

HISTORICAL BITS ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract: *History is the story of events, it is a narrative about life. In relation to our own knowledge base, we realize that when reflecting with the past, we select, simplify, organize and summarize a historic time frame in order to fit a topic of discussion.*

To know the past in a scientific manner means to organize, control and follow a set of rules. The variety and wealth of organizational forms of systems, in which the theory and practice of physical education are studied, are impressive in their vast documentary content and assessment. The place of physical education in society today can only be understood and cherished if we know the steps it had to undertake throughout history until present time. Today's modern sports average age is of about 120-140 years. The paper makes a foray into the time period when people started to like the idea of the sport beyond school lesson. Starting with the second half of the nineteenth century, people attempted the understanding the limits of physical education and sports activity.

The methods used in this article are documented study, theoretical analysis and synthesis of information. Theoretical documentation sought to identify and review the state of knowledge on the history of physical education in the analyzed period.

Key words: *history, gymnastics, school, exercise, systems.*

1. Introduction

In order to respect the historical truth, it must be clear at the outset that physical exercise - gymnastics - systematically, methodically was practiced primarily by the German population (Saxons) of Transylvania, introduced by the young people studying at universities in the West and in particular in Germany.

Stephan Ludwig Roth's name "great warrior culture and good living of the people (of whose birth in 1997 we celebrated 200 years), national equality and fraternity fighter between Transylvanian nationalities" link gymnastics since inception 1822, at the gymnasium of Medias.

Born in Medias, after finishing high school he enrolled at the University of Tübingen.

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After two years of going to Yverdon in Switzerland where IH Pestalozzi, the founder of modern pedagogy, knowing him and appreciated his skills, hired him as a teacher at his famous educational institute, [1] where he worked with great dedication by the pedagogical principles of his master, who saw in the teacher of Transylvanian spirit one who could continue his ideas. During his work for two years, Roth has acquired the knowledge needed for teaching gymnastics.

With an enormous amount of knowledge and the desire to pass on the accumulated results, the educator returns home after his doctoral dissertation in Tübingen and is appointed professor at the gymnasium of Medias. He began practicing physical exercises organized by students during their free time, combining these lessons with songs.

2. Material and methods

The methods used in this work are documented study, theoretical analysis and synthetic data. Documentation theoretical sought to identify and review the state issues addressed.

Method (literally "a way, the way") is ultimately the way of human thinking for knowledge, truth, is action to end a query of the past, a reconstruction of past events in physical education.

3. Results and discussion:

St. L. Roth's opinion concerning gymnastics aimed to develop mobility and body strength and the song activating the breath. As is clear from the documents, Medias was the first city in Transylvania, but also the first city in the Austrian Empire in which gymnastics were introduced in 1822 [2].

It is unfortunate, however, that this first attempt of St. L. Roth to introduce gymnastics in school, did not enjoy lasting success.

What held him back, were primarily parents attitude who did not understand the role of gymnastics in the growth and development of young people and secondly indifference and limited views of colleagues who have not given any important new ideas, but rather took into mock striving young teacher.

As shown in the work of Thomas Ruckblick "Aus dem Leben des Hermannstadter Mannerturnvereins" (From gymnastics society of Sibiu) [5].

St. L. Roth employed as a teacher and then director, because of his active spirit and uncomfortable encounters with the great resistance of Saxon circles, conservative par excellence, whose intrigues ended by removing the Educator in 1834.

By trying to introduce gymnastics in school and through other innovative ideas found much later that the principles put forward by decades exceeded his contemporaries. Its merits in gymnastics were recognized much later and we refer to this issue in the following pages.

Meanwhile in Germany, gymnastics was introduced in school curricula at public schools, mostly in gymnasiums, recognizing its great educational value.

Teaching staff of the school board Medias sent in 1847, teachers Dr. Friedrich Schuster and Karl Brandsch to Sibiu to inform about practicing gymnastics.

We thus learn, that to have a qualified teacher in teaching gymnastics, the school board sent on their own, the student of final year of school teaching J. Thellmann, during winter, to maestro Badewitz from

Sibiu to follow there a course lasting three months.

In late February, after finishing training in Sibiu, Tellmann started teaching gymnastics in Medias. At the end of the school year 1847-1848 was held under the leadership of the first celebration with the gymnastic demonstrations. Thellmann left Medias after finishing the teaching school. After his departure, he was replaced to teach gymnastics by teacher Johann Fabini that during university studies at Leipzig had great zeal and much love for exercise.

There were concerns for arranging the material. We thus learn that in the spring of 1848 it was chosen for setting up the gyms in a beautiful place, right on the edge of town, next to a pine forest. On a lower terrace a sports field was arranged, and a narrow field was the space for necessary appliances.

The works were conducted with much energy and skill by Professor J. Fabini and the expenses were considerable. A delegation from the gymnasium of Sighisoara, which was part of the committee of maturity in Medias, was deeply impressed by the work done during the planning of the gyms.

In their report, which they sent to the Superior Consistory, dated August 26, 1848, stated, *inter alia*, with the following: "School gymnasium, which was arranged lately by voluntary labor and contribution of teachers and students make honor to this school and is an ornament to the city."

Regarding the particular activity performed by J. Fabini, he can be called rightly "the creator of the gym school" Medias. Between 1845-1848, in almost all schools of Saxon cities practicing

gymnastics has began. Austrian journalist Hermann Wagner visiting Transylvania, notes that in Austria there are only isolated attempts to introduce gymnastics in schools, which leads him to make the following remarks: "Transylvanian Saxons cultivated gymnastics in schools even before 1848" [4].

