

The history of physical education in schools and sports associations in Transylvania, from the beginning to the middle of the 20th century

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The present doctoral work captures the evolution of physical school education and sports associations in Transylvania from the beginning until the middle of the 20th century. In its composition it includes a number of 6 chapters, to which conclusions, summary, introduction, bibliography, annexes and the dictionary of terms are added. During the doctoral preparation we identified and researched numerous materials in the libraries of Transylvania ("Astra" Library in Sibiu, the "Lucian Blaga" University Library in Sibiu, the Municipal Library in Blaj, the Library of the Institute of Socio-Human Studies in Sibiu) and in archives (County Directorate of State Archives, Sibiu Branch).

The first chapter brings to the fore the reluctance with which these sports events were received in the school environment, especially in the Saxon one. A different situation can be seen in the case of the confessional schools in Transylvania, that had to align their curricular programs with the Hungarian legislation in the field. The first touch of the schools with the new discipline (gymnastics) were due to the contact with the western educational environment of some personalities who have been studying abroad. In the case of confessional schools, by the end of the 19th century the obligation was stipulated that each institution needs to have a gymnasium, endowed with all that was required. During this pioneering period, the gymnastic discipline was taught after the works "Gymnastic exercises" by Iosif Aron and "Manual of gymnastics" by I.E. Prodan, and the place of gymnastics in the educational plan acquired a new dimension, thanks to Andrei Șaguna's circulars and the legislation promoted by Spiru Haret. The new discipline acquires compulsory status in the curriculum and is separated from the military instruction. In a short time, at the beginning of the 20th century, one can distinguish the wide and complex role of physical education, noticeable also in the questionnaire prepared by professor V. Crețu and sent to the 68 normal schools of girls and boys (1936). The whole picture, drawn at the end of the centralization of this questionnaire, approved by the director of O.N.E.F., General V. I. Bădulescu, allowed the identification of the existing deficiencies at a general level and a concrete plan of measures to remedy them.

The spread and development of gymnastics in our area was also possible through the Saxon, Jewish and Hungarian gymnastics associations. An overview of this phenomenon we undertook during the second chapter of the dissertation. Despite the initial failure in connection with the introduction of physical education in the school plan, the name of the Transylvanian revolutionary Stephan Ludwig Roth is linked to the first gymnastics association, which adds up a few elements (gymnastics, singing, defense associations). Through Johann Fabini's care, gymnastics becomes an optional discipline at the gymnasium in Mediaş (1848), a model quickly adopted by other evangelical school institutions (Braşov, Bistriţa, Sebeş). The positive evolution of this discipline in the Transylvanian school environment was made possible by the involvement of prestigious personalities, among which Karl Badewitz (Sibiu), Wilhelm Schuster (Sebeş), Gottlieb Budaker (Bistriţa), Friedrich Marienburg (Sighişoara) and Theodor Kühlbrandt (Braşov). Undoubtedly, gymnastics occupied a different place within the communities in the Saxon cities of Transylvania, as evidenced by its the situation in the second half of the 19th century. In this regard, considerable efforts have been made in the direction of promoting the new discipline, a visible aspect in the scope of the associations, in the specialized press ("Turnglocke", supplement of the newspaper "Kronstädter Zeitung") and in the construction of suitable gymnasiums. Parallel to the gymnastics associations, a number of other associations appear, for skiers ("Brasov Ski Union" / Kronstädter Ski-Vereinigung / K. S. V., "Ski Club" in Sibiu), swimmers, skaters and target shooters (Sighişoara).

Until the building of sports halls and the training of teachers capable of teaching this discipline, the public schools benefited from the support of some instructors and the possibility of using the premises of the associations, as was the case in the city of Cluj. The popularization of physical education in the school environment of Cluj brought a substantial contribution to a number of sports pioneers, such as: Károly Albert, Gyula László, Sándor Varga, Istvan / Ştefan Somodi, Jakobi Dezső, Paneth Farkas, etc. The role of the sports movement in the life of the city of Cluj is more than obvious, if we look at the organizations existing in the 19th century: the School of Fencing, the Association of Sport and Fencing, the Sports Association of Commercial Clerks, the Association of Skating, the University Athletic Club, the Athletic Club (ACC) and the Haggibor Sports Arena Society.

