Co-Creators of the Polish Physical Culture Model – Wenany and Eugeniusz Piasecki

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Abstract

The objective of the article is to present the thoughts and practical activities of Wenante and Eugeniusz Piasecki in the development of physical culture in Poland. It is about reminding the somewhat forgotten achievements of W. and E. Piasecki in the area of a modern understanding of the theory and practice of physical education, sport, hydrotherapy, school hygiene, as well as the implementation of the concept of training staff in therapeutic gymnastics, sports medicine and physical education. Therefore, it is worth considering the role of W. and E. Piasecki, both in the creation and development of scientific grounds for physical education, as well as its practical implementation, training of staff in this field, as well as school hygiene and physiotherapy. In the study, analysis of historical sources is implemented, as well as inductive, deductive and comparative methods, i.e. classical methods for works of historical nature. The content is based on a synthesis from the analysis of source materials and literature on the subject. This article is an attempt to assess the creative contribution of both scientists in the development of the above-mentioned fields and the synthesis of scientific achievements, as well as the presentation of analogies in their activities, and presenting the inspiring Western European thought, which they were able to transplant into Poland in the field of health sciences.

Keywords: physical culture, theory of physical education, training staff.

In November 1918, Poland regained its independence, which was achieved due to the heroic attitude of many generations of Poles. During the 123 years of captivity, spiritual culture, science, art, education and physical culture had significant impact on shaping the national bond. It was then that the basic institutions and various forms of scientific life were formed, which laid the foundations for the dynamic and multi-directional development of physical culture in independent Poland. The programme-related and organisational concepts in the field of physical culture, prepared before 1918, became a foundation for the development of the Polish physical culture model, which began to dynamically progress in many directions within the sovereign homeland, to which, Wenany and Eugeniusz Piasecki (father and son) contributed to a great extent. It was them who made a lasting impact on the development of hydrotherapy, physiotherapy and physical education in Poland at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Wenanty and Eugeniusz), as well as during the interwar period (Eugeniusz).

Dr. Wenanty Piasecki (1832–1909) and his son, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eugeniusz Piasecki, Ph.D. (1872–1947) were recognised doctors, who by publishing in foreign journals, made a significant contributions in the fields of science and practice in hydrotherapy, physical therapy as well as rehabilitation and thory of physical education, hygiene, scouting as well as games and activities. Wenany studied physical education in Dresden and Prague, while Eugeniusz undertook studies in Vienna in the field of therapeutic gymnastics and hydrotherapy at the first Department of Hydrotherapy in Europe, University of Vienna. Both were comprehensively educated physical education teachers. They conducted their pioneering activity in this field, and also in theoretical aspects as well as in the area of hygiene, in Lviv, Kraków, Poznań and Zakopane. They promoted the introduction of university forms of training physical education teachers and the inclusion of a physical exercise programme among students of universities in Kraków, Lviv and Poznań. Wenany popularised German and Czech forms of gymnastics, adapting them to the needs of the educational situation in Polish territories occupied by Austria-Hungary, and limiting the strength and acrobatic elements of German gymnastics by giving it health, hygienic and recreational features, and to a lesser extent, the dissemination of Swedish methods for treatment applying movement.

On the other hand, Eugeniusz (an opponent of German gymnastics) was definitely in favour of Swedish gymnastics, promoting it in Lviv schools as modern, supported by medical knowledge, physiological research, and noting its beneficial aspects for maintaining
health and hygiene among children and adolescents. He introduced motor games, short trips and inter-class exercises into his school practice; he popularised sport for all and scouting as a method of education devoid of military elements.

The Piasecki family also adapted physical education to the needs of hospitals and health resorts. Eugeniusz, who headed the Department and Study of Physical Education at the University of Poznań, co-created the concept of educating physiotherapists in Poland. They both published many valuable works, for example, *Słownik gimnastyczny* [Eng. *Vocabulary of Gymnastics*] (Wenanty), *Dzieje wychowania fizycznego, Zarys teorii wychowania fizycznego, Zabawy i gry rodzowe dzieci i młodzieży – ze źródeł dziedzinowych i ludowych, przeznaczenia rodzimych i tradycji ustnej* [Eng. *The History of Physical Education, an Outline of the Theory of Physical Education, Games and Motor Activities for Children and Adolescents – from Historical and Folklore Sources, Mostly Native and Oral Tradition*] (Eugeniusz). They developed a specific system of treatment combining water and movement. They also created modern forms of education in the field of broadly-understood medicine and physical culture, which they adapted to national conditions and needs, thus, creating an original system of physical education.

