

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE OFFICERS' CONTRIBUTION TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SERBIAN CIVILIAN SCHOOLS FROM 1815 TO 1918

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Abstract. *This historical review aimed to demonstrate the contribution of Serbian officers to physical education in civilian schools by examining their historical ties. We explored mutual relationships and proved their relevance and contribution by using a theoretical and critical approach, which emphasized the importance of initiation of physical education in city schools, teaching staff, and exercise programs. Physical education was essential in the education and upbringing of the officer cadre. After independence, Serbia was able to modernize and prosper economically, politically, athletically, and academically. Officers made immeasurable contributions to martial arts, equestrian societies, and shooting groups. Many officers who graduated from the Military Academy abroad and in Serbia performed various teaching duties in civilian schools from 1815-1918, proving that the officers influenced the development of the armies in which they served and made a significant contribution to the mass spread of physical education (gymnastics and military skills) by training youth in civilian schools or sports clubs in the Principality of Serbia and the Kingdom of Serbia. The knowledge acquired in this historical review will undoubtedly shed more light on the officers' contribution and work in Serbian civilian schools in physical education.*

Key words: *physical education, civil schools, military officers, Principality of Serbia, Kingdom of Serbia*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Historical sources confirm that in civilian education in Serbian states, there was military training under the same name, with officers teaching in civilian and private institutions. The Principality of Serbia provided the first data on the teaching of gymnastics (physical exercise) in elementary schools and gymnasiums (lyceums) (1815-1882). Since 1882, following an agreement between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Military Affairs, the officer cadre has been carrying out gymnastics and military training programs in schools. During that period, the Military Academy made an immeasurable contribution to the development of physical education in civilian schools to directly "awaken" the Serbian people's sense of national pride.

The Principality of Serbia did not have a regular military organization until 1807. When Prince Miloš organized a standing army in 1825, he established the state's official government, a general military, and the need for adult men to carry firearms (Ratković-Kostić, 2007).

From 1861 to 1873, the Serbian army sent its cadets abroad for professional education. They mostly stayed in Austria-Hungary, Russia, France, Belgium, and Germany. During their education, they were introduced to different physical exercise systems in military and civilian schools. One of the many examples is officer Dragomir T. Nikolajević, who stayed in France after finishing the military academy from 1902 to 1904. During his stay in Paris, he graduated from the Faculty of Sports ("High School of Sports") in the suburb of Joinville le Pont (Gavrilović, 2011).

With the conclusion of the Turkish war and independence in 1878, Serbia could modernize and prosper economically, politically, athletically, and academically. Intellectuals of that time (Vuk Karadžić, Petar Predragović, bishop Nikolaj Velimirović, Stevan Todorović, Jovan Ristić) made a remarkable contribution, as well as officers who were studying abroad. Thus, military and civilian physical culture flourished during the period. Since the establishment of the Military Academy in 1850, it has been the central place of gathering and systematic training. Physical education was essential in the education and upbringing of the officer cadre (Ljušić, Vojković, Pršić, & Jovović, 2000).

Officers needed to develop the identity of a professional officer - a leader, honorable, loyal, and prepared for the intellectual and ethical demands of an officer's vocation in the service of the country. The slogan "honor is our property, and for them, our power" fully describes what kind of people we are referring to when they graduate from the military academy.

Aside from ordinary professional tasks in the army, the officer cadre was involved in social events, including physical exercise in the civilian schools of the Principality of Serbia and the Kingdom of Serbia, where they provided an incomparable contribution and importance. The previous body of evidence on the above relations was only fragmental. The knowledge gained in this study will undoubtedly shed more light on the officers' contribution and work in Serbian civilian schools.

Therefore, from a historical perspective, this study aimed to explore the contribution of the officer cadre and physical education (gymnastics and military exercise) in Serbian civilian schools.

2. THEORETICAL BASIS

We cannot stop all social events nor bring back historical events, but we can preserve them from oblivion by continuing with extensive research. Therefore, all these events took place in a particular time and space. So that all historical research has a cultural and practical function (Deletić, 2006). The priceless historical sources we came across during this research were objective mediators between those events, people in the past, and us researchers. The indirect sources were various written traces, like historical sources of the first and second order. Based on the researched material, the authors provided certain conclusions.

