



PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL OF UŽICE FROM ITS ESTABLISHMENT UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1839 - 1914)

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SUMMARY

Since the first years of high school instruction in the Principality of Serbia, various Ministers of Education, principals and first gymnastics teachers had been thinking about physical education instruction. Better political, economic and cultural situation in Serbia together with the influences and ideas arriving from culturally developed European countries gave rise to several initiatives related to physical education instruction which were introduced into high school curricula.

Persons with different qualification levels were engaged as physical education teachers (gymnastics teachers) and they remained at that position for a few years. *The aim of the paper* was to establish who the PE teachers were in High School of Užice since its establishment until the beginning of the First World War (1839-1914). Historical method was used in this paper.

From 1839 until 1878 there were no organized physical education classes (physical exercise and gymnastics) because the first teachers in this school were not interested, or experienced about this type of instruction. By the written approval, the Minister of Education appointed in September 1878 the first gymnastics teacher Steva Trifunović, teacher of painting and calligraphy. In the next period the classes used to be realized by teachers of Serbian language, geometry and algebra, geography or officers and sometimes even all other homeroom teachers.

Regardless the fact that those were all people who had acquired basic knowledge on physical exercising in military schools or in gymnastic societies, it

was still not enough for professional work in PE education and its further promotion.

The solution to the problem was initiated only in 1910. when Josef Jehlička came, at the invitation of the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Serbia, together with a group of Czeck Sokol leaders who had been sent to work in High School of Užice and improved quality of physical education classes in that school thanks to his professional competence. That led to the conditions for the PE classes in High School of Užice to become more significant in the system of general education of students.

Key words: gymnastics teachers, physical education instruction, High school of Užice, professional staff

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INTRODUCTION

Influenced by modern thoughts coming from the developed European countries, several important changes occurred in the organization and the concept of secondary schools in Serbia, including the reopening of the Great School (Velika škola), the first and the only secondary school, in 1830 until 1914 when there were 42 secondary schools in the Kingdom of Serbia.

In the first decades of development of secondary schools in the Principality of Serbia, the state authorities were not willing to introduce physical education in schools. It was only when the young, educated people arrived from the Western countries that the first idea could be expected followed by the attempts to introduce that instruction as a compulsory school subject.

The position of this subject used to change since its introduction in schools was firstly initiated as non-compulsory exercising of students, only to become a compulsory subject with the number of classes established by the curriculum and conducted by educated gymnastics teachers. Thus in the mid-19th century this subject was introduced in the secondary school curricula in Serbia.

After the First and the Second Serbian Uprising and the 1830 *Hatisherif*, Serbia gained the right to organize independently its internal administration. Education played an important place in the gained autonomy. Many schools were established. The first one was the High School of Kragujevac in 1833, followed by other high schools in bigger Serbian towns. High school of Užice was established in 1839.

The first teachers engaged in school instruction were educated Serbs who acquired their education in some developed European countries. They implemented the contents of school subjects according to their knowledge and experienced education. At the same time, depending on their interests, they could ask for a consent from the Ministry of Education to teach other subjects such as physical education, which was the case in High school of Kragujevac, when fencing was introduced.

METHOD

The historical method was applied in the paper.

The aim of the paper was to establish who the PE teachers were in High School of Užice since its establishment until the beginning of the First World War (1839-1914).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

High school of Užice opened in 1839 and the first appointed teacher was a jurist, Milan Mijatović. He taught all the subjects prescribed by the first grade curriculum: slavic grammar, general history, geography, mathematics, Serbian language, Slovene language and German language. The following two years classes were held by Pavle Đukić and Petar Zarić.

In 1842 the high school moved to Čačak and Užice remained without high school until 1865 (23 years), when it was re-opened again. Lazar Čolak Antić was appointed substitute (assistant teacher).

Between 1839 and 1865 no classes of **teloupraženije** or **military education and gymnastics** were held in High school of Užice. The first appointed teachers were not neither interested or experienced to implement any of the physical exercises. This remained until 1878 when the first gymnastics classes were realized.

The introduction of PE classes followed the correspondence of the school teacher Velizarić and the Minister of Education of 4th September 1874. The letter suggested that it was high time to appoint music and gymnastics teachers in secondary schools.

By his letter of 26th July 1878., as suggested by teachers, students and parents, the director Velizarić asked the Minister of Education to allow introduction of gymnastics because of its benefit for students' health. It was

particularly underlined that Steva Trifunović, school teacher of drawing and calligraphy, was ready to teach gymnastics for a compensation in money.

