

SOKOLSTVO IN UKRAINIAN REGIONS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE: FROM ORIGIN TO DOWNFALL

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to advance a better insight into the history of Sokolstvo (Sokol movement) in the Ukraine within the territorial borders of the Russian Empire, and the variety of reasons for its origin and downfall. Slavic origin of Sokolstvo, the activity of supporters of Sokol gymnastics (SG) in the popularization of Sokol idea and, a gradual rapprochement of supporters of the two opposing areas of reforming Russia for further development began ("Slavophiles" and "Westerners") contributed to the emergence and rapid development of the Sokol movement in the Ukrainian regions of Russia. In the 90s of the 19th century, SG began to be cultivated in the Sokol units of gymnastic societies, since 1907 independent institutions began to open. By World War I, Sokol gymnastic societies (SGS) in Ukraine were the largest group. SGS constantly trained instructors, but the majority of SG teachers were foreigners, Czech by nationality. SG was officially introduced into the military training of the army and the curricula of secondary schools and cadet corps. Sokol events were a significant part of the public life of many Ukrainian cities. Representatives of Ukrainian regional societies became members of the Board of the Union of the Russian Sokol, founded in 1910. The crisis of the Sokolstvo began in the years of the World War I due to the growth of xenophobic attitudes. During the years of Soviet power, the Sokol were accused of a bourgeois orientation, recognized as the "hotbed of counter-revolution" and banned in 1923.

Keywords: Sokol, gymnastics, Russian Empire, Ukraine.

INTRODUCTION

The conduct of this study and the preparation of the article were caused by the following reasons.

Activities of a gymnastic nature totals more than four thousand-year history. In spite of this long history, according to Russell (2013), gymnastics is currently evolving at an unprecedented pace. On this path, under the influence of political, socio-

economic and cultural factors, the state system, the dominant ideology and historical traditions, the history of gymnastics was formed in different countries.

The bright page in the history of gymnastics is *Sokolstvo* (Falconary). In the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Sokol idea conquered the

countries of Europe and immigrated to America (Bábela & Oborný, 2018). *Sokolstvo* expanded in the Ukrainian territories when an independent state did not exist, and its modern regions were part of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. Specifically, historical conditions determined fundamentally different vectors of development of *Sokolstvo* in different regions of modern Ukraine. This study will present the history of the origin and downfall of *Sokolstvo* in the Ukrainian regions of the Russian Empire.

In the historical dimension, the *Sokolstvo* in the Russian Empire and, accordingly, on its Ukrainian lands, did not exist for very long, about 20 years. There are a number of studies of the last three decades devoted to this problem (Gilbert, 2017; Kachulina, 2016; Prikhodko, 1998; Sirotkina, 2017). However, knowledge about the development of *Sokolstvo* in the Ukrainian regions is, first of all, a “view from the center”, from the capital of the Russian State. They do not take into account the fact that the Russian Empire at that time was a culturally and estate fragmented state with significant differences in the development of the same cultural phenomena in the regions. To date, case studies on the development of *Sokolstvo* in the regions of Ukraine (Liakh-Porodko, 2010, 2011; Prikhodko, 2011, 2012) are fragmented, and require further research and their systematization.

An important reason for the preparation of this article is the extreme limitation of English-language publications on the history of sports in the countries of the former USSR. Traditionally, such case studies of Slavic scholars are published in Russian and Ukrainian. This limits the ability of a wide English-speaking audience to get acquainted with the results of Ukrainian research, creates a barrier in communication between experts from different countries (Jirásek & Hopsicker, 2010).

Thus, the *purpose* of this study is to contribute to a better insight into the history

of *Sokolstvo* in the Ukraine, the variety of reasons for its origin and downfall. The selection criteria for the primary sources corresponded to the subject of research topic of *Sokolstvo*, its features in the Ukrainian regions of the Russian Empire. Data collection was carried out in various historical Archives of Ukraine (Kyiv) and Russia (St. Petersburg). Additionally, articles and dissertations of modern researchers were analyzed.

PRECONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOKOLSTVO IN THE UKRAINIAN REGIONS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

In the Russian Empire, *Sokolstvo* spread later than in other countries. This is explained by the fact that before the beginning of the “*great reforms*” of Tsar Alexander II (60-70s of the 19th century), Russia in all spheres of public life lagged behind Europe for several decades in its development, including the issues of physical education (PE) of the population. In the 19th century, German Turnen Gymnastics and Swedish Gymnastics systems were introduced in Russia. Swedish Gymnastics aroused amateur interest mainly among residents of the capital of Russia. German Turnen Gymnastics also did not take root on Russian soil, and during the period of aggravation of Russian-German relations (70s of the 19th century and later), a flurry of criticism against it especially increased (Oleynik & Grot, 2002; Sirotkina, 2017). The most important barrier for Russians was social reasons, as well as language problems because both social and sporting activities were performed in foreign languages (Grys, 1999).

Russian teachers, progressive public figures, representatives of the military elite of the turn of the 20th century A. Butovsky, P. Lesgaft, V. Ukhov, A. Anokhin et al., tried to create a national gymnastic system (Prikhodko, 1998). However, their inventions did not have wide support in

public and, as a rule, were localized in certain regions of the huge Russian state, where they originated. In general, despite the rather active debate in the medical and educational environment and the pressing social need for PE of the Russian population, during this period there was no clear strategy on this issue. Therefore, the appearance of *Sokolstvo* at the end of the 19th century in Russia found fertile ground for distribution both throughout the country and in Ukrainian regions (Kachulina, 2016). According to Alekseev, Gromova, and Silantev (2016), Prikhodko (1998), Sokol gymnastics (SG) gradually began to take a leading position among various gymnastic directions due to its attractiveness, active popularization and state support.

This process was facilitated by such significant factors.

1. *Slavic origin of Sokolstvo*. The idea of uniting the Slavs (Pan-Slavic idea), “skillfully spread by Sokols”, corresponded to the foreign policy goals of the Tsar and the Government, contributed to a certain consolidation of Russian society during the growing of the domestic political situation in the country (the first decade of the 20th century) and was extremely popular among secular wealthy youth and found support from wide sections of the bourgeois-democratic public (Oleynik & Grot, 2002, p. 8).

2. *The activity of supporters of SG in the popularization of Sokolstvo*, which promoted in active educational and publishing activities, used symbols of the Pan-Slavic movement, public demonstrations by SG, etc. The democratic organization of classes and membership in society made SG publicly accessible to various sectors of society (Kadilin, 1914; Sirotkina, 2017; Zmuda Palka & Siwek, 2018).

3. *At the turn of the 20th century, a gradual rapprochement of supporters of the two opposing areas of reforming Russia for further development began: “Slavophiles” and “Westerners”*. The *Slavophiles* advocated preserving the national identity

of the historical path of development of Russia on the basis of Orthodox Christian values and ideals. The *Westerners* were supporters of the development of Russia according to the Western European type. Therefore, *Sokolstvo* in Russia became, as it were, the personification of the results of a consensus of ideologies of *Slavophiles* and *Westerners* in a specific social sphere, specifically in PE. On the one hand, the Slavic origin of gymnastics and *Slavophile* principles are the basis of its ideology. On the other hand, SG was a product of European scientific thought and pedagogical experience.

Besides, at the turn of the 20th century, the idea of “*russification*” of non-Russian peoples living on its territory, in particular Ukrainians prevailed in the national politics of the Russian Empire. At the same time, for various political reasons, relations with Germany began to worsen and anti-German attitudes intensified in society. In the field of PE and sports, this was reflected in the following way: German Turnen Gymnastics became “undesirable” for popularization and preference was given to SG, the most attractive and closes in spirit to Russian society.

