
Original research article

THE SERBIAN SOKOL CLUB IN BANJA LUKA

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SUMMARY

The Sokol movement (from the Slavic word for "falcon") appeared in Czech in 1862 as a new way of physical training, a part of the framework of the Czech resistance to Austro-Hungarian government. Even though the Sokol ideology sprung up in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1893, the first Serbian gymnastics club "Obilić" wasn't established until 1904 in Mostar. The Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka was founded in the middle of 1907 and was working until July 1914 when all the Sokol clubs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were disbanded. Within that period the Serbian Sokols had a major role in expansion of Sokol ideas in Bosnia.

Historical method was used in this research. The research subject was the development of Sokol ideas in the Banja Luka region, and the aim was to illuminate and tear from oblivion the development and work of the Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka by the end of July 1914, and to explore its significance for the growth of Sokol beliefs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key words: Sokol ideas, Sokols, public trainings, *slets*, the Sokol club

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INTRODUCTION

The Sokol movement represented the system of gymnastics trainings first appeared in Czech in 1862. The movement expanded really quickly and reached other Slavic nations, so it also arrived among the Serbs living in contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Even though the Serbs in Foča tried to form a gymnastics club in 1893, they didn't succeed in their intention. After the suggested proposals had been forbidden by the local Government (Zemaljska vlada), they thought of an idea to form alcohol forbidden club "Pobratimstvo" in which gymnastics section was acting. The proposals for this club weren't approved by the government until 1899. The first Serbian gymnastics club "Obilić" was founded in Mostar in 1904. Within the following few years, in Bosnia and Herzegovina gymnastics clubs were appearing by the various titles, depending on what was their main ideology (pro-Serbian or pro-Yugoslav). After the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 the Serbs started to strive for union of their gymnastics clubs. These organizations were united in the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community (Srpska sokolska župa bosanskohercegovačka) with headquarters in Sarajevo in the conferences held on 8th August as well as 3rd and 4th of December 1909.¹ That was the moment when all the Serbian clubs in Bosnia and Herzegovina obtained the name of the Serbian Soko ("Srpski Soko"). The local Government allowed the proposals for the Community on 26th February 1910, so that the constitutional conference was held on 9th May the same year.

By the decree of the local Government, proclaimed on 2nd May 1913 (published in Sarajevo gazette on 3rd May), general Oskar Potiorek declared "specific measures" according which all the Serbian clubs in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been disbanded. The Sokols, as well as the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community, shared the fate of the other clubs. The reasons for this act had been "The Skadar crisis" (Skadarska kriza) and Balkan wars in which both Serbia and Montenegro, as free countries with an enormous influence on the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, had taken part. Under the pressure of the European public community and the management of disbanded organizations, especially Vojislav Basarović, president of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community, these measures were abolished on 15th November the same year. That's when a large number of clubs renewed their work. However, there were some that have not done this. The final suspension of the Serbian Sokol clubs in Bosnia and Herzegovina occurred on 25th July 1914, when the general Potiorek dismissed the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community and confiscated all its possessions. The persecution of the Sokol members, mainly the Serbs, started.²

¹ Hajrudin Ćurić, *Prvo srpsko sokolsko društvo u Sarajevu (1905 – 1919)*, (Sarajevo, Zavod za fizičku kulturu, 1975)

² Hajrudin Ćurić, „Kako je ukinuta Srpska sokolska župa bosansko-hercegovačka“, *Prilozi za istoriju fizičke kulture u Bosni i Hercegovini* br. 4 (1971): 1 – 10.

After the war, the Serbian Sokols in Bosnia and Herzegovina started to rebuild their organizations. The Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community was also renewed. Its management made a decision to strike the word *Serbian* from the name of the club and join the Croatian and the Muslim Sokols in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 27th April 1919.³

THE SUBJECT AND THE AIM

The Sokol principles in Banja Luka haven't been examined enough. Considering that this problem represents very important part of the history of physical education in Banja Luka and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we decided that the subject of this research would be the development of Sokol principles in the region of Banja Luka. The aim of the research is to light up the rising of the Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka, its work and the growth until the end of July 1914, as well as its influence on the strengthening of the Sokol ideas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

METHOD

Historical method was used in dealing with this subject. Historical sources originated from the period of founding and acting of the club, as well as some sources written in the later ages, were looked through with criticism and analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The forming of the club

We found the first data of founding of gymnastics circle in Banja Luka in *the Bill of the State Attorney's Office in Banja Luka (Optužnica Državnog odvjetništva u Banjoj Luci)*, where it is alleged that a gymnastics circle, led by Professor Vladislav Skarić, was founded on 20th October 1905. The circle has grown in the Sokol club later.⁴ According to data found in *The Vrbas newspapers (Vrbaske novine)* the

³ Hajrudin Ćurić, „Srpska sokolska župa bosansko-hercegovačka“, *Prilozi za istoriju fizičke kulture u Bosni i Hercegovini* br. 1 (1968): 3 – 9.