It was their theoretical considerations and practical activities that became the rudiment for the development of physical culture in Poland. Thus, on the 150th anniversary of the birth of Eugeniusz Piasecki, as well as on the 190th anniversary of Wenante Piasecki’s birth, it seems justified to recall these eminent figures. The main purpose of this article is to reminisce about most important achievements that heralded the future, and now the present state of physical culture.

### The Piasecki family’s activity in the field of hydrotherapy and physiotherapy

In Lviv, during W. Piasecki’s youth (1856–1861), the trend for gymnastic exercises was already established. They were used to improve health and spend time pleasantly. The first gymnastic facilities operated there from 1847. However, in the field of physiotherapy, only the Gymnastic and Organopathic Institute (since 1856), run by Hungarian Dr. Tivadar Bakody, M.D., and the Department of Hydrotherapy and Gymnastics ‘Treatment by Franciszek Medvey (founded on May 1, 1859) in Lviv-Kisielka were active. This was supervised by Dr. T. Bakody. The later director of the Department in Kisielka, Dr. Wenanty Piasecki, specialising in natural medicine, became interested in traditional methods of hydrotherapy treatment, when at a school age, he suffered from pneumonia for 5 years (1849–1854), and regained his health thanks to its use. Initially, he studied at the Faculty of Law and Politics of the University of Lviv (1855–1858), and later, completed a surgery course in Lviv (1859). For a year (1859), he worked at the known hydrotherapy facility run by Dr. J. Hahn in Weid (Switzerland). He deepened his interest in physical exercises and natural medicine in Germany and Austria. There, he became acquainted with the activities of the most famous centres (Gräffenberg, Meran, Wartenberg, Königswart). To develop an interest in medicine, hydrotherapy and physical exercise, beginning from the 1862/1863 academic years, he began studies at the Faculty of Medicine, Jagiellonian University in Kraków. He continued this education Charles University in Prague (1863/1864–1865), where he took refuge from the repressions of the tsarist Russian authorities for participating in the January Uprising (from January 22, 1863).

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2. Dr. Teodor Józef Bakody, M.D. (1825–1911) in January 1856 in Lviv, opened the first gym in Poland where Swedish therapeutic gymnastics was used in practice. He treated patients with various diseases of the musculoskeletal system and for preventive purposes. Soon Dr. Bakody (in the garden belonging to Dr. Schreter’s house) built a spacious gymnastic and organopathic facility, equipped with the necessary utensils and instruments, with which facilities abroad were equipped. "Nowymy" from 22 Apr. 1856, No. 48, p. 383.

3. W. Piasecki was born on July 15, 1832 in Magdalówka in Podolia. His father - Piotr - was a forest ranger. Wenany left home early and made a living on his own. He attended the Academic Juniors High School in Lviv. In 1849, he fell ill with pneumonia. After unsuccessful treatment, he underwent a natural cure with hydrotherapy methods, which he therefore learned from autopsy. After a break due to the aforementioned disease, in high school, he studied well, receiving a scholarship for outstanding results (specified as ementis or wyróżnionych, ausgezeichnet on school report cards). He passed his matriculation examination on March 15, 1855, and in June 1855, he enrolled it the Faculty of Law and Politics (partioko-polities) of the University of Lviv. In 1857, he passed the state examination in the history of law, and a year later, he interrupted his law studies. See: F. Laurentowski, *Działalność Wenantego Piaseckiego w Galicji* [Eng. *The Activity of Wernanty Piasecki in Galicia*] [in:] Z. Grot (red.), Studia nadziejami kultury fizycznej XIX i XX wieku. Materiały z sesji naukowej Wyższej Szkoły Wychowania Fizycznego w Poznaniu, Poznań, 8 and 9 Dec. 1970 r., Series: Monografie, No. 45, University of Physical Education in Poznań, Poznań 1973, p. 130.


