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POLISH STATE RAILWAYS IN 1945–1989 – A RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

Abstract: In the history of Poland after 1945, the functioning of the railway was one of the most important elements of everyday life – great migrations, modernity, commuting to work or holidays, military or employment. The largest transport in history was recorded by the state carrier at the end of the seventies. In reality, however, the activity of PKP was paid for by numerous compromises – outdated rolling stock, organizational structure and network in fact reflecting the beginning of the 20th century, the pursuit of electrification of almost all sections with a limited degree of motorization, mass transport and the abandonment of many potential customers. The aim of the article is to summarize the state of research and indicate questions that will allow to answer the question posed in the title. The inspiration came from the thesis of M. Jarząbek, expressed a few years ago, that the railway in this epoch from a symbol of modernity became an unwanted choice out of necessity.

Keywords: rail transport, transport strategy, profitability studies, passenger transport, coal transport, rolling stock industry, OSJD, Comecon

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INTRODUCTION

It will be a truism to say that without railways it is difficult to imagine the functioning of Poland after 1945. For many years it remained the key means of transport for shorter and longer distances. At the same time, it made possible for the country to be rebuilt after the war [despite its destruction; Dominas P. 2021], it facilitated the transport of domestic and export hard coal, and finally, without it, mass migration activities after World War II would not be possible. Railways in Poland can be viewed in two ways – as an element of state ownership, symbolized by the Polish

State Railways (PKP), and as a part of the economy – then the industrial railway systems (normal and narrow-gauge), preserved after 1945, will be equally important. which have never been part of PKP. Most often, industrial railways did not use the infrastructure belonging to PKP, or only delivered loading to stations adjacent to the public network; therefore, they will not be the subject of the article. The PKP enterprise was formally established in 1926, and after the end of World War II, it was restored to existence in an initially unchanged form. In the period 1945–1989, the legal basis for the company's operation was amended many times[1]. The network existing in Poland also remains of key importance for understanding the functioning of PKP in the period in question. In fact, it is a heritage primarily of the times before the rebirth of Poland in 1918, and therefore of the then legislation and thinking about the role of railways. Significant, despite the limitations [Keller D. 2020a], investments in the interwar period did not eliminate the disproportions in network density between individual regions of the country. The consequence of this is that in the western voivodships [the so-called Regained Territories, Greater Poland, Pomerania and Silesia; Taylor Z., 2004],[2] the railway reached (although in various forms – normal and narrow-gauge, local and long-distance)[3] most of the towns. In Lesser Poland and Podkarpacie there were only longitudinal and latitudinal lines that used the existing geographic conditions and population density (no investments in the interwar period). In the rest of Poland, with the exception of the so-called coal main line along with the Kalety – Podzamcze line connected with it), the reconstruction of the Warsaw Railway Junction, the connection between Kutno and Brodnica or Lublin and Rozwadow dating back to World War I), the legacy of Russian rail policy has been preserved, which was associated with significant

[1] Ordinance of the President of the Republic of Poland of September 24, 1926 on the establishment of the enterprise "Polskie Koleje Państwowe" (Polish State Railway) [Dz.U. 1926 nr 97 poz. 568]; Act of February 26, 1951 on the organization of authorities in the field of communication [Dz.U. 1951 nr 14 poz. 108]; Act of December 2, 1960 on railways [Dz.U. 1960 nr 54 poz. 311]; Resolution No. 189 of the Council of Ministers of May 26, 1961 on granting the statute to the company "Polskie Koleje Państwowe" [M.P. 1961 nr 47 poz. 210, as amended]; The Act of 27 April 1989 on the state enterprise "Polskie Koleje Państwowe" [Dz.U. 1989 nr. 26 poz.138].

[2] One should remember, however, about the actions of the Russians related to the dismantling and removal of lines and industrial plants. Lists of war damages in the rolling stock production industry [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu Taboru…*: file no. 22, 25].

[3] But also *Cztery kilometry do najbliższej stacji kolejowej można przebyć pieszo* – odpowiedź na prośbę z 1953 r. [Labuda G. 2017: 51].

shortcomings. The network was enriched by several very important investments realized after 1945, although with each subsequent year there were fewer of them [the most important ones include CMK and LHS sections; Basiewicz T. et al. 1977; Ciemnoczułowski T. 2009; Massel A., 2004].[4] It means, therefore, that for many people, using PKP services was not an everyday routine.

A few years ago, M. Jarząbek [2015] drew attention to the fact that the perception of railways had changed in this era. Initially, in the hectic phase of post-war migration and reconstruction [until the implementation of the 6-Year Plan; Gehorsam L. 1952] it was officially presented as a symbol of modernity. While at the beginning of the 1970s the construction of the Central Railway Station in Warsaw[5] was sumptuously celebrated, the investment of the Metallurgical and Sulfur Line, already implemented in the second half of the decade, found itself in the eye of strong criticism, and the narrow-gauge lines that were underinvested and overlooked by PKP were either criticized or their role was limited to being tourist attractions. Although a few decades earlier the implementation of the 6-year plan could not be imagined without an effective narrow-gauge railway [assumed increase by 300 km; Jarząbek M. 2015; Gehorsam, L. 1952].

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[4] The most important are the Central Railway Main Line (CMK), Sokółka – Sidra (1961) and Sidra – Kamienna Nowa (December 1963) (direct connection of Białystok with Suwałki), Czerwony Bór – Zambrów, Skierniewice – Łuków, Piotrków Trybunalski – Bełchatów–Zarzecze, Włoszczowice – Chmielów near Tarnobrzeg / Połaniec, Metallurgical and Sulfur Line (currently the Metallurgical and Wide-Gauge Line), Rzeszów – Tarnobrzeg (built in 1919–1971). Some of these activities still refer to projects from the interwar period. The flagship investment was the CMK under construction, the final destination of which, however, was different than originally planned. The line was created as intended for the transport of goods, modern in form and allowing (theoretically) to develop high technical and commercial speeds of trains. Despite the expressed by theorists the need to build a high-speed railway in Poland, passenger trains appeared on it only in 1984. This project was not implemented in its original form (North-South) and was limited to the Zawiercie – Grodzisk Mazowiecki section. Apart from that, of course, numerous smaller investments were undertaken, such as bypasses of junctions, construction of slip roads, modernization and construction of marshalling yards. The list of unrealized projects is provided by Zamkowska S. [1991: 50–2; Koziarski S. [1993: 89, 203].

[5] Meanwhile, the local party authorities spoke only critically about the reconstruction of the Katowice railway station, or rather a freight and passenger station, assessing that the scale of its delay (several years of work) was not only an economic problem, but also a political one [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki ...*, sygn. 301/IV/482, Comments of the Faculty of Economics of the Provincial Committee of the Republic of Poland on the topic "Assumptions for the expansion and modernization of the railway junction in Katowice", Katowice, January 31, 1966: 40–43].

STATE OF RESEARCH AND PERIODIZATION

The historiography of the Polish State Railways after 1945 can be divided into two groups. The first of these are synthetic studies. These include, first of all, the valuable work of Zamkowska S. [1991], the valuable (though based primarily on printed materials, not archives) study by Koziarski S. [1993] and the books by Taylor Z. [2007] and Ciechański A. [2013]. There is still no valuable, contemporary synthesis of this period, which is not replaced by the information published in the latest work of this type [*Dzieje kolei*... 2012]. At the same time, the research conducted by the author of the article allows us to conclude that the actual picture of events and their background in relation to this epoch is far from that present in historiography [Keller D. 2017, 2019, 2020b].

The second group of publications consists of those devoted to specific issues. What is important here is Bartosz Kruk's book about the initial postwar years of railways in Lower Silesia [Kruk B. 2020], Kamil Dworaczek's publication about railwaymen strikes in the 1980s [Dworaczek K. 2020] and a number of scattered articles dealing with selected issues[6]. The book by Grzegorz Labuda is valuable, as he presented the functioning of the railways in the Tri-City during the Stalinist era against the political and social background [Labuda G. 2017]. The situation of the railway in Silesia was described in their synthesis, in many places still valid, by Stanisław Koziarski and Michał Jerczyński [Koziarski S., Jerczyński M. 1992]. The work devoted to the history of the Warsaw-Vienna Iron Road is of a similar nature [Paszke A. et al. 1995]. However, the assessments of the period of the People's Republic contained in them require verification. A good example of such activities is the book by Dominas P. and Przerwa T. [2017], in which the authors show a broad background of the problems of railways in Lower Silesia; It is worth noting that another work published at the same time in the same publishing house repeats the company's narrative without subjecting it to verification [Jensen C., Jerczyński M. 2017]. One cannot forget the work from 1972, created in the year of the jubilee of the Polish railways, although its value for the period after 1945 is relatively small [Pisarski M. 1974], despite many quotes [e.g. Koziarski S. 1993]. It was not until 50 years later that another monograph on the history of

[6] Collected e.g. in the volumes: *Znaczenie kolei…* [2012]; *Sukcesy i porażki …* [2015]; *Piękne, użyteczne…* [2016]; *Państwo wobec kolei…* [2017]; *Węgiel, stal, polityka…* [2018]; *A jednak kolej…* [2019]; *Kolej wobec kryzysów…* [2020].