⁴ Оптужница Државног одвјетништва у Бањој Луци бр. 1, 685/15, стр. 238.

Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka started its activities at the end of 1906.⁵ The same data is mentioned in *The Serbian Soko (Srpski Soko)*.⁶ However, we haven't come across the exact date of founding. During this first unofficial period of "Sokol" activities its initiators encouraged citizens of Banja Luka to join the Sokols; they also gave proposals of the club for approval to the Government and organized a temporary managing board of the club itself. Initiators and organizers of the Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka were Vladislav Skarić, Savo Surutka, Aco Babić, Mića Baslać and others⁷, and even Petar Kočić, a writer, found himself among founders of "The Serbian Soko" in 1907.⁸ In those times, it even took a few years for the authorities to approve the proposals and to let any organization to be found, so we might conclude that the Banja Luka's Sokols haven't waited for a long time. The permission for founding and work was given to them on 14th May 1907. This date can be taken as a starting point of official club activity. This club was enlisted in the register of sports and Sokol organizations by the number 76085.⁹ Exactly one month after that, on 14th June at 8 p.m. in Banja Luka, the members attended the Constitutional conference when the first Managing board was elected.¹⁰ Vladislav Skarić, a professor in The Grammar school (Velika realna gimnazija), was elected president, and Petar Kočić was chosen for his deputy. The position of secretary was trusted to Petar Oreščanin, a savings bank clerk, and the place of treasurer got Vlado Malić, a merchant. Milan Kovačević, a bank clerk, was given a position of a keeper. Assembly's participants became Prof. Dr. Vaso Glušac, Branko Stričević, a merchant, and Petar Miljević, a measurer, while Vladislav Babić, a merchant, Joca Mihailović, a clerk in the State bank, and Savo Miljković, a tailor's assistant, were chosen for their deputies. Aksa Bajić, the director of the Credit Office, Dušan Puvačić, a merchant, and Mićo Bogdanović, a clerk in the State bank, became revisers. Around 100 members joined the club.¹¹

We haven't managed to find many pieces of information about the Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka for the period till the World War I. The reasons for this

⁵ Божо Митровић, „Соколске свечаности“, *Врбаске новине*, 5. јун 1938.

⁶ „Нов Српски Соко у Босни“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари*, бр. 9 (1907): 159.

⁷ Божо Митровић, „Соколске свечаности“, *Врбаске новине*, 5. јун 1938.

⁸ Ђорђе Микић, *Бања Лука култура грађанског друштва* (Бања Лука: Институт за историју, 2004)

⁹ Ljubiša Zečević, „Uticaj društveno-političke i ekonomske kostelacije u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austrougarske vladavine na razvoj fizičke kulture“ (Doktorska disertacija, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Fakultet za fizičku kulturu, 1988)

¹⁰ „Српски Соко“, *Отаџбина*, 29. јун 1907.

¹¹ „Српски Соко у Бањалуци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 2 (1907): 27 – 28.

are, probably, inefficient arrangements inside the club at the beginning of their work and very small number of written traces concerning its activities, the confiscation of documents in the time of “specific measures” and at the beginning of the World War I by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, as well as destruction of the documents during the war itself.

The club activities from the founding till the end of July 1914

“The Serbian Sokol” in Banja Luka had numerous problems in the first years of its work. Banja Luka’s Sokols neither had their own gym (especially difficult was in the wintertime), nor they had expert trainers of gymnastics. Also the financial situation wasn’t too promising. However, good will and enthusiasm of its members helped the club to grow. They spread the Sokol spirit to their fellow-citizens, to the population of the nearby villages, by organizing various events (public trainings, massive gymnastic festivals called *slets*, lectures, parties). They also took part in entertainment shows given by different cultural and educational organizations in the region.

Soon after the Constitutional conference, the management of the club summoned a special meeting which had a task to discuss the possibility of the club’s name being changed. During the period of the founding of the first gymnastics clubs in Serbia there were disagreements between *dušanovci* (whose guiding line was traditional Serbia) and the Sokols (who followed the Slavic ideology). The problem was carried on to the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina where, too, there had been followers of the both streams. In the middle of 1907 the members of the gymnastics club “Dusan the Mighty” (“Dusan the Mighty”) from Sarajevo started the initiative wishing that all gymnastics clubs in the country come together by one joint name “Dusan the Mighty”.¹² The members of the club from Banja Luka soon after, on 2nd September of the current year at 6 p.m. had the conference deciding whether the club’s name should be changed. The members’ uniforms would proportionally be modified with the club’s name.¹³ There were opposed attitudes with many of the members, so in the following session there were split opinions concerning the name of the club. Nevertheless, the name “Dusan the Mighty” was kept after the heated discussion and the secret voting on 23rd May 1908.¹⁴ After the forming of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community all gymnastics clubs were given the name the Serbian

¹² „Душан Силни“, *Отаџбина*, 6. јул 1907.