In the years 1865-1867, he continued his studies at the Jagiellonian University. He finally graduated in 1871 as a doctor of medicinae (all medical sciences). He used the skills acquired during the courses in Prague in the field of therapeutic gymnastics and hydrotherapy at the Hydrotherapeutic Institute in “Kisielka” near Lviv. There, from the spring of 1871 to 1885, he was its director. In order to facilitate the treatment of hydrotherapy supporters, in the post-Jesuit garden in the city centre, Dr. W. Piasecki opened the Dianna Bathing Centre, a branch of “Kisielka” in Lviv. In 1872, “Gazeta Narodowa” [Eng. The National Newspaper] reported that as a result of Dr. W. Piasecki’s activities, and as a consequence of his foreign trip, the “Kisielka” Bathing House was modernised, adapting it to the highest European standards of that time. New bathrooms and a factory kitchen were built, and places for sun and air baths were organised in the park. The residential buildings of the Centre were adapted to patients’ all-year stays. From 1877, Wenanty also worked seasonally at the hydrotherapy centres in Sassiów (until 1879) and Moszyn.

As a lover of the Tatra Mountains and mountain-climate treatment, in 1879, he purchased, the Hydrotherapy Centre in Kuznice near Zakopane from Dr. Piotr-Gonczarski, and a plot of land located between the village of Zakopane and Jaszurowa, and the Kuznice bridgehead, or “Hamry”. In May 1880, he began operating in the field of therapeutic gymnastics at the purchased facility. In the years 1880-1882, he built a new Hydrotherapy Centre (called “Klemensówka” from the name of the doctor’s wife) and soon thereafter operated it on the said plot. Between 1882—1897, he implemented physical exercises among patients, especially in the area of therapeutic and orthopaedic gymnastics. The license to run the centre and a home pharmacy allowed him to develop activities in the field of natural medicine. At the newly built institute of natural medicine, there was all the essential equipment needed for hydrotherapy, as well as steam and sunbathing devices, and those necessary for therapeutic gymnastics and orthopaedics. At the Hydrotherapy Treatment Centre in Kuznice near Zakopane and in “Klmenówka”, he used a wide range of the above-mentioned therapies and dietary treatments. He also collaborated with the Society of Galician Doctors at the University of Lviv, as the president of the local Hydropathic Society. He also prepared a thematic study entitled Stosunek Hydroterapii do innych metod leczenia [Eng. Comparison of Hydrotherapy to Other Treatments], published in Lviv in 1880.

From January 1885 to 1890, he periodically ran a gymnastics facility for children and adolescents in Kraków, where he conducted therapeutic gymnastics classes. In Zakopane, on the other hand, he actively participated in social life, promoting its climatic values, a healthy lifestyle and strongly opposing alcoholism among highlanders. As a member on the editorial board of “Przegląd Zakopiański” [Eng. The Zakopane Review] and being its editor (1905), as well as a member of the Tatra Society, he fought to improve social hygiene and public health, contributing to the status of Zakopane as a spa town. He was a determined man, consistent in action, disciplined (every day at 5 in the morning, he would wake up his son Eugeniusz to exercise together), a vegetarian, avoiding any stimulants. His scientific legacy consists of several works and articles of scientific and popular science nature. He died on August 25, 1909 in Linz.