SOKOL GYMNASTICS IN THE PUBLIC LIFE OF THE UKRAINIAN REGIONS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

SG appeared in Russia through Czech mediation – thanks to gymnastics teachers from *Czechia* (the name of the Czech historical lands (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia), which was widely used in Russian-language primary sources) (Alekseev et al., 2016; Grys, 1999; Kachulina, 2016; Prikhodko, 2017; Sirotkina, 2017). In the 90s of the 19th century in Russia no one knew about the foreigners’ affiliation to the Sokol. They were perceived only as experienced gymnastics teachers (Sirotkina, 2017). Therefore, fans of SG as gymnastics from Czech origin carried out activities within the legal framework. They opened units in existing sports and

gymnastic organizations, worked as teachers in schools, took part in sports competitions, where they demonstrated all the advantages of SG through their own sports achievements (“Otchet,” 1910; “Sokol’sstvo,” 1910).

At the turn of the 20th century, the first sports and gymnastic organizations began to be founded in Ukrainian regions that actively promoted SG. Some studies indicate that as early as 1870, in *Volyn* (region of Ukraine), the Czech community founded the Sokol society for Czechs (persons from Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) residing in the region (Kachulina, 2016; Matsukevich, 2011; Sirotkina, 2013, 2017). However, it is believed that *Kievskoe Atleticheskoe Obschestvo* (Kyiv Athletic Society), founded in 1900 in Kyiv (the capital of modern Ukraine), stood at the origins of *Sokolstvo* on Ukrainian lands. The initiative group consisting of Czechs, who residing in Kyiv, under the leadership of the founder of the Society, Kyiv citizen Yevgeny Garnich-Garnitsky (founder of *Sokolstvo* on Ukrainian lands of Russia), began to purposefully promote SG. In 1905, on the basis of *Kievskoe Atleticheskoe Obschestvo*, an independent institution, the *Gimnasticheskoe Obschestvo “Yug”* (Society “South”) was formed, so named by analogy with the *Society “Sever”* (Society “North”, founded in 1903), which promoted SG in the capital St. Petersburg (“Ob utverzhdenii,” 1905). The Sokol unit of the Kyiv *Gimnasticheskoe Obschestvo “Yug”* was headed by V. Vondrak, led the classes *gymnaziarkh* (gymnastics teacher) F. Brabets (“Gimnasticheskoe obschestvo,” 1908). In 1908, the Kyiv *Gimnasticheskoe Obschestvo “Yug”* was renamed the *Sokol* (“Gimnasticheskoe obschestvo,” 1910).

Gimnasticheskoye obschestvo “Sokol” v Kieve (Gymnastics Society Sokol in Kyiv) was the largest and most respected Sokol organization in the Ukrainian region, consisting mainly of Czechs (80%). Classes were attended by “exclusively youth” and a large number of adolescents. The tradition of the Kyiv Sokol was the holding of the

fundraisers, the fees from which were used to finance regular trips to the Sokol *Slets* (rally, gathering or demonstration). The program of charity evenings always included SG, female gymnastics and athletics competitions (“Gimnasticheskoe obschestvo,” 1908). By 1913, Kyiv Sokol totaled about 100 permanent members and several dozen *visitors* (no member status). The structure of society included men’s, women’s and children’s gymnastics departments, a football team, wrestling, athletics, lawn tennis units, and a *drama kruzhok* (drama club) (“Gimnasticheskoe obschestvo,” 1910).

Sokolstvo quickly managed to gain popularity, despite obstacles from some administrative structures and criticism of supporters of other gymnastic systems. Material support for the *Sokolstvo* was provided by representatives of noblemen, industrialists, *kupechestvo* (merchants) and intelligentsia. Honorary members of Sokol gymnastic societies (SGS) were members of the imperial family, governors, mayors of cities, prosecutors, trustees of educational districts. This testified to the popularity of the *Sokolstvo* among the ruling class and helped in solving the problems of the lack of gyms (“Otchet,” 1910; “Otchet,” 1913). The main demographic feature of the spread of SG in the Ukrainian region was its coverage exclusively of the urban population from privileged estates: the nobility, *kupechestvo*, and some part of the *meschanstvo* (the lowest category of urban residents). The popularity of *Sokolstvo* among these estates was very high. The peasants and the urban proletariat had absolutely no access to SG.