Polish railways was published, the assessment of which, however, is not unequivocal [Wiścicki T. 2013] and shows rather the real shortcomings of Polish historiography [*Dzieje kolei*... 2012].

The period of the Polish People's Republic also has its place in all studies of shorter and longer railway lines (as well as individual railway junctions), of which, especially in the last two decades, a lot has been created. However, their limitation is largely the source materials used – local press from the era, train timetables, or private archives [Keller D. et al., 2006; Stankiewicz R. 2008; Stankiewicz R., Wieczorek E. 2009; Witkowski R. 2009; Nadolski P. et al. 2010, 2017; Pawłowski J. 2010; Kotlarz G., Pawłowski J. 2014, 2020; Machowski T., Nycz G. 2014; Stankiewicz R., Stiasny M. 2014; Tajchert A. et al. 2014; Garbacik R., 2015; Tajchert A., 2015, 2016; Garbacik R. et al. 2016; Ćwikła M. 2018; Burzykowski R. 2019; Górniak J. et al. 2019]. State archives are very rarely used in them, almost no sources of party or official provenance are used, and the presented opinions tend to be contradictory. The work on the coal main is a notable exception [Kotlarz G. et al. 2008/2017]. A number of these works appear in the form of articles published locally, which significantly limits their availability for researchers, although they should not be depreciated by this. However, in my opinion, much more important is the compilation of the entire history of these routes. This makes it possible to compare, not always carried out by the authors, the functioning of individual sections, systems (e.g. narrow-gauge railways) or districts in a broader perspective. We should note here the work on the Nasielska Narrow-Gauge Railway [Tucholski Z. 2007], the railway in Rybnik [*150 lat kolei*... 2007], the narrow-gauge railway Przeworsk – Dynów [Bożek A., Pokropiński B. 2018] or Warsaw commuter railways [a series of publications by Pokropiński B. 1985, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2020]. Against this background, the monograph of Wrocław narrow-gauge railways [Gołaszewski J. et al., 2010] stands out positively, as it attempts to critically evaluate the state's policy towards narrow-gauge railways in the communist era not so much on the basis of memories, but on the archives gathered in the state archives. A similar assessment should be made of the multi-volume study of narrow-gauge railways in Upper Silesia, the new, much enlarged edition of which has only been announced [Soida K. 1999–2001]. The study on the Walim railway, the declining years of its existence in the post-war period, is equally valuable [Jerczyński M. 2020].

The study inspired by PKP and carried out by its employees also refers directly to the tradition of PKP. The resentments visible in them [Szulc H.

2007] or the mechanical repetition of the content of the company's propaganda information [Zięba H. 1993] do not have a positive impact on their assessment, and using them requires increased criticism. The study created in the Katowice community, which (by duplicating information from the literature) critically assesses the transformations taking place in PKP [Soida K. et al., 1997) is valuable. The situation is similar with the periodically published books on the occasion of successive anniversaries of the railway electrification in Poland [Kuczborski S. 1963; Frontczak F. et al. 1989, 1996; Augusciuk M., Plewako S. 2010]. Their authors (most often from the engineering community) focus on emphasizing the successes, and only between the lines give considerations on the evaluation of the initiatives taken and the comparison of Polish solutions to European and world solutions. Initially, due to political conditions (in relation to those created before 1989), then probably due to the perpetuation of this image, these works require critical reading.

Railway architecture also remains an important element of the research, although there are doubts as to the scale of these works. The texts on the Katowice railway station [Gzowska A. 2012] and the local railway administration office building [Syska A. 2016] are interesting. The publication on Wrocław railway stations [*Wrocławskie dworce*… 2007] is very valuable. Analyzes on the Warsaw Railway Junction are similarly valuable, although they go beyond this topic only [Skalimowski A., Tucholski Z. 2017]. Following this, however, it is necessary to mention the discussions around the protection of railway heritage (mainly architecture, but not only), which still have not developed a uniform strategy with the conservation services, and on the other hand there is no central railway transport museum [Jerczyński M. 2014; Keller D. 2020c].

It is surprising that the state of research on the history of rolling stock is relatively small (despite monographic works). In addition to reliable atlases [Terczyński P. 2011, 2017], there is also a series of publications devoted to traction units, published by the Poznań center (known, among others, from the magazine *Świat Kolei*). The authors of these valuable publications rely primarily on the materials of the PKP enterprise related to the operation of the rolling stock or technical studies. Moreover, they do not know the archives of design offices or the industry union, which causes simplifications or errors in factography [Terczyński P., Ćwikła M. 2019; Kroma R. et al. 2011, 2014]. None of the rolling stock manufacturers of that time (including *Cegielski* in Poznań, *Pafawag* in Wrocław, Fablok in Chrzanów) had a modern historical scientific monograph. Single series of locomo-

tives have been published in the monographs, although their authors focus rather (in relation to the period after 1945) on recording daily traction assignments, relocation, current repairs and cancellation, most often failing to analyze, for example, the suitability of these locomotives for the everyday functioning of the railway or, for example, the importance of steam locomotives for military transport services [Stankiewicz R., Garbarcik R. 2013; Stankiewicz R. 2019; Wiśniewski K., Stankiewicz R. 2020], although a number of publications describing the rolling stock in general are prepared by Bogdan Pokropiński [Pokropiński B. 2007, 2009, 2016; 2020]. The industrial railways are also the least recognized. Against this background, there is a very valuable and verifiable (also based on archives) study on sand railways [Soida K. et al. 2007].

A specific publication is also the cyclically published *Atlas of railway lines* [Korcz P., Pyssa R. 2019; Stiasny M., Stankiewicz R. 2011], based on numerous information from the literature (this corresponds to the geographic method). However, this results in numerous unintentional errors. It is also worth noting the recently published memories of an employee related to the course of electrification of the Polish State Railways [Hanasz M., 2019].

An important element of the analysis of the history of PKP in the post-war period seems to be the periodization of that time, different from the political one. In the historiography to date, two are most often used – either after S. Zamkowska (though only until the end of the 1960s) [Zamkowska S. 1991][7] or after Z. Taylor [2007][8]. It seems, however, that one more periodization could be formulated, based on the analysis of the processes taking place around PKP. The first stage will then be the time of reconstruction and initial, feverish, electrification (and thus the time of the positive view of railway). It ends with the resolution of 1959 [M.P. 1959 nr 96 poz. 508][9], which initiated the process of analyzing the possibility of decommissioning railway lines classified as "redundant" or "unprofitable". The era

[7] Reconstruction (1944–1949), the period of post-war reconstruction of the Polish railways (1950–1955), the period of electrification of the railways with the stagnation of the railway infrastructure (1956–1970), in the face of the broad investment program of the 1970s.

[8] He indicates that the entire era after 1945 can be considered uniform (the period of reconstruction, expansion and post-war modernization), although it distinguishes sub-periods in the process of regression of the railways (the period of war and post-war dismantling – until 1948, and the period of growing competition of car transport). – until 1990).

[9] On the basis of it, for example, in DOKP Wrocław, a number of lines with transports below 1 million brtt km per 1 km of the line were selected [*APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa*… 514: sign. no 15/37; Study of liquidation of unprofitable transport ...: 21–4].

of dualism between the development of mass transport and liquidations that began at that time ended in the mid-1970s (liquidation ceased from 1975) [Keller D. 2019a][10]. Crises (economic, fuel and social) strengthen the real stagnation of PKP, the unobvious symbol of which was the broad, economically unjustified electrification of railway lines (in the original projects it was assumed that electric traction would cover 25% of the length of the network [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu Taboru…*: No. 57, Study entitled *Industry tasks,* 3]) and a visible renaissance of steam traction[11].

