

IT BEGAN WITH GYMNASTICS...

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SUMMARY

The goal of this research was to provide insight into and systematisation of data relevant for the emergence and development of gymnastics in the Principality, and later Kingdom of Serbia, based on a review of monographic and serially published sources. The basic hypothesis was founded on the expectation that a direct link would be established between gymnastics, as the pivot of the programme, as well as its forms of physical exercise, and the emergence and development of organised physical exercising system in the civilian gymnastic and Sokol associations. In this research the historical method was applied. The results presented in this paper showed that gymnastics was the first and the chief component of the military and school physical exercising programs, as well as the significant role of gymnastics in the development of civilian gymnastic, Army and Sokol associations, and in the popularisation and development of modern sports at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century in Serbia. The development of gymnastics was accompanied by the provision of suitable exercising conditions, the organisation of professional courses for the gymnastics teachers and the publishing of appropriate literature.

Key words: physical exercising, civilian gymnastic associations, Sokol movement, school and military gymnastics, gymnastics departments, modern sports, Principality and Kingdom of Serbia

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INTRODUCTION

The history of physical exercising and the Sokol movement in Serbia is a significant part of the general history of the Serbian society and cultural heritage, and yet, it does not hold an appropriate place in Serbian historiography. The history of gymnastics is inextricably linked with both systems of exercising, which represented significant segments of the social, cultural, and even political life in Serbia, and in spite of ideological frameworks, their main component was gymnastics.

The advent and the development of gymnastics in Serbia had their own particular path, which was inevitably dependant on the social-historical conditions, beside some other ones. In the period from the mid-19th century, until the beginning of the Second World War (1857-1941), when in a small territory several states existed – from the Principality, and then Kingdom of Serbia, followed by the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians and finally the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – from the very beginning, and in modest conditions, gymnastics was the foot-stone of the emergence and the pivot for the development of physical education. The time would confirm the constancy of the essence, the role and significance of gymnastics – as the chief component in the development of physical exercising, sports, education and culture in the most general sense, which, among other things, would confirm its title as a specific phenomenon of the Serbian cultural heritage.

When the Principality of Serbia had won its independence under the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin (1878), emerging as a victor from the wars with the Ottoman Empire (1876-1878), Serbian intellectuals returned from their studies abroad to liberated Serbia and wishing to improve social life they spread ideas and introduced changes, thus irreversibly altering the social conditions. That was how the young intellectual avant-garde, impressed by the values of Ancient Greece and the Renaissance spirit, brought and spread some other notions, knowledge and experiences acquired in the developed European countries, and started raising consciousness about the importance of physical exercising. Some of those who had brought these changes had given a significant contribution to the development of organised physical (gymnastic), and soon Sokol exercising. Both of these systems of exercising revolved around gymnastics.

METHODOLOGY

In this research historical method was applied. Within the heuristics, historiographical factography from monographic publications and serial periodicals were consulted. The gathered data was systematised according to the

aspects of the emergence and the role of gymnastics in the development of the system of exercising of the civilian gymnastics and Sokol associations, its position in the programmes of military and school physical exercising, as well as the influence which it had on the development of civilian gymnastics and the advent of modern sport in the Kingdom of Serbia.

RESULTS

From the mid-19th century, beside other activities which were introduced in the Principality of Serbia somewhat earlier (equestrian, fencing, martial arts, swimming), gymnastics was recognised as the prime, unavoidable and essential exercising activity which needed to be given an appropriate place in the educational and the social life systems. The thought of the progressive and the esteemed individuals of that period, and the government officials, on the usefulness and necessity of the introduction of gymnastics into the state institutions, was slowly gaining ground.

While in the first half and during the middle of the 19th century famous gymnastic systems had already been developed in Europe—in Germany Jan’s tournament gymnastics, in Sweden Ling’s gymnastics, in France Amoro’s exercising system (Ling’s gymnastics on modified tournament equipment), and in Bohemia (modern day Czech Republic) and Slavic countries where German tournament gymnastics was transformed into Sokol exercising system¹ – in the Principality of Serbia only some exercises which could be seen and learned in the Western countries had been introduced. At Belgrade Higher School (1808) fencing was introduced as a subject, taught “according to a modern method”. Private schools were also founded: fencing schools – Nikolić’s in the town of Kragujevac (1839), Ninić’s (1843), Koder’s (1848), Wilmes’s (1851) in Belgrade; Lepojević and Danić’s swimming school in Belgrade (1843); since 1850 fencing, swimming and gymnastics were taught to the cadets of the Belgrade Artillery School, and particularly prominent was Sedlmayer’s gymnastics school in Belgrade (1866)². Exercising in these private schools – “the institutes” which were opened in the Principality of Serbia, was the result of initiatives of persistent social-sport

¹Gabriela Kragujević, Sokolski gimnastički sistem kao osnova školskog fizičkog vaspitanja u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji (1919-1941), doktorska disertacija (Beograd: FFK, 1994), 14-18.

