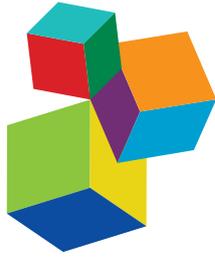


YOUTH, YOUNG PEOPLE AND SPORT FROM THE 19TH CENTURY TO MODERN DAY

EDITED BY: Patrick Clastres, François Vallotton and Nicolas Bancel
PUBLISHED IN: *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*





frontiers

Frontiers eBook Copyright Statement

The copyright in the text of individual articles in this eBook is the property of their respective authors or their respective institutions or funders. The copyright in graphics and images within each article may be subject to copyright of other parties. In both cases this is subject to a license granted to Frontiers.

The compilation of articles constituting this eBook is the property of Frontiers.

Each article within this eBook, and the eBook itself, are published under the most recent version of the Creative Commons CC-BY licence.

The version current at the date of publication of this eBook is CC-BY 4.0. If the CC-BY licence is updated, the licence granted by Frontiers is automatically updated to the new version.

When exercising any right under the CC-BY licence, Frontiers must be attributed as the original publisher of the article or eBook, as applicable.

Authors have the responsibility of ensuring that any graphics or other materials which are the property of others may be included in the CC-BY licence, but this should be checked before relying on the CC-BY licence to reproduce those materials. Any copyright notices relating to those materials must be complied with.

Copyright and source acknowledgement notices may not be removed and must be displayed in any copy, derivative work or partial copy which includes the elements in question.

All copyright, and all rights therein, are protected by national and international copyright laws. The above represents a summary only. For further information please read Frontiers' Conditions for Website Use and Copyright Statement, and the applicable CC-BY licence.

ISSN 1664-8714

ISBN 978-2-88976-164-7

DOI 10.3389/978-2-88976-164-7

About Frontiers

Frontiers is more than just an open-access publisher of scholarly articles: it is a pioneering approach to the world of academia, radically improving the way scholarly research is managed. The grand vision of Frontiers is a world where all people have an equal opportunity to seek, share and generate knowledge. Frontiers provides immediate and permanent online open access to all its publications, but this alone is not enough to realize our grand goals.

Frontiers Journal Series

The Frontiers Journal Series is a multi-tier and interdisciplinary set of open-access, online journals, promising a paradigm shift from the current review, selection and dissemination processes in academic publishing. All Frontiers journals are driven by researchers for researchers; therefore, they constitute a service to the scholarly community. At the same time, the Frontiers Journal Series operates on a revolutionary invention, the tiered publishing system, initially addressing specific communities of scholars, and gradually climbing up to broader public understanding, thus serving the interests of the lay society, too.

Dedication to Quality

Each Frontiers article is a landmark of the highest quality, thanks to genuinely collaborative interactions between authors and review editors, who include some of the world's best academicians. Research must be certified by peers before entering a stream of knowledge that may eventually reach the public - and shape society; therefore, Frontiers only applies the most rigorous and unbiased reviews. Frontiers revolutionizes research publishing by freely delivering the most outstanding research, evaluated with no bias from both the academic and social point of view. By applying the most advanced information technologies, Frontiers is catapulting scholarly publishing into a new generation.

What are Frontiers Research Topics?

Frontiers Research Topics are very popular trademarks of the Frontiers Journals Series: they are collections of at least ten articles, all centered on a particular subject. With their unique mix of varied contributions from Original Research to Review Articles, Frontiers Research Topics unify the most influential researchers, the latest key findings and historical advances in a hot research area! Find out more on how to host your own Frontiers Research Topic or contribute to one as an author by contacting the Frontiers Editorial Office: frontiersin.org/about/contact

YOUTH, YOUNG PEOPLE AND SPORT FROM THE 19TH CENTURY TO MODERN DAY

Topic Editors:

Patrick Clastres, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

François Vallotton, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Nicolas Bancel, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Citation: Clastres, P., Vallotton, F., Bancel, N., eds. (2022). Youth, Young People and Sport From the 19th Century to Modern Day. Lausanne: Frontiers Media SA. doi: 10.3389/978-2-88976-164-7

Table of Contents

- 04** *Editorial: Youth, Young People, and Sport in the Twentieth Century*
Patrick Clastres, François Vallotton and Nicolas Bancel
- 08** *Upstanding Youngsters: Ivorian Scouting and the Manufacture of a Subordinate Citizenship (1937–1979)*
Claire Nicolas
- 22** *Facing the Involvement of Youths in Competitions: Soviet Visions and Adaptations to the Rejuvenation of Elite Sports (Second Half of the 20th Century)*
Sylvain Dufraisse
- 35** *A Sporting and Peronist Youth in the Making: The High School Students Union (UES) in Argentina (1952–1955)*
Lucie Hémeury
- 41** *Sport at the World Festival of Youth and Students: Between Olympic Ideals and Socialist Internationalism*
Lidia Lesnykh
- 56** *Healthcare and Physical Education of Children and Youth in Prague 1869–1914*
Marek Waic and Dagmar Pavlů
- 69** *“Sports Maternalism”, to Train and Take Care: Ethnographic Investigation in Baton Twirling Clubs*
Shia Manh Ly
- 75** *Swann’s Way: Youth, Personal Affinities, and Acculturation Through Sport in Nineteenth Century France*
François Bourmaud
- 88** *Doomed Youth: Antonio Cánovas, a Young Sportsman in Time of War in 1930s Spain*
Alejandro Viuda-Serrano and Iker Ibarondo-Merino
- 101** *From Mandatory School Gymnastics to Physical Training for Youth. How the Société Fédérale de Gymnastique Became a “Gymnastic State” Dedicated to the Physical Preparation of Swiss Youth From 1873 to 1907*
Gil Mayencourt and Grégory Quin
- 118** *Educate Kermit Roosevelt Through Sport Hunting and Train Him for Government Missions. Roosevelt Scientific Mission to English Equatorial Africa in 1909*
Romain Chasles