REDUCTION OF THE RAILWAY NETWORK

The functioning of railway transport determines the existence of infrastructure, the key element of which are railway lines. The chart shows the length of the railway network in Poland in the period in question. It is worth noting that while it increased (as can be seen on the trend line), these were not large numbers. The sharp increase in the post-war period is most likely due to the nationalization of the narrow-gauge railway network (mainly local government) [Pawłowski J. 2015]. At the same time, this highlights the already signaled problem of network density in the country – the aforementioned few investments did not significantly improve the accessibility of this means of transport. They were important for communication cohesion, the transport of goods, passengers and the army

[10] This was probably done by the letter of the Minister of Communication KE4-0311 / 2/75 of August 7, 1975 [*APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa*… 514: sign. no. 15/40, 1–2].

[11] PKP reported that the decrease in the share of steam locomotives in transport performance in the 1980s amounted to 17.4% in gross tonne kilometers, but at the same time the unit consumption of traction coal increased. It was the result of, inter alia, a significant increase in the share of steam locomotives in shunting traffic, their wear and tear and limited repair possibilities [*ANN, Ministerstwo Komunikacji…*, sign. no No. LIII /4, Annual analysis of the overall activity of Przedsiębiorstwo "Polskie Koleje Państwowe" for 1985, Warsaw 1986: 39]. It is worth quoting a fragment of one of the synthetic studies on the history of railways in the era in question: the meanings of the lines are more differentiated. Electrified ones take over an increasing part of the transport, when the share of secondary lines decreases. The latter should be gradually eliminated for economic reasons, but the high costs of car transport, environmental threats it causes, the lack of own oil deposits, as well as the social pressure of the local population and the authorities encourage the exploitation of scarce lines "[Koziarski S. 1993: 85]. The author gives these theses after the synthesis of the economic geography of Poland from 1989, in some way simultaneously documenting the views of the time.

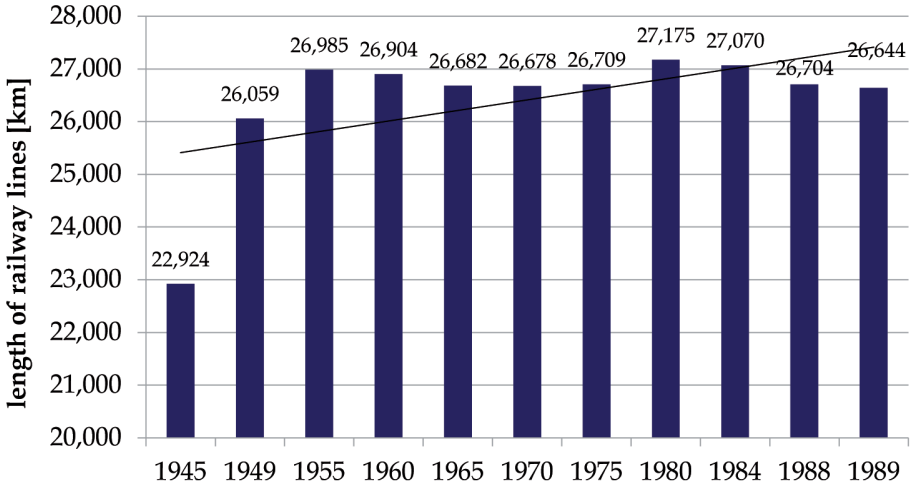

Figure 1. Length of railway lines in Poland in the years 1945–1989[12]

Source: Zamkowska S. [1991: 30, 62, 88, 138, 173]; Keller D. [2020b]; *Mały rocznik statystyczny* [1989: 228; 1990: 199].

(such as the Skierniewice – Łuków section). S. Zamkowska [1991], evaluating the decade of the seventies, wrote about the "high pace of construction of new railway lines", which is visible on the chart only in the second half of this period. It is noteworthy that the length of the network at the end of the epoch reverted to the state of the mid-1970s – therefore this was a period when closures were greater than new openings.

As early as 1959, the network was constantly restricted (based on the aforementioned analyzes; some of the restrictions also affected the process of reconstruction from the war damage, e.g. the reconstruction of second tracks on lines considered less significant or electrification in Lower Silesia was abandoned). The intensification of these activities (except for the immediate post-war period) is in the 1960s and early 1970s; this was revived in the 1980s. Later, the fuel crisis temporarily limited this activity. PKP has consistently emphasized the "unprofitability" of these sections or narrow-gauge rail systems, which was even formally, though little known,

[12] The data provided in the work by Zamkowska S. [1991] are inconsistent with those provided in the annual reports of PKP. Due to the lack of source research for the entire epoch, and at the same time their reliability for the presentation of the processes affecting PKP, it was decided to use them in the article. For the last years of the period under study, the Central Statistical Office data was used as an auxiliary.

sanctioned by the resolution of the "interministerial communication committee" [Tajchert A. 2013; Taylor Z. 2007][13]. This happened despite the repeatedly expressed objections of local enterprises and party authorities (Polish United Workers' Party), and after 1975 also the ministry of communication. This is particularly evident in the case of Upper Silesia [Keller D., 2019a],[14] where PKP marginalized the profitable and important for the local economy (which was emphasized by the local party authorities), narrow-gauge sections, e.g. limiting repairs and hindering their functioning [Halor J. 2020].[15] In turn, in the early seventies in Wielkopolska, PKP declared its readiness to cover the costs of repairing a local road alternative to the railway line. It was a condition of the road carrier (PKS), which was to take over the transport. The cost of this renovation, howev-

[13] The resolution of the „interministerial communication committee" recommended the liquidation of narrow-gauge railways in Poland, but, for example, the Provincial Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Katowice did not agree to its application in the Upper Silesian conditions [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki*…:301/IV/476, Directions of work in combating mismanagement and criminal activity in securing the implementation of the 5-year plan in state transport, Katowice, October 21, 1965, 194–5]. Similarly, it was emphasized that the poor offer of PKS in the vicinity of Hrubieszów meant that the local narrow-gauge railway supplemented the transport needs [*APL, Dyrekcja Okręgowa*….: 3/560, 91]. Being aware of this meant that railwaymen indicated "poor condition of the rolling stock" as an argument for the liquidation of transport. The fact is that the newly manufactured rolling stock in the 1960s suffered from numerous faults, some of which were of serious importance [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu*... 329, passim].

[14] „In 1965, 45 percent. freight transport, and 20 percent. passenger services on the entire PKP network were carried out in the Katowice DOKP". But in local traffic, in a densely populated, urbanized area with a railway network rich, PKP had only 23% of the passenger transport market [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki*…*:* sign. no 301/IV/476, Directions of work in combating mismanagement and criminal activity in securing the implementation of the 5-year plan in state transport, Katowice, October 21, 1965, 189; sign. no 301/IV/427, Program of passenger transport in bus and tram transport in the Katowice voivodship in the years 1964–1967. Synthesis, Katowice (1963), 37]. WPK: 41.1%. tram communication, 14.5% road transport. The total number of passengers in the area between 1960 and 1965 increased from 702 million to 929 million (mobility from 207 to 255), but the railways and trams not only failed to acquire new passengers, but lost existing ones [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki*…, sign. no 301/IV/518, Directions for the development of collective passenger transport in the Katowice voivodeship. A synthesis of the study, Katowice, September 1967, 10−3].

[15] "Lack of economy of this means of transport. DOKP Katowice, interested in a rather gradual liquidation of the narrow track, did not show a proper understanding of the difficult transport situation " [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki*…, sign. no 301/IV/476, Directions of work in combating mismanagement and criminal activity in securing the implementation of the 5-year plan in state transport, Katowice, October 21, 1965, 193–4].

er, was comparable to the cost of a major renovation of the railway line 4 [Keller D. 2019a][16]. The preserved, sparse analyzes prepared by employees of individual area directorates show that the problem of these lines had other sources than just "unprofitability" [*APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa…* sign. no 8/5, Protocol No. 7 from the session of the extended Presidium of DOKP Wrocław on May 18, 1973: 42], but was related to a number of measures limiting the demand and abandoning renovation [see *APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa…*, sign. 15/39 – the case of the Nysa – Kałków Łąka line][17]. In addition, the suspension of transport itself did not directly reduce the costs of PKP – an example can be the line Ścinawka Średnia – Wolibórz. After (!) the passenger traffic was suspended (September 15, 1971), it was proposed to simultaneously dismantle it partially and use it for sidings of nearby enterprises. After several months of analyzes, it was found that their little interest so far does not herald a positive future, so the speed was reduced administratively (to 10 km / h), road posts were liquidated and the need to drive with a pilot was introduced [see *APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa…*, sign. no 15/38]. When the Wrocław management aimed to liquidate the Gryfów Śląski–Lubomierz line, it was argued with low transports (4 pairs of trains, 200 people a day, including 70 monthly tickets), a collision with future road investments and the high cost of the necessary renovation. The above data indicate that this line was suitable for service with low-capacity rolling stock, which, however, was not available in Lower Silesia [*APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa…*, sign. 15/40][18]. Interestingly, the analysis of the potential for the expansion of two short lines departing from Bąkowiec (near Dęblin), undertaken at the same time, showed that the role of railways in this area was significantly limited to the existing lines, and road transport satisfied the transport needs [*APL, Dyrekcja Okręgowa Kolei…*, sign. 3/560,

[16] *APP, Prezydium Wojewódzkiej…*, sygn. 2246 [Letter of the Communication Department of PWRN in Poznań to the Communication Committee of PWRN in Poznań of October 16, 1972: 220−2; Assessment of the advisability of replacing the Jarocin Access Railway by road transport companies: 284−5].