²Jovan Vanja Petrović, „Fizička kultura do 1941. god.“, u *Socijalistička republika Srbija*, II tom, ur. M. Maletić (Beograd: Književne novine, 1983), 430; Stefan Ilić i Slađana Mijatović, *Istorija fizičke kulture Kneževine i Kraljevine Srbije*, drugo izdanje, deo 3 (Beograd: Fakultet fizičke kulture Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2006), 437-438.

missionaries arguing for the organised physical exercising and propagation of healthy way of life among the populace and the youth.

Gradually, gymnastics was introduced in state schools, first in the military schools. Some twenty years before Belgrade youth would gather in the gymnastic *Company of Steva Todorović*, the curriculum of Požarevac Military School included gymnastics (1838). Gymnastics was taught to the cadets of the Belgrade Artillery School from its very founding (1850). Gymnastics, martial arts and swimming were taught by officers on active duty, such as Dimitrije Karadžić (the son of Serbian linguist Vuk Karadžić), but also by famous masters of these skills such as Jovan Zamastil, Đorđe Marković Koder, Ferdo Mihoković, Atanasije Popović, and later by the Czech Sokol leader and the Headmaster of the Artillery School Miroslav Vojinović (from 1908, until 1927, before changing it, his name was František Hofman)³.

Exercising of “neck-breaking, difficult and dangerous” gymnastics, which was to be accepted as the basic means in children education and whose place in the curriculum needed to be struggled for, was propagated by distinguished individuals from the scientific, political, artistic and literary communities, including Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, Laza Kostić, Laza Lazarević, Vasa Pelagić, Živojin Žujović, Svetozar Marković, Josif Pančić... That was a time of conservative understanding and slow acceptance of school gymnastics, occasional bans, objections, and even obstructions, by both teachers and parents⁴. The process of introducing gymnastics into schools was not going easily at all. There were either not enough trained teachers, or they could not manage their classes; there were not enough gyms, equipment was lacking and this would be felt until the end of the century.

The Ministry of Education made efforts to overcome these problems by passing legislation, introducing obligatory exercising programmes, sending letters and working instructions to schools. Through the “Law on the Organisation of High Schools” (1863) the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs had decreed that the gifted students, beside church singing and music, could have gymnastics a subject as well. Since then (1863) the famous German gymnastics teacher Ascanius Sedlmayer had taught German tournament gymnastics to the students of Belgrade elementary and middle schools according to the tournament system. But,

³Vladan Vukašinić i sar, „Program gimnastike u obuci vojnih struktura Srbije od 1850. godine“. *Fizičko vaspitanje i sport kroz vekove*, časopis za istoriju, filozofiju, teoriju i metodologiju 3(1) (2016), 7-22.

⁴Nikodije Trujić, *Fizička kultura u školama Srbije u 19. veku* (Beograd: Komisija za istoriju, arhiv i muzej fizičke kulture Srbije, 1976), 27, 54-55; Vladan Vukašinić, „Građanska gimnastička društva i sport u Kraljevini Srbiji“. *Fizička kultura* 70(1) (2016). 23-33.

gymnastics would become a subject officially only in 1882⁵. Gymnastics was introduced into the curriculums of elementary schools in the Principality of Serbia at the end of 1868 (by the Writ of the Minister of Education from 10 December), which would over time influence the popularisation of exercising among the population. In the Writ the Minister recommends that “the teachers of elementary schools devote three to four hours every week for gymnastics after school, which the children can exercise at school or in the field outside the school building when the weather is fair”⁶. The commissions, which adopted the instructions, recommended that gymnastics should be an obligatory subject in town and village schools, with two classes per week in middle schools (1869)⁷.