The engagement of Serbian military commanders and warriors as military training teachers in the medieval Serbian army is a forerunner of the influence of Serbian army officers on the development of physical education in the Serbian army and indirectly in the people of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Gavrilović, 2011). The theoretical context of this study is directly related to the influence and engagement of Serbian army officers in civilian schools. As experts and lecturers, the officer cadre made a remarkable contribution to martial arts, equestrian societies, and shooting groups. Working in schools, they encountered the problems of a lack of closed exercise areas, exercise plans, and programs and a severe lack of equipment and props.

Physical education in primary schools in Serbia (grades I-IV) was neglected not only until 1830, when schools operated according to the law of tradition but also after 1835, when the state took over the care of schools. In 1868, the Ministry of Education printed the Instructions for Physical Exercises for schools. Gymnastics confronted a certain mistrust and some resistance in schools. It was not until 1871 that the Principality of Serbia government introduced gymnastics into the curriculum for primary schools (Trujić, 1976).

Therefore, this study aimed to explore the contribution of the officer cadre to physical education in civilian schools across spatial and temporal continuums of The Principality of Serbia and the Kingdom of Serbia. We applied historical and descriptive methods in this study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Physical education in civilian schools and officers' cadre

During the period of existence of the Principality of Serbia (1815-1882), the Serbian army did not have enough educated officers, so it sent abroad a certain number of cadets (educated at the Artillery School) or already graduated officers of the Serbian army. The physical training and education of Serbian officers abroad impacted the formation of military doctrine, laying the foundations of physical training in the Serbian army. As a result, the educated officers attended schools in Serbia, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin (Ђукић, 2013). This versatility and the broad concept of physical and military training in the world's armies contributed to the emergence of the following teaching topics in the regular military-professional and physical training during the time of the Principality and Kingdom of Serbia: fencing (fencing), gymnastics, wrestling, swimming, horseback riding, and boxing. There were also rifle drills during the specified period (as part of military training). After returning from abroad, many Serbian officers contributed to the mass spread of physical education by training Serbian youth in civilian schools or sports clubs and organizations. Improving the teaching staff of that period in the Principality

and Kingdom of Serbia, military schools, and teaching staff from the Serbian army were one of the solutions for spreading physical culture among Serbian folk.

From 1830 to 1871, the concept of physical exercise in elementary schools in the Principality of Serbia took root, first in teachers' schools in 1870, then in gymnasiums and secondary schools in 1874 (Гавриловић & Мијатовић, 2020). "Military training" was introduced to the curriculum of secondary schools in 1877 at the Teacher's School and in 1881 at the gymnasium to train and develop high-quality military troops (gymnastics and military training). The course was regular in all seven high school grades, with three weekly classes (Гавриловић, 2019). In the same year, 1881, the subject "physical exercise" was introduced in teacher schools for all four grades with two weekly classes. That partly deviated from the law that all schools have the subject of "military training" (Илић & Мијатовић, 1994).

From 1863 through 1882, 37 professors served at the secondary schools of the Principality of Serbia as gymnastics and military drill instructors. Sixteen officers and non-commissioned officers completed their careers in civilian schools by performing two jobs or leaving the military service (Илић & Мијатовић, 1994).

Military physical training and gymnastics were mandatory for all secondary schools of the Principality of Serbia. There were 26 at that time, with about 4000 students (Илић & Мијатовић, 1994). On certain occasions, the course did not include gymnastics-related material. The curriculum's primary demographic was students enrolling in high schools, secondary schools, teacher's colleges, trade schools, or seminaries in the Kingdom of Serbia. From 1882 until 1890, the secondary school teaching staff included officers (Гавриловић & Мијатовић, 2020).

The introduction of physical education in civilian schools in Serbia and the involvement of officers originated from Great School in Belgrade in 1808, where the captain of the Belgrade Cavalry, Petar Đurković, taught fencing with sabers, while two sergeants and one officer of the Russian Nišlot regiment demonstrated rifle drills (Gavrilović, 2011). In 1882/83, the Minister of Education instructed all school principals that, by the Minister of War, teachers-officers would teach the subject "gymnastics and military training" at the start of the following school year. Due to the frequent movement and reassignment of officer teachers, the Minister of Education delegated the appointment and replacement of teachers to military structures and institutions. As a result, senior officers from the garrison oversaw the instruction of "military exercise gymnastics" because school principals lacked expertise in this area. In 1884, military supervisors began to offer suggestions to improve this subject in addition to their regular oversight. Therefore, increased student discipline and the prospect of disciplinary action indicated progress (Илић & Мијатовић, 1994).