Editorial: Youth, Young People, and Sport in the Twentieth Century

Patrick Clastres*, François Vallotton* and Nicolas Bancel*

University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

Keywords: sport history, youth-young adults, twentieth century, Western Countries and non, masculinization, sport policies, students, scouting

Editorial on the Research Topic

Youth, Young People, and Sport in the Twentieth Century

The ten contributions in this volume were presented at the 23rd Congress of the European Committee for Sports History (CESH) organized in September 2019 by the University of Lausanne's Institute of Sport Sciences (ISSUL) and the Social and Political Sciences Faculty (SSP). Our topic was chosen in response to the fact that, even though sport is commonly associated with youth, few sports historians have focused on the issue of age. Indeed, research into the history of sport has tended to concentrate on aspects such as sportspeople's/spectators' national, social, gender or racial identities, rather than on age/age groups. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule in fields such as the history of physical education, the history of bodily and moral discipline policies and the history of supporters. Historians, sociologists, ethnologists and anthropologists have shown that the ages at which childhood and youth begin and end vary from one civilization to another, from one social category to another, from one gender to another, and from one era to another.

According to Mauger (2001), by declaring in 1978 that "youth is only a word," Bourdieu (1978) was encouraging us to analyse the social and cultural differences between youths and not to see young people as "a social unit, a constituted group, with common interests, related to a biologically defined age," but as "an age of life", i.e., a sequence of biographical trajectories. Our preliminary questioning owes much to the work published in 1996 by Levi and Schmitt (1996) who affirmed that "the word "youth" has meaning everywhere and always, even if it takes on different names and contents depending on the period" and "that among the common characteristics, we can retain the transitory status, intermediate between childhood and adulthood, a brief period of learning (sexual, warlike, professional, etc.) and finally a status of *margin*."

So our general question was: What is the case from a sports perspective? And the crucial questions that arise is first of all that of sources. As Sirinelli (2009) writes for the periods prior to the nineteenth century, "for a long time a sociologically dominated category, youth was most often barely audible to contemporaries and the traces left about it were external, coming, for example, from public authorities or from the sphere of knowledge development." In the light of documents as rich as the *Carnets de voyage dans les îles Britanniques* (Clastres, 2023) or the *Mémoires de jeunesse de Pierre de Coubertin* (Clastres, 2008), or even the Diary of the 1896 Olympic tennis champion John Pius Boland (Gillmeister, 2008), it would be interesting and useful to systematically collect the testimonies left by the young practitioners themselves.

At what age do children start and stop doing sport in different societies? Does giving up sport signal entry to the adult world? Or into the world of seniors, considered too old for physical exercise? Could doing sport be seen as a heuristic criterion for defining the transitional state of youth? Does one stay young into old age as long as one continues doing sport? Do boys leave the often-maternal world of childhood games by adopting masculine sports rituals? Do girls adopt new forms of exercise as they get older? Does physical exercise play a role in the strict separation between girls and boys or is there a degree of porosity? Where there are age distinctions with respect to sports, how did they arise? Do these age categories reflect age categories in the rest of society

OPEN ACCESS

Edited and reviewed by:

Pirkko Markula,
University of Alberta, Canada

*Correspondence:

Patrick Clastres
patrick.clastres@unil.ch
François Vallotton
francois.vallotton@unil.ch
Nicolas Bancel
nicolas.bancel@unil.ch

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 02 March 2022

Accepted: 09 March 2022

Published: 25 April 2022

Citation:

Clastres P, Vallotton F and Bancel N
(2022) Editorial: Youth, Young People,
and Sport in the Twentieth Century.
Front. Sports Act. Living 4:887919.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2022.887919

(puberty, school, work, religion, citizenship), or are they specific to the world of sport? How and by whom are they defined and justified?

Is it possible to identify “youth sports groups,” that is, communities of young people whose identity is based on their young age and their sports activities? What becomes of these communities of young sportspeople when their members become adults? Do they continue, dilute, evolve, break up, reactivate? Do young sportspeople feel particular emotions that are specific to their age? Once they become adults, how much nostalgia do they retain for their sporting pasts? Do young sportspeople see themselves primarily as sportspeople or as young people? Is there a methodological risk in reducing them to a single category, that of “sportsperson,” when they also play other social roles in their daily lives? How, here like elsewhere, can age, social position and gender be articulated? What part do young people play in the institutions that run sport? Do young people take the initiative to create clubs, leagues or federations? In the case of institutions created and controlled by adults, are young people’s voices heard. How are they viewed?

In terms of other forms of power exercised by adults over sporting practices (political, medical, educational, military, religious, professional), what impact do they have on young people? How much freedom do they truly have? Is it, in fact, possible to explain the success of sport across the centuries by the freedom young people draw from the statute of being a sportsperson? But, paradoxically, do not these practices also, and sometimes simultaneously, have a normative, and/or disciplinary dimension?

YOUNG PEOPLE AND SPORT IN NON-WESTERN COUNTRIES

In this volume, we also focus on a number of studies dealing with the various sports activities intended for young people in non-Western regions and we wish to recall here the double contribution of British, American and French historiographies.

Since the mid-1980s, Mangan (1986, 1989) has taken an interest in the issue of sport within the British empire, in which young people are the main actors. Research on the articulation between sport and religion has been carried out on a large scale, going beyond the role of Protestantism only, as exemplified by the work of Alpert and Remillar (2019). Inaugurating the tradition of the Postcolonial Studies in sports history, Appadurai (1996) highlighted in the development of cricket in colonial India. Anglo-Saxon historians did also investigate the Pacific region like Sacks (2019). American researchers claim a global vision of the mechanisms underlying the dissemination of sport among the young in colonized countries, like the synthesis on Games and empires directed by (Guttmann, 1994). Both Guttmann (1994) and Appadurai (1996)—while integrating the writings of globalist Galtung (1991) evaluating “the sport system as a metaphor for the world system”—point out the hybridization of sports practices by young athletes during the diffusion of

cricket throughout India. The valorization of the American research benefits from the efficient relay constituted by the *Journal of Sport History*. In volume 33, nr 1, published in 2006, this journal applies a comparative perspective, entitled “Globalization as imperialism?,” to three case studies focused on American, German (Pfister, 2006) and French (Combeau-Mari, 2006) colonization. Although Anglo-Saxon sports were received with a certain amount of reserve in China, they achieved a break-through owing to the militancy of the YMCA (Gems, 2004). Researchers such as Cleveland et al. (2020) are currently pursuing these perspectives with regard to the evolution of sport in Africa.