Wenanty passed his knowledge and experience down to his son - Eugeniusz (born on November 13, 1872 in Lviv), who, while studying at St. Jacek’s Junior High in Kraków, helped his father in conducting body exercises at the Institute of Medicinal and Hygienic Gymnastics in Kraków (1885–1890) and, during the summer,
at the “Klemensówka” Hydrotherapy Centre in Zakopane (1892–1897). Eugeniusz, following in his father’s footsteps, was also educated in the field of hydrotherapy. In Vienna, from 1897, he stayed with Prof. Wilhelm Winternitz – at the first Department of Hydrotherapy in Europe – University of Vienna, and with Antoni Blum, a specialist, among others, in the field of therapeutic gymnastics. After his internship, he stated that “there is no opposition between skilful medicine and skilful hydrotherapy”, although the latter was used at clinics only to a small extent. The acquired experience resulted in an interest in physical education, the theory and practice of gymnastics, mountaineering, skiing, cycling and broadly-understood culture. After graduating from the Faculty of Medicine at Jagiellonian University in Kraków (December 23, 1896), he began an internship in his own Department of Medical Gymnastics, Orthopaedics and Massage (1900-1915) in Lviv, where he laid down the foundations for Polish rehabilitation. He performed therapeutic treatments with the use of modern devices and instruments. These included, inter alia, devices for passive and active resistance exercises proposed by Knoke and Dressler, Beely Lorenz, Barwell, and Hoffer (1900). Patients were also given regular, electric and vibration massages. This department specialised in the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders, typically orthopaedic ones – flat chest, habitual and scoliotic curvatures of the spine, inflammation of joints and muscles. Physiotherapy was carried out in neurological diseases – paralysis, paresis, neuralgia and neuroses, cardiological as well as gastric diseases (weakening of the heart muscle and other circulatory disorders along with stomach and intestines ailments) were treated. Eugeniusz Piasecki, in order to learn more about the principles of Swedish gymnastics, went to Germany and Sweden several times (in 1901). After his return, he replaced the currently applied German gymnastic system proposed by F. Jahn, widely used in Galicia, and he bought new equipment along with him. During WWI (1917), while being forced to stay in Kiev and belonging to the Polish University College, he gave a lecture on war-related orthopaedics, which he published in the “Polski Miesięcznik Literacki” [Eng. The Polish Literary Monthly] in 1917. He discussed the latest studies and reports related to the organisation of military orthopaedics and a review of orthopaedic-surgical and physical therapy methods, confirming the belief that “physiotherapeutic healing of the wounded (during World War 1 – EK and M.L.) gives very favourable results”. After the end of his war exile, from April 1, 1919, he joined Wszechnica Piastowska [Eng. Piast University, now Adam Mickiewicz University] in Poznań. He was the head of the Department of School Hygiene and Theory of Physical Education, and from 1924, the director of Physical Education Studies at the University of Poznań (UP). There, he educated candidates for physical education teaching specialisations, initially together with medical students (1919-1921) in 2-year studies, then 3-year studies (1922-1939), and from 1931, also sports doctors in a 5-year course in school- and sports-medicine for students of the Faculty of Medicine – UP. At the PE College, the co-founder of Polish Orthopaedics was employed – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ireneusz Wierzejewski, M.D., Ph.D. (1925—1929), as well as his student, Dr.Wiktor Dega (1929—1939), as a lecturer in the subject of Swedish gymnastics and massage, and as a doctor at the College.

Having survived the war ordeal, in June 1945, E. Piasecki returned to Poznań. The following year, he published an article in Nowiny Lekarskie [Eng. News

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The Piasecki family’s activities in the field of school hygiene, gymnastics and the theory of physical education

Due to the low level of gymnastics in Galicia, W. Piasecki continued his education in this area in Dresden and Prague. In Germany, the Jahn-Spiess gymnastic system prevailed, characterised by the use of a large number of acrobatic and strength elements. For Piasecki, who came from Lviv deprived of independence, the German thought in the field of gymnastics became a model to follow. The inspiration to explore this field was the conviction about the significant health as well as hygiene values, recreational physical exercises and deep patriotism manifested by the will to act for the good of society. The skills acquired at the gymnastic school of the University of Prague (he was the assistant of a gymnastics teacher there), at a swimming school, at gymnastics and therapeutic gymnastics courses in Prague and during classes at the “Sokół” Gymnastic Society in 1865, Wenany further applied to Szkoła Główna Wzorowa [Eng. Main Exemplary School] in Krakow, working as a gymnastics teacher (from October 31, 1866), and later at “Sokół” in Lviv (1867–1869) as a “head teacher of gymnastics” and its head and director. Piasecki believed that the “Sokół” movement would become an impulse to rebuild the biological fabric of the nation and to start fighting for social progress and regaining freedom (taken away by tsarist Russia, Austria and Prussia). In order to better communicate with the exercising persons, in 1867, he published a lexicon entitled Słownictwo gimnastyczne [Eng. Vocabulary of Gymnastics], replacing the German vocabulary with 437 of the most important Polish lexical items. In 1868, he was authorised to teach gymnastics in public schools in Galicia, which he did starting 1869 in the “Orzel Bialy” Gymnastic Society in Krakow. In the years 1869-1873, he was also the host and physician specialist in the field of gymnastics at the TG “Sokół”. He introduced the principles of medical control as well as the assessment of fitness and physical development of students. Candidates had to undergo medical examination, and then, a test of strength and dexterity. These tests were the basis for implementation to the exercises and assignment to the appropriate exercise group. In this way, the activity of W. Piasecki had impact on raising the qualifications of his associates.