Officers and non-commissioned officers, who taught military skills, were among the first gymnastics teachers in schools. That was how the issue of insufficient number of gymnastics teachers was being solved in state schools, but also later in the civilian gymnastic associations. Instruction was conducted as a pre-military service training, and this trait of the exercises was ascribed to the political and military ambitions of Prince Mihailo and King Milan Obrenović, who wanted the Serbian army to be trained according to modern standards, and the reserves recruited from amongst the middle school students to be more ready⁸. From the school year 1882/3 officers and non-commissioned officers taught gymnastics at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, teacher schools in Belgrade and Niš, lower and regular high schools throughout Serbia.

Because there were not enough teachers, “Military Science and Gymnastics” were merged into one subject (in 1853, under the “Organisation of High Schools and the Lyceum” law), even though there were some other initiatives: in 1869; in 1873, the Initiative for the Merger in Higher and Middle Schools; in 1881, under the “Law on High Schools Organisation”. Thus in 1882 Gymnastics and Military Exercising Curriculum was adopted and printed in a 1000 copies. Over time, due to pronounced military character of these exercises, discontent grew and so it was recommended that the military should be separated from the physical exercising and that for a time officers should not be teaching (1890), and this led to the situation that in many schools in Serbia there were no gymnastics classes

⁵Bora Jovanović, „Povodom stogodišnjice organizovanog fizičkog vaspitanja u Srbiji“. *Fizička kultura*, 7-8 (1957), 326-332.

⁶Nikodije Trujić, *Fizička kultura u školama Srbije u 19. veku* (Beograd: Komisija za istoriju, arhiv i muzej fizičke kulture Srbije, 1976), 42.

⁷Ibid, 48-53.

⁸Stefan Ilić i Slađana Mijatović, *Istorija fizičke kulture Kneževine i Kraljevine Srbije, drugo izdanje, deo 3* (Beograd: Fakultet fizičke kulture Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2006), 423.

throughout the entire last decade of the 19th century⁹. Authoritative, responsible and meticulous officers-teachers were also men such as the famous Serbian field-marsals, generals who served as Defence Ministers, among them then young sub-lieutenants Živojin Mišić in the First Belgrade Lower High School and Stepa Stepanović in Kragujevac High School¹⁰.

The year 1857 is taken as the beginning of the organised physical exercising in Serbia, when Belgrade Lyceum and high school students gathered in *the Company for Gymnastics and Martial Arts*, in *the Painting School*, which was established by the academic painter Steva Todorović (Ilić, S. and Mijatović, S., 1994), or in *the First Serbian Gymnastics and Martial Arts Society*, as this *Company* is called in some other publications (Spornjak, B., 1931; Brozović, A., 1935; Jovanović, B., 1957; Matić, M. 1975; Petrović, J. V., 1983; Kragujević G., 1994. and others)¹¹. Major part of these exercises was gymnastics and fencing. Steva Todorović received a significant support and help from Prince Mihailo Obrenović, which served as a great stimulus for the introduction of the physical exercises. Even though this society was active for only seven years, until 1864, it had left a significant mark and had become the predecessor of all later civilian associations for organised physical exercising.

After Serbia was proclaimed an independent state at the Congress of Berlin (1878), better conditions for organised physical exercising were met. Former Lyceum student, md Vladan Đorđević, nicknamed Ippocrates, the Head of the Medical Department, who could not forget gymnastics and fencing classes, and the significance of exercising for the proper body development, established *the First Belgrade Gymnastics and Martial Arts Society* (1882), with the support from the Minister Milutin Garašanin (his children also exercised in Steva Todorović's *Company*), and joined by the former Todorović's students and prominent citizens of Belgrade and the leaders of political parties. This Association (modern day *Belgrade Sokol* Association) continued, i.e. restored the activities of the mentioned *Company* and during the next ten years it initiated and assisted the establishment

⁹Nikodije Trujić, *Fizička kultura u školama Srbije u 19. veku* (Beograd: Komisija za istoriju, arhiv i muzej fizičke kulture Srbije, 1976) 241, 286-294, 483-487, 529.

¹⁰Vladan Vukašinić i sar, „Program gimnastike u obuci vojnih struktura Srbije od 1850. godine“. *Fizičko vaspitanje i sport kroz vekove, časopis za istoriju, filosofiju, teoriju i metodologiju*, 3(1) (2016), 7-22.

¹¹Vladan Vukašinić, „Građanska gimnastička društva i sport u Kraljevini Srbiji“. *Fizička kultura*, 70(1) (2016). 23-33.

of similar associations in other towns of the Kingdom of Serbia, in Zaječar, Šabac, Smederevo, Kragujevac and others¹².