Considering the francophone historiography, we must consider two pioneering works: Youssef Fatès’s new light on the cultural history of Algeria’s decolonization (1994; 2002; 2020), building on the pioneering work of Kaddache (1976, 2003), and Bernadette Deville-Danthu’s (1997) PhD thesis defended two years before on the diffusion of military and school gymnastics and modern sports in French Black Africa. This research was further developed by Bancel (1999) in his thesis on youth movements and modern sports in the same area. As for the African Great Lakes region, we should mention Thomas Riot’s thesis on colonial Riot (2011). In their IJHS special issue on “post-colonial sports,” Frenkiel et al. (2015) continued this research along the same lines. Several other studies present a similar comparative approach. A relevant example is the special edition of *Outre-mers. Revue d’histoire* entitled “Le sport dans l’empire français, un instrument de domination coloniale ?” under the direction of (Abassi, 2009). Addressing the issue of “cultural globalization” initiated by Singarevelou and Sorez (2010) revisited the question of the diffusion and local adaptation of modern sports by their young practitioners.

FROM SCOUTING IN IVORY COAST TO SOVIET YOUNG ELITE ATHLETES

This collection of 10 articles covers a wide chronological spectrum, from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present day, and various European and non-European national realities.

The role of sport in the acculturation process of youth is first illustrated by the example of physical education in Prague, which highlights its essential role in both healthcare and military terms (Waie and Pavlu). Beyond the strict domain of primary education, the Swiss example shows the role of gymnastics clubs in the extension of the phenomenon both in terms of geographical and political areas and age groups (Mayencourt and Quin). With the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the question of socialization through sport is approached via cultural mediators whose youth is an asset (Bourmaud) but also, in the case of Theodore Roosevelt and his son hunting in Africa, as the stake in a process of learning cultural as well as moral values (Chasles). The crossroads between sport, youth and war are dealt through the voluntary commitment of a young Spanish swimmer, member of a workers’ club, who joins the

Republican camp at the time of the Civil War (Viuda-Serrano and Ibarrondo-Merino).

Two contributions address the propagandist role of sport through the examples of the High School Secondary Students created by the Peron government in 1953 (Hémeury) and the scouting movement in Côte d'Ivoire before and after independence (Nicolas). However, their impact is balanced in the first case by the autonomy of the institution from political struggles, and the resistance that can be observed within the scout association in the second. The Cold War issue is analyzed also in two articles. The first one highlights the role of sport within the World Festivals of Youth and Students which embodies a form of cultural diplomacy of the USSR and the communist bloc (Lesnykh). The second one focuses on the representations of Soviet elite sport in its consequences for young athletes: beyond the Western narrative on the making of champions, the contribution underlines the need for a broader contextualization of these issues (Dufraisse). Finally, a contemporary ethnographic analysis of the practice of twirling in Switzerland, a practice with little legitimacy that reinforces female stereotypes, underlines the need to take into account the gendered dimension in order to approach the general theme (Manh Ly).

REFERENCES

- Abassi, D. (2009). *Le sport dans l'empire français, un instrument de domination coloniale ?*. Outre-mers. Revue d'histoire, t. 96, no 364–365, 5–15. Available online at: https://www.persee.fr/issue/outre_1631-0438_2009_num_96_364
- Alpert, R., and Remillar, A. (2019). *God, Games, and Globalization: New Perspectives on Religion and Sport*. Macon: Mercer University Press.
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bancel, N. (1999). *Entre acculturation et révolution. Mouvements de jeunesse et sports dans l'évolution politique et institutionnelle de l'AOF (1945–1962)*. History thesis, Paris I University.
- Bourdieu, P. (1978). "La jeunesse n'est qu'un mot. Entretien avec Anne-Marie Métaillé," in *Les jeunes et le premier emploi* (Paris: Association des Âges), 520–530.
- Clastres, P. (2008). *Mémoires de jeunesse de Pierre de Coubertin*. Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions.
- Clastres, P. (2023). *Les carnets de voyage de Pierre de Coubertin dans les îles Britanniques*. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes.
- Cleveland, T., Tarminder, K., and Akindes, G. (2020). *Sports in Africa: Past and Present*. Athens: Ohio University Press. doi: 10.2307/j.ctv224tvfw
- Combeau-Mari, E. (2006). Sport in the French colonies (1880–1962): a case study. *J. Sport History* 33, 27–57. Available online at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43610448>
- Deville-Danthu, B. (1997). *Le sport en noir et blanc, Du sport colonial au sport africain dans les anciens territoires français d'Afrique occidentale (1920-1965)*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Fatès, Y. (1994). *Sport et tiers-monde*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.
- Fatès, Y. (2002). *Sport et politique en Algérie*. De la période coloniale à nos jours, Political science State thesis, Paris I University.
- Fatès, Y. (2020). *Histoire du sport en Algérie*. Paris: Self-Published.
- Frenkiel, S., Riot, T., and Bancel, N. (2015). Postcolonial sports. *International Perspectives. Int. J. History Sport* 32:847–48. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1043073
- Galtung, J. (1991). "The sport system as a metaphor for the world system," in *Sport in the Third Millennium*, eds F. Landry, M. Landry, and M. Yerlès (Laval: Presses Universitaires de Laval), 147–156.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

PC organized the CESH2019 Congress in Lausanne and designed this special issue. NB wrote the first part of the Editorial. PC and FV edited most of the articles. NB wrote the paragraph titled "Young people and sport in non-western countries" and FV the one called "From scouting in Ivory Coast to Soviet Young Elite Athletes". All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Here we would like to thank Prof. Bengt Kayser and Prof. Emmanuel Bayle (ISSUL), the CESH Directing Council, and especially its president Mike Huggins and its secretary general Daphné Bolz, our colleagues of the Scientific and Organizing Committees, first of all Dr. Quentin Tonnerre, our three formidable keynote speakers, Ludivine Bantigny (Rouen University, France), Paul Christesen (Dartmouth College, USA) and Harald Fischer-Tiné (EPF Zurich, Switzerland), the reviewers and associate editors, and of course the ten authors and the Frontiers staff. May they all be warmly thanked here.