¹³ „Душан Силни“, *Отаџбина*, 21. септембар 1907.

¹⁴ Мићо Богдановић, „Душан Силни у Бањајалуци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 11 (1908): 171 – 172.

Soko, which was the case with the club in Banja Luka, too. That way the original name was restored and it stood on from 1909 till 1914. It is of course clear that the name itself wasn't the problem but it served in the conflict of the two political streams. This conflict brought discomfort to the freshly founded Banja Luka's club, and along with the other poor conditions, it resulted with the bad work and uneasy spirits among members.

The Managing board was trying to solve problem in the deficiency of expert trainers of gymnastics in Banja Luka in various ways. In the period after the founding the leader was being chosen out of existing order. This was not a permanent solution, so that Dimšo Božić, a leading trainer of "The Serbian Soko" from Tuzla, was assigned that position in 1908. He has just moved to Banja Luka and has made some positive expert changes.¹⁵ However, he hasn't stayed for a long time in this city on the Vrbas River. After his departure, once again there was a silent period which had been there before his coming. In *The Serbian Soko* magazine concerning this, it was written: *Shortly before brother Božić, a former leading trainer from B. Luka, was going to leave, it seemed the club itself had been struck by some kind of darkness, for suddenly, and with no apparent reason, it had started to fall apart and weaken, like it had stopped to live.*¹⁶ When the position of the leader took over Savo Surutka, a merchant, once again the progress was made in the Sokol club activities.¹⁷

The problem of the deficiency of the club accommodations was the question for the discussion during every meeting. So, on 2nd September 1907, it was agreed that Đorđo Stričević and Stevo Marić try to arrange with Lazar Popović the lowest reasonable price for some of his accommodations, putting them at club's disposal.¹⁸ During the meeting on 23rd May 1908, the question of training space was one of the key ones. As nothing had been done to improve these conditions, three members of the club were chosen to raise funds for building the Sokol's gym in the shortest possible time. They raised funds for their own gym in every opportunity, at parties and cultural events. In the year 1913, the Gym Construction Fund for the Serbian Sokols in Banja Luka was created, but all the money raised was spent on organizing *Vidovdanski slet* held in Banja Luka in 1914.¹⁹ The longest period of time the Sokols stayed in an old building of the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 12 (1909): 195 – 196, стр. 195.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ „Душан Силни“, *Отаџбина*, 21. септембар 1907.

¹⁹ „Соколи селе у свој дом“, *Врбаске новине*, 4. јануар 1933.

Serbian primary school next to the Balkan hotel²⁰ and at the open playground next to the Edison cinema. The Sokol Hall (Sokolski dom) in the biggest city of Bosnian Frontier (Bosanska Krajina) didn't see the light of day until 1933, and it was completely finished in 1937.



Photography 1. Prof. Vladimir Skarić, Milan Zarić and Prof. Dr. Vaso Glušac²¹

The Serbian gymnastics club "Dusan the Mighty" held its ordinary yearly conference on 23rd May 1908. The participants were discussing all current issues (club's accommodations, deficiency of the expert trainers, poor financial situation, and the change of name). All these problems caused another one- decrease in the club's membership. The club management expected improvement in activities in the following year, as they trusted the position of the leader to Dimšo Božić, the leading trainer of "The Serbian Soko" from Tuzla. At the end of the session, a new managing board was elected. Vladislav Skarić was kept in the chief position as the president, and Dr. Aco Babić, who held a position of the club physician, was elected for his deputy. Mičo Bogdanović, a clerk in the State bank, was elected as a secretary, Vaso Bokonjić was a treasurer, and Nikola Majkić was positioned a club archivist. Ljubomir Babić, M. Lajić²², and Branko Stričević were elected Assembly's Participants, and their deputies were Aksa Bajić, Dušan Puvačević and Savo Surutka. Tihomir Kondić, Živko Nježić and Tode Popović became revisers.²³

²⁰ in the 1930s in that place a building was built, present day is the place of the City hall.

²¹ Милан Јанковић, "Слобода" и "Југославија" предратна тајна ђачка друштва, Бањалучки ђачки процес 1914/15 (Бања Лука, 1939): 33. и 63. и Гимназија Бања Лука (2012), www.gimnazijabanjaluka.org/VasoGlusac.aspx, (preuzeto 21. juna 2013)

²² We haven't managed to find his name in analyzed sources.

²³ Мићо Богдановић, „Душан Силни у Бањалуци“, Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари бр. 11 (1908): 171 – 172.