[17] It is an open question to what extent it resulted from PKP treating narrow-gauge and local (former private) lines as less important. This would require an analysis of the company's documents, which has not been carried out so far in Polish historiography. The use of motor carriages by PKP may be symbolic here, as they did not improve the frequency of train traffic, but only (though only partially due to fuel restrictions) limited the costs of transport.

[18] Attention is drawn to the list of trains from 1980 and their timetable, which made it impossible or significantly difficult to use them for commuting to work / school.

Study of the prospective use of the Bąkowiec – Kozienice and Bąkowiec – Wysokie Koło lines and the advisability of a possible extension to Warka and Puławy, 199−232].

RAILWAY AND PROSPERITY

It is worth remembering that, despite many systemic difficulties, the 1950s and 1960s were a time of growing society's dreams about an own car and the progressive development, despite numerous troubles, of bus transport (both municipal and regional) [see e.g. Panków M. 1978; Połom M., Palmowski T. 2009; Dulewicz J. 2016; Wilk H. 2017; Sroka P. 2020].[19] The lack of railways in many places did not give the inhabitants an alternative. The key moment was, it seems, the first half of the seventies (although symptoms of this had already been seen before).[20] And while in political and social life it was potentially the "best" time in the entire epoch, it paradoxically contributed to a change in the role of railways.

At that time, the state allowed private persons to own cars on a larger scale than before (in 1975 there were 30 cars per 1,000 inhabitants, in 1980 it was already 65; *Rocznik statystyczny województw…* 1982: 272). Along with the increase in the number of inhabitants, the number of trips also increased. But most of this market was taken over by the car. Moreover, M. Jarząbek is right and the considerable scale of negative comments on the functioning of the enterprise should be noted, e.g. at the end of the 1960s [see e.g. Drobny I. 1970; js 1970, about bribery of conductors; Jaworski T. 1970, again about bribery; Kołodziejczyk T. 1971]. The system change made it easier for customers to resign from overcrowded, dirty, late trains to a tight and own car, or even to a bus. Both these processes can be seen perfectly in the presented charts. Interestingly, the trend lines plotted give

[19] In the agglomeration conditions of Upper Silesia, the party authorities planned to use even industrial railways for passenger transport, but PKP did not want to be a partner in such activities [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki...*, sign. no 301/IV/518, Protocol No. 19 from the meeting of the executive of the Voivodeship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Katowice on 3 October 1967, 3].

[20] *ANN, Komitet Centralny…*, sign. no 237/IX-173, 2: "The current condition of the PKP network's equipment with security and communication devices [securing railway traffic – D.K.] and communication cannot be considered satisfactory. It should be taken into account that the existing transport reserves of certain nodes or stations are being gradually exhausted. In a number of cases, this exhaustion has already occurred or will occur in the near future."

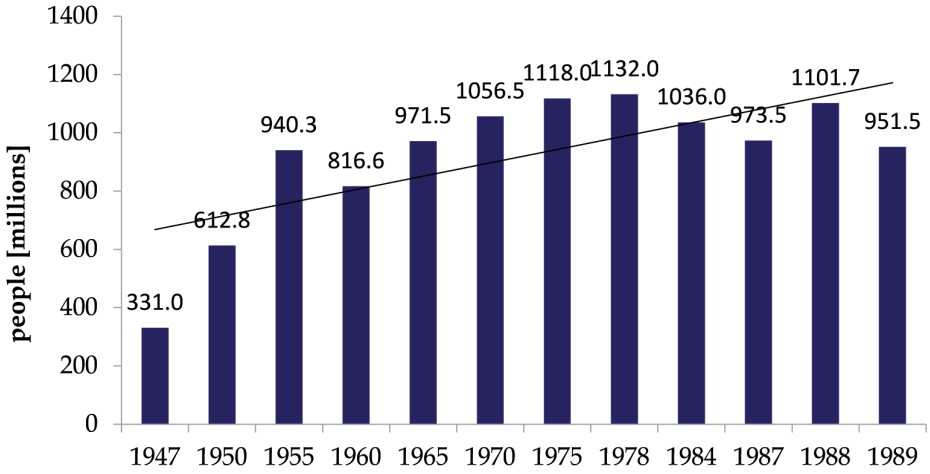

Figure 2. The volume of passenger transport in millions of people in the years 1947–1989

Source: Zamkowska S. [1991: 43, 74, 114, 156, 170]; *ANN, Ministerstwo Komunikacji...* [No. LIII/4, Annual analysis of PK''s operations for 1987: 3]; *Mały rocznik...* [1989: 231; 1990: 199].

the wrong picture of continued gains. Only a comparison of the economic environment shows the actual situation. Moreover, the increase in the number of travelers in 1988 is the result of adding passengers using free tickets.

In fact, the number of travelers, reported in 1988, was supposed to be 983.7 million. It was a slight improvement in the situation, but it was not possible (even such analyzes were not undertaken) to assess it positively – internal railway and party analyzes indicated a permanent decrease in the number of passengers. The data from 1989 confirm the scale of the decrease in transport.

The situation was even worse in the case of the transport of goods. After a surge in the seventies, there was a crash. In the crisis years 1980–1981, PKP boasted that it could finally meet the needs of customers because it had a sufficient number of wagons [Keller D. 2020b]. The 1980s consolidated the transport crisis of PKP in the most important category – the transport of goods.

It is worth comparing the above data with the number of statistical trips per capita. On the one hand, this brings about a steady increase in this value, but also a slight slump at the end of the seventies. In the middle of the next decade, customers chose PKP with the frequency of the early

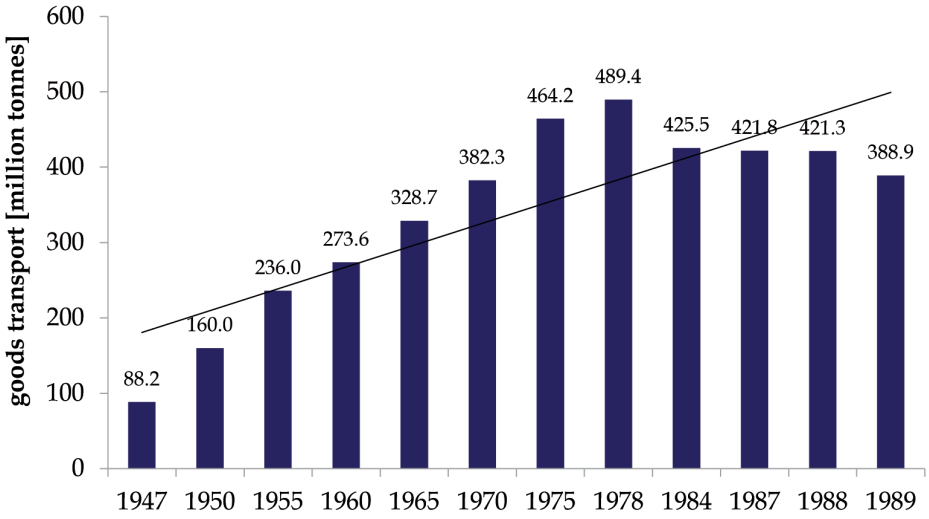

Figure 3. PKP goods transport in million tonnes in the years 1947–1989

Source: Zamkowska S. [1991: 43, 70, 110, 149, 169]; *ANN, Ministerstwo Komunikacji...* [No. LIII/4, Annual analysis of the PKP enterprise for 1987: 16]; *Mały rocznik...* [1989: 232; 1990: 199].

1960s. This may mean either a bad PKP offer, or the use of bus or individual transport (despite restrictions in access, e.g. to fuel). Perhaps it was influenced by the progressive decapitalization of the network, which resulted in a decrease in the average commercial speed of express trains from 70.7 km/h in 1965 to 63.4 km/h in 1980, or long-distance passenger trains from 43.5 km/h up to 41.7 km/h [Zamkowska S. 1991: 157].