- Gems, G. R. (2004). "Sport et impérialisme américain en Asie," in *Evelyne Combeau-Mari, Sports et loisirs dans les colonies XIXe-XXe siècles* (Paris: S.E.D.E.S./Nathan).
- Gillmeister, H. (2008). *From Bonn to Athens, single and return: the diary of John Pius Boland, Olympic champion 1896*. Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag.
- Guttman, A. (1994). *Games and Empires, Modern Sports and Cultural Imperialism*. New York, NY: Columbia university Press. doi: 10.7312/gutt91262
- Kaddache M. (1976, 2003). *Et l'Algérie se libéra. 1954–1962*. Paris: Paris-Méditerranée.
- Levi, G., and Schmitt, J.-C. (1996). *Histoire des jeunes en Occident de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne*. Paris: Le Seuil.
- Mangan, J. A. (1986). *The games ethic and imperialism*. New-York, NY: Viking.
- Mangan, J. A. (1989). *Education and Imperialism: Four Case Studies (Aspects of Education)*. London: Routledge.
- Mauger, G. (2001). La jeunesse n'est qu'un mot. À propos d'un entretien de Pierre Bourdieu. *Agora débats/jeunesses* 26, 137–142. doi: 10.3406/agora.2001.1924
- Pfister, G. (2006). Colonialism and the enactment of German identity: *Turnen* in South West Africa. *J. Sport History* 33, 59–83.
- Riot, T. (2011). *Sport et mouvements de jeunesse dans l'émancipation politique du Rwanda colonial. Histoire d'une libération imaginée (1935–1961)*. STAPS thesis, Strasbourg University.
- Sacks, B. (2019). *Crickets, Kiriti and Imperialism in Samoa (1879-1939)*. Londres: Palgrave.
- Singarevelou, P., and Sorez, J. (eds) (2010). *L'empire des sports, une histoire de la mondialisation culturelle*. Paris: Belin.
- Sirinelli, J.-F. (2009). "Préface," in *Jeunesse oblige. Histoire des jeunes en France, XIXe-XXIe siècles*, eds L. Bantigny and Y. Jablonka Siècles (Paris: Presses universitaires de France), 2.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.

Copyright © 2022 Clastres, Vallotton and Bancel. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Upstanding Youngsters: Ivorian Scouting and the Manufacture of a Subordinate Citizenship (1937–1979)

Claire Nicolas*

Faculté de sciences sociales et politiques, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

This research focuses on Ivorian scouting from its colonial implementation in the late 1930s up to the late 1970s, under Félix Houphouët-Boigny's regime. Using a novel perspective, it highlights the gender lines of scouting youth training in West Africa. Furthermore, this paper argues that understanding this history of Ivorian youth through the lens of the scouting movement allows us to articulate youth governance between the colonial and postcolonial era, notably in order to understand the political and moral subordination of Ivorian youth during the twentieth century. This research is based on archives collected in France, Côte d'Ivoire and Switzerland as well as biographical interviews conducted in 2016.

Keywords: scouting, Côte d'Ivoire, sport, youth, independence, gender

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Ansgar Thiel,
University of Tübingen, Germany

Reviewed by:

Sylvain Dufraisse,
Université de Nantes, France
Keith Allen Rathbone,
Macquarie University, Australia

*Correspondence:

Claire Nicolas
claire.nicolas@unil.ch

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 31 May 2020

Accepted: 19 August 2020

Published: 08 October 2020

Citation:

Nicolas C (2020) Upstanding Youngsters: Ivorian Scouting and the Manufacture of a Subordinate Citizenship (1937–1979). *Front. Sports Act. Living* 2:568013. doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.568013

“In my community, the Scouts, the vast majority are children of civil servants. Because first of all, they are well-dressed. They march. It gives the impression of order and discipline. So, everyone was proud to see their child in these ranks!”¹.

When, in 2016, a former Ivorian Boy Scout recalled what attracted him to Scouting 50 years earlier, as a teenager, he emphasized its playful aspects and the camaraderie it involved, but also placed great emphasis on the privileged social status of young Scouts in Ivorian society². At the time, the Scouts largely came from the privileged ranks of the State bourgeoisie that managed the country (Fauré and Médard, 1982), and the civil service embodied a form of social success. At the same time, the values of order and discipline were praised by the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, hereafter PDCI), which now ruled the country. In particular, young people had to be disciplined and subordinate themselves to the values promoted at the State level.

The career of this former Scout, like that of his comrades, is part of the political and social history of Ivorian youth and can be understood as such from a social and political perspective. And one perspective within the field of contemporary African history is particularly enlightening. For scholars such as Mbembe (1985), young people are social and political juniors who were excluded or instrumentalized by many States in sub-Saharan Africa before and after independence. This paper will thus argue that Scouting, as a youth movement of European origin promoting loyalty, morality, and physical exercise, allows us to understand the ambivalence of the relationship between young people and the colonial, then post-colonial African States they live in, through the example of Côte d'Ivoire. Here, the Ivorian case helps us illuminate how the perspective of social and political history

¹“Dans mon milieu, les scouts, la grande majorité c'est les enfants des fonctionnaires. Parce que d'abord ils sont bien habillés. Ils marchent au pas. Ça donne l'impression de l'ordre, la discipline. Donc chacun était fier de voir son enfant dans ces rangs-là !” Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïques de Côte d'Ivoire*), 4 April 2016, Bouaké.