In the first half of 1909 two ordinary yearly conferences of "The Serbian Sokol" from Banja Luka were held. In the first, not so called upon, session all expected items in the agenda were discussed over, but the agreement wasn't made concerning the issue of the new Managing board. Nevertheless, in the second conference, held on 29th May, the new Board was elected. As a former president asked not to be reelected on that position, justifying his decision by his overwhelming employment, he was replaced by Mile Janković, a merchant, while Živko Nježić, a solicitor's clerk, was elected his deputy. The position of the club secretary was given to Toma O. Mutić, an actuary in Diocesan Council, and the treasurer was Branko Milošević, a clerk in the Serbian Credit Office. The place of the keeper was trusted once again to Nikola V. Majkić. The Assembly's Participants became Savo J. Surutka (who was also elected as a leader), Mihailo Đukić, an accountant, and Kosta Šukalo, a merchant's assistant. The posts of the deputies were trusted to Dušan Lazičić, a chancellor in Diocesan Council, Stevan Kerkez, a bank clerk, and Jovo Kandić, a landlord. The members of the financial supervisory board became Vladislav Skarić, Božidar Kremenović, a court's clerk and Petar Popović, a professor.²⁴



Photography 2. The Serbian Sokols as the members of the Sokol club in Prague in 1911, in the first row the second on the right is Dr. Jovo Bokonjić from Banja Luka²⁵

²⁴ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 12 (1909): 195 – 196.

²⁵ Photography in property of Dragojla Tošić.

The next regular yearly conference of "The Serbian Soko" was held on 17th January 1910. The session was opened by the deputy of the president, Živko Nježić, who informed the committee about the death of one of the club members, Dimitrije Nikolić, a judge. After paying the last respect to the deceased, a former leader submitted a resignation for his overbearing engagements, but the Assembly members turned it down and he was reelected to the same position.²⁶ However, in the course of the year he was replaced by Velimir Ćesarević.²⁷ What followed was the report of the Managing board, where it was emphasized that the club property had been doubled during the year before. Savo Surutka suggested that trainees should be insured during the trainings, while Vladislav Skarić asked the founding of the alcohol forbidden section of the Sokols. By the end of the session a new board was elected. Risto Božić, solicitor's clerk, became a club president, and Milan Zarić, a teacher, was his deputy. At the position of the treasurer, the secretary and the keeper remained the same members. Petar Popović and Jovo Kandić joined Kosta Šukalo in the committee positions, and for their deputies were elected Mihailo Mitrović, a construction worker, Dragutin Mitraković, a merchant and Vid Pantić, a shoemaker. Vladislav Skarić remained the reviser, and Dane Ivezić, a solicitor, and Stevan Kerkez joined him.²⁸

The main yearly conferences of the Sokol club in Banja Luka were held on 4th February in 1912, and on 15th February in 1914.²⁹ We haven't succeeded to find reports from the other sessions held till 1914, but we managed to single out some of the club officials for the period 1911-1914 using the data from the other sources. In *The Tenth Anniversary Prosvjeta's Memorial (Spomenica o proslavi desetogodišnjice Prosvjete)* from 1912 it's mentioned that the delegates of the Sokol club from Banja Luka, the leader Milan Grubanović and deputy of the president Milan Zarić attended the celebration.³⁰ Milan Zarić also represented the club in the conference of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community held in 1912.³¹ Đorđe Mikić states that the club leader from 1912 till 1914 was

²⁶ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари*, бр. 7 (1910): 136 – 137.

²⁷ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари*, бр. 1 (1910): 10.

²⁸ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 7 (1910): 136 – 137.

²⁹ Оптужница Државног одвјетништва у Бањој Луци, бг. 1, 685/15.

³⁰ *Споменица о прослави десетогодишњице Просвјете* (Сарајево: „Просвјета“, 1912)

³¹ Hajrudin Ćurić, *Istorija „Srpskog Sokola“ u Sarajevu* (Sarajevo: „Bosanska pošta“, 1940)

Ljubomir Popović.³² Dragutin Dakić held a position of the club secretary from 15th February 1914.³³ The representatives of the Sokols from Banja Luka took part in the meetings in Sarajevo on the occasion of founding of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community. The Sokols from Banja Luka were represented by Savo Surutka and Branko Milošević in the first such meeting held on 8th August 1909.³⁴ This club was one of the first nine joining the Community during its constitutional conference held on 9th May 1910. The Sokols from Banja Luka regularly took part in any Community activities. According to a report of one party held in Banja Luka in October 1909 it's mentioned that Živko Nježić was the club president at that moment,³⁵ so we assume that he, being a deputy of the president, took all the responsibilities after Mile Janković had stepped away from the position for (to us) unknown reason in the course of 1909. Živko Nježić opened the next Assembly conference, while there's no mentioning of Mile Janković, which also proves our conclusion given above.³⁶ According the report of the club party held in 1910, it is mentioned that the leader at that time was Velimir Ćesarević,³⁷ who represented his club in the specific conference of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community held on 10th October 1910. In *The Bill of the State Attorney's Office in Banja Luka*³⁸, it is stated that Vaso Glušac was elected for the head position of the Sokols in 1911 and 1912, while the same position was held by Mića Baslać for the next two years. In the same document, it is alleged that Vladislav J. Babić kept a post of the deputy of the president of "The Serbian Soko" during *Vidovdanski slet* in 1914.