The importance given to physical education by educational institutions, especially since the end of the 19th century, is the subject of the following chapter. A true "golden stage" of physical school education is particularly striking during the "interwar miracle" when the

number of local, regional and national school competitions is increasing. Parallel to this phenomenon, there was an increasing attractiveness of students towards practicing physical education. A conclusive example is represented by the Braşov educational institutions, which organized numerous sporting events, some following the Blaj model. The high schools "Andrei Şaguna", "Dr. I. Meşota" and "Honterus" excelled in this direction, being present at most sports competitions with teams of students. In this context, it is worth mentioning the inter-school ski competition "Zaharia Florian" Cup, the regional ski competitions (Predeal Championship) and the inter-school athletics, shooting and ping-pong competition. As can be seen from the study of the Yearbooks of the Brasov schools, utmost attention was paid to the annual enrichment of the technical-material base, with specific materials (equipment, athletics supplies, games and sports). The Day of Union of the Principalities, the Day of Coronation and the Day of Heroes were celebrated through a series of sporting events. The athletics competitions from Braşov also contributed to the physical training of athletes such as Herold Constantin, with national records for juniors (1932) in the triple jump, pole and fence events and Ionescu Crum, national champion in triple jump (1933) and national record holder in long jump (1934). In order to practice a diverse range of sporting activities (athletics, volleyball, soccer, swimming, rowing, hiking, handball, skiing, trips and scouting activities), but also to remove the deficiencies generated by reducing the number of hours for physical education, in some institutions of Transylvanian education ("Andrei Şaguna" High School from Braşov, State High School "Gheorghe Lazăr" from Sibiu, The united Romanian boys' high school "St. Vasile cel Mare" from Blaj), well defined sports societies were born during the interwar period having, which stands proof of the role, the interest and the evolution achieved by physical education at a national level.

In the fourth chapter we studied the famous annual sporting events from Blaj, dedicated to the celebration of the day of 3/15 May 1848. As we have pointed out, these inter-school sports competitions initiated by Augustin Caliani starting with 1921 have soon become true "national Olympics". The commemoration of this historic day included in the official program "gymnastics productions and sports competitions" in the I.M. Clain Square, but also a series of sports events (long jump, high jump, running, disc throw and weight throw) on the Freedom Field, on which civilian/military educational units from all over the Romanian area competed. Moreover, this day of the year attracted like a magnet personalities and officials of the state (Nichifor Crainic, N. Iorga, Zenovie Pâclişianu, G. Popa-Lisseanu, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, I.G. Duca, Alexandru Lapedatu) and numerous correspondents from the press

of the time ("Brotherhood", "Fight", "Fatherland", "Gazette of Transylvania", "Truth", "Dacia", and "Morning"). In addition to the praiseworthy mentions, over time, prizes were also awarded to participating teams, represented by: The Blaj Prize - a tricolor flag made of heavy silk with the inscription: „3/15 May. Blaj Romanian Youth”, the Silver Cup of the Ministry of Cults, the Statuette of the Ministry of Instruction, the Statuette (the discus thrower) of the Ministry of Labor, the “David Baron Bear of Margina” cup for outfits and discipline and the Blaj Franco-Romanian Circle Cup for „volley ball”. The local press ("People's Union", "The Union. Political Church Paper") but also the Yearbooks of greek-catholic educational institutes of Blaj (Boys' high school, Girls' high school and primary school, Normal school, Application school, Business and merchants' school) allowed us to analyze and reconstruct this "golden page" in the history of school and national physical education as accurately as possible. Undoubtedly, Braşov, Blaj and Sibiu were true "reference centers" of physical education in schools, with some noticeable differences. In the case of Blaj, the competitions were national in nature, with the participation of only Romanian educational institutions. Compared to this, the sporting events from Braşov were held mainly between the local Romanian and Saxon school institutions. We find a different situation in the case of Sibiu, where the competitions were held only between the Saxon local schools from around the area. The State High School "Gheorghe Lazăr" was an exception in this regard, as it was present during the events at the Blaj competitions.