²I wish to thank Jakob Kraiss, my colleagues from the University of Lausanne and *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living's* anonymous reviewers for generously commenting on the present paper. I also thank Kate McNaughton for thoroughly proofreading the text.

enables us to understand how young people and their engagement in physical activities may be associated with a public social engineering project.

Scouting, a movement established by Robert Baden-Powell at the beginning of the twentieth century, aims to train young people from a moral and physical perspective. Conceived as an imperial practice of military inspiration for young boys in the United Kingdom (Block and Proctor, 2009), the movement was very quickly taken up by girls (Mills, 2011) before spreading abroad, in Europe (Kergomard and François, 1983; Laneyrie, 1985; Cholvy, 1999; Prigent, 2011) and all over the globe, notably in the French and British empires (Parsons, 2004; Johnston, 2016; Fossard, 2017; Wu, 2019). In the case of the latter, the historian Timothy Parsons has shown how Scouting, as an institution promoting social stability and loyalty to the Empire, is a faithful ally of the colonial administration. However, French-language works have recently highlighted the emergence of fault lines in this loyalty, notably the subversive role played by Scouting in the French Empire at the time of the struggle for independence (Bancel et al., 2003; Kraiss, 2018).

The rise of Scouting in Côte d'Ivoire took place within a particular context. A colony relegated to the margins of the Afrique Occidentale Française (hereafter AOF)³, Côte d'Ivoire became one of the leading economic powers in the region after gaining independence in 1960, while the country's economic development was based on State capitalism and cooperation with France (Bamba, 2016). As such, specialists in the political history of Côte d'Ivoire have highlighted the determination of President Félix Houphouët-Boigny to offer a development model based on cooperation with the former French colonial power, as well as the iron fist with which he ruled the country (Fauré and Médard, 1982). In the early 1960s, among other things, the President eliminated his opponents within his own party, in particular removing the head of the Marxist *Jeunesse du Rassemblement Démocratique Africain de Côte d'Ivoire* (Youth of the African Democratic Rally of Côte d'Ivoire) in 1964⁴. During the following decades, he came under increased criticism, particularly from young Ivorian graduates who pointed out his poor economic management and the control he exerted over their organizations (Chazan, 1976; Proteau, 2002). In response, in 1968, he dissolved the student union heading this protest and repressed student demonstrations⁵. However, examining this history of Ivorian youth through the lens of the Scouting movement allows us to articulate another aspect of this opposition between student sedition and State repression. More specifically, this paper focuses on what Jean-François Havard refers to as “socialization in a subordinate political assignment”⁶ (2009, 316), meaning that the “Fathers of Independence” made sure that “social

juniors” were also “political juniors,” setting up specific control procedures in order to better mobilize them for their own benefit on the one hand, or exclude them from the higher spheres of the political arena on the other. Scouts were not completely excluded from the political game, however: rather, they were confined to a marginalized position from which they could be instrumentalized by the Ivorian State in response to various forms of contestation. Thanks to their sense of duty, loyalty, willingness, and respect for hierarchies, Scouts ideally embodied the figure of the “new man” (Bromber and Kraiss, 2018), the archetype of the new postcolonial citizenship, and were at the vanguard of the modernization process—albeit subordinate to political power.

If historiography offers avenues of analysis to understand this subordinate political assignment, it remains incomplete. First, the focus on Ivorian student rebel youth put forward by political historians of Côte d'Ivoire does not allow analyses to take into account the nuances of a diverse younger generation, which certainly was subversive in parts, but also included disciplined and loyal individuals. Political discourses might define “youth” as a natural and unambiguous stage of life, either feared for its tendency for deviance, misconduct, and rebellion, or praised for its enthusiasm and creativity. However, the reality is far more complex, and scholars of youth have shown the importance of an intersectional approach to qualifying young people (Bantigny and Jablonka, 2009). Secondly, academic works on Scouting in Africa tend to focus on the colonial era (Bancel, 1998), and those that focus on the post-colonial decades tend to limit themselves to issues related to cooperation (Harang, 2010) or development (Koné, 2017). However, Katrin Bromber's publication (Bromber, 2018) on the place of Scouting in the formation of an Ethiopian “new man” and, more generally, scholarly works on socialist youth movements in Africa (Burgess, 2005; Ahlman, 2017; Nicolas, 2017) offers new lines of inquiry in terms of the training of young people by the state. Thirdly, the sub-field of “Scouting Studies,” in line with Sub-Saharan Sport Studies, remains largely andro-centered (Sikes and Bale, 2014), in spite of some recent works on colonial Girl Guiding (Kraiss, 2019; Wu, 2019). Following this innovative avenue of research, understanding Scouting more widely through the prism of the Girl Guides' moral salvation program helps throw light on the ways in which the Ivorian Scout movements developed as training institutions dedicated to an ideal younger generation.

This analysis uses multi-situated data (Nicolas, 2019a). Indeed, archives related to the Ivorian Scouting movements are scattered. Some may be located within the archives of public authorities, as they gathered intelligence on youth activities. One may also go through private archives (either held in public archive centers or by organizations themselves), which are scattered from Côte d'Ivoire to France and Switzerland. In Côte d'Ivoire, I thus accessed the archives of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the library of the *Institut National de la Jeunesse et des Sports*. There I was able to go through the archives of the *Association des Guides de Côte d'Ivoire*, in the collection of the Frenchwoman Marcelle Piauxt (1960–1985). In order to explore the premises of Scouting during the colonial era, I collected archival documents in the *Archives nationales d'Outre-mer* in Aix-en-Provence, France (in particular the *Bulletin de la*

³The French colonies of West Africa were gathered together into a single administrative entity, the Afrique Occidentale Française. These colonies were Côte d'Ivoire, Dahomey (now Benin), Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, French Sudan (now Mali), Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), and Togo.

⁴This elimination follows the “false conspiracy” affair, during which he also dismissed early independence fighters threatening his authority (Diarra, 1997).

⁵This protest was part of a general protest movement among African students during the 1960s (Blum et al., 2016).

⁶“Socialization dans une assignation politique subordonnée”.