We found some data for the year 1912 concerning the number and the structure of the membership in the Serbian Soko club in Banja Luka. According to these there were total 86 members: 25 man trainees, 12 woman trainees, 40 members of the Sokol youth and 5 leading trainers.³⁹

³² Ђорђе Микић, *Бања Лука култура грађанског друштва* (Бања Лука: Институт за историју, 2004)

³³ *Veleizdajnički proces 1915 – 1916*

³⁴ Петар Д. Павловић, *Српски Соко* (Српско Сарајево, Витешко друштво Српски Соко, 1999)

³⁵ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 1 (1909): 68.

³⁶ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 7 (1910): 136 – 137.

³⁷ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 1 (1910): 10.

³⁸ Оптужница Државног одвјетништва у Бањој Луци бр. 1, 685/15.

³⁹ „Соколска друштва“ у *Календар Просвјета за преступну годину 1912*. (Сарајево: „Просвјета“, 1911): 295 – 297.

The data concerning the number of members as well the financial situation in the Sokol club in Banja Luka from 1907 till 1912 were presented by Ljubiša Zečević and they were as follows:

Year	Members			Finances		
	Active	Others	Total	Income	Expense	Profit (in crowns)
1907	16	44	60	613	114	498
1908	30	29	59	1583	892	690
1909	33	36	69	2007	663	1344
1910	42	65	107	3367	3326	3041
1911	119	-	119	2547	1666	2380
1912	31	78	109	1531	1564	1907 ⁴⁰

The club from Banja Luka shared the same fate with the other clubs in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1913. That is, it had to stop its activities for a few months because of "specific measures" enforced by the authorities. The activities of the Sokols were renewed the same year, but only till July 1914 when the movement was completely disbanded because the war broke out.

Activities of the club

- Parties and public trainings

The Sokol club in Banja Luka organized numerous shows, parties and public trainings (exercises). The club organized its first party with public training on 1st August 1908 in the hall of the Balkan hotel. The Sokol beliefs haven't been popular in the city at that time yet, so the attendance to the public training was very low. Dimšo Božić was the leader at that moment so he was the most responsible for the part of the program when the exercises were performed. The Sokols from Banja Luka saved all the funds, raised during this and every other

⁴⁰ Ljubiša Zečević, „Uticaj društveno-političke i ekonomske kostelacije u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austrougarske vladavine na razvoj fizičke kulture“ (Doktorska disertacija, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Fakultet za fizičku kulturu, 1988)

party they organized in the following years, to the purpose of building the Sokol's gym.⁴¹

For the success of the first show in the open space, held at the end of spring 1909, all the merits were assigned to Savo Surutka. Back then the members took part in the party organized by the Charity Institution of the Serbian Women from Banja Luka. They drew attention of the large number of the present civilians to their trainings, which resulted with the increase of the members in the following period.⁴²

During the period before the World War I, members of the Sokol club from Banja Luka most frequently organized their parties in the Balkan hotel. This was the case with the party organized in honour of members of the County committee of Banja Luka and Bihać (okrug banjalučko-bihački). The council held a conference on 26th October 1909, and the Sokol club prepared a party with a very interesting program in the evening of the same day. The Sokols performed: free exercises with spindles, exercises on a high and parallel bars, the high jump of the bars using a skipping rope, exercises on a Pommel horse, pyramids,⁴³ as well as wrestling of the two members. The party was well attended, and had the double role. The first was to raise funds and the second was to introduce the Sokol ideas to the committee members and to citizens of Banja Luka, especially the young ones. For that purpose, the leader Savo Surutka made a speech about the Sokol ideas.⁴⁴

The similar party was organized the following year at the same date, but this time in the cooperation with the Serbian Singing Club "Unity" (SPD "Jedinstvo"). It is interesting to state that the section of the woman performers appeared for the first time with the five forms of basic exercises. The Sokol adolescents, together with its girl section, showed their skills. The members did the pugilism. Velimir Ćesarević, the leading trainer of the Sokols from Banja Luka, directed the expert part of the performance.⁴⁵

In the spring of 1914, on 30th April, the members of the "Serbian Soko" attended the commemoration of Zrinski and Frankopan which had been arranged

⁴¹ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 12 (1909): 195 – 196.

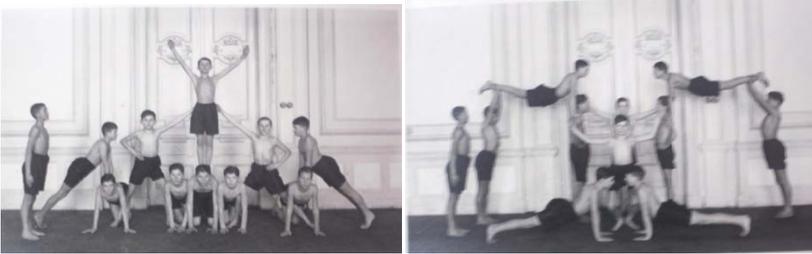
⁴² Ibid.

