

## Review paper

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# CONTRIBUTION OF THE JOSEF PILSUDSKI UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TO THE PROMOTION OF OLYMPISM

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When, in 1928 Director of State Physical Education and Military Training Authority Colonel J. Urlych was summoned by Józef Piłsudski, he was asked: “What would you do, if I gave you several million for Physical Education Purposes?”. Without hesitation, he replied that “because the future of physical education depended on the availability of appropriate teachers and instructors – he would use the money to found a physical education university” [1]. That is the sort of an answer that the Marshal had expected, assigning 5 million zlotys for establishment of The Central Institute of Physical Education.

The foundation act shows that the most significant people, including the President of the Republic of Poland Ignacy Mościcki, responsible for the development of the country signed up to this decision. Similarly highly esteemed was the composition of the Building Committee, headed by the Minister of Interior – Brigadier General Dr. Feliks Sławoj-Składkowski. “Conceived in the interests of the common good, may this university be the mainstay of health and vigour of the Nation” – we could read in the act – and then “May the teachers and instructors emerging from this university, develop in the young generations the strength and fortitude that will provide in the future, freedom of the spirit, willingness and enthusiasm to take on even hardest work, overcoming the adversity and the rivals” [2].

Polish Physical Education University – the name given to The Central Institute of Physical Education in Bielany – was intended to educate teachers and instructors, who, as Osmolski said “were not only to educate and shape the young people entrusted to the university, but also develop their characters, and also to bring joy and noble manners to world of youths. To achieve that, it is not sufficient to know how to organise sporting exercises or competitions know how to conduct exercises or decorate sports. In order to turn exercise into hygienic, ethical and social value, one needs to be an optimist, a friend of the people and youths, one needs extensive knowledge and abilities, and radiate with the love for the country and the life” [3]. These words seem to bear the true spirit of Olympism – i.e. the values that the Olympic spirit carries.

### Olympism

Promotion of Olympism affects all generations in the society. The institutional dimension can be found everywhere – at all levels of education, at social and cultural institutions involved in sporting activity, museums, Olympic education cen-

tres, national Olympic committees, etc.

This sort of education produces the values of Olympism, which individuals bring into the adult lives of societies. Olympism is based on two fundamental principles: the idea of fair play and the idea of peace. Their universal dimension makes Olympism the source of educational values as well as generally social values.

Education for these values is the basis for the perception of Olympism in the adulthood through the mass media, with particular emphasis on the role of the Olympic Games that are widely available in the media.

### What is Olympism?

Olympism is a pedagogical concept, created by the restorer of modern Olympics Pierre de Coubertin.

The notion of Olympism was used by Coubertin for the first time in 1894, in his speech closing the I Olympic Convention in Sorbonne. With a great deal of pride he said that: „tonight electricity spreads the news that Hellenic Olympism has been restored after many centuries of oblivion” [4].

In his works Coubertin defined Olympism a number of times, but all those attempts boil down to the conviction that Olympism is: “a state of mind born out of the duality of the cult of strain and harmony” [4].

The definition of specified in clause 2 of the preamble to the Olympic Charter (1991) referred to as “Fundamental Principles”, states as follows: “Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole of the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles” [5].

The goals of Olympism defined in this manner, are specified by the Olympic Charter as follows: “The goal of Olympism is to place everywhere sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity/.../” [5].

The essence of the Olympic education is the assumption that with the help of physical effort, through psychosomatic and moral impact on the alumni, one can achieve the desired effect, as well as enrich the educational and human personality. The most important elements of education understood in this

manner is moral impact of fair play and the so-called doctrine of mutual respect.

### The need for Olympic education of young people

The precursor of Olympic education, Pierre de Coubertin distinguishes two symphonies in his work. The first one is the Olympic sports movement, which - in his opinion - has sailed into world like a shiny zeppelin, and the second one - unfinished - is education reform [4].

Today, we can distinguish two categories of Olympic education. The first of these is treated as part of host countries' preparations for Olympic Games, while the second one - being the fabric of educational programs at schools, educational content and education of youth development, and an educational tool, with a chance of fulfilment, socialisation, interaction and partnership in education, in-depth ethical reflection and the need for its improvement - not only in sports.