The events of that time in the Military Academy were particularly interesting for research because of the accessible, valuable historical evidence. Teaching staff in the field of physical education at the Military Academy in the period 1850–1880 consisted of gymnastics teachers: Jovan Zamastil (from 1851), Lazar Cukić (1858–1859), Dimitrije V. Karadžić (1859-1865/son of Vuk Karadžić), and Ferdo Mihoković (1863–1887). From 1850 through 1880, Jovan Zamastil instructed wrestling along with Đorđe Marković (1858-1860) and Ferdo Mihoković (1863–1887). Jovan Zamastil and Ferdo Mihoković conducted swimming drills during this time (1863–1887). In 1870, when the National Theater in Belgrade founded its "theatre school," Ferdo Mihoković, then in the rank of captain, held fencing (Stanković, 2003). In addition to teaching at the Military Academy, several officers selflessly imparted their knowledge to Serbian youth in sports groups and organizations (Ljušić et al., 2000).

Gymnasium teacher Ljubomir Ilić taught wrestling and gymnastics from the fall of 1886 to June 30, 1891, and like Mihoković, he was one of the teachers in the "First Serbian Society for Gymnastics and Wrestling." Both teachers from the Military Academy agreed to train without compensation in the "First Serbian Society for Gymnastics and Wrestling," which significantly contributed to the overall popularization of physical exercise at the end of the 19th century (Stanković, 2003). General and Minister of Military Miloš M. Vasić taught wrestling, geography, tactics, strategy, and military service from May 22, 1891, to September 21, 1899, and he was also a lecturer at the Great School in Belgrade (wrestling). Reserve infantry Lieutenant Colonel and professor Atanasije Popović taught gymnastics as a regular and part-time teacher from August 26, 1898, to April 16, 1901. Following that period, he worked as a gymnastics teacher at the State Trade Academy along with Professor Zdelar, the director of the Trade Gymnasium (Gavrilović, 2011).

Đorđe Marković – Koder was the first domestic fencing teacher at the Artillery School from 1858–1860. In addition to the Artillery School, he was a fencing teacher in Szeged, Timisoara, Budapest and taught saber and rapier to students and cadets of the Austrian army (62 regiments) in order to receive an invitation to become a military "fencing master." Before joining the military school in 1837, he opened the "Gymnastic Enchantment" and held private fencing lessons in Petrovaradin. From 1839 to 1844, he taught youth in Szeged, and his later well-known student was Stevan Todorović. In 1839 in Kragujevac, at the invitation of Miloš Obrenović, Koder was appointed as the first court teacher of fencing and physical exercise in Serbia. Koder taught Miloš Obrenović's sons (Milan and Mihailo), Serbian guardsmen, and interested citizens. Afterward, he opened the first civil fencing school in 1843 in Belgrade (on Palilula, near the church of St. Mark). He held classes for Lyceum students and interested youth, and aside from private schools, he instructed Military Academy cadets and Prince's Guard soldiers. Vuk Karadžić's son Dimitrije was his swordsmanship student and later a Military Academy teacher. Đorđe Marković Koder's specialty was combat fencing lessons with a heavy practice saber (Stanković, 2003).

In 1900, the Military Academy established the "First Officer's School for Fencing and Other Sports." Its first headmaster was Charles Duché, who selected only the most outstanding officers of the Serbian army (Gavrilović, 2011). Later, in 1904, the Military Academy continued implementing this course. The administration chose Captain Dragomir Nikolajević (director of the course), Colonel Damjan Popović (supervisor), Charles Duché (head teacher), Major Dušan Pešić - a member of the examination committee (Војни Архив, 1902). Some managers of these courses already performed the duty of wrestling teachers at the Military Academy (Charles Duché, Dragomir Nikolajević, and Aleksandar Josifović), while Bogoljub Dinić acquired the teaching position in the following period. In 1908, the Sokol training method was introduced in the Military Academy for cadets during all four years of schooling, and the lecturer was František Hoffman, a gymnastics teacher at the Gymnastics School (1908) in Belgrade (Gavrilović, 2011).