In his letter of 1st September 1878, the Minister of Education, approved the appointment of Steva Todorović as gymnastics teacher. For those activities his annual salary was increased by 50 thallars. Thus **Stevan, Steva Trifunović**, drawing and calligraphy teacher was the first PE teacher in High School of Užice in school year 1878/79.

Trifunović successfully completed High school in Belgrade in 1873. Since he could not continue education and study art he was forced to study technics in Belgrade. When his father died, due to hard material conditions of his family, he abandoned the initiated studies and returned to his home town of Užice. Based on his presented school works and the recommendation by Steva Todorović, he started working in High School of Užice on 15th February 1874.

Although a minor, he participated in Serbian-Ottoman wars. He worked in High School of Užice until 20th August 1884 when he was transferred to High School of Belgrade.

As the first to teach physical education in High School of Užice, though unqualified, he fulfilled his mission thanks to experience gained during his education in Belgrade and his acquaintance with Steva Todorović. The Principal of the Užice High School Janićije T.Manojlović in school year 1881/82 reported that physical education was regularly taught and that such activities positively affected students' health and physical development.

The development of the curriculum for **gymnastics and military exercising** in 1882, created conditions to realize instruction according to the conditions and objectives of military doctrine. Army officers were appointed teachers and non-commissioned officers were assigned as their assistants. For those engagement, the officers and non-commissioned officers were given an annual compensation amounting to 480 and 180 dinars respectively..

The first teacher of gymnastics and military exercising in Užice High School was **Josip Prodanović**, second lieutenant, appointed in the school year 1883/84. As the first teacher, the officer failed to fulfil expectations. The high school principal Vasa Filipović, reported that the students were eagerly accepted the classes of physical and military exercising, but the teacher was often absent due to, he claimed, his working obligations but also for other reasons (weakness) so many classes were not held at all. After Prodanović's dismissal, the classes were taught by **Nilola Protić**, infantry second lieutenant.

In the following school year 1884/85 **Stevan Mićanović**, second lieutenant, was nominated teacher and major Jakov Maksić was a supervisor. In March 1885 the Užice battalion was transferred from Užice to Valjevo. Consequently, the

school was left without the officers to teach physical education. This was solved by engaging the teachers who were army reserve officers. Thus **Jovan Hobiš**, drawing teacher and artillery second lieutenant was nominated assistant for the instruction of military exercises and gymnastics until the end of that school year. Hobiš taught gymnastics and military exercising even in the school year 1885/86.

Until the end of military instructions in 1890 the teachers in High School of Užice included **Dobrosav Petrović**, lance sergeant (1886.), **Radomir Matić** (1887-188), **Jovica Conić**, lieutenant (1889) and **Mihajlo Dedinac**, second lieutenant (1890).

Abandoning of this concept of classes resulted in further lack of professional staff to realize classes and lack of quality curricula. Aware of the situation, the Ministry of Education sent an announcement to schools, recommending the way to realize instruction and to compensate for the shortcomings.

According to the Recommendations, once the teaching council of the High School had adopted the curriculum, in the school year 1897/98 instruction was realized by **Miloš Trifunović**, Serbian language professor and **Nikola Nikolić**, geometry and algebra professor. The school principal reported that he asked the said teachers to realize classes because they had had previous experiences as members of the Belgrade gymnastic societies.

Due to further lack of professional staff to realize PE classes, the Ministry of Education sent announcements in 1903, 1905 and 1907 to encourage the initiation of PE instruction. Therefore in 1907, the schools were submitted the "Temporary curriculum for gymnastics classes in high schools."

According to the said Recommendations, in school year 1906/07 **Mihailo Živković**, science teacher, **Mirko Popović**, geography teacher, **Miloje Rakić**, history teacher and **Risto Petrušić**, drawing teacher, realized PE classes outdoor, when the weather allowed. The contents of the excursions were aimed at improving knowledge related to the subjects taught by the said teachers.

The report for that year indicates that the instruction realized by Mirko Popović corresponds to the contents which stimulate development of physical abilities. For the second-grade students Popović organized excursions aimed at exercising in longer marching, doing gymnastic exercises and games.