Olympism is a carrier of values that meet two basic conditions:

- are widely accepted by young people and meet the needs of global education;
- are timeless - i.e. that is, they lose nothing out of their validity as time passes by.

The universal nature of these values can make them effective elements of global education.

Actual promotion of Olympic education began in the second half of the twentieth century. On the one hand, the conditions underlying this promotion formed worldwide and European institutions, with the aim of disseminating the fundamental values of Olympism and autotelic values of sport and to prevent their threats, and on the other hand, this was favoured by the necessity to activate countries and societies that hosted subsequent Olympic Games.

### Seeking partners in Olympic education

Sport and Olympism are autotelic values, but their instrumental dimension is what determines their meaning in the lives of individuals and societies. Many people and institutions participate and cooperate in the promotion and making these values universal, both, at national and global levels.

The heritage and culture of the Olympic sports are overseen by appropriate institutions such as universities of physical education, the Polish Olympic Committee with its agencies, such as the Polish Olympic Academy, Club Fair Play, Committee for Culture and Education, the Polish sports associations and the Museum of Sports and Tourism, luckily located in Olympic Education Centre, with its 60-year tradition and one of the largest collections in Europe in this field.

The museum is also a base for activities of teaching and research at our university. Our university's academic teachers and students pursue here various topics from the history of physical culture, Olympic education, pedagogy, philosophy, and theory of physical education and sports, not to mention specific subjects - associated with individual sports disciplines.

This brings us to yet another idea behind this speech: the cooperation of our University and the Museum of Sports and Tourism is further continued by the university's graduates - physical education teachers and coaches, who return to the museum with their students and players. They come back for the values of sport and Olympism, which enrich the content of their daily physical education classes and sports activities, facilitate the development of attitudes in contact with the tradition, as well as national and international cultural and sporting achievements in this regard. For the young people to enjoy the

numerous benefits of the Museum, their teachers and instructors must first have the knowledge of its offerings.

In support of such actions, our academic teachers in cooperation with schools organise training workshops in Olympism and Olympic education for school headmasters and teachers - as part of Teachers Councils sessions [6]. At physical education universities - also including ours - Olympic education subjects are being introduced. Research on the effects of Olympic education on the development of young people and their education, is being conducted. On the basis of these studies, often presented during various meetings and awarded in a contest organised by the Polish Olympic Academy, a number of master, doctoral and post-doctoral theses were written. It is all about scientific exploration of Olympism, analysing the value of its educational impact on the human, in an individual as well as a global scale. Theoretical achievements in this area are very abundant (awarded researchers include: J. Nowocień, M. Czechowski, A. Bodasińska).

We are continuing the good habit of organising of Nationwide Scientific Conferences, together with the Polish Olympic Committee, to promote Scientific Conference promoting the values of sport and Olympism, in close cooperation with the scientific departments the Polish Olympic Academy, the Fair Play Club and the Olympic Foundation. Often these conferences are held, in whole or in part, at the Olympic Education Centre and the Museum of Sports and Tourism. Visiting the museum, as well as participation in Olympism classes is becoming a tradition (6 conferences were held, organizer: prof. J. Nowocień with a team of employees of the Department of Education and HKF).

The cooperation of our University with the Museum of Sports and Tourism has always been in the services of Olympic education, and the new Olympic Education Centre creates special opportunities for further active cooperation not only with the use of new infrastructure, but the approach in the cooperation of all stakeholders - researchers, employees of the Polish Olympic Committee (POC), the POC Board, the Museum with the children, school children and students, athletes, Olympic athletes, teachers and coaches. This facilitates integration with the Olympic family - as well as national and global community.