After the defeat in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and during revolutionary situation (1905-1907), the *Sokolstvo* was able to suggest and consistently implement the idea of consolidating the nation, improving the body and spirit, so necessary for Russian society at that time (Alekseev et al., 2016). The “completely spoiled relations with Germany and Austria-Hungary” had a significant impact

(Sirotkina, 2017, p.325). After that, the attitude of the Tsar Nicholas II and the Government towards the SG as a gymnastic of foreign origin softened, and in 1907 it received state support and official status (Kachulina, 2016, p.115).

In the first two decades of the 20th century, SGS appeared in Ukrainian cities: Odesa, Kharkiv, Ekaterinoslav (Dnipro), Poltava, Kam'yanets'-Podil's'kyi, Zhytomyr, Chernigiv, Rivne, Lugansk, Kryvyi Rih, Simferopil, Yuzovka (Donetsk), etc. In each Ukrainian *Guberniya* (Province) of the Russian Empire SG and the Sokol movement had their own *gnezda* (organization, representative offices). The Sokol movement in the Ukrainian regions, as a whole in Russia, had a network structure. By 1914, 68 SGS were founded in the country (Liakh-Porodko, 2011). On January 1, 1915, in the Ukrainian region of Russia, there were 206 sports and gymnastic societies, of which SGS constituted the largest group ("Spisok obschestv," 1916).

The activities of SGS as independent public institutions included a wide range of forms of work: gymnastic classes for children and adults, sports competitions, traditional festivals and charity events to attract additional funds for the development of SG. Societies initiated the opening of SG *kruzhok* (unit) in secondary (male and female) schools and universities (Gotlib, 1909a; Liakh-Porodko, 2011; Prikhodko, 2012). The number of people wishing to engage in SG in them reached several dozen people. A feature of the cultural and educational activity of the Ukrainian SGS was the organization of female and children gymnastic units, gala evenings, balls, and out-of-town excursions. The money collected was used for the needs of SGS, and during the World War I – for the needs of the wounded.

In the first decade of the 20th century, SG began to be gradually introduced into the curriculum of Ukrainian schools. The initiators of this were school administrations and heads of board of

trustees (Prikhodko, 2012). The unique experience of PE of students on the basis of the SG was gained by the *Yaltinskaya Aleksandrovskaya Gimnaziya* (Yalta Alexander Gymnasium) in Crimea. The director of the Gymnasium, A. Gotlov-Gotlib, believed that SG "was most suitable for the moving Slavic temperament of Russian school youth" and "most fully corresponded to the pedagogical requirements of the Russian school" (Gotlib, 1909a, p. 10). The classical exercises of the SG system were taught in all classes, from 1 to 8, and in the SG *kruzhok*. Especially for exercises, SG costumes were purchased in Prague. The gymnastics teacher was a visiting reputable specialist. The organization of PE based on SG was discussed in the journals "*Russkaya Shkola*" (Russian School) and in the *Časopis "Sokol"* (Gotlib, 1909b).

In Russia, there was a practice of inviting SG teachers from Czech lands, especially to educational institutions for privileged estates and to gymnastic societies. It was believed that the professional level of these specialists was significantly higher than their local colleagues. At the same time, the salaries of Czech teachers were much higher (Grys, 1999; Prikhodko, 2017). In 1910, 32.6 % of the Sokol teachers who taught at educational institutions in Russia practiced in Ukrainian regions (Liakh-Porodko, 2010, p. 149). Later, in connection with the World War I and the 1917 Revolution, the migration processes of foreign teachers in the country took the reversed direction. Many specialists returned to their historical homeland, a significant part joined the *White Movement* (the pro-tsarist, anti-Bolshevik movement) and disappeared from the Ukrainian historical space during the *Civil War* (1917–1921). Only a small part of foreign gymnastics teachers continued their activities in Soviet Ukraine.