Côte d'Ivoire) and from the *Archives nationales du Sénégal*, in the Afrique Occidentale Française (AOF) collection (in particular the political archives). In addition, the *Eclaireurs et éclaireuses de France* association collection in the *Archives départementales du Val-de-Marne* (France) provides access to the private collection of two French Scouts linked to Côte d'Ivoire: René Dumeste (1952–1954) and Charles Boganski (1963–1979). Moreover, within the archives of the *Scouts et Guides de France* association in Paris, it is possible to browse through Scouting magazines published in AOF. Finally, in the Swiss Federal Archives, I went through the collection of the *Fédération des Éclaireuses Suisses*. The archive documents a cooperation project with the Ivorian Girl Scouting movements (1968–1975). However, as the archives are scattered, fragmented and sometimes unavailable, some data are lacking. In particular, while we may plausibly infer⁷ that there were around 200 young Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in the 1950s and several thousands in the 1970s, it is impossible at present to carry out a precise quantitative analysis of the movement over the decades. In 2016, in collaboration with the Ivorian Scouting specialist Gilbert Koné, I conducted biographical interviews with 11 former Ivorian Scouts and Girl Guides who participated in the movement during their youth, between the 1950s and 1970s. Cross-examination of these archives and interviews allow us to contrast the perspectives of the colonial and independent public authorities on the one hand, and Scout leaders and former young members of the Scouting movements on the other.

THE COLONIAL ORIGINS OF SCOUTING: TOWARD A HIERARCHICAL BROTHERHOOD (1937–1959)

Scouting movements were established in Côte d'Ivoire during the colonial period. They were first imported from France by French citizens, either members of the colonial administration or missionaries. Catholic, secular and Protestant movements were closely associated with the colonial civilizing mission, particularly with a view to training young Ivorian schoolchildren for their future role as auxiliaries to the colonial State. While French Scouting massively took off in the 1920s, it was not until the end of the 1930s that the first troops were founded in the colony. As Scouting aimed at training a social vanguard, the movement found a fertile ground in the colonial “civilizing mission.” And, far from enrolling large swathes of Ivorian youth, the movement grew from Catholic schools and churches, reaching an educated urban youth in the Southern region.

The first recorded troop in the colony was founded in 1937 by a metropolitan missionary Father and a leader (a French female nurse from Dakar), in the parish of the African district of Treichville, in the south of Abidjan⁸. The Catholic *Scouts de France* movement was closely associated with the evangelizing mission of the Church. Troops comprised of young African boys

and led by white fathers appeared between the late 1930s and the early 1940s and were integrated into churches and Catholic schools. These troops were concentrated in urban centers in the southern areas of the country (Agboville, Abidjan, Bingerville). It was only under the Vichy regime that the secular *Éclaireurs de France* and—to a lesser extent—the Protestant *Éclaireurs unionistes* established troops in the colony⁹. Throughout the 1940s, the secular movement was not very present in Côte d'Ivoire. It was only from 1952 onwards that the movement really took off¹⁰. Before this date, Bancel (2009, p. 149–150) counted 150 Catholic Scouts and 50 secular Scouts in colonial Côte d'Ivoire. In this respect, the territory was different from the other colonies in Afrique Occidentale Française, most of which were committed to the cause of secular Scouting. Finally, despite the involvement of a handful of Catholic Girl Guides in Abidjan from the 1940s, Girl Scouting was far less developed¹¹. These organizations had neither the support of the clergy nor that of the education services. It was only in 1957 that a permanent company was created at Bingerville's Girls secondary school, soon followed by units supported by Catholic missionary sisters in Abidjan, then throughout several girls' schools in the Southern region¹².

All in all, during the last three decades of colonization, the Ivorian Scouting movement was mainly monitored by the missionary Catholic clergy, either through Catholic schools or churches. One may frame this distinction in terms of the special place occupied by Côte d'Ivoire, at the periphery of the AOF. On the one hand, its primary school enrolment rate was among the lowest in the French colonies¹³ and, on the other hand, elite secondary schooling was concentrated more than 2,000 km away in Dakar, Senegal (Jézéquel, 2003; Barthélémy, 2010). As a result, secular Scouting, set up within secular colonial schools, remained scarce in Côte d'Ivoire until the end of the Second World War and the subsequent rise in school enrolment throughout the territory. Furthermore, Catholic Scouting remained limited to the urban areas of the coastal South. Here, colonial control was strong and stable, in contrast to the forest and northern areas, where the military and political administration was both more scarcely distributed and violent (Gendry, 2020). Meanwhile, in colonial urban centers, colonial Scouting groups remained mainly embedded within Catholic institutions and public administrators favored their development. This attitude was consistent with the ideology of a civilizing mission that officially underpinned France's imperial conquests from the end of the nineteenth century. Boy and Girl Scouts were to become a positive model, the faithful civilized youth opposed to a rebellious territory. Indeed, not all Africans should become involved in Scouting, but rather an educated elite. According to administrators who favored French Scouting, it thus provided

⁷Based on cross-referencing archives and interviews with former Scouts and Guides.

⁸“Scoutisme français. Origines du scoutisme en Côte d'Ivoire,” *Bulletin de la Côte d'Ivoire*, 1st January 1948. Copies of the *Bulletin* were browsed at the *Archives nationales d'Outre-mer de France* in Aix-en-Provence.

⁹“Scoutisme français. Origines du scoutisme en Côte d'Ivoire,” *Bulletin de la Côte d'Ivoire*, 8 January 1948.

¹⁰Letter from Ousmane Thiané Sar (secular Scout leader) to Obed Yansunni, 15 March 1953. Val-de-Marne Archives (hereafter VDM), 542J 420.3.

¹¹“Scoutisme français,” *Bulletin de la Côte d'Ivoire*, 8 January 1948.

¹²Fédération éclaireuse suisse, *Amitié internationale Côte d'Ivoire*, 1968, p. 17. Swiss Federal Archives (hereafter SFA), J2.334-01 2008/3 (242).