In 1871, W. Piasecki began giving lectures on the theoretical foundations of gymnastics and its methodical teaching as an attempt to introduce systematic teaching of gymnastics and pedagogical preparation of future teachers of this subject. The idea was to show the bio-

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logical influence of exercises on the organisms of the participants and, on this basis, to precisely define the content, form and goals of teaching. Initially, he promoted the German gymnastic system modified according to the patterns of the Czech "Sokól". In the 1890s, he became convinced of the benefits related to implementing the Swedish system of treatment with movement. The latter was devoted to the book System Linga w zarysie [Eng. The Linga System in an Outline], published in Lwów in 1912.

Appointed Medizin und Universitätsträger by the University of Lwów (November 20, 1873)42, he also held lectures on theory and gymnastics for candidates of gymnastics teaching specialisations43. In the years 1873–1876, he continued conducting classes at the Lwów "Sokól", and in 1875, he initiated a scientific course for candidates for gymnastics teachers at the University of Lwów, but without success. Courses of this type were organised only in 1895 at the Jagiellonian University. Meanwhile, Wenanty Piasecki opened a gymnasium at on Sławkowska Street in Kraków in 1885. He conducted classes there, among others, on so-called educational and folk gymnastics. In open-air, lessons were conducted on clear days, and on rainy days, in hygienically-appropriate rooms, equipped with state-of-the-art devices. The facility was very popular due to the high qualifications of its manager44. By "folk gymnastics", Wenanty Piasecki understood "the resultant of all types of gymnastics", useful for anyone who wants to perform it. While staying in Kraków from January 1885, W. Piasecki was also one of the co-initiators of the local TG "Sokół". Just before its establishment, he had the essay titled O celach i zadaniach towarzystwu gymnastycznych [Eng. On the Goals and Tasks of Gymnastics Associations] published, as a member of the management board and the host of a dissertation. During this period, he was also the co-founder of "Sokół" in Zakopane (1894).

Eugeniusz Piasecki, after obtaining a certificate to teach gymnastics (1899)45, worked as a gymnastics teacher and school doctor, among others, at Junior High School No. 4 in Lwów (until 1912)46. As his father's ingratiating son, he was eagerly involved in creating sports and recreational societies. In 1904, he organised the Youth Gymnastic Club, transformed into the Gymnastic and Sports Club of Junior High School No. 4 in Lwów (the oldest school sports club), and in 1907, into the Lwów Sports Club - "Pogoń" (chronologically, the 3rd football club in Poland). He was its first president (1907)47. In addition to football48, stick-ball and cricket, track-and-field sports, French boxing, skating, tobogganing, he popularised Swedish gymnastics, scouting49, skiing (organising ski trips outside the city in 1905/1906 for young people or a skiing course under the guidance of Mateusz Zdarski from Liliénfeld, Austria)50. Under the influence of Dr. Prof. Henryk Jordan (1842-1907) – the founder of the first public park in Europe (1889)51 – he contributed to creating the Towarzystwo Zabaw Rachowych [Eng. Society for Movement Games] (1905) in Lwów and the park of this society (1909), as well as the Carpathian Ski Society (1907)52. Working with the Department of Hygiene and Bacteriology at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Lwów (from 1899), he prepared research works, including those on students’ school hygiene, and his habilitation thesis (1909)53 related to the physical and mental development of a student in connection with health and hygiene issues at school and physical education sciences. In further research, he showed a low level of school hygiene in Galicia (poor hygienic and san-