At that time, the Czech Sokol Movement had been spreading throughout the Slavic countries for two decades. Soon, the Sokol ideas and sport activities started reaching Serbia. Over time, instead of the German tournament, the Czech Sokol (Tyrš's) gymnastic system was adopted, and at the recommendation of the Secretary, Dr. Vojislav Rašić, the Association changed its name into *Belgrade Gymnastics Association "Soko"* (1891). The adoption of the pan-Slavic Sokol ideology – reflected in physical exercising for the purpose of strengthening the national and cultural consciousness of the people and liberation from the influence of Germanisation, as well as all-encompassing Slavic unification of the subjugated South Slavic peoples – met with resistance from some circles of the Serbian society, which, in then free and independent Kingdom of Serbia, had been looking for *the Society's* identity in the cultural tradition and rich history of the Serbian people. Thus, the group of former members of *the Belgrade Gymnastic Association "Soko"*, led by the lawyer Jovan Stojanović, set up a parallel gymnastic organisation *Civilian Gymnastic Association "Dušan the Mighty"* (1892), which would sometime later change its name into *the Chivalric Association "Dušan the Mighty"*¹³.

Because of the rivalry between these two gymnastic groups, Sokol and Chivalric, due to different understandings of the idea on which their work was to be based, both Sokol and Chivalric associations kept being established in the Kingdom of Serbia in the coming period. Even though the relationship between these associations was harmful for the development of physical exercising in Serbia during the 18 years of their contention, both Sokol and Chivalric supporters operated for the good of the people through their active work and exalted goals and noble intentions. Especially after the unification into the single *Association of Sokol Associations "Dušan the Mighty"* (1910). That was when the rise of the Serbian Sokol movement began, and with it, not long after, the advance in the development of gymnastics, physical education in schools, and it would even turn out that this was a stimulus for the emergence and development of modern sports. Even King Peter I Karađorđević expressed favour for the Sokol ideas.

¹²Vladan Vukašinović i sar, „Prilog proučavanju osnivanja društava za gimnastiku i borenje u Kraljevini Srbiji“. *Fizička kultura*, 69(1) (2015). 44-50.

¹³Stefan Ilić i Slađana Mijatović, *Istorija fizičke kulture Kneževine i Kraljevine Srbije, drugo izdanje, deo 3* (Beograd: Fakultet fizičke kulture Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2006), 456.

During the next year, 1911, the Head of the *Association*, the Czech master František Hofman, brought nine Czech Sokol masters, to whom the Government of the Kingdom of Serbia had given the position of gymnastics teachers in the *associations* and schools in Belgrade, Kragujevac, Požarevac, Šabac, Niš, Kruševac, Užice, Pirot and Valjevo¹⁴. This was one of the turning points for the quality improvement of the “technical” work throughout the *associations* and for the increase in Sokol membership. According to the statistical data of *the Association of Sokol Associations “Dušan the Mighty”* from the end of 1913, the number of these associations in Serbia rose in three years (from 1910) from 20 to 122, while the members numbered a total of 14.778 in all categories¹⁵.

The Czechs had been coming to Serbia even earlier, in a number of stages: in 1863, 1877, 1883, 1893, 1908, 1910, nine in 1911, and then in 1913 and 1914, and later, after the end of the Great War in 1918-1919 eleven men and one woman came to teach gymnastics, and also in 1928 sixteen men and one woman¹⁶, which was of invaluable significance for the physical education classes in schools.

Beside Chivalric and Sokol gymnastic associations there were other civilian associations in Serbia with different names, but what all of them had in common were – apart from gymnastics which was the pivot of their exercising programmes (the so called “technical gymnastic activity”, particularly in Chivalric associations) – diverse exercises and competitions held in other activities: running, pole vaulting, fencing and sword-fighting, weight lifting, shot put and medicine ball throwing, swimming, field trips, boxing, Chivalric games (rock and discus throwing, baton fighting, wrestling, and later “French” and “English” boxing (Petrović, J. V., 1983; Ilić, S. and Mijatović, S., 2006; Vukašinić, V., 2013)¹⁷ ...

During the great rivalry between the Sokol and chivalric gymnastic associations modern sports arrived in Serbia. The interest for the work of the members of the Sokol associations was faltering (1901-1906), while the Chivalric associations kept being established throughout the country. In an effort to

¹⁴Ibid, 493.