I found it necessary to introduce the gym activity in Medias of this period, to reveal that the attempt of St. L. Roth, had trustfull followers, in Medias, as well as in Sibiu.

Thanks to the tireless work of Johann Fabini in the spring of 1849, the word gymnastics gets a new impetus, work accomplished by setting the "Society of the gym" [6].

Gymnast's registers are next to the names of students and seminarians and the names of several teachers, young merchants, craftsmen, each gymnast paid weekly three farthings in a shared house (Turnkasse).

At the initiative of a group of students from the Faculty of Law Sibiu headed by J. Fabini "a true gymnast after the fact and nature", addressed a note higher consistory on the importance and necessity of gymnastics at a public meeting and invite all youth Medias and other localities enthusiastic about the idea of fraternity in order to raise social and national consciousness.

Over 4000 young people from all over Transylvania met in August 1848 in Medias and founded "Association of Young Germans in Transylvania" (deutscher Siebenbürger Jugendbund) [6].

On this occasion, the congregation elected as president a person who despite all the persecutions they had suffered, worked tirelessly for the good of his people.

It was Stephan Ludwig Roth, at that moment a priest in the village Moşna near Medias.

Under his leadership, the congregation has set its goals and they were: "educating people able and awakening of national consciousness in the most effective way - by practicing gymnastics in connection with music and shooting, all without neglecting their education."

For August 15 1848 there was a large gathering planned, but due to political events, the revolution, the gathering has not happened.

Association founder J. Fabini, fell in battle, and St. L. Roth who actively collaborated with Romanian revolutionary authorities in County Târnavă organizing resistance to forced annexation of Transylvania to Hungary, was arrested.

Judged by a court in Cluj in May 11, 1849 on charges of high treason, was condemned to death and shot near the city wall on the hill that rises near the city center. [2]

As in the German Länder, gymnastics developments in Transylvania through this stage together with national and political developments. One of the first and most important achievements of this period was the foundation of the Association "Siebenburghische Landeskunde" [4] in 1841.

In 1844 Sibiu was founded the Saxon legal faculty which studied the great revolutionary of 1848, Avram Iancu, in his opening speech, its first director, Dr. Muller does mention that it was established "as a time of celebration commemorative 700 years of the emigration of the Saxons in Transylvania".

In this time of national revival longing springs gradually finds its expression in a

collection of songs, to the Saxons of Transylvania.

Now all conditions were created to achieve St. L. Roth's advanced idea to introduce gymnastics in Saxon schools, forever so that since 1845 gymnastics halls are built in almost all major cities in Transylvania.

In this context, in Sibiu practicing exercise (gymnastics) in an organized, institutionalized manner began with the arrival of Karl Badewitz gym master, Prussian origin who attended Eiselen classes in Berlin and has been improved in this discipline.

He came to Sibiu in 1845 by Eiselen's personal recommendation.

According to archive documents studied [3] on 3 March 1845 in Sibiu took place the first hour of gymnastics, which is particularly important for historians of physical education in our country, allowing us to conclude that Sibiu was the second city in Transylvania who introduced gymnastics in an organized manner.

All documents shows that on June 13, 1845 in Sibiu, foundation was laid for the establishment of an "Institute of Gymnastics" the material being provided by "savings".

In 1846, there was founded one of the first "gym companies".

Most members of this society were Saxon legal college students.

During this period the government grants "Institute of Gymnastics" annual financial funds, considering the intense activity carried out and also recognizing the educational value of exercise. Part of this Institute was gymnasium students, school's teaching students, students from other schools in Sibiu, and soldiers (officers and other students).

At these classes attended both students and adults who wanted to practice gymnastics. Under the leadership of K. Badewitz prudent by the results obtained in the gym but also its rich literary activity performed, this institute came shortly be the largest and most appreciated in the whole empire, which contributed to gymnastics spread in many provinces of Transylvania.

In Sibiu, gymnastics has suffered greatly in the years 1848-1849 as a result of the revolution, which forced master Badewitz to leave the country with his wife and child.

In 1850, when he returned, the gym Institute reopened, but only that particular institute. The government appointed Badewitz as gymnastics and fencing master of this institute is financially subsidized by the year 1858. The next year financial support was withdrawn to not "help increase demagogues" cause that led to the abolition of the institution and Badewitz his departure from the country.

Therefore gym Society was disbanded. The gym was transformed into ballroom that hosted various theaters. Shortly practicing gymnastics ceased in Prussia and other provinces. It seems that changes and political turmoil that existed in this period made the gymnastics activity disrupted.

After the departure of K. Badewitz from Sibiu, he returned to Prussia, where in different cities he developed a rich activity as editor of several newspapers and also as a writer, as his literary concerns. He died in October 10, 1882 in Dresden [7].

4. Conclusions

1. As shown in the documents, Medias was the first city in Transylvania in

which gymnastics was introduced, although the attempt of St. L. Roth did not enjoy lasting success. Unfortunately his efforts in gymnastics were recognized later.

2. Master Karl Badewitz merits are to mention, the man who first introduced in Sibiu gymnastics and also founded the Evangelical Gymnasium first "gym Society" and the first "Institute of gymnastics", which unfortunately did not last a long time. Meritorious contribution is that of Johann Fabini from Medias.
3. Involvement of local authorities are to be noted in supporting the work of the locations and gymnastics material, organizing gymnastic demonstrations, the establishment of companies and sports associations and propaganda, of support for the construction of gyms and equip them with suitable equipment, etc.

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