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42 F. Laurentowski, Działalność Wanentego Piaseckiego w Galicji, p. 132.
43 E. Piasecki, Dzieje wywodzenia fizycznego, p. 201.
45 Archives of AWF in Poznań, Certificate L, declaring that Eugeniusz Piasecki, on 28, 29; 30 Jan. 1899, passed the exam for a gymnastics teacher to teach at secondary schools and teachers’ seminars before the Examination Board, Kraków, 31 Jan. 1899. Chairman of the commission, Dr.Henryk Jordan. From 1899, he was active in the Society of Higher and Secondary School Teachers.
46 Archives of AWF in Poznań, Statement of the Presidium c.r. National School Council L. JAK WYZEJ 468, to Eugeniusz Piasecki, deputy teacher of the c.r. Junior High School in Podgórze that J.E. - Minister of Religion and Enlightenment, with a rescript from June 25, 1899, l.13522, appointed him an actual gymnastics teacher at the c.r. Junior High School No. 4 in Lwów on 1 Sep. 1899, Lwów Jul. 23, 1899; Eugeniusz Piasecki, Dzieje kultury fizycznej..., p. 132.
49 R. Wacek, Wspomnienia sportowe..., p. 20.
52 Kronika University of LwówIslamic..., p. 349; R. Wryk, Początki ruchu olimpijskiego w Polsce [Eng. Beginnings of the Olympian Movement in Poland], Poznań 2012, pp. 30-31; K. Toporowicz, Eugeniusz Piasecki (1872–1947)...., pp. 118–120.Title of the work for habilitation: Zdobycze lat ustawień w zakresie walki z chorobami zakaźnymi uściami w szkole [Eng. The Achievements of Recent Years in the Fight Against Acute Infectious Diseases at School]. It concerned the physical and mental development of a student in connection with the health and hygiene issues at school and with physical education sciences. He obtained the degree of a private lecturer and started his activity as an independent scientist. In the papers delivered at sessions, he raised issues related to the hygiene and health of the inhabitants of Lwów, improving the operation of the health service, and increasing funds allocated for sanitation purposes.
53 Kronika University of LwówIslamic II..., p. 349. Obronił ją 9 czerwca, a reskryptem z 26 września 1909 r. Minister Wyznań i Oświecenia zatwierdziła dorobek habilitacyjny E. Piaseckiego na docent prywatnej higieny szkolnej.
itary condition of rooms and the lack of school doctors), physical exercises, theory and methodology of physical education, and the lack of teachers of this subject. Thoughts on scientific journeys (from 1902) to Scandinavian countries (where in 1902–1903 he became acquainted with the Swedish system), Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Denmark, Italy and Great Britain inspired him to deliver papers at congresses: school hygiene incl. in Nuremberg (1904), physical education in London (1907) and Paris (1910, 1913), pedagogical (1909) and anti-alcohol (1912), as well as introducing scouting to physical education classes as a means to enliven lessons. In the years 1909-1918, he lectured on school hygiene and the principles of physical education. Due to the authority and competences of the Professor, he was appointed during the International Congress of Physical Education in 1911 (in Odense, Denmark) to the International Committee of Physical Education (Institution Internationale de l’Education Physique), as a permanent member of the Physical Education Congresses in Brussels and of the Polish section. During World War 1, staying in Kiev from 1915, he organised 10 summer camps for schoolchildren.

After Poland regained independence in 1919, E. Piasecki, as a professor of physical education and school hygiene, took over the chair of school hygiene and physical education at the Piast University in Poznań (renamed the University of Poznań in 1920). Soon, he led to the establishment of the Physical Education College (March 7, 1924) as an independent unit of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Poznań, with the right to award the title – Master of Physical Education. He was its director (until 1939). On his initiative, in 1930, mass physical education was introduced to all universities in Poland (according to American standards), because he wanted to make this subject an important measure of the nation’s physical and moral health, providing it with a theoretical scientific basis. He included them in Zarys teorii wychowania fizycznego [Eng. An Outline of Physical Education Theory] (1931, 1935). On the other hand, by publishing Dzieje wychowania fizycznego [Eng. The History of Physical Education] (in 1925, 1929), he filled a gap in the field of this type of studies in Poland. The scientific journal „Wychowanie Fizyczne” [Eng. Physical Education] published by him (since 1920) comprised high scientific valued, gathering outstanding researchers and practitioners in this area.

Eugeniusz Piasecki also collaborated with various organisations: Institution Internationale de l’Education Physique in Brussels, Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft für Körperliche Erziehung, Comité de Patronage Faculté International de Pédagogie in Brussels, Comité Permanent Internationale des Congrès de gymnastique in Paris and La Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique Ling. In 1927, as a delegate of the League of Nations, he travelled around 14 European countries to conduct research on physical education systems. He also participated in the Olympic Pedagogical Congress in Prague (1929) and in the meeting of physical education experts in Copenhagen (1931), where he presented the results of research on his travels around Europe, and in the meetings of the Scientific Society for Physical Education (Amsterdam-Berlin), and finally, in the International Congress of Physical Education during the Ligniada gymnastics tournament in 1939 in Stockholm.