¹⁵Vladan Vukašinić, *Gimnastika i sokolstvo u Srbiji do 1941. godine, velikani srpske gimnastike i sokolstva* (Beograd: Fakultet sporta i fizičkog vaspitanja Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2016), 30-31.

¹⁶Jovan Vanja Petrović, „Fizička kultura do 1941. god.“, u *Socijalistička republika Srbija, II tom*, ur. M. Maletić (Beograd: Književne novine, 1983), 433; Stefan Ilić i Slađana Mijatović, *Istorija fizičke kulture Kneževine i Kraljevine Srbije, drugo izdanje, deo 3* (Beograd: Fakultet fizičke kulture Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2006), 462, 493-502; Vladan Vukašinić, *Sokolstvo u Smederevu, 101 godina sokolstva i 128 godina gimnastike (1885-2013)* (Smederevo: Samostalno autorsko izdanje, 2013). 21-22.

¹⁷Vladan Vukašinić, „Građanska gimnastička društva i sport u Kraljevini Srbiji“. *Fizička kultura* 70(1) (2016).23-33.

maintain and revive the activity Belgrade Sokol representatives expanded the work programme (in 1902 by altering *the Association's Satute*) and formed "gymnastic departments" – actually, "sports departments", because they were also called "clubs", which were managed by the "Soko". By solving the problem of membership numbers the Sokol representatives satisfied the interest of the youth to participate in only one activity, but they also allowed the sport clubs to differentiate from gymnastic associations and the creation of new modern sports: shooting, skating, equestrian, swimming, rowing, practicing martial arts, cycling, practicing ball games¹⁸. From then onward "Soko" would be the sprouting ground for, and generator of new, modern sports in the Kingdom of Serbia.

This path was followed by Chivalric and other associations, no matter what their name, and they laid plans for the founding of clubs in their regulations and statutes¹⁹. Respected, influential individuals and experts among the gymnastics aficionados – professors and gymnastics teachers, doctors, textbook and expert literature on gymnastics writers – contributed to the emergence and development of modern sports in Serbia by diligently fighting for the greater presence of sports in the activities of Sokol associations²⁰. This process of the advent and development of modern sports was unavoidable, as it was unavoidably accompanied by the contentious relations between the Sokol organisation and sport clubs and associations that were being established. Furthermore, civilian gymnastic associations, by showing support for modern sports, also encouraged the development of the Olympic movement in Serbia, by accepting the Olympic idea – the restoration of Antiquity's Olympic Games.

The Sokol movement would, thanks to its ideas, values and organisation system, acquire a dominant position in the domain of education of the young and adults on body, health, culture, morality and patriotism in the coming period. Gymnastics was the framework for the activities in the Sokol associations, but "Soko" also strived towards high technical achievements of its members. Beside diverse and mass forms of exercising at Sokol slets, Sokol gymnasts participated in prestigious competitions and performed superbly in European and world tournaments and at the Olympic Games.

After the establishment of the 6 January Dictatorship (1929), the Sokol movement and exercising system was recognised, in the process of etatisation, as

¹⁸Stefan Ilić i Slađana Mijatović, *Istorija fizičke kulture Kneževine i Kraljevine Srbije, drugo izdanje, deo 3* (Beograd: Fakultet fizičke kulture Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2006), 458.

¹⁹Jovan Vanja Petrović, „Fizička kultura do 1941. god.“, u *Socijalistička republika Srbija, II tom*, ur. M. Maletić (Beograd: Književne novine, 1983), 437-439.

²⁰Atanasije Popović, „Proglas. O sportu i o gimnastici“, *Srpska viteška biblioteka*, 1-20.

an irreplaceable factor for the unity of three peoples (Serbs, Croats and Slovenians), the symbol of the strength of the new state (Kingdom of Yugoslavia) and a powerful means in the spread of its educational influence. By sharing the fate of its state and its people, the Sokol organisation would rise and grow into the Sokol movement, a movement in the service of the people.

The Sokol organisation also fulfilled its educational goals and tasks through its positive cooperation with schools. After the enactment of a series of laws – on regular, teacher-education and middle schools, right at the time of the passing of the Law on the Founding of the Sokol Association of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (from 21 August to 5 December 1929), the adoption of curriculums and programmes in which the Sokol gymnastic system, under whose umbrella gymnastics became the basic component of activity, marked as the sole basis for the school physical education. The compatible ideologies of the state and the Sokol movement contributed greatly to this²¹.