Table 1. Number of rail journeys per capita in Poland in selected years

Year	Population	Number of travels per year
1950	25,008,000	24.50
1960	29,776,000	27.42
1970	32,642,000	32,37
1978	35,061,000	32.28
1984	37,003,000	28.00

Source: as in Figure 3; *Historia Polski...* 1994: 174–5; *Statistical Yearbook 1985*, p. 36; author's calculations.

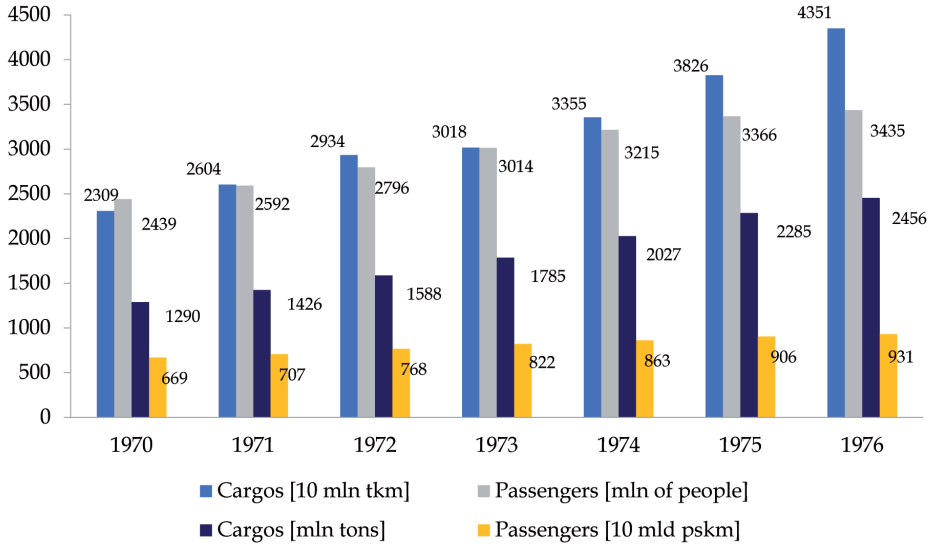

Figure 4. Passengers and cargo transported by PKP in the first half of the seventies
Source: Zamkowska S. [1991: 147].

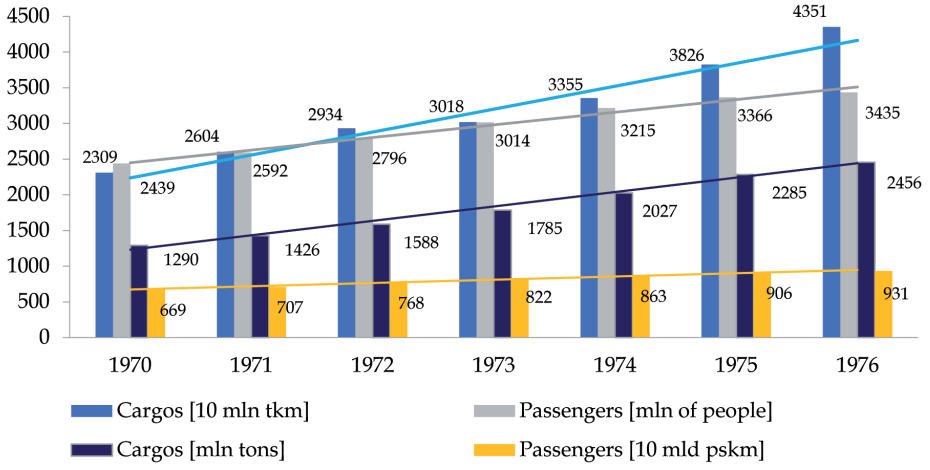

Figure 5. Growth dynamics of cargo and passenger transport by PKP in 1970–1973
Source: Zamkowska S. [1991: 147].

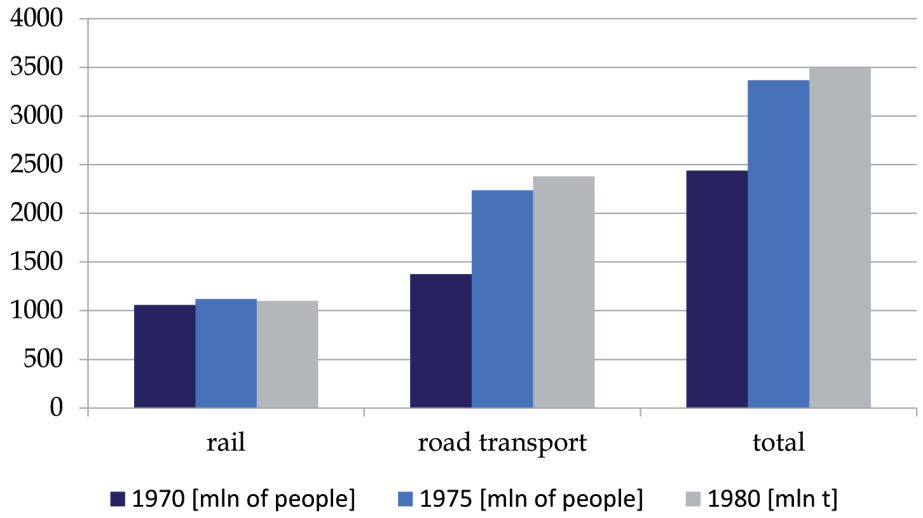

Figure 6. Comparison of the dynamics of growth in rail and road transport
Source: Zamkowska S. [1991: 148].

Figures 4–6 show constant increases in both passenger and freight transport carried out by PKP in the first half of the seventies. But their dynamics is not very high, especially when compared with the growing importance of road transport. Although these data relate only to "socialized" communication, even here the railroad reflected the market. The inclusion of private cars in these statistics will make this leap even greater. These charts also show that the key moment in the PKP crisis was the first decade of the 1970s. It was then that the party analysts' predictions that the railway, which had been underinvested for decades, would no longer be efficient in terms of communication began to materialize. And the increase in transport needs of the society and the economy required an urgent response. At that time, they could not give it to PKP – the open question is why it was so? Was it solely due to the underinvestment mentioned above? The existing historiography of the topic does not answer this question.

CAUSES OF THE CRISIS

The studies conducted so far indicate that an important element of the loss of PKP's position has become the focus on mass transport, especially coal, even at the expense of passenger traffic or other transported cargo[21]. At the same time, paradoxically, it was related to the systemic pursuit of sidings and the carrier pushing smaller customers to road transport (to facilitate mass transport and to reduce sections with small transports)[22]. The resolution of the Council of Ministers (No. 175/77) assumed that, for example, in the Silesian DOKP in Katowice, steam traction would be eliminated by 1985, the demand for mass transport would be fully covered [which was achieved only thanks to the crisis in the early 1980s; Keller D. 2020b] or, in general, very generally described, increasing the capacity of nodes in the Katowice agglomeration [Dziadek S. 1983] – in reality, however, these were plans impossible to be realized [Wielgus M. 1976].

What other causes of this situation can be identified? Apart from the external ones, it seems that PKP pursued an erroneous policy of activity. As a result of decisions which, in the light of the weaknesses of historiography, background and justification, we do not know, PKP decided to electrify its network[23]. It was followed by modernization of the entire infrastructure (construction of second tracks [e. g. Rybnik – Żory – Pawłowice

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[21] This was the situation throughout the epoch. At the same time, the priority export of coal meant that it was also delivered on Sundays, which had negative and long-term economic effects [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki …*, sign. no 301/IV/411, Letter from the Minister of Mining and Energy to Deputy Prime Minister P. Jaroszewicz, Katowice, October 29, 1962:. 26–7; sign. no 301/IV/427, Program of passenger transport in bus and tram transport in the Katowice voivodship in the years 1964–1967. Synthesis, Katowice 1963, 33–4]. It is very clearly visible on the example of the Piła voivodship. In the mid-1970s it was written that the lack of covered wagons limited the possibility of exporting local products, and the fodder factory in Gołańcza even stopped production; similarly, Zakłady Wyrobów Blaszanych "Predom-Wromet" in Wronki was not able to deliver the produced gas cookers "for export and for the market" [*APP OP, Polska Zjednoczona...*, sign. no 346, sign. no 418: 2–3]. PKP delivered less than 50% of the ordered wagons [*APP OP, Polska Zjednoczona...*, sign. no 418: 4–6].