In 1912, SG was officially introduced into the program of secondary schools in Russia. Out of 1577 secondary schools in the country, 855 taught SG (Kachulina,

2016). According to Liakh-Porodko (2010, p. 148), SG was taught in male and female gymnasiums, commercial schools, cadet corps in cities as Kyiv, Chernigiv, Kharkiv, Ekaterinoslav, Sumy, Odesa, Zhytomyr, Bila Tserkva, Yalta, Lugansk, etc. Notably, that SG did not practically extend to the primary level of education of the Russian Empire, especially in rural schools.

In the first decade of the 20th century, public exercises SG began to be included in the program of gymnastic and sports events. The Gymnastic Festivals are an inalienable part of the cultural life of the public in many large and small cities throughout the country. They took place in the central squares and hippodromes in the presence of a large number of spectators. Usually, the holiday program included floor exercises and apparatus-work. In Kharkiv, annual *Festivals of Schoolchildren in SG for the Cup of Emperor Nicolas II* were held (Prikhodko, 1998).

The most saturated in the number of Sokol events in the Ukrainian region was 1913 (Prikhodko, 1998). In August, the *First All-Russian Olympiad* was held in Kyiv, the program of which included gymnastics competition and a *Gymnastic Festival of Students of Secondary Schools from Kiev and Chernigov*. The program of the *Festival* was public floor exercise with 275 male students, floor exercises with hoops of female students and team exercises of male students of six gymnasiums on apparatus ("Perepiska," 1913).

At the turn of the 20th century, sports began to emerge and develop in the Russian Empire. The Russian public associated sport primarily with competitive activity. There were heated public debates about the expediency of using the competitive method and competition in the PE of youth. Some members of the Russian Sokol regarded the sports "with great suspicion, believing ... that the principles of harmonious development and collectivism suffer in sports" (Sirotkina, 2017, p. 331). Despite this, *Sokolstvo* in Russia and in the regions of Ukraine, in addition to SG,

successfully developed such sports as athletics, handball, ice skating and skiing (Windhausen & Tsyapkina, 1995). It was a kind of advertising to attract young people to a physically active lifestyle and an opportunity to build relationships with sports societies (Kachulina, 2016). It was from the Sokol that the winners and prize-winners of the first all-Russian sports competitions came out. According to Alekseev et al., (2016), *Sokolsky movement for Russia is «the unique phenomenon of national scale», «the impressive samples, when the sport movement, borrowed abroad, becomes nearly the main support of national sport».*

Researchers emphasize that the years 1909–1914 were peak in the activity of the *Sokolstvo* in imperial Russia (Gilbert, 2017; Kachulina, 2016; Liakh-Porodko, 2011; Prikhodko, 1998; Sirotkina, 2013). In 1910, the *Union of the Russian Sokol* (URS) was founded, the chairman of which was elected a member of the *State Duma* (Parliament), Ukrainian A. S. *Gizhitskiy* ("Ustav," 1911). The URS united a fairly consolidated network of regional Sokol organizations and gave the movement a new dynamism. Thanks to the URS, congresses as forums of the PE public with the aim to consolidate the efforts of society in improving the physical development of people were first held in the Russian Empire ("Ustav," 1911, p. 4).

In April 1911, the *First Congress of the URS* took place in Moscow. Fourteen regional Sokol societies delegated their representatives to the Congress, of which five represented Ukrainian *gnezda*: Odesa, Chernigiv, Kyiv, Ekaterinoslav and Poltava. An active participant in the debates of the Congress from Ukraine K. Popel joined the Board of the URS from provincial societies. The main attention of the Congress was directed to the "Sokol idea as a means of moral, spiritual and physical healing of human and society, the rallying of Slavic peoples around it" ("Pokhodataystvu," 1913, p.13). At the Congress, it was decided to convene the

next congress two years later in Kyiv (the capital of modern Ukraine) as “the regional center of Russia, where the Sokol idea had a large number of supporters” (“Po khtaodaystvu,” 1913; Liakh-Porodko, 2011).