Among the numerous members and passionate aficionados of gymnastics there were charismatic leaders who had surpassed the ideas of the movement in their visionary realisations of the exercising system. The most devoted to this were Stevan Todorović, Vladan Đorđević, Vojislav Rašić, Laza Popović, Miroslav Vojinović – the pioneers of physical exercising, gymnastics and the Sokol movement foundation-builders, distinguished men, but also some others who were faithfully followed towards the exalted goals by numerous leaders, progressives, heads of institutions and a host of participants.

The highly advanced Sokol work in many fields was stopped by the Second World War. After the liberation the numerous activities and events in physical education initiated by the new government were based on the ideas, experiences and the Sokol practices from the monarchy period. It was not difficult to notice that the pre-war Sokol solutions – ideas, organisation, terminology and exercising methodology, public classes, gymnastic academies and mass rallies, cultural programmes – were copied. Gymnastics maintained its dominance, and the physical education associations would over time assist the separation of new sports and sport associations.

In the end, it is not without merit to remember that the development of gymnastics has been documented by significant data:

²¹Vladan Vukašinović, *Gimnastika i sokolstvo u Srbiji do 1941. godine, velikani srpske gimnastike i sokolstva* (Beograd: Fakultet sporta i fizičkog vaspitanja Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2016), 47.

- *how the exercises were once conducted*: simple exercises (introductory exercises) – “Swedish exercises”, simple exercises with short batons, baton fighting, pole vaulting, on various pieces of apparatus – horizontal and parallel bars, crawling circles, rings, trampolines, ladders, ropes, sticks, balance beams, vaults, pommel horses, weights, shot put balls, discuses, medicine ball, stilts, the high jump equipment, swords, sabres, masks and gloves, boxing, wrestling, swimming, skating, and later athletics, volleyball and other equipment...

- *professional gymnastics instructor training*: via courses, public classes, exams: through the appointment of Vasilija Sedlmayer, the first woman gymnastics teacher in Serbia, at the Belgrade Women’s High School (unique in the Balkans) in 1871; a one-month gymnastics course for teachers taught by Petar Predragović in Kragujevac in 1872 and again in 1873; the physical exercising courses for the teachers of elementary schools in Niš taught by lieutenant Petar Antić in 1880; the courses for the temporary teachers in Niš and Požarevac (gymnastics was also taught – simple exercises, marching, apparatus activities) in 1880; Soko and Dušan the Mighty associations also trained teachers for the Belgrade Gymnastics School in 1907; a boxing course taught by Hofman in 1908; a public boxing demonstration class organised by Soko in 1910; a public gymnastic skills demonstration class organised by Dušan the Mighty in 1908; summer courses of “modern gymnastics” (fencing, boxing, wrestling, equestrian, skating, cycling, shooting, rowing, swimming, ball games, with field trips) taught by Hofman in 1908; a three-day course for Sokol members, taught by Hofman in 1909, after which the best were sent to Prague to continue their education and professional development; exams for the gymnastics teachers organised by Dušan the Mighty in 1897 (Kosta Jovanović – in 1898 the first gymnastics teacher with a degree, Natalija Ristić – in 1900 the first woman gymnastics teacher with a degree who went to Prague in 1912 for the purpose of further professional development); several times the same courses were also organised by Soko; six-month training course for the gymnastics teachers in middle and teacher training schools in 1909...

- *provision of professional literature*: “Pedagogical Methodological Directions” by Milovan Spasić, a methodological instruction for teachers, published in 1855; “Gymnastics in Schools”, an article published in a school paper (an appeal that gymnastics finally be accepted as a regular subject) in 1867; an article in the journal “Škola” on the importance of gymnastics, 1869; “A Short Instruction” by Petar Predragović, the first gymnastics textbook in Serbia, printed in 1,000 copies in 1873; Ivan Popović’s book “Gymnastics”, published in Timisoara, Romania, in 1878; the Ministry of Education supplied each school with one copy of Ivan Tomašević’s book “Gymnastic Exercises for the Gymnastics of the Children’s Body and Spirit”, along with the book “Introduction into Gymnastics” by Jovan Stojanović and Aleksandar Zega; the Ministry also recommended Atanasije

Popović's "Gymnastics Textbook"; Sreta Stojković's book "Physical Education and its Reforms" was considered the most important work in the field of physical education; "Project of Rules for the Construction of Gymnastic Exercises Equipment", 1884...