⁴³The pyramids are the Sokolian exercises performed in the groups of several trinees.

⁴⁴ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 4 (1909): 82.

⁴⁵ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 1 (1910): 10.

in the Catholic church. The Serbian and the Croatian Sokols stood one next to the other in their formal garments.⁴⁶



Photography 3. The Sokol youth - the students of the 3rd year of the grammar school-performing the pyramids in Subotica on the occasion of the St. Sava's school celebration⁴⁷

- Slets

Year 1910 was full of the Sokol events in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The held events were: The slet (came from the Czech word for "a flocking of birds") of Herzegovinian Sokols in Nevesinje, Posava-podrinian (Posavsko-podrinjski) slet in Priboj, as well as the slet of the Serbian Sokols from the Frontier. The last one was held at Moštanica monastery at the foot of Kozara mountain, which was organized by the Serbian Sokol clubs from Bosnian Frontier as their first joint slet, on 19th August. The representatives of all the clubs met in Banja Luka on 4th July to agree on manner of organizing this festival. The actual location of performing this slet was chosen-by the Serbian monastery next to which there's a resting place of the Frontier Duke Petar Petrović Pecija, who led the uprising from 1858 till 1875 in that territory. The day before the slet, the members of the clubs from Banja Luka, Prijedor, Bihać and Krupa had met in Prijedor, from where they set off towards the meeting spot at the monastery. They camped and slept there. That same night, the Sokols from Kozarska Dubica welcomed the Sokols from Gradiška, and the Pobratims from Laminci and Razboj, and Stevo Žakula, the leader of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community, joined them as well. Early in the morning, they set off for Moštanica, where they met the Sokols that had arrived the day before. Around 170 Sokols gathered, out of which there were 28 members from Banja Luka. The festival was opened at 11.30 a.m. by Stevo Žakula, a guest belonging to the club from Tuzla, and P.S. Ivančević,⁴⁸ a prior of the monastery. They spoke about the life and the work of Duke Petar and about the growth of

⁴⁶ Милан Јанковић, "Слобода" и "Југославија" предратна тајна ђачка друштва, Бањапучки ђачки процес 1914/15 (Бања Лука, 1939)

⁴⁷ АЈ, Двор Краљевине Југославије, 200 – 287

⁴⁸ We haven't managed to find his name in analyzed sources.

Sokol principles in that region. Later it followed a speech about the abstinence given by P. Đurić whose name we haven't managed to find in analyzed sources. After the introductory part, it followed the performance of the Sokols and the Pobratims in front of numerous spectators. Joint exercises from the fifth Sokol slet in Ravanica were shown. The Sokols from Dubica performed five pyramids, while the members of the club from Gradiška worked with sticks. The adolescents belonging to the club from Dubica surprised all present spectators by doing several exercises. Some time later, a competition was held. The Sokols competed in the various sporting disciplines: stone tossing, jumping and running, while peasant section was engaged in throwing cannonballs and running. Upon the finish of the competition, it came handing in the awards to the winners and spending time with comrades until the late hours. It is interesting that the alcohol wasn't consumed throughout the day at all, and that's why there were no any problems and the day was spent in high spirits.⁴⁹

After the *slet* had been finished, the conclusion was that similar events should be organized every year and the Sokol clubs from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina should be included. This was the reason for the meeting of the Sokols held in Banja Luka on 7th April the following year. The issue of the meeting was the arrangements around slet in the Frontier, in the city on the Vrbas River, although we don't have any data that this particular *slet* was ever realized.⁵⁰



Photography 4. "The Serbian Soko" preparing for Vidovdanski slet in 1914⁵¹

⁴⁹ „I slet krajiških srpskih sokolova“, *Srpski Soko - list za sokolске ствари* бр. 12 (1910): 246 – 248.

⁵⁰ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Srpski Soko - list za sokolске ствари*, бр. 4 (1911): 59.

⁵¹ Ђорђе Микић, *Бања Лука, култура грађанског друштва* (Бања Лука: Завод за историју, 2004): 269.