[22] This was the case even at DOKP Katowice [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/573, Information on the preparation of DOKP Katowice for the winter of 1970/1971: 29].

[23] It is worth noting that as early as 1967 it was estimated that the steam locomotives would be replaced by diesel locomotives. The problem, however, was the lack of medium and heavy locomotives at the time [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/518, Protocol No. 19 from the meeting of the executive of the Voivodeship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Katowice on 3 October 1967: 2].

Śląskie), modernization of stations, increasing capacity; Bogdaniuk B. 1988; see: Frontczak F. at al. 1996; *Elektryfikacja…* 1974]. It was understandable with the relative availability of hard coal supplying power plants and with the necessity to purchase fuel for diesel locomotives and railcars. At the same time, however, it showed the limitations of the Polish railways at that time. The Polish industry was not able, despite multiple political decisions and numerous attempts [Kroma R. et al. 2011: 208−9; Keller D. 2019a; Bereszyński Z. 2017][24], to build a large-series motor car or (for many years) medium and high-power diesel locomotives, which resulted in the fact that, for example, in the years 1965–1970 of the planned deletions of 1,900 steam locomotives, only 800 were actually realized [Keller D., 2021a; *APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu*…, sign. no. 75: 21−2, Continuous delays in the implementation of individual projects should also be added, related to, inter alia, with delayed deliveries of components; *APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu*…, sign. no. 200: 6].

This meant that Poland was forced to import such rolling stock (from the USSR, Hungary, Romania[25]), which was attempted to be balanced with the export of e.g. freight or passenger carriages[26]. This means that Poland imported products requiring complex technological processes, and exported products that were much simpler in terms of design and construction. Moreover, PKP did not undertake the purchase of Czechoslovakian motor coaches of the M152 type (series 810 and derivatives), proven and used until today, prolonging the technical negotiations [Kroma R. et al. 2014; Nigrin T. 2017; Flade F. 2019; Małachowski K. 2006; *APP, Zjednoczenie*

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[24] Description of tests in passenger traffic of the WOA-29 draisine and acceptance of the SN81- wagon on April 4, 1989, 001, i.e. a modification of this draisine. Interestingly, the prototype was tested in the Silesian DOKP, despite the fact that such rolling stock had not been operated here for many years. It was probably due to the proximity of the manufacturer.

[25] Emergency import was envisaged in one of the analyzes only until the end of the 70s [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…,* sign. no 57: "Tasks of the industry", 26].

[26] See: *APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…* [sign. no 33: 20]. It concerns, inter alia, o steam locomotives to the USSR and India, a freight car for Mozambique or passenger carriages mainly to the USSR (various types and types). The export of traction vehicles was incidental (apart from the aforementioned steam locomotives); as the representatives of the „Kolmex" company explained due to the lack of goods in line with expectations and competition from other Comecon countries [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…,* sign. no. 211: 3, 12–3, 31]. It was assessed that the exported products were technically backward, and therefore less attractive, and in addition with numerous disadvantages (very critical opinions from Romania and the USSR). See: *APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…* [sign. no 63], K. Kamienobrodzki, T. Rutecki [1967].

Przemysłu…, sign. no. 483, Protocol from the meeting of the "Rolling Stock" Working Group of the Polish-Czechoslovak Committee for Economic and Scientific and Technical Cooperation on April 10–12, 1979][27].

Perhaps the explanation for this may be an erroneous and variable strategy for the development of rail transport in Poland (which can be seen in the divergent analyzes of rolling stock production, based on PKP conclusions, suggestions of Comecon and Ministry authorities). When the Polish industry was delaying the delivery of locomotive prototypes, attempts to purchase a license for the production of locomotives (the source did not provide information on specific series of rolling stock) produced by FIATA or Alstom were unsuccessful, the aforementioned decisions were made to purchase rolling stock in the USSR and Romania[28]. Electric locomotives were also initially produced under a license (Contractors Committee, series EU06, then EU07 and derivatives[29]), and the Soviet WL 22M (ET21) locomotive modernized in Poland was assessed by the design office as too heavy and too slow for passenger traffic [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…*, sign no. 33: 29−30]. An important stage in the functioning of the rolling stock production industry was also specialization within Comecon, which to some extent responded to the weaknesses of the Polish industry, but it cannot be considered that it generated them [*APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…*, sign no. 476−478].

The aforementioned technical limitations of the railway network had their background in the dangerous process of abandoning renovation and operation of individual sections. Symptomatic is the frequent use of mixed trains (at the same time being a real evidence of the level of passenger and freight traffic on a given section), launching the so-called alibi-zugs (i.e.

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[27] It was assumed that the contract was signed urgently (by May 31, 1979) and deliveries in 1981–1982. This shows the rolling stock situation of PKP, on the other hand, the purchasing decision system – there was no PKP representative in the committee. However, it is not true that the bilateral relations within Comecon or OSJD were completely correct. However, it should be remembered that the mere purchase of such rolling stock could not strengthen the position of local lines.

[28] *APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…*, sign no. 115, Letter from the Minister of Heavy Industry to the director of the Union of the Rolling Stock Industry of May 8, 1964; A copy of the letter from the director of the MPC electro-machinery department to the Union of the Rolling Stock Industry of December 21, 1963, no. The idea was to purchase a license for a 1700 HP CoCo diesel locomotive with an electric transmission.

[29] *APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu…*[sign no. 33: 31], already at that time, it was planned to use the knowledge gained in obtaining a license to build a locomotive with a capacity of 4260 KM (type 7E, later 201E, series ET22).

the negligible movement of passenger trains, e.g. on the Nysa – Kałków Łąka line[30]), i.e. the entire "systemic" maladjustment of passenger train timetables to the needs of travelers (the use of long-distance trains in local traffic, which was usually overcrowded and delayed; Labuda G. [2017]; Keller D. [2017])[31]. This process can be seen especially when comparing the operation of railways in several regions of Poland with a comparable network density, but with a different social composition and economic life – in the area that before 1922/1945 belonged to Germany and the rail network was built there mainly on the basis of local legislation.

TOWARDS THE HERITAGE

Reading the party documents shows that in Upper Silesia, when analyzing the communication needs of the economy and society, railroad was at the first place. Its disadvantages and limitations were noticed (e.g. failure to keep up with the existing railway network and train traffic for the construction of new housing estates, therefore necessarily operated by buses[32], total unpreparedness for the most important investment of the entire

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[30] *APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa*… [sign. 15/39 – the case of the Nysa – Kałków Łąka line]. In 1973, traveling 17 km took 1.5 hours, the movement of trains depended on the circulation of the train, 2 pairs of passenger trains were launched.

[31] The very process of creating the timetable was already very complicated then. Passenger-pro-passenger initiatives were put forward by, for example, party authorities, demanding a modern agglomeration movement (every 10/20 minutes in the Upper Silesian diameter), which was possible only after the construction of a separate track. However, it never happened, although the traffic was introduced with such frequency (successfully) in the second half of the seventies [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki*…, sign. no 301/IV/518, Directions for the development of collective passenger transport in the Katowice voivodeship. A synthesis of the study, Katowice, September 1967: 16; *APK, Śląska Dyrekcja*…, sign no. 2/74: 7]. In the 1980s, an approx. 30% tariff discount and mass sale of tickets in vending machines were also introduced [*APL, Dyrekcja Okręgowa*…, sign. no 3/4, Protocol No. 9/71 of the extended session of the Presidium of DOKP, held on October 6, 1971: 69].

[32] The analysis sent in February 1963 by the Ministry of Communications to the first secretary of the KW PZPR in Katowice, Edward Gierek, is symptomatic here. The Economic Department of the Polish United Workers' Party established a commission headed by Tadeusz Pyka, which did not leave a "dry thread" on the study, stigmatizing key errors [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki*…, sign. no 301/IV/411, Notes to the synthesis of the transport and investment study of Upper Silesia (main directions of modernization of DOKP Katowice in perspective) prepared by the Central Center for Research and Development of Railway Technology in Warsaw, Katowice, March 1, 1963: 85–9]. It was noted that the analysis was based on incomplete, outdated data. In a very extensive study (over 300 pages),

epoch in this area, i.e. the construction of the Rybnik Coal District[33]), but it was the key to functioning of this area. This explains why the design of the Regional Traffic Railway and the Diametrical Road Route were started at the same time – they had the same significance [Keller D., 2017].