### Publications

As a result, the numerous research projects carried out by the staff of our University published a number of books promoting the values of Olympism. These include:

- Grzegorz Młodzikowski: "21 Olympic Games of the Modern Era";
- Kajetan Hądzelek and Grzegorz Młodzikowski: "Pierre de Coubertin";
- Zbigniew Krawczyca: "The Two Faces of Olympism";
- Stefan Wołoszyn:
  - "Olympism and Education";
  - "Olympism and Global Education";
- Krzysztof Zuchora:
  - "Distant and Close Outlooks of the Sport";
  - "Olympic Education";
  - "Dedications and Olympic Memories";
- Maria Rotkiewicz:
  - "The Light of Olympia";
  - "Olympic Mascots and Symbols";
  - "A book devoted to the life and work of Konpacka";
- Kajetan Hądzelek and Krzysztof Zuchor (Eds.):
  - "90 Years on the Olympic Trail";
  - "The Best of the Best. Polish Gold Medallists";
  - "Olympic Competitions of Art. Olympic Laurels";
- Jerzy Nowocień: "Sport and Olympism in the Teaching

- and Educational System of the Modern School”;
- Anna Dąbrowska: “International Fair Play Awards”;
- Marcin Czechowski:
  - “The Perception of Fair Play Values and Health Oriented Attitudes of Students”;
  - “Fair Play in the Sport and Life of Young People”;
- Jerzy Królicki: “Students Athletes in the Informal Structure of Student Groups”;
- Anna Bodasińska: “Attitudes of Rural Youth to Olympic Values and the Idea of Fair Play in Sport and Life”;
- Zofia Żukowska:
  - “Fair Play – Sport – Education”;
  - “The Fair Play Club of the Polish Olympic Committee”;
  - “Olympic Education in Poland and Selected Countries”;
  - “Fair Play as a Moral Value on Sport”;
- Ryszard Żukowski:
  - “Young People about the Values of Fair Play”;
  - “Fair Play – the Supreme Principle of Olympism”;
  - “The Place of Fair Plat in Sports Education”;
  - “Fair Play and the Use of Illegal Stimulants in Sport. Myths and the Reality”;
  - “Sport – Fair Play – Expectations”;
- Zofia Żukowska, Ryszard Żukowski (Eds.):
  - „Olympic Education in Reformed School”;
  - “Education through Sport”;
  - “Fair Play in the European Culture and Sport”;
  - “Health and Sport in Global Education”;
  - “Health – Exercise – Fair Play”;
  - “Fair play in Sport and Olympism – an Opportunity or Utopia” (Polish and English version);
- Marcin Czechowski, Zofia Żukowska, Ryszard Żukowski:
  - “Olympic Education. Normative Documents and Fair Play Codes”.

In addition, K. Zuchora was awarded the Silver Olympic Laurel for a sports book of poetry, “In the Gulf of the Heart”, beginning with “Olympism according to P. de Coubertin”. It included numerous poems dedicated to Olympic athletes, including our graduates.

#### **CIPE-UPE – a place where coaches so necessary for Olympism are being educated**

In the 50s of the past century, the first majors in coaching were offered. Moreover, promotion of new sports was launched, later on incorporated into the Olympic program (such as judo, gymnastics, etc.).

Academic teachers were the core of PZS MFS activists.

Our University became renowned internationally for having “coaching and sporting schools” in sporting disciplines such as athletics, volleyball, basketball, weightlifting, judo, fencing, gymnastics (including artistic gymnastics) and swimming. We had a number of Olympians and Olympic successes in these disciplines.

#### **The Olympians of our University**

As many as 190 employees and graduates of Warsaw's UPE participated in Olympic Games (coaches, crew chiefs, referees, doctors, physiotherapists, journalists, activists, massage therapists, commentators).

Between 1924 and 2012 we had 268 Olympians. Some of them participated on more than one Olympic Games (e.g. J. Sidło – five times).

Since 1928 graduates of CIPE – UPE have won as many as 70 Olympic medals (16 gold, 25 silver, 29 bronze) and 142 times ended up in points winning positions (4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>). The greatest

successes were celebrated at the 20<sup>th</sup> Olympic Games in Montreal – 11 medals (5 gold, 4 silver, 2 bronze).

Gold medallists included: J. Kusociński, W. Baszanowski, J. Kulej, Z. Smalcerz, J. Rybicki, T. Ślusarski, P. Nastula, O. Jędrzejczak, foil fencers, volleyball and soccer players.

Since 1952 our University has had a sorting club – ASA-UPE, which has produced a number of Olympians. Members of the club have won 22 Olympic medals (8 gold, 7 silver, 7 bronze). Even greater successes were enjoyed in World Championships (22 gold, 28 silver, 30 bronze) and European Championships (37 gold, 36 silver, 35 bronze) and University Games (18 gold, 12 silver, 28 bronze).