The biggest slet in Bosnian Frontier till the World War I was held on Vidovdan (great Serbian saint's day, 28th June) 1914 in Banja Luka. The Sokol and the Pobratim clubs from Banja Luka and its nearby settlements took part in this slet. There were Sokols from Zagreb, Sisak and other cities.⁵² The preparations for this gathering were taking a long time. The main organizers were the members of the Sokol club from Banja Luka, especially its officials Vladislav Babić, Mića Baslać and Dragutin Dakić.⁵³ All the money, raised up to that moment by the Gym Construction Fund for the Sokols in Banja Luka, was spent on the organization of that slet. At daybreak Banja Luka was decorated with flower, flags and tapestry, and the citizens of Banja Luka were woken up by the Sokol's music. The competitions, under the guidance of Ljubomir Popović, started in front of the old Orthodox church of Holy Trinity early in the morning. His Eminence Metropolitan Vasilije made a commemoration to heroes from Kosovo inside the church, and after that a great procession of the Sokols, the Pobratims, as well as the members of the other clubs, was formed.⁵⁴ They marched together no matter whether they belonged to certain nationality or religion or any other, which was a result of the tendency to create the Yugoslav nation. Several speeches with patriotic contents were made in front of the numerous citizens. There followed a recess until 4 p.m., when a public exercise was due to happen. After the Sokols and the Pobratims gathered at the slet ground and lined up, and the spectators filled the last place in the stands, the festivity itself was interrupted by the news of Franz Ferdinand's assassination in Sarajevo that day. It was ordered to stop the manifestations, and the people were dispersed. The assassination in Sarajevo was the cause for the war to come, but also for the persecution and the arrestment of the great number of the Sokols, the Pobratims and members of "Civil defense" ("Narodna odbrana") and The Serbian Cultural and Educational club (SKPD) "Prosvjeta". Almost exclusively, the arrestees were the Serbs, but there was a small number of the Croatian and the Muslim people, too.

- The Banja Luka's Sokols attending other clubs' social events

Except the ones already mentioned, the members of the Sokol club from Banja Luka were taking part in competitions and events organized by other clubs in the nearby area, as well as all around Bosnia and Herzegovina and some countries in the region.

⁵² Радмила Кујунџија, *Многаја љета* (Бања Лука, 2002)

⁵³ Божо Митровић, „Соколске свечаности“, *Врбаске новине*, 5. јун 1938.

⁵⁴ „Видов – дан 1914. год. у Бањој Луци“, *Врбаске новине*, 28. јун 1938.

The Sokol club from Prijedor held a bee-party with public training and a dance party on the day after Christmas, on 8th January 1910. The representatives of several neighbouring clubs, likewise the club from Banja Luka, took part in it.⁵⁵ For the reasons of being so close to Banja Luka (56 km) and having a developed club at that time, Prijedor often organized various social events; it is reasonable to assume that the Sokols from Banja Luka took part in them. The members of the Sokols from Banja Luka, Prijedor and the nearby villages attended the sanctification of the common hall for the Sokol club and the Serbian Singing Club "Fairy" ("Vila") held in Prijedor on 12th August 1912. There was a public training accompanied by a band of tambura-players (a kind of stringed instrument). A concert was staged in the "Prijedor" hotel that same night.⁵⁶



Photography 5. The Sokol-pobratim slet held on Vidovdan 1911⁵⁷

The Sokol club from Gradiška with the Pobratim club organized one joint slet on 28th June 1911. The similar festival was arranged on 26th August. For the reason of relatively small distance between the two cities (50km), we presume that the Sokols from Banja Luka took part in those slets, but we can't claim the fact with certainty because we didn't find any written traces to verify that.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ „Српски Соко у Приједору“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 6 (1910): 114.

⁵⁶ *Споменица соколског друштва Приједор*, (Приједор: Соколско друштво Приједор, 1932)

⁵⁷ *Календар Просвјета за преступну годину 1912*. (Сарајево: „Просвјета, 1911): 120.

⁵⁸ Hajrudin Ćurić, „Počeci moderne gimnastike u Bosni i Hercegovini“, *Prilozi za istoriju fizičke kulture u Bosni i Hercegovini* br. 5 (1972): 1 – 24.

During the slet in Ravanica on Vidovdan 1910, in the team of the Serbian Sokol Bosnia-Herzegovinian Community, consisting of 13 members, 1 member from Banja Luka found his place. Unfortunately, we couldn't find his name in the analyzed sources.⁵⁹

In the next year, 1911, the club attended the Second Croatian All-Sokolian slet in Zagreb, when all the Sokol clubs performed together.⁶⁰

The most important performance of the Sokol club was during the All-Sokolian slet in Prague in 1912. To prepare the show as well as they can, the Serbian Sokols worked hard and on a regular basis. All the Serbian Sokols performed under one flag. The leaders were visiting clubs in all the communities, keeping a vigilant eye on the preparations, in the beginning of the year. The first such review of the clubs' activities was done in Banja Luka on 18th March 1912, when the work of the home club, as well as neighbouring ones, was tested in their accuracy.⁶¹

The biggest and the most famous event in the Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1912 was the festivity of the Serbian Cultural and Educational Club (SKPD) "Prosvjeta" in Sarajevo, regarding the tenth anniversary since the club had been formed. This club was closely related to the Sokols and the Pobratims, morally and financially supporting their actions. 14 Sokols from Banja Luka took part in the festivity held in Sarajevo on 8th and 9th September, but the anniversary was also marked in other cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, among others in the city on the Vrbas River.⁶²

⁵⁹ „V Српски соколски слет“, *Српски Соко – лист за соколске ствари* бр. 12 (1910): 206 – 213.

⁶⁰ „Српски Соко у Бањој Луци“, *Српски Соко - лист за соколске ствари* бр. 4 (1911): 59.