On the other hand, in the Piła region, despite the similar density of the existing infrastructure, in the transport analyzes, the railway had a limited importance in (especially local) passenger traffic, and in freight traffic, customers considered alternative means of transport to themselves. The existing infrastructure was used sparingly and in a way that was not fully understood. Moreover, one has the impression that the opportunity it gave was not used. It is true that even in the 1950s the timetable was consulted with workplaces, but also PKP did not treat this region as a priority[34]. This is perfectly visible on the example of the content of the executive sessions of the local Provincial Committee of the Polish United Workers'

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only modernizations were announced, but no extensions or reconstructions were planned. An analysis of the types of traction used in Upper Silesia has not been undertaken, most likely assuming the achievement (through electrification of the main line) of the assumed technical goals. Passenger traffic was treated marginally, without indicating where the number of trains should be increased. Meanwhile, already then, passenger trains had to be liquidated so that, in the existing traffic conditions, it was possible to start up new freight trains. The study is considered one-sided, does not have the required arrangements and marginalizes the use of sidings and groupage transport.

[33] Road transport, which was built on the investment, crossed local roads. PKP did not have any investment plans prepared, and the first steps were taken only 10 years after the construction of the ROW began [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/406, Annex to the assumptions and preliminary concept of the regional plan of the Rybnik Coal District for the years 1961–1980: 36; *APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/355, Report on the implementation of the investment in Rybnik Okręg Węglowy, Katowice, July 20, 1960: 25–6; *APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/374, Protocol No. 6 from the session of the Executive of the Polish United Workers' Party in Katowice held on March 30, 1961: 4; *APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/352, Information on rail transport tasks in the years 1961–1965, Katowice 1960: 65].

[34] *APP OP, Prezydium Miejskiej…*, sign. no 463: 90–1, 93–8. A curiosity is the letter from the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party Committee in Piła to Janusz Kamiński, Deputy Minister of Transport, about replacing the steam locomotives used so far in shunting traffic at the Piła station and the steaming city center with two medium-power diesel locomotives (1500 t) [*APP OP, Polska Zjednoczona* sign. no 418: 20–1]. In the report on the transport situation after the creation of the Piła voivodeship, it was written (although in the context of PKS communication) that, for example, from Okonek to Piła (approx. 50 minutes by car), trains departed at 6.19, 9.50, 12.48, 16.51 and 21.20, back on 1.17, 2.30, 4.00, 5.49, 8.01, 14.32, 18.32 and 19.30. *APP OP, Wojewódzka Rada …* [sign. no 128: 15, Travel to work and school was therefore only theoretical or very time-consuming. Other more important towns]; *APP OP, Wojewódzka Rada …* [sign. no 128: 14–18. The situation is even worse in the case of Wałcz (around 25 by car): to Piła 6.30, 12.40, 3.15, 18.01,

Party. For example, when in 1977 the program to improve passenger communication was discussed, only PKS was analyzed [see Taylor Z. 2007; *APP OP, Polska Zjednoczona*…, sign. no 76: 72−90][35]. The situation is not improved by the incidental situation when rail was cheaper in this area than PKS and it was chosen as a freight carrier [*APP, Komitet Powiatowy*…, sign. no 34: 4−5][36]. In terms of the scale of transport, the situation here was paradoxically similar to the vicinity of Kielce, where there were fewer railway lines [Dulewicz J. 2016; Labuda G. 2017][37].

The Lower Silesian example is even more significant. It is worth mentioning here the data indicated by Tomasz Przerwa. He pointed out that already in the interwar period, some sections of the railway network did not generate sufficient income in Lower Silesia [Jerczyński M., Przerwa T. 2007]. The change in the socio-economic situation after 1945 did not significantly change the way the railways were used. Despite the population changes (migrations, birth rate), the offer addressed to travelers could not arouse their interest. The rail journey was long and did not allow commut-

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23.28, from Piła 2.47, 6.20, 11.50, 14.17, 19.04. Ibid., P. 24. In 1975, Ujście had 15.5 pairs of bus connections and two pairs of railway connections].

[35] Interestingly, the PKS was assessed similarly to the railway station in Upper Silesia. It is true that Z. Taylor gives examples of European conditions of the decline in the rail network (e.g. in Ireland, related to the decline in population, the lack of heavy industry, or restrictions on transit traffic). It is possible to refer to the conditions for the so-called Recovered Territories, but it requires in-depth research. Similarly, when the preparation for servicing tourist traffic in the Piła voivodship was analyzed, in 1976 the use of PKP was not assumed [*APP OP, Wojewódzka Rada*…, sign. no 128: 80–3].

[36] Symptomatic is the almost complete absence of the railway topic during the meetings of the Municipal Economy, Communication and Communications Committee of the WRN in Piła in the 1980s. Perhaps this is the effect of limiting the powers of these authorities, but this lack is incomprehensible [*APP OP, Wojewódzka Rada*…., sign. no 137, passim].

[37] Dulewicz J. states that over 105 thousand 28,000 people commuting to work in 1973 in the Kielce Voivodeship traveled by rail with monthly tickets. people (approx. 26%), and additionally approx. 6.5 thous. with 32 thous. youth commuting to schools (20.31%). As in Piła, bus communication was the most important here as well. It is noteworthy that the party authorities did not adjust timetables to the needs of employees (surveys for some workplaces revealed that the travel time to Kielce for a distance of approx. 20 km was from 2.5 to 3.5 hours), which resulted in frequent employees being late even up to 1 hour in winter. In 1980, there were 1,600 km of railway lines in the Katowice voivodeship (24.1 km / 100 km2), in the Piła voivodeship 826 km (9.9 km / 100 km2), Wrocław voivodeship 777 (12.4 km / 100 km2), Kielce voivodeship 798 (8.7 km / 100 km2). Meanwhile, the number of bus stops in voivodships in 1980 amounted to: Katowice 1645 (61 / km of regular line), Piła 957 (40.1 / km), Wrocław 882 (49.5 / km) and Kielce 1727 (55.7 / km) [*Rocznik statystyczny województw*… 1982: 266–7, 270].

ing / returning to work / school [Herma J. 1966]. A similar phenomenon also took place in Upper Silesia, where since the 1970s reports indicated a decreasing number of travelers using season tickets[38].

A SERIES OF PROBLEMS WITHOUT A SOLUTION

The economic effects of the suspensions were not analyzed. It was found that, for example, the liquidation of the Giżycko-Kruklanki section (the deficit in the 1980s was estimated at about PLN 28 million) resulted in losses of PLN 48 million in the economic environment of railways. It is also worth paying attention to the conduct of repairs – especially in the 1980s, there were cases where the renovation took several years (Skoki – Janowiec Wielkopolski – 10 years!), Or months without replacement transport (e.g. Głubczyce – Pietrowice) [Dychtowicz A., 2001].

As already noted, the loss of the market was partially the fault of PKP. It was in some way connected perhaps also with the generational change – the pre-war generation was retiring, and the new generation was quite demanding[39]. The earnings at PKP at that time were not the highest. The visible excess of employment (or better: excess of employment needs) meant that the costs of railway operation were considerable[40]. The prestige of the railwayman's work also decreased and the young generation was not interested in difficult work in such financial conditions [Keller D. 2017; Dworaczek K. 2020; Przybyszewski J. 2021][41].

At least from the second half of the seventies, although the symptoms of this process were already visible earlier, the investments were also stalled, limiting them only to the most necessary (also politically – the aforementioned LHS) or significant for the functioning of PKP (construction of pris-

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[38] In 1987, 50% of the total [*APK, Śląska Dyrekcja…*, sign. no 2/75: 6]. Even in 1981, it was 63.52% [own calculations based on *APK, Śląska Dyrekcja…*, sign. no 2/71: 6].

[39] It is worth remembering that passenger train timetables were arranged not so much in relation to the needs of travelers, but to the work of railway units to which employees were transported, or the circulation (and thus working hours) of rolling stock and railwaymen.

[40] An important element of the cost structure, although not included in the reports, was free travel for railwaymen and their families. In a way, this compensated for the low wages.

[41] An interesting light on the greatest catastrophe after 1945 is provided by Przybyszewski J. [2020]. He argues that one of the causes of the catastrophe at Otłoczyn was to be a dispute between an older and a younger worker.

ons, whose prisoners were employed by PKP; Keller D., 2021b)[42]. The pace of electrification was suspended and slowed down, and current renovations were also limited [Keller D. 2020b].

The constantly growing transport (in absolute numbers) lulled the vigilance of the administration – if it was good, everyone wanted to use the railway, there were problems with the lack of rolling stock for forming trains with export (and domestic) coal – i.e. the railway performed its tasks well. Departmental awards and decorations kept that thinking. The problems were outside – in unscrupulous contractors holding the wagons, in passengers who, during the "exchange of stays", found themselves in the trains, and then complained to the press about the disastrous travel conditions or the striking railwaymen.