Charles Duché brought fencing into Serbian schools in 1894, and the following year he was hired as a fencing teacher at the Higher Women's Institute, a private school for girls from more progressive circles. It was the first city school where Duché held classes in pure French sport fencing (Stanković, 2003). Soon, in 1897, Duché opened the "Charles Duché Fighting School" in Belgrade, followed by the decision to form the First Fighting (Fencing Society) in Serbia.

Artillery Colonel Dragomir T. Nikolajević taught gymnastics and wrestling at the Military Academy from 1900 - 1902. After returning from abroad (France), he demonstrated French

savate and English boxing for the first time in the Military Academy in 1904. Given his versatility and understanding of fencing, athletics, swimming, gymnastics, wrestling, and boxing, we could assume that he substantially contributed to the growth of physical education in Serbia during that time. He was also the president of the Boxing Association, as well as a member of other civilian sports organizations and clubs (Гавриловић, 2011). In addition, Artillery Lieutenant Milenko Arsović published the book "Knight Games and Sports and Physical Education" in 1911 (Арсовић, 1911).

We emphasize that the contribution of the officers educated in Belgrade was substantial, where it was more accessible to participate in organized physical exercise and sports clubs than in the interior of Serbia. However, considering the social and economic circumstances in Serbia in that period, we should note that commissioned and non-commissioned officers also contributed to the training and development of youth in Serbian schools in the interior.

In Valjevska Gymnasium in 1878, gymnastic equipment was used by soldiers of the 4th Artillery Regiment with the approval of the director Miloš Davidović (Трипковић, 1990). At the beginning of the school year 1879/1880, Sergeant Matija Nenadović became a gymnastics lecturer at the Valjevska Gymnasium, who performed this duty without compensation (Поповић & Петровић, 1881). In 1882, infantry lieutenant Nikola Milovanović was a gymnastics teacher in the Valjevo gymnasium and thus officially became the first physical and military exercise teacher in the lower gymnasium in Valjevo with the approval of the Ministry of Education and the Serbian Army and Sergeant Milentije Mihajlović as his assistant. In the following period, due to obligations in the training of the Serbian army and frequent travels to military exercises, the military personnel who carried out physical and military training with Serbian students consisted of Lieutenant Milan Jovin, Sergeant Svetozar Savić, Sergeant Janićije Birčanin, and Aksentije Sretenović (scribe). From 1886, in addition to lecturers, Major Pavle Jurišić Štrum was appointed supervisor of physical and military training (he would later become a general of the Serbian army), and Second Lieutenant Radomir Matić and Sergeant Pavle Pavlović conducted the classes. Then, in the further period until 1890, the teaching was carried out by reserve officers Petar Glogić, Ljubomir Ristić and Filip Popović, second lieutenants, and the supervisor was instead of Štrum, Vukoman Aračić (Trujić, 1976).

In 1882, Infantry Lieutenant Jovan Magdenović became a lecturer of physical and military training at Kruševac Junior High School and Infantry Sergeant Jovan Stamenković as an assistant. Trujić (1976) states that in 1883, Infantry Lieutenant Mihajlo Jovanović replaced Magdenović. In 1886, Major Lazar Pavlović became supervisor, and Vojislav Drinčić, the second lieutenant, was appointed lecturer. Physical and military training was carried out most often in schoolyards, on Bagdala hill, or Košijsko polje (Trujić, 1976).

Therefore, in 1882, official physical education was introduced in schools, and the first professional manuals, "Syllabus for gymnastics and military exercise," were printed, emphasizing military exercise. At that time, officers often handled and led these activities. The year 1883 was significant for physical education in Serbia since it resulted in the establishment of the Lyceum for the education of future officials for administrative and legal services in Kragujevac. After three years, the Lyceum moved to Belgrade. Since 1884, the "Great School" students had three faculties and compulsory physical education classes. Physical education also included wrestling, adopted in the Military Academy, and the lecturers were active officers of the Kingdom of Serbia. At the beginning of 1887, the Minister of Education submitted a new school curriculum, selected teachers, and pointed out that these programs significantly strengthened the youth for the war. With the re-

establishment of the national army in 1890, the need for officer staff in schools immediately ended, so the Minister of Education dismissed them from their duties as teachers in the subject "military training" in the same year. The staff from civil gymnastics clubs took over classes and, later, with the arrival of the Czechs, also from Sokol clubs. The problem was finally overcome in 1908 when the "Gymnastics School" was opened in Belgrade for the training of gymnasts (Илић & Мијатовић, 1994).

