

REVIEWS

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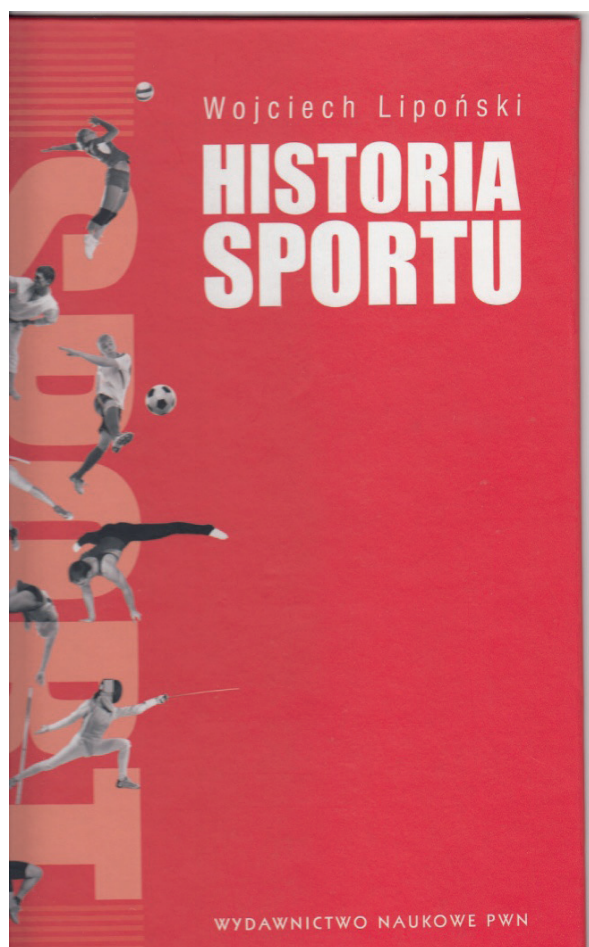
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A short review of the monograph by Wojciech Lipoński: A history of sport in relation to the development of physical culture

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Wojciech Lipoński, *A history of sport in relation to the development of physical culture / Historia sportu na tle rozwoju kultury fizycznej*, PWN, Warszawa 2012, 764 pp. [in Polish]

I. There have been a few studies¹ putting together the history of physical culture into one compact study by the same author², a retired prominent athlete³. There are not many successful textbooks on the history of physical education in Poland either. There are though, some unsuccessful scripts⁴.

Considering all these facts, this work by Wojciech Lipoński (born in Sosnowiec in 1942),

¹ See: W. Lipoński, *Rochwist and palant. An ethnographic study of old Polish sports and activity games against the background of European tradition*; *idem*, *The Poles at Olympic Games/Polacy na olimpiadach* (ed. Czechowicz-Podsiedlik et al.); *idem*, *History of Polish sport of medieval archery to the last Olympics/ Dzieje sportu polskiego od średniowiecznego łucznictwa do ostatniej olimpiady* (ed. Czechowicz-Podsiedlik et al.).

² W. Lipoński (1987), *Humanistic encyclopaedia of sport/ Humanistyczna encyklopedia sportu*, Warszawa; *idem* (2000), *Olympism for everybody/Olimpizm dla każdego*, Poznań; *idem* (2001), *Encyclopedia of world sports/Encyklopedia sportów świata*, Poznań.

³ Wojciech Lipoński is a titular professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and at the Academy of Physical Education of Eugeniusz Piasecki in Poznań, a prominent expert in the birth of culture and civilization in the British Isles and a lecturer at the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia in Greece as well as at the State University of Florida, Gainesville (USA). He is also a Polish 400-metre runner, who held two Polish records in the 400 metres relay. Although he lost his place in the team to Filipiuk at the Olympics in Tokyo (1964) he served as a reserve. He also won against an American sprinter Michael Larabee during an athletic meeting in Zurich (1965).

⁴ J. Świercz (2005), *History of physical culture. Facts and anecdotes. / Historia kultury fizycznej. Fakty i ciekawostki*, Ed. Bikstudio, Brzeście.

although somewhat difficult for the average reader to understand, seems to be an almost perfect publication, with a considerable philosophical focus.

This book by W. Lipoński is in 9 parts (Introduction, I - Pre-history, II - Ancient Middle East, III - Games and Bodily Culture of Ancient Europe, IV - Ancient and Medieval Far East, V - Medieval Knights and Middle Class Sports, VI - The Physical Culture of the Renaissance and 17th Century, VII - The Age of Reason and Automatization of Human Body, VIII - Centenary of the Steam Engine and Velocipede, IX - A Fascinating Century of Sport, Conclusions, Annexes, Selected Bibliography, Index of Names, Sources.

I have no objections to the development of the argument, though this kind of scientific compendium could usefully add a chapter about the attitude of the Universal Church and other Christian Churches to physical culture in a historic perspective. To be more specific, the attitude of Roman bishops towards this kind of public activity, and the issues connected with wider relations between State and Society (geopolitics) - at a human level (too often these days pushed aside by the speed of change in the contemporary world)

The comments by the author of the following review concerning this high quality work by Wojciech Lipoński are secondary or tertiary and are subjective opinions made by him as an ordinary reader.