He was invited to various conferences, e.g. as a member of the Council for Physical Education and Body Culture (1919), the Supreme Council of Physical Education and Military Training (1925), the Scientific Council of Physical Education of the State Office of Physical Education and Military Training (1926). During World War 2, E. Piasecki stayed in Lviv, and later in Kraków. At the end of June 1945, he assumed the position of director of the College for Physical Education in Poznań and, despite being 73 years old, he started working by undertaking a number of organisational and research activities. Sudden death (stroke) on July 17, 1947 prevented him from fully carrying out his plans.

54 S. Ciechanowski, Trzynastoletnie pracy Profesora Piaseckiego [Eng. On the Thirtieth Anniversary of Professor Piasecki’s Work], „Wychowanie Fizyczne” 1930, Ch. XI, z. pp. 3-6.
57 In 1900, at the 4th Congress of Polish Doctors and Naturalists in Krakow, together with Prof. H. Jordan, they led to the establishment of the Physical Education Section. In the Society of Secondary and Higher School Teachers, he co-organised the Physical Education Commission.
62 Archives of AWF in Poznań, Dr. Eugeniusz Piasecki, M.D. - Death certificate for the cemetery board, date of death 17 Jul. 1947 r., time of death 7:30 p.m.. Registry Office in Poznań, 19 Jul. 1947.
Conclusion

Wenanty and Eugeniusz Piasecki made a permanent mark on the development of natural medicine, physiotherapy, hygiene, physical education and sport in Poland at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. They were supporters of treatment in mountain climates. They fought to raise social hygiene and public health. They left behind a significant scientific legacy in the form of monographs, scientific and popular science articles. They were characterised by determination, consistent action, discipline, and both were vegetarians who avoided all stimulants. Their extensive competences gained during their studies and internships at foreign institutions meant that they undertook many activities in various fields. They created university forms of education for physical education. They created core-curriculum for students from Lviv, Kraków and Poznań.

Wenanty, working at facilities propagating natural medicine, with the help of physical exercises, hydro- and solar-therapy, contributed to the improvement of patients’ health, while also increasing awareness of hygiene and health. By conducting classes at gyms, he not only spread the slogan of a healthy mind in a healthy body, but also triggered patriotic feelings in exercisers, intentionally using physical exercises as a proprietary to the liberation of one’s homeland from the occupant’s ties. Among the goals and tasks of gymnastics, he distinguished its hygienic, educational, preventive, healing, utilitarian (especially military) and generally, spectacular values. He further developed knowledge on the correct naming of physical exercises. Eugeniusz Piasecki, who had learned the ways of a proper and healthy lifestyle at home, not only engaged in treatment with the use of movement and various mechano-therapeutic devices to restore previous functions of the body, he also promoted the rules of hygiene at school institutions. As a doctor and physical education teacher, he enriched the school curriculum with the most innovative models, as well as his own concepts of increasing the attractiveness of physical education classes through games and activities, school trips and scouting. He co-organised movement game societies, school sports clubs and sports associations. He was inspired by foreign literature, participation in numerous scientific journeys, meetings with doctors and naturalists. The consequences of his activity were numerous publications on the history and theory of physical education. Thanks to E. Piasecki, Poznań College of Physical Education was the best institution of this type during the interwar period in Poland, representing the highest scientific and didactic levels. His fame radiated not only to Poland, but also to the whole world. This opinion was shared at home and abroad. As the editor-in-chief of the “Wychowanie Fizyczne” [Eng. Physical Education] monthly, he contributed to the publication of the latest research results in the field of physical culture. Many initiatives of E. Piasecki in the area of social hygiene, public health and physical education have been implemented, such as the institution of a school doctor, medical supervision over hygienic devices in schools, education of a group of sports physicians. Wenany and Eugeniusz Witold Piasecki conducted lively scientific activity, contributing to the development of Polish literature in the field of physical education, hygiene and physiotherapy. They co-created modern physical education, theoretical thought about physical education, sport, physiology of movement, school hygiene and scouting, as well as the use of movement games and activities in school practice. In retrospect, we can better see their significance for the development of Polish physical culture.

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