⁶¹ „Преглед и припреме по жупама за свесоколски слет у Прагу“, *Српски соколски гласник* бр. 4 (1912): 40 – 41.

⁶² *Споменица о прослави десетогодишњице Просвјете* (Сарајево: „Просвјета“, 1912)

Presidents, deputies of the presidents, secretaries, treasurers and leaders of the club

Table 1. Presidents of "The Serbian Soko" ("Dusan the Mighty") in Banja Luka from 1907 to 1914

Presidents	Time period in the position	Profession
Vladislav Skarić	1907-1908	Professor of History and Geography
Mile Janković	1909	Merchant
Risto Božić	1910	Lawyer
Vaso Glušac	1911-1912	Professor of The Slavic Languages
Mića Baslać	1913-1914	Merchant

Table 2. Deputies of the presidents of "The Serbian Soko" ("Dusan the Mighty") in Banja Luka from 1907 to 1914

Deputies of the presidents	Time period in the position	Profession
Petar Kočić	1907	Writer
Aleksandar Babić	1908	Physician
Živko Nježić	1909	Lawyer
Milan Zarić	1910-1912	Teacher
Vladislav J. Babić	1914	Merchant

Table 3. Secretaries of "The Serbian Soko" ("Dusan the Mighty") in Banja Luka from 1907 to 1914

Secretaries	Time period in the position	Profession
Petar Oreščanin	1907	clerk in the savings bank
Mićo Bogdanović	1908	clerk in the State bank
Toma O. Mutić	1909-1910	actuary in the Diocesan Council
Dragutin Dakić	1914	Chemist

Table 4. Treasurers of "The Serbian Soko" ("Dusan the Mighty") in Banja Luka from 1907 to 1911

Treasurers	Time period in the position	Profession
Vlado Malić	1907	Merchant
Vaso Bokonjić	1908	-----
Branko Milošević	1909-1910	clerk in the Serbian Credit Office

Table 5. Leaders of "The Serbian Soko" ("Dusan the Mighty") in Banja Luka from 1907 to 1914

Leaders of the club	Time period in the position	Profession
Dimšo Božić	1908	-----
Savo Surutka	1909-1910	Merchant
Velimir Česarević	1910	Teacher
Milan Grubanović	1912	-----
Ljubomir Popović	1913-1914	Lawyer

Based on the facts asserted above, the conclusion can be made that the Serbian Sokol club in Banja Luka, founded in 1907, had an important role in the development of the Sokol principles in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the period from 1907 to July 1914, even though it had its ups and downs. After the World War I, "The Serbian Soko" in Banja Luka was renewed, and by the middle of 1919, it merged with "The Croatian Sokol" ("Hrvatski Sokol"), becoming one common Sokol club in Banja Luka.

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СЕРБСКОЕ СОКОЛЬСКОЕ ОБЩЕСТВО В БАНЯ-ЛУКЕ

РЕЗЮМЕ

Сокольное движение появилось в Чехии в 1862 году как новый способ физической подготовки, в рамках сопротивления чешского народа австро-венгерской власти. Хотя идеология Сокольства появилась в Боснии и Герцеговине в 1893 году, первое сербское гимнастическое сообщество основано в середине 1904. года в Мостаре. Сербское сокольное общество в Баня-Луке было основано в середине 1907 года, и его работа продолжалась июля вплоть до 1914. года, когда все соколские общества в Боснии и Герцеговине были распущены. В этот период сербские Соколы из Баня-Луки играли важную роль в расширении Сокольство в Боснии.

В данном исследовании использован исторический метод. Предметом исследования была распространение Сокол идей в районе Баня-Луки, а цель осветление и попытка не передать забвению становление Сербского сокольного общества в Баня-Луке в конце июля 1914. года, и изучить его значение для распространения Сокольство в Боснии и Герцеговине.

Ключевые слова: Сокольство, Соколы, явные вступления, сокольное общество

СРПСКО СОКОЛСКО ДРУШТВО У БАЊОЈ ЛУЦИ

САЖЕТАК

Соколски покрет се јавио у Чешкој 1862. године као нови начин тјелесног вјежбања у склопу отпора чешког народа према аустроугарској власти. Иако се у Босни и Херцеговини соколска идеја појавила 1893. године, прво српско гимнастичко друштво „Обилић“ је основано тек 1904. године у Мостару. Српско соколско друштво у Бањој Луци је основано средином 1907. године и радило је све до јула 1914. када су распуштена сва соколска друштва у Босни и Херцеговини. У том периоду српски соколи из Бање Луке су имали велику улогу у развоју соколства у Босни.

У истраживању је кориштен историјски метод. Предмет истраживања је развој соколства на простору Бање Луке, а циљ да се расвијетли и отргне од заборава настанак и рад српског соколског друштва у Бањој Луци до краја јула 1914. године и да се истражи његов значај за развој соколства у Босни и Херцеговини.

Кључне ријечи: соколство, соколи, јавне вјежбе, слетови, соколско друштво