II. Regardless of what I have written in the general and introductory part of the review regarding the work of *Prof. zw. Dr hab.* Wojciech Lipoński, it should be stated that the monograph is wholly original:

1. So far there has not been a similar study, of the history of physical education both in terms of chronological scope and substance in historiography of syntheses.

– This book by Prof. W. Lipoński includes, for the first time a detailed prehistory of physical culture, recognizing the development of the main forms of physical culture in the crucial area of Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, Phoenicia and Carthage. No other known publication among the existing literature can boast such scope. Only the history of physical culture by Marek Ordyłowski or to an extent that by Sławomir Wilk and Jerzy Chełmecki come close, as far as content is concerned, to the level of this work by Prof. W. Lipoński: *cf.* Mirosław Ponczek, *Review of an outline of sports history by Jerzy Chełmecki and Sławomir Wilk - a textbook for university students - Education in Sport / Edukacja w sporcie*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 342).

– there is no textbook or a more extensive

compendium of the Olympic Games and bodily culture of ancient Europe (i.e. the oldest Olympic sports of Celtic, Greek or Roman provenance, let alone the science of hygiene in ancient India or China and neighbouring areas).

2. I do not see in the current historiography of the subject any study with a similar range covering medieval sports or middle-class and plebeian tournaments, games and activities from this era. This opinion is formulated by an expert on the history of physical education in relation to the Roman Catholic Church (*cf.* Mirosław Ponczek, *Physical Culture and Roman-Catholic Church. Antiquity - 20th century / Kultura fizyczna a Kościół rzymskokatolicki. Antyk-XX wiek*, Częstochowa 2004).

3. With regard to the Renaissance and the 16th century I do not see a similar piece of work either, even taking into consideration the textbook by Prof. R. Wroczyński which since it dates back many years does not cover the research done in the 1980s and 1990s.

4. From the Enlightenment and the nineteenth century, this work by Prof. W. Lipoński could be compared to the popular studies by Sławomir Wilk and Jerzy Chełmecki.

5. I definitely do not see any work on a comparable scale to this work by Prof. W. Lipoński covering, the, as he calls it, "fascinating" century of sport - the 20th century especially in relation to fascist Italy, Germany and Spain, communist Russia and its neighbouring countries, not to mention the period of the first few years after World War II in Poland (it can only be compared to a synthesis by Piotr Godlewski, *Sport in Poland and political reality of 1944-1956 / Sport w Polsce na tle politycznej rzeczywistości lat 1944-1956*, Poznań 2006, pp. 520).

6. *Sport in the Peoples' s Republic of Poland 1944-1989 / Sport w Polsce Ludowej 1944-1989* by Prof. W. Lipoński could be solely related to the works by Prof. Leonard Szymański *Polish Parliament on problems of physical culture / Parlament Polski wobec problemów kultury fizycznej 1944-1980*. Wrocław 1990; partially to *Physical culture and tourism in politics People's Republic of Poland 1944-1989 / Kultura fizyczna i turystyka w polityce Polski Ludowej 1944-1989*, Wrocław 2004, partially to a study by Prof. Marek Ordyłowski *The Parliament of the Third Republic of Poland in relation to physical education 1989-2005 / Parlament III RP wobec kultury fizycznej w latach 1989-2005*, Wrocław 2012.

At this point I would make one methodological remark regarding the selective bibliography in this study by W. Lipoński, namely I would include a

traditional bibliography taking into account archival printed sources and selected subject-related literature.

Expressing appreciation for the work of *Prof. zw. Dr hab.* Wojciech Lipoński

Mirosław Ponczek

In May 2013.

Krótką notą recenzyjną monografii autorstwa Wojciecha Lipońskiego, *Historia sportu na tle rozwoju kultury fizycznej*

Słowa kluczowe: historia, kultura fizyczna, sporty, gry

Streszczenie

Autor stwierdza, że mało mamy dziś opracowań zwieńczających dzieje kultury fizycznej w jedno zwarte opracowanie tego samego Autora. Także udanych podręczników do historii kultury fizycznej było w Polsce niewiele.

W szczególności książka prof. W. Lipońskiego obejmuje po raz pierwszy tak dokładnie prehistorię kultury fizycznej, z ujęciem rozwoju głównych form kultury fizycznej na newralgicznym obszarze Mezopotamii, starożytnego Egiptu, Fenicji i Kartaginy. Jest to ważna pozycja w historiografii kultury fizycznej, jako kompendium wiedzy o igrzyskach i kulturze cielesnej starożytnej Europy (idzie o najstarsze igrzyska sportowe proveniencji celtyckiej, greckiej i rzymskiej, nie wspominając o higienie dawnych Indii czy Chin oraz obszarów sąsiednich) i ważna pozycja w historiografii średniowiecznych sportów, gier oraz zabaw ruchowych, różnych praform sportu epok Odrodzenia i Oświecenia, XIX stulecia i wreszcie fascynującego XX-wieku – wieku sportu.