The Club's training staff comprised mostly of academic teachers, who gained the highest coaching qualifications. Similarly, the Club was managed by academic teachers and graduates of the University (for example, for many years the club was managed by K. Lipska-Skład, and A. Krzesinski – now Secretary General of the Polish Olympic Committee).

Since 1991 we have had an active UPE Integration Sports Club which is a breeding ground for Paralympic athletes.

Since 1958, our University has had Olympic Training Centre (OTC), subsequently converted into COTC. It has organised training for Olympic teams, specialist testing of Olympians, had its own laboratories and experimental research laboratories, where our academic teachers had worked, while medical assistance was provided by the Medical Clinic of our University. This is where coaches of various disciplines were educated and lectures were conducted by academic teachers. Hotel “Meksyk” was built.

In 2005 Academic Centre for Sports Training at UPE ASA-UPE and Sports and Curriculum Council were established (employees of the University and the Club), as well as Olympic Training Centre for Olympic throwing competitions.

Olympians have always been the core of the University's life.

#### **Activities of employees and graduates of the University on Olympic forums**

Active participation in the activities of the Polish Olympic Committee (Board members, deputy chairmen – T. Ulatowski, managers of the Sports Commission, the Fair Play Club, the Olympic Foundation, the Polish Olympic Academy (POA), Culture and Education and others) as well as members of the Polish Olympic Committee.

Active participation in POA and IOA sessions in Olympia (since 1964) – as participants and lecturers (Młodzikowski).

In 1976 a 15-member strong group of students participated in bike tour of the ancient Pan-Hellenic Olympics and participated in a IOA session in Olympia.

Participation of the Fair Play Club in the promotion of Olympism in Poland, Europe and around the world.

I have been president of the Fair Play Club for 46 years. The Club has always associated numerous academic teachers of our University, actively participating in long term studies on development of the Olympic idea, the history of the Olympic movement and Olympic Games, operations of the Polish Olympic Committee and the IOC, closely cooperating with the European and the worldwide fair play movement (K. Hądzelek is an official representative of Poland on UNESCO's International Fair Play Committee, Z. Żukowska is an individual member of the Committee, she is also a founding member of the European Fair Play Movement, a participant of 18 annual European Fair Play Congresses (always with speeches), she was awarded an EFPM Medal and a Lithuanian Commander's Cross for the promotion of fair play values in Europe. For the promotion of the Olympism and fair play values the International Olympic Committee

awarded a special statue to K. Hądzelek and Z. Żukowska, and on the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IOC, Z. Żukowska was awarded Pierer de Coubertin's Gold Medal.

European Fair Play Congresses were also attended by M. Czechowski, J. Nowocień and R. Żukowski (with speeches).

Editors and authors of texts promoting Olympic values in periodicals: "Almanac", "Magazyn Olimpijski" included a number of our University's academic Teachers (K. Zuchora and others). It was similarly with numerous monographs already mentioned before, not to mention numerous international publications.

Through the annually awarded prizes for fair play gesture in sport, for the whole sporting career and a decent life after its completion, and for the promotion of Olympism with its guiding principle of fair play, the Fair Play Club rewards many teachers and graduates of our university, which shows how great role models they are to follow [7].

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The Honorary Doctorates awarded by our University have also contributed to the promotion of values that they have always identified with, also including Olympism. This mainly includes long standing Chancellors of our University: Stefan Wołoszyn, Tadeusz Ulatowski and Zbigniew Krawczyk and IOC President J. Rogge.

The deep respect for our community has been demonstrated by visits of three subsequent presidents of the IOC: M. Lord Killian, A. Samaranch and J. Rogge.

The Polish Olympians Association in cooperation with our University organised "Gloria Optimis" Golden Circle, located in the centre of the university, devoted to Olympic athletes and senior employees of the university. It is an important promotion of the values of sport and Olympism, which they personified.

All I have said is associates with real people, not all whom I was able to name. Therefore I believe that the entire commu-

nity of our University has made a contribution to creating a aright climate for the promotion of Olympism values. It is a climate that generates these values and facilitates their implementation. May we all have bear that in mind.

### Literature

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