¹³Less than 10,000 young Ivoirians (among whom less than 2,000 girls) were sent to school in the late 1930s (Désalmand, 1983, p. 267–268).

“a magnificent example of French unity, [but it remained] an elite movement reserved for the training of leaders”¹⁴. These “leaders” were indeed to become the auxiliaries of the colonial administration (Jézéquel, 2007), as clerks, nurses or teachers. Eventually, they were to become colonial middlemen, led astray from a supposed African savagery, while remaining subordinate.

However, as Tony Chafer has recently pointed out, even if the “civilizing mission” discourse aimed rhetorically at the cultural and political assimilation of an educated elite, it was in fact more of a way to “legitimize a form of segregation between French people and Africans” (Chafer, 2018, p. 4). In this perspective, appeals were constantly made to hierarchy as far as the “small indigenous elite” that populated the Scout movements was concerned. The words of the AOF’s Director General of Political, Administrative and Social Affairs in 1942 echoed this ideology, when he defined Scouting as follows:

“A true brotherhood, in which we play the role of elder brothers, is born between white and black Scouts jointly serving the same ideal. It is a hierarchical brotherhood at the top of which our homeland, France, radiates”¹⁵.

The French elder brothers were to raise their younger brethren toward the French homeland, while keeping them in subordinate positions. As such, Scouting had to enable young boys to forge a virile will, worthy of France, and to emerge from the “atavistic instincts of their race”¹⁶ so that they could be energetic, willing, adventurous, pure, and fraternal. The colonial movements here echoed the moral enrolment program that was created during this period by the Vichy regime for its metropolitan youth (Prêtet, 2016). The subordinate status of the African Scouts was thus recalled and asserted by the head of the colonial administration.

In practice, for young Ivorian schoolchildren involved in Scouting, learning was based on physical and sports pedagogy, which complemented school. Following the example of Baden-Powell’s initial model, large-scale games in nature were intended to promote their moral and civic training. Thus, Scouting brought together the elite “of those who [knew] how to promise and show[ed] themselves capable of keeping their commitments”¹⁷ (Denis, 2003, p. 199), while Scouting trials and exams provided proof of such moral fiber.

For instance, the activities organized in Bouaké (Central Côte d’Ivoire) by Catholic and secular Scouts in the 1950s provide an insight into how the Ivorian Scouts put in place

this moral and physical training project. The *Scouts de France* organized bivouacs and, during these camps, centered their activities around religious ceremonies. Thus, for example, the leader Dorothé Akpovo (a teacher) and his troop *Saint-Michel* (protected by the patronage of its eponymous saint) camped for a few days in a village near Bouaké over Christmas 1955. On this occasion, the young boys made a campfire, sang, danced, played, and exercised. They also took advantage of this opportunity to conform to the social doctrine of the Church: they attended baptisms, performed “multiple services” in the village and prayed every day¹⁸. In the same place, in the same year, the *Éclaireurs de France* engaged creatively with the Catholics to organize appealing activities. For example, the Bouaké patrols went boating and swimming by regularly going up the Bandama River with canoes and inflatable rafts over several dozen kilometers. For both Catholic and secular Scouts, physical activities and games were associated with discussions on morality and socially beneficial activities.

The learning of morality and civics also touched on the private lives of young boys. Indeed, the French colonial administration sought to order family life by exalting the centrality of a domestic ideal inspired by the European bourgeoisie. The family unit was to allow for the reproduction of heritage on the one hand and the reproduction of social values through the education of children by women on the other (Barré, 2019). The promotion of European conjugality involved, among other things, movements interested in “educated” organizations, such as Scouting. For example, discussions among the Scouts were often devoted to conjugality and the duties of young Scouts, such as conjugal duty, the founding of a home, or saving money¹⁹. The following excerpt from the AOF Catholic Scouting journal gives a good example of such advice:

To get married, “it is necessary firstly that one’s studies be completed or about to be completed, and secondly that the financial conditions in which the young man and the girl live be such that they can safely assume the responsibility of a home... It is also preferable that the spouses practice the same religion.”²⁰

However, even beyond the Boy Scouts movements, as family and conjugality became central issues for the civilizing enterprise of the colonial State, it was mainly the Girl Guides that were targeted in this perspective.

Through her work on Lagos (Nigeria), George (2014) has highlighted a double movement of changes to social policy during the 1940s in West African colonial cities. She has shown how girls were then constituted as a category “to be saved,” with moral salvation becoming a political discourse participating in the reorganization of colonial political power after the Second World War. Moreover, Gendry (2020) recently put forward in her thesis on AOF’s judicial space that such injunctions were not

¹⁴“Donne ainsi pratiquement un magnifique exemple de l’unité française, [mais] il reste cependant un mouvement d’élite réservé à la formation des chefs.” In *Service de la Jeunesse de l’Afrique noire, Instructions générales aux chefs locaux*, n°1, 1943, p. 9. SNA, O 516 (31).

¹⁵“Une véritable fraternité, où nous jouons le rôle de frères aînés, naît entre scouts blancs et noirs servant ensemble un même idéal. C’est une fraternité hiérarchisée au sommet de laquelle rayonne notre patrie, la France.” In Letter from F. Berthet (Director General of Political, Administrative and Social Affairs) to the Director General of Public Education and Sports, 3 October 1942. Senegal National Archives (hereafter SNA), O 2 (31).

¹⁶“Instincts ataviques de leur race.” In “Scoutisme français. Pour les jeunes et leurs parents,” *Bulletin de la Côte d’Ivoire*, 18 December 1947.

¹⁷“De ceux qui savent promettre et se montrer capables de tenir leurs engagements.”

¹⁸“Multiples services.” In Dorothé Akpovo, “Côte d’Ivoire,” *Lettre de la province. Bulletin de l’association des scouts de France, province d’AOF—Togo*, March 1956.

¹⁹Brother Jean-Pierre Lintanf, “Pour une vraie,” *Scout AOF*, n°1, 1957.