The next chapter of the dissertation focused on the prominent role in popularizing and developing physical education in the school and community environment, with a number of educators, sportsmen and cultural people from various fields (medicine, chemistry, literature, history, etc.). Notable in this framework are Pavel Vasici, Petru Pipoş, Simion Bărnuţiu, Onisifor Ghibu, Gheorghe Moceanu, Nicolae Teclu, Iuliu Moldovan, Iuliu Haţieganu, Albin Morariu, Virgil Roşală, Ioan Slavici and Stephan Ludwig Roth.

The "inter-war miracle" also brings to the forefront of the Romanian society another exceptional achievement, the ASTRA Physical Education Subsection, highlighted in the sixth chapter. After 1927, the organization of "The Carpathian Falcons" becomes a reality, an official issue with quite profound implications for the communities of Transylvania. The popularization of the Czech Sokol model, the conferences of Iuliu Haţieganu and his close friends and the excellent organization (regulation and statutes) allowed for a gradual and intense evolution of the organization, at rural and urban levels. Alongside Iuliu Haţieganu and Iuliu Moldovan, the development of the organization was made possible with the help of

some kindhearted people, with different specializations, such as Coriolan Tataru, Romulus Vuia, Alexandru Borza, Simion Ilieșiu, Atanasie Popa, Tiberiu Spârchez, Sava Golumba, Albin Morariu, Onoriu Chețianu, and so on. The activity of "diffusion and contamination" had to lead to the establishment of centers and sub-centers and then to the organization of Falcon-games, like that of Topa Mică. The falcons of many departments were also involved in other community activities, among which we mention the planting of seedlings and the building of cultural houses. Definitely, one of the greatest achievements built during this time is the Sports Park of the University of Cluj, a prize awarded project with the bronze medal at the architectural exhibition organized on the occasion of the Berlin Olympics (1936). In a short while, the "The Carpathian Falcons" are present at similar events abroad, such as those in Uzhgorod / Slovakia (June 8-9, 1930), Belgrade / Yugoslavia (June 28-29, 1930), Prague (June-July 1932) and the 10th Congress of the Prague Sokoles (July 2-8, 1938). After the first reorganization of 1935 when the "The Carpathian Falcons" were subordinated to the Office of Youth Education in Romania (O.E.T.R.), another followed in 1937 when it merged (together with The Archers in Bucovina, O.E.T.R.) into The Country Watch. The last bastion of this organization was the Cohort of the Apuseni Mountains (Alba County), which resisted until 1947.

In conclusion, as can be seen from a more in-depth analysis, a number of notable changes occur in the evolution of physical education, starting in the mid-19th century. This evolution, noticeable especially until the interwar period, was determined by several factors that connected to the changes in the European societies and the new gymnastic systems, the impact of the works of pedagogues and domain specialists, the inter-school, local, regional and national competitions with influence on the permanent endowment and enrichment with the necessary equipment, the preparation of the students and the increase of the number of hours assigned to the discipline.

The information we gathered from various specialized papers we considered to be of historical significance for the emerging discipline of sports science, for the culture of today's and tomorrow's generations. We felt it was necessary not to miss valuable texts of prominent authors, who accidentally, premeditated or eagerly approached the sporting phenomenon.

From the treasury of the history of sports in our country we have quoted some passages that represent the spirit of the time. Through their great diversity, they approach physical exercises and sport from multiple perspectives: body and spirit, physical education and physical culture, sports history, amateurism and professionalism, sports and culture, or sports

and art. In their transcript, a number of language features characteristic of each author and epoch have been preserved.

Key words: physical education, sports associations, school, competitions, evolution

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