In the school year 1907/08 the classes were taught by all head teachers: **Mihailo Živković**, professor, **Pavle Vujić**, professor, **Miloje Rakić**, professor, **Ljubomir Matić**, professor, **Mirko Popović**, professor, **Stevan Macura**, senior teacher, **Filip Kovačević**, teacher and **Stevan Kolar**, teacher. At the meeting of the teaching council of the High School, at the beginning of that school year, it was decided that there would be one class of PE weekly.

In the following period, until the school year of 1910/11 due to lack of professional staff there were no gymnastics classes.

Invited by the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Serbia, in 1911, Josef Jehlička, together with a group of Czech Sokols arrived and was sent to work in High School of Užice. With his professional competence he improved the quality of PE classes in this school.

Josef Jehlička was born in Holetin (today's Czech Republic) on 12th September 1892. As a young man he practiced gymnastics and other forms of physical exercises. He became a leader and took part in the First Pan-Slav games in Prague in 1907.

When he came to Užice in 1911 he was appointed gymnastics teacher to the fifth class. It can be said that the first educated and competent PE teacher in High school of Užice was Josef Jehlička. His hard work left lasting traces and created conditions for PE classes to take more important position within the system of general education of students.

Even the first year of Jehlička's work in High School of Užice was remarkable. The school medical doctor reported about the health condition of students in the school year 1911/12 and stated that growth, body weight and constitution of the students was significantly improved compared to the previous condition. According to dr Maksim Maksimović, this improvement can be ascribed to Josef Jehlička and his gymnastics classes. Those were outdoor classes, in front of the school but also in a gymnasium, in the new school building in 1893.

The Principal report underlined that excursions were organized aimed at improving the instruction quality and developing students' physical abilities. With the 6th grade students Jehlička realized an excursion to Servojno. During the excursion the students were trained to march and it was stated that they passed 14 kilometers in 110 minutes with a 5-minute break.

Besides the gymnastics classes in High School of Užice, Jehlička was actively involved in establishment of the Sokol association. With a few enthusiasts, among others Pavle Vujić, high school professor and MP and senator later, in March 1911 he established the Sokol Association "Dušan the Mighty" which was accepted to the Federation of Sokol Associations of the Kingdom of Serbia in April of the same year.

At the beginning of 1911 he started realizing public classes in order to indicate to importance of gymnastics and to raise awareness about physical exercises. The first public class was at Ada. The next favourable opportunity for organization and display of the public class was in 1912 when the train arrived to Užice for the first time. It should be stressed that the base and majority of the members were the Užice High School students. Those activities did not remain

unnoticed. By his act of 14th February 1914 the Minister of Education and Church Affairs recommended that a group of students of High School of Užice be sent to participate in St. Petersburg rally. However, the war conflicts (beginning of the First World War) prevented those activities.

CONCLUSION

The first PE teacher in High School of Užice was **Stevan Steva Trifunović**, drawing and calligraphy teacher. As the student of Steva Todorović, educated and experienced, appointed by the Minister of Education, he taught gymnastics from 1878 until 1883.

Since the school year 1883/84. instruction was realized by the officers of the Army of the Kingdom of Serbia. That period, until 1890 was characterized by adoption of the curricula (that had military contents) and professional staff who realized the instruction. Seven officers were involved in instruction (Josip Prodanović, Nikola Protić, Stevan Mićalović, Dobrosav Petrović, Radomir Matić, Jovica Conić and Mihajlo Dedinac) and Jovan Hobiš, army reserve officer, who taught drawing and calligraphy. The stated officers, approved by their superiors and upon appointment of the Ministry of Education, realized PE classes.

Once this concept of classes was abandoned there was a further lack of professional staff and stagnation in PE instruction. By its announcements in 1898, 1903, 1905 and 1907, the Ministry of Education wanted to motivate school principals and teachers to start realization of PE classes. In 1897/98 the classes were realized by Miloš Trifunović and Nikola Nikolić, teachers of general education subjects with no previous experience.

In school year 1906/07 four teachers were involved in classes and in the following school year 1907/08 head teachers used to instruct physical education in their classes (eight).

From 1911 Josef Jehlička, Czeck Sokol leader who was invited by the Ministry of Education, taught PE as the first competent PE teacher in High School of Užice.