- *provision of adequate working conditions*: Belgrade Summer Gym was built during the summer of 1862 with the help from Prince Mihailo; the first gym for physical education with gymnastic apparatus was located near Delijska Fountain (the location of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts), according to the ideas and designs of AscaniusSedlmayer in 1864...

CONCLUSION

The sport, social, cultural and historical footprints of gymnasts and Sokol movement members belonging to the cultural heritage of the Serbian past are crisscrossed and still visible, and make gymnastics a unique phenomenon in the Serbian environment, such as it is, and has endured throughout three centuries. As an integral part of the emergence and development of physical education in the earliest period of Serbian independence, the foundation upon which both exercising systems had been developed – the tournament and Sokol, gymnastics has remained the undisputed component of physical education classes in spite of all passed reforms.

Organised physical exercising began with gymnastics. In spite of being questioned and constricted by the provincial inertia of the society, in spite of modest development conditions, gymnastics' attractiveness brought devotees first in schools and then in companies and associations, until it was accepted as useful and necessary, eventually becoming accepted and imbued into the Sokol exercising system in the educational institutions of Serbia and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as the pivot for physical exercising.

The results of this research represent a significant contribution to the attempts to systematise the facts on the role and importance of the tournament and sokol gymnastics for the general movement for advocating physical exercising in Serbia through almost an entire century (1857-1941), which was a good basis for the development of physical education in the widest sense, and the modern sports in Serbia. This gives us the right to hope that the history of gymnastics would be given its appropriate place in the Serbian historiography.

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СА ГИМНАСТИКОМ ЈЕ ПОЧЕЛО... ТЕЛОУПРАЖНЕНИЈА, ТЕЛОВЕЦБАЊЕ, ГИМНАСТИСАЊЕ, СОКОЛСКА ТЕЛОВЕЖБА...

САЖЕТАК

Циљ студије био је да се на основу прегледа одговарајућих монографских и серијских извора омогући увид и систематизују подаци релевантни за појаву и развој гимнастике у периоду Кнежевине, затим и Краљевине Србије. Основна претпоставка заснивала се на очекивањима да ће се установити непосредна повезаност гимнастике, као окоснице програма, и њених облика физичког вежбања са појавом и развојем организованог телесног система вежбања у грађанским гимнастичким и соколским друштвима. У истраживању је примењен историјски метод. Резултати у раду указали су да је гимнастика била први и неприкосновени садржај у програмима војног и школског телесног вежбања, такође и на значајну улогу гимнастике у развоју грађанских гимнастичких, витешких и соколских друштава, као и у полумодернизацији и развоју модерног спорта крајем 19. и почетком 20. века у Србији. Развој гимнастике праћен је обезбеђивањем услова за вежбање, организовањем стручних течајева за учитеље гимнастике и публикавањем одговарајуће литературе.

Кључне речи: телесно вежбање, грађанска гимнастичка друштва, соколство, школска и војна гимнастика, гимнастичка одељења, модерни спортови, Кнежевина и Краљевина Србија

ВСЕ НАЧАЛОСЬ С ГИМНАСТИКИ ...

АННОТАЦИЯ

Цель данного исследования состояла в представлении и понимании и систематизации данных, касающихся появления и развития гимнастики в Княжестве, а позднее в Королевстве Сербии, полученных в результате обзора монографических и периодических изданий. Основная гипотеза была построена на предположении о том, что будет установлена прямая связь между гимнастикой как центром программы, также ее видами физических упражнений и появлением, развитием организованной системы физических упражнений в гимнастике для гражданских лиц и общества «Сокол».

В данном исследовании был применен исторический метод. Результаты, представленные в данной статье, показали, что гимнастика была первым и основным компонентом в программах военных и школьных физических

тренировок, установили значительную роль гимнастики в развитии гражданской гимнастики, военной и общества «Сокол», а также в популяризации и развитии современного спорта в конце XIX- начале XX веков в Сербии. Развитие гимнастики сопровождалось обеспечением соответствующих условий для тренировок, организацией профессиональных курсов для учителей гимнастики и изданием соответствующей литературы.

Ключевые слова: физическое упражнение, гражданские гимнастические ассоциации, движение «сокол», школьная и военная гимнастика, виды гимнастики, современный спорт, княжество и королевство сербии

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