The railway at that time tried to solve its problems by reorganizing the administration. And these were permanent actions throughout the epoch. Each idea worked for a maximum of several years. Such a gigantic company, basically bureaucracy, couldn't bear it. The new ideas were supposed to be a remedy (e.g. introducing the system of District Directorates similar to the Soviet system – that is, combining all services in the field under one manager), after a few months (!), dismantling began, and after a few years it was withdrawn [Keller D. 2017][43].

The military had a bearing on the shape and functioning of PKP (although there is no comprehensive research on this issue). This applies to a number of military but also useful investments, the scale of military involvement in the reconstruction or construction of railway lines, maintenance (or improvement) of technical accessibility (passability) of individual lines [e.g. additional slip roads and strategic detours branched, at the request of the army, from the routes, and not a station; Tucholski Z. 2009: 71], although the literature contains information that in the years 1955–1987 the army "participated" in the construction of 1,290 km of lines, 300 km of station tracks and sidings, 567 bridges and viaducts [Nowacki K.,

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[42] Ultimately, PKP had 9 prisons [*APK, Śląska Dyrekcja…*, sign. no 2/74: 104]. In addition, only in one of the directorates, PKP had three laundries, a sparkling water factory, eight tailor's shops and three shoemakers [*APK, Śląska Dyrekcja…*, sign. no 2/75: 180–1].

[43] He points out that party analyzes criticized, for example, the functioning of 14 equivalent managers of executive units at the station in Gliwice. Railwaymen found themselves poorly in this system, and for customers it was probably even more complicated [*APK, Komitet Wojewódzki…*, sign. no 301/IV/563, Information on the existing organizational structure and management in the line units of DOKP Katowice and proposed changes in this regard: 134].

2012: 95; Mielcarek A. 2013: 205]. The military doctrine of the USSR and Poland in the field of the use of railways is known, as well as military organizational structures [the Military Communication Board of the Border Guard, later the military communication service, Military Communication Units at military districts, Military Headquarters of Railway Stations and Railway Sections Headquarters subordinate to the Head of Railroad Transport at individual DOKP, and finally the Military Headquarters of Reloading Regions on the borders; Mielcarek A. 2013: 203]. This also includes striving to maintain, on the Soviet model, an "iron" stock of locomotives in case of war (out of necessity, due to significant delays in the supply of diesel locomotives, mainly steam locomotives – additionally, it was planned to use ST44 locomotives for this purpose (imports from the USSR) [Tucholski Z. 2009: 101−2, 2020; Nowacki K. 2012; Mielcarek A. 2013: 210−11)[44].

The issue of bilateral relations between the countries of the communist bloc remains an issue that requires urgent research. The findings of Tomas Nigrin indicate that difficult economic relations (it was about transit settlements and the export of coal from Poland via Czechoslovakia) influenced the decisions and functioning of the railways also in local and internal traffic. For example, as a result of Polish pressure, the Czechs cleared access to the railway tunnel in Łupków, while the Czechs lobbied very intensively against the changes in the Montraux Transit Convention favorable for Poland (but unfavorable for themselves) [Nigrin T. 2017].

CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Despite significant transport, a relatively long railway network, due to the lack of significant (more broadly than electrification) development activities and failure to solve the "problem" of local lines, e.g. through motorization, progressing technical backwardness and a decrease in transport (greater than the scale of the crisis in the 1980s), PKP after 1989, when

[44] The study by Tucholski Z. [2009: 101−2, 2020] does not answer this question. Certainly, however, military factors influenced the introduction of security related to the liquidation of the line. From 1975, the condition for obtaining approval for the suspension of transport was to ensure that the technical condition was maintained by PKP "in a condition enabling train traffic in the event of such a need" [*APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa…*, sign. no 15/40: 3–4].

faced with the market economy, underwent a dramatic crisis [Keller D. 2021b; Lijewski T. 2006].

The presented facts from the history of PKP after 1945 make us ask important questions. The answer to them will allow us to depart from the image of the Polish railways created by publications from the era, issued with the funds or with the participation of the carrier (such as, for example, studies on electrification). What role was the railroad to play in Poland's economic and social policy? Did its "golden times" last until the end of the sixties or the seventies (depending on the criterion we adopted), because the state limited individual motorization, and coal was the basic export good? To what extent did the views of party economists translate into decisions made at the Ministry of Communications? How independent were the directors of PKP in relation to the ministry or the party? To what extent did the PKP authorities shape their functioning – the disputes in Upper Silesia and Greater Poland show the discrepancy between local needs and the global, in many cases schematic, thinking of the railway administration. What impact did the arrangements made under Comecon have on the weakness of the Polish rolling stock industry? The current state of research, reading the preserved sources, leads to the conclusion that the specialization pursued by the organization, in these conditions, meant that the production of traction vehicles was directed to other countries – after all, in the 1960s Poland imported engines for diesel locomotives, and the idea of obtaining a license from Western Europe was to limit the more expensive imports. It was easier to sell finished products inside the block than to observe the implementation of delayed projects. The "white spot" of Polish historiography is the cooperation of PKP within the OSJD based in Warsaw (Organization for Cooperation of Railways). I believe that we can also say about the unused opportunity to use the wealth potential of the railway network on the so-called Recovered Territories. Destroyed as a result of hostilities, and then technically neglected, with negligible (or unnecessary) transports, in a changed economic and social environment – it showed its redundancy with each successive year. And the Polish State Railways perpetuated this situation with its passivity. The answer to some of the above questions may be the analysis of financial resources (including those related to the freezing of passenger tariffs between 1959 and 1983). However, numerous sources from various regions of Poland show that PKP itself was not the most-chosen carrier, and in the situation of further restrictions and focus on the transport of bulk goods, and the related difficulties in the transport of other goods, the most faithful customers

resigned from the services of the railways. The relationship between the military and railroads remains an open question, going beyond what has been agreed so far. On what scale did the military influence civilian investments or the everyday functioning of PKP? Perhaps this is how the condition for the admissibility of suspending transport on railway lines, introduced in the mid-seventies (maintaining the passability) should be read. It should also be remembered that the railway throughout Europe was experiencing a crisis at that time – but it had its source in the popularization of the automotive industry (including individual transport) – in this sense, it fully affected PKP only after 1989. in the cited analyzes, however, the existing constraints (economic, political, technical?) meant that the postulated necessary changes (new investments, focusing on agglomeration traffic, increasing speed (also in freight traffic) and travel comfort) were not implemented in a timely manner. In this sense, PKP has certainly not fully used its potential.

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AAN – Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie
APK – Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach
APL – Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie
APP – Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu
APP OP – Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu, Oddział w Pile
APW – Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu

ANN, Komitet Centralny Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej w Warszawie, sygn. 237/IX-173.

ANN, Ministerstwo Komunikacji, zespół nr 1725, sygn. LIII/4.

APK, Komitet Wojewódzki Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej w Katowicach, zespół nr 1793, sygn. 301/IV/563, 301/IV/573, 301/IV/352, 301/IV/355, 301/IV/374, 301/IV/406, 301/IV/411., 301/IV/427, 301/IV/476, 301/IV/518.

APK, Śląska Dyrekcja Okręgowa Kolei Państwowych w Katowicach, zespół nr 2676, sygn. 2/71, 2/74, 2/75.

APL, Dyrekcja Okręgowa Kolei Państwowych w Lublinie, zespół nr 813, sygn. 3/560; ¾.

APP OP, Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza – Komitet Wojewódzki w Pile, zespół nr 346, sygn. 76, 418.

APP OP, Prezydium Miejskiej Rady Narodowej w Pile, zespół nr 193, sygn. 463.

APP OP, Wojewódzka Rada Narodowa w Pile, zespół nr 341, sygn. 128, 137.

APP, Komitet Powiatowy Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej w Pile – Trzciance, zespół nr 2208, sygn. 34.

APP, Prezydium Wojewódzkiej Rady Narodowej w Poznaniu, zespół nr 1071, sygn. 2246.

APP, Zjednoczenie Przemysłu Taboru Kolejowego w Poznaniu , zespół nr 1285, sygn. 22, 25, 33, 57, 63, 75, 115, 200, 211, 329, 476–478, 483.

APW, Dyrekcja Okręgowa Kolei Państwowych we Wrocławiu, zespół nr 514, sygn. 15/37; 15/38; 15/39; 15/40; 8/5.

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