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НАСТАВНИЦИ КОЈИ СУ ПРЕДАВАЛИ ФИЗИЧКО ВАСПИТАЊЕ У УЖИЧКОЈ ГИМНАЗИЈИ ОД ЊЕНОГ ОСНИВАЊА ПА ДО ПОЧЕТКА ПРВОГ СВЕТСКОГ РАТА (1839 - 1914)

САЖЕТАК

Физичко васпитање је већ од првих година рада средњих школа у Кнежевини Србији било у замислима неких министара просвете, директора школа и првих наставника гимнастике. Боље политичке, економске и културне прилике у Србији као и утицаји и идеје које су стизале из културно развијених земаља Европе, условиле су појаву више иницијатива у вези са наставом физичког васпитања, за које се тражило и нашло место у наставним плановима и програмима средњих школа.

Као наставници физичког васпитања (учитељи гимнастике) радила су лица различитог степена стручног образовања, који су се најчешће на овом послу задржавали неколико година. *Циљ рада* је да се утврди ко су били наставници који су предавали наставу физичког васпитања у Ужичкој гимназији од њеног оснивања па до почетка Првог светског рата (1839-1914). У раду је коришћен *историјски метод*.

У периоди од 1839.год до 1878.год. у Ужичкој гимназији није се организовала настава физичког васпитања (телоупражњеније или војено учење и гимнастика) јер први наставници који су реализовали наставу у овој школи нису имали интересовања, ни претходно стечена искуства о овој настави. Уз писмено одобрење Министра просвете, од септембра 1878.год. за првог наставника гимнастике постављен је **Стева Трифуновић**, учитељ цртања и краснописа. У наредном периоду ову наставу су изводили наставници српског језика, геометрије и алгебре, географије, официри, а у једном периоду и све разредне старешине.

Без обзира што су то били људи који су стекли елементарна знања о физичком вежбању у војним школама или вежбајући у гимнастичким друштвима, то ипак није било довољно за стручни рад у настави физичког васпитања и њеном даљем унапређивању.

Овај проблем је почео да се решава тек 1910. године, доласком Јосифа Јехличког, који је на позив Министра просвете Краљевине Србије дошао са групом чешких сокола предњака и био упућен да ради у Ужичкој гимназији. Он је својом стручном компетенцијом унапредио квалитет наставе физичког васпитања у овој Гимназији. Тиме су створени услови да настава физичког васпитања у Ужичкој гимназији заузме значајније место у систему општег образовања ученика.

Кључне речи: учитељи гимнастике, настава физичког васпитања, Ужичка гимназија, стручни кадар

УЧИТЕЛЯ ФИЗИЧЕСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ В СТАРШЕЙ ШКОЛЕ В УЖИЦЕ СО ДНЯ ОСНОВАНИЯ ДО НАЧАЛА ПЕРВОЙ МИРОВОЙ ВОЙНЫ(1839 - 1914)

АННОТАЦИЯ

С первых лет существования старшей ступени обучения в школах княжества Сербия, различные министры образования, руководители и первые учителя гимнастики думали о физическом образовании. Улучшение политической, экономической и культурной ситуации в Сербии под влиянием культурного окружения европейских стран породило ряд инициатив, связанных с физкультурным образованием, которые были введены в учебные программы старшей школы.

Специалисты с разным уровнем квалификации были приглашены в качестве учителей физической культуры (учителей гимнастики) и занимали должности в течение ряда лет. *Цель статьи установить*, кто были первые учителя старшей школы со дня основания до начала первой мировой войны (1839-1914). В статье использован метод исторического анализа.

С 1839 по 1878 годы в школах не были организованы занятия физической культурой (физическими упражнениями и гимнастикой), потому что первые учителя не интересовались или не имели опыта выполнения этого предписания. С письменного согласия Министра образования в сентябре 1878 года первым учителем гимнастики назначили Стева Трифуновича, учителя изобразительного искусства и каллиграфии. В последующие годы учителями физической культуры были учителя сербского языка, геометрии и алгебры, географии, офицеры в отставке, а иногда другие учителя-предметники.

Несмотря на то, что это были люди, которые получили базовые знания по физической культуре в военных училищах или в гимнастических сообществах, этого было недостаточно для профессиональной деятельности в физкультурном образовании и его дальнейшем продвижении.

Решение данной проблемы стало возможным только в 1910 году, когда пришел Жозеф Еничка по приглашению министра образования королевства Сербии вместе с группой лидеров Чешских Соколов, которые были направлены на работу в старшую школу Ужице и улучшили качество занятий физической культурой в этой школе, благодаря своей профессиональной компетенции. Это привело к тому, что занятия физической культурой в школе Ужице стали более значимыми в системе общего образования учащихся.

Ключевые слова: учителя гимнастики, физкультурное образование, старшая школа Ужице, профессиональные кадры.

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