In 1913, the Second Congress of the URS took place in Kyiv. The journal “*Vestnik Russkogo Sokolstva*” wrote about this:

From all over the Russian land – from St. Petersburg to Odessa, from Volyn to Kavkaz – representatives of Sokol organizations gathered in Kyiv – the first stolnyi city [capital] of Russia ... Everywhere there is a lively, cheerful mood, joyful revival on all faces, laughter, loud conversations, noisy greetings are heard... those who were at the Congress, those who saw this general upsurge, this readiness to carry their forces to the benefit of the common cause, this amazing energy, which the members of the Congress were full of... could not help but get the impression that the Sokolstvo in Russia has a great future ... (“Kievskiy s'yezd”, 1913, p. 121).

At the Congress, many organizational issues were discussed and debates were held on improving the methodology and organizing the SG classes, competition rules, etc. (“Po khodataystvu,” 1913).

During these years, Sokol regional *Slets* also took place in the Ukrainian regions. In June 1913, the *First Sokol Slet Yugo-Zapadnogo Kraya* (South-Western Territory) was held in Kyiv, where delegates from 22 Sokol societies from all Ukrainian regions gathered (“Obshchestvo,” 1913; “Slet Sokolov,” 1913). At the *Slet*, the sketch of the *Sokolsky badge* was presented, the competition rules and the attitude of the *Sokolstvo* to sport were discussed, and exercises for male and female were demonstrated. The program of the event, in addition to traditional meetings, included athletics competitions with the participation of school gymnastics teachers (“Perepiska,” 1913, sh. 39).

In 1911, Russia joined the of the *Slavic Sokol Union*, but Ukrainian supporters of

the *Sokolstvo* since 1901 (*IV Slet*) have been regular participants in the *All-Slavic Sokol Slets*, which took place both in Prague and Sokol events in other European cities (Gajdoš, Provaznikova, Bednar, & Banjak, 2012; Zmuda Palka & Siwek, 2018). In 1907, the *Kiev Gimnasticheskoe Obschestvo “Yug”* and a group of students aged 16-18 from the *Yaltinskaya Aleksandrovskaya Gimnaziya*, took part in the competitions of the *5th All-Slavic Sokol Slets* in Prague (“Gimnasticheskoe obschestvo,” 1908; Gotlib, 1909a; “Russkiye sokola,” 1913).

In 1910, the first Sokol gym in Russia, the *Russkaya Sokolnya*, was opened in Kam'yanets'-Podil's'kyi in Ukraine (“Pervaya,” 1910/1911). In the same year, the *Sokol journal* was founded in Moscow under the editorship of D. P. Kuzmenko. Since 1913, the Journal became known as the *Russian Sokol*. The format of the Journal, the range of discussion questions, the wealth of illustrations, the guidelines for gymnastics, were largely repeated from the Prague Journal *Sokol*. However, it competed favourably with similar small Russian journals. This made the Journal and SG even more attractive in the eyes of its fans throughout the country and attracted new supporters to the ranks of Russian *Sokolstvo* (Alekseev, et al., 2016; Pikhodko, 1998). Between 1913-1917, the journal *Vestnik Russkogo Sokolstva* was also published in the Russian Empire. During this period, training manuals and books on SG were published by Y. Wagner, B. Gonzatke, A. Gotalov-Gottlib, M. Zusailov, E. Malyi, etc. Textbooks on SG were translated from Czech (Prikhodko, 1998).

In 1910, a new “*Manual on Gymnastics for the Army*” was adopted in Russia and SG was included in the curriculum of military schools and in the physical training of the active Russian Army, where it remained until the 1917 Revolution.

A serious crisis in the development of the *Sokolstvo* in Russia and in its Ukrainian

regions was caused by the outbreak of the World War I. Many athletes voluntarily went to the front, driven by a patriotic mood and desire to defend their motherland. The government announced the *"mobilization of sports"* (the Program of government of Russia with the goal of attracting sports organizations to prepare reserves for the army) ("Materialy," 1916). For the SG teachers of Czech nationality and ordinary foreigners from Germany and Austria-Hungary who lived in Russia, this patriotic wave turned into progressive xenophobia (Alekseev, et al., 2016). There was a sharp discussion in SGSs about the possibility of non-Russian subjects taking part in their activities. With the outbreak of War, one of the key tenets of the Sokol collapsed – the idea of creating the union of all brotherly Slavic peoples. The editorial article of *Sokol journal* contained the thesis that *"nothing prevents the Polish, Czech and Croatian Sokols, battled in the Austrian-Hungarian army, from shooting to their Russia 'brothers': 'There is no Sokol Movement without the Slavic idea'"* (Kadilin, 1914, as cited in Alekseev, et al., 2016). By 1916, the URS practically stopped its work due to the self-liquidation of most of the *gnezda* in Russia.