Concerning theoretical context and available evidence, we rounded off a whole set of contributions of the officer cadre to the development of gymnastics and military training in civilian and private schools. Through the present historical review, we have determined that three basic directions can be observed in the development of physical education in Serbia from 1850 to 1918. These directions intermingled, complemented, and connected one another. Only by observing all three directions can we attain a whole perspective on the evolution of physical education in Serbia. The growth path for physical education and martial arts may be traced back to 1) their placement and involvement in city schools, 2) military schools, and 3) the founding and expansion of municipal sports organizations and sports clubs (Gavrilović, Kasum, & Radović, 2010).

4. CONCLUSION

We emphasized the historical link between the discovered interactions and phenomena that one should observe from the historical perspective of origin, development, and existence by employing historical and descriptive approaches and theoretical, critical data and fact analysis. We shed some light, partially explained certain previous phenomena, and projected future ones using the historical method. This study is more than just a list of people, years, and events; it also highlights their connections and proves contributions to the ongoing development of physical education in civilian schools in our country.

Physical education was introduced to schools through the army during Karađorđe Petrović's (1808) Serbian revolt, educating the youth for national defense. Fencing and martial arts were part of the physical education curriculum. Many commanders and non-commissioned officers could not fully embrace gymnastics and military training due to a lack of equipment, props, and training facilities. Internal and external international developments complicated the army's status in Serbia. As a consequence, in 1867, the school referent for the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs in Belgrade, Đorđe Natošević helped enhance physical education facilities in schools, while Dimitrije Matić underlined the importance of healthy, physically active children in the country's defense. These actions were crucial for developing military exercises and gymnastics in schools in 1881. However, the re-establishment of the national army in 1890 abolished the need for officer staff in schools, so the Minister of Education discharged them in the same year. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Stevan Todorović's art school and Ascanius Sedlmayers gymnastics school were founded as clubs for citizens in Serbia. Civil gymnastics groups and, later, Sokol clubs took over classes, and the problem was finally overcome in 1908 when the "Gymnastics School" was opened in Belgrade to train gymnasts. Nonetheless, we should not overlook the contribution of the officers that promoted physical exercise in Serbia from 1815 to 1918. In public organizations and schools, officers taught gymnastics and military training.

We can conclude that the officer cadre introduced various types of physical exercise in civilian schools and that soldiers' physical activity significantly impacted the civil system through fencing schools, swimming classes, gymnastics, and other activities. The paper's relevant literature and archival sources provide a new viewpoint on the identified relationships. This study could, to some extent, explain officer cadre contributions to gymnastics and military training (events and relationships).

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ISTORIJSKI PREGLED DOPRINOSA OFICIRA FIZIČKOM VASPITANJU U SRPSKIM CIVILNIM ŠKOLAMA OD 1815. DO 1918. GODINE

Ovaj istorijski pregled imao je za cilj da ukaže na doprinos srpskih oficira fizičkom vaspitanju u civilnim školama kroz ispitivanje njihovih istorijskih veza. Istražili smo međusobne odnose i dokazali njihovu relevantnost i doprinos teorijskim i kritičkim pristupom, koji je istakao značaj pokretanja fizičkog vaspitanja u gradskim školama, nastavnom osoblju i programima vežbanja. Fizičko vaspitanje bilo je od suštinskog značaja u obrazovanju i vaspitanju oficirskog kadra. Srbija je posle nezavisnosti mogla da se modernizuje i napreduje ekonomski, politički, atletski i akademski. Oficiri su dali nemerljiv doprinos borilačkim veštinama, konjičkim društvima i streljačkim grupama. Mnogi oficiri koji su završili Vojnu akademiju u inostranstvu u Srbiji obavljali su različite nastavne dužnosti u civilnim školama od 1815-1918. godine, dokazujući da su oficiri uticali na razvoj vojski u kojima su služili i dali značajan doprinos

masovnom širenju fizičkog vaspitanja (gimnastika i vojne veštine) obučavanjem omladine u civilnim školama ili sportskim klubovima u Kneževini Srbiji i Kraljevini Srbiji. Saznanja stečena u ovom istorijskom pregledu će nesumnjivo baciti više svetla na doprinos i rad oficira u srpskim civilnim školama u području fizičkog vaspitanja.

Ključne reči: *fizičko vaspitanje, civilne škole, vojni oficiri, Kneževina Srbija, Kraljevina Srbija*