SOKOLSTVO IN THE FIRST YEARS OF SOVIET POWER

In 1918, an initiative group arose to revive the *Sokolstvo* in the Republic of Soviets and convene a *Slet*. By that time, the Sokols had departed from politics, dissociated themselves from the tasks of the Soviet government of *"universal compulsory military training"* and adhered to the principles of Slavophilism. The Sokol units that remained in the USSR developed vigorous activity to popularize SG in educational institutions. SG was also actively developed by proletarian PE organizations.

However, the program and activities of the Sokols did not satisfy the power of the Soviets, which saw them as a *"hotbed of*

counter-revolution" (Sirotkina, 2017, p. 333). The *Sokolstvo* was accused of *"bourgeois orientation and anti-Soviet ideology"* (Liakh-Porodko, 2008). The *Central Department of Universal Military Training*, together with the *Komsomol*, began a *great battle* for the *"purification of sports and gymnastic clubs from class-hostile elements,"* such as Sokol (Stolbov & Chudinov, 1962, p. 131). Propaganda of *"anti-sokolstvo"* was carried out on the pages of magazines and newspapers, from the rostrums of party congresses: *"Sokolyatina (falcon meat) needs to be burned with a hot iron and the road for Soviet physical culture, which is so necessary for us as air, must be cleaned of this rot"* (Smolin, 1924, as cited in Liakh-Porodko, 2008). In 1923, the activities of the Sokol in the USSR were officially and finally banned. Many of the leaders of the *Sokolstvo* remaining in the USSR were repressed. The communist government persistently uprooted from the history of the USSR all the positive that was founded in tsarist Russia. In the Soviet textbook *"History of Physical Culture"* (1962) for higher education institutions of PE, *Sokolstvo* is mentioned only in a negative context as a counter-revolutionary nationalist reactionary organization whose activity was *"aimed at supporting and glorifying the autocracy and popularizing Western European methods of education"* to the detriment of traditional national exercises and methods (Stolbov et al., p. 113). Such rhetoric persisted until the collapse of the USSR. The Russian *Sokolstvo* continued to exist in emigration, in particular, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Latvia, France, USA and China (Kachulina, 2016; Lushin, 2019; Matsukevich, 2011; Sirotkina, 2013).

However, in spite of everything, the *Sokolstvo* left a noticeable mark on the history of Ukraine and other countries of the former USSR. In 1924, *Sokol Slets* were transformed into *Spartakiads of the peoples of the USSR*. Sokol gymnastic terminology,

used by the USSR until 1938 (Kachulina, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The *Sokolstvo*, founded by Miroslav Tyrš, is by its nature a model for the education of a physically developed educated person with an active civic position. It reflected the spirit and social needs of his time. The values of the *Sokolstvo* are very close to the mentality of the Ukrainian people and this explains its popularity, the dynamics of the development of a variety of forms of activity in the Ukrainian regions of the Russian Empire. The *Sokolstvo* on the Ukrainian lands of Russia manifested itself, first of all, as a system of PE of the people, which received support from both the advanced part of public and the official authorities. Despite all the prohibitions in the Soviet period, the *Sokolstvo* largely determined the vector and peculiarity of the development of gymnastics in Ukrainian educational institutions for many decades, the popularity of sports such as rhythmic and artistic gymnastics, athletics, football, handball, etc. Ukrainians love to hold mass sporting events. The history of the *Sokolstvo* in Ukraine obviously would not be complete without a detailed study of its development in the Ukrainian regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

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