²⁰Christian Kuawu, “Le jeune homme et l’amour,” *Lettre de la Province. Bulletin de l’association des Scouts de France, province d’AOF—Togo*, April 1956.

the same in urban and rural areas. For colonial legislators, non-respect of Western moral standards was tolerated in the “bush” on the basis of a “savagery” and “amorality” that was supposed to be peculiar to Africans (and in particular a sexuality that was expressed outside the rules of European decency). In contrast, in cities, proximity to Europeans required (again, in the eyes of legislators) a stronger acculturation to such moral standards. Consequently, young African girls living in colonial cities were all the more the object of their attention, following the model of European charities (Belliard, 2004).

And indeed, the Girl Guides of Côte d’Ivoire movement was built as a bulwark against the moral dangers of urban life. Thus, in 1943, French leaders of the French colonial Girl Guides movement deplored the “feverish and unethical atmosphere of big colonial cities” and, to remedy this, proposed the establishment of “women’s restaurants and street surveillance along with morality propaganda”²¹. While no actual traces of these surveillance projects have been found, restaurants and non-mixed hostels were established by the Girl Guides movement in the colony²². In order to exert a beneficial moral influence on the girls, leaders thus offered to integrate them into the private sphere and encouraged them to leave the public space. Once again, the desire to control colonial sexualities was resurfacing (Stoler, 2002). However, it is not the sexuality of young men that was targeted, nor possible sexual assaults, but rather the sole behavior of Ivorian girls.

However, despite this action in accordance with the principles of the civilizing mission, the Girl Guides movement did not benefit from the blank check granted to the Boy Scouts movements by the colonial authorities. The leaders of the movement were constantly looking for funding. But in 1944, the AOF’s General Secretariat of Youth refused to help them:

The Girl Guides movement must only “emancipate [women] very slowly and there would be no question, apart from the exceptions that will confirm the rule, of training parallel to that of boys as we understand it. Since women are the means of work and the instrument that perpetuates life in the eyes of Blacks, it will be necessary for this area of training to remain very modest”²³.

The delegate to the General Secretariat feared unrest among the population in his charge. His fears were based on his own interpretation of the “colonial library,” that is the epistemological order that has made it possible to construct Africa as a symbol of otherness and inferiority (Mudimbe, 1988). The mobilization

²¹“l’atmosphère fiévreuse et peu morale des grandes villes” and “restaurants féminins et une surveillance des rues en même temps qu’une propagande de moralité.” In Mrs D’Authéville, Claudet, Bourgoïn, Ledran, Matte and Mallet, “Sous-commission féminine,” *Rapport général sur la Conférence africaine de la jeunesse*, 3–5 February 1943. SNA, O 87 (31).

²²Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïques de Côte d’Ivoire*), 4 April 2016, Bouaké.

²³“d’émanciper que très lentement [les femmes] et il ne serait pas question, à part les exceptions qui confirmeront la règle, de formation parallèle à celle des garçons, ainsi que nous la concevons. La femme étant aux yeux des Noirs le moyen de travail et l’instrument qui perpétue la vie, il sera nécessaire de rester très humble dans ce domaine de formation” In *Programme d’action du délégué du secrétariat général de la Jeunesse en Afrique occidentale française*, circa 1944. SNA, O 515 (31).

of a racist discourse on the colonized taken in its broadest sense made it possible here to justify a colonial patriarchal view aimed at establishing a hierarchy between movements. However, whether the delegate was convinced of this or whether it was merely a rhetorical justification, this argument was at the very least an effective means of justifying the denial of any symbolic or financial support from the government to European leaders wishing to develop Guiding. While Boy Scouts movements were considered a priority, Girl Guiding was not. And even if the Delegate believed that Guiding would enable the emancipation and protection of young girls, this was not a priority in his view.

Generally speaking, the activities of Girl Guides were largely concerned with hygiene, childcare and “household taste”²⁴. In Côte d’Ivoire, young female leaders were encouraged to lead troops of young boys, since “female guardianship (mother, teacher, leader)”²⁵ was considered beneficial for small boys. This supervision was viewed as good training for motherhood. Here, the Girl Guides movement was part of the manufacture of a “colonial motherhood” (Hugon, 2004). Guiding was aimed at training girls to become ideal mothers and the pillars of social protection, allowing the colonial authorities to avoid considering the economic or political reasons behind the failures of the few social policies they did have in place. However, training young girls also involved camping and outdoor games, which were considered masculine practices²⁶. These activities are indicative of a form of gender blurring. As such, in her work on British Guiding, Mills (2011) has shown that it was such activities, which were traditionally viewed as manly, that legitimized the membership of girls within the Scouting movement, originally intended for boys. However, this blurring was largely reduced and discouraged, particularly through the adaptation of physical practices. Thus, fewer physical tests were required to obtain badges validating progress in colonial Guiding, and outdoor games were often replaced by sewing, singing, or arts and crafts.

The extremely restrictive framework proposed by the French Girl Guides movement in Côte d’Ivoire, aiming at training an ideal docile young African woman, leads us to the hypothesis that, from the point of view of gendered and racialized identities, the colonial Girl Guide movement was even less transgressive than its metropolitan counterpart. Girl Guiding was limited to a secondary space, and primarily valued for its moralizing action. Although its members sometimes carried out military-inspired activities, Guiding focused its educational project on the moral training of young girls, between sexual abstinence, humility, and motherhood, which fitted to the values and activities socially associated with French femininity.

Thus, for two decades, Scouting, supported by the AOF administration, made it possible to train young Ivorian

²⁴“le goût ménager” In Service de la Jeunesse de l’Afrique noire, *Instructions générales aux chefs locaux*, n°1, 1943, p. 26. SNA, O 516 (31).

²⁵“la tutelle féminine” In “Le mouvement scout de France,” *Lettre de la province. Bulletin de l’association des scouts de France, province d’AOF—Togo*, October–November 1955.

²⁶Guides de France, “La vie en Outre-Mer en 1958–59,” *Journées nationales de commissaires de district et aumôniers diocésains*, Paris, 1959, p. 6. Youth and Sports National Institute of Côte d’Ivoire Archives (hereafter INJS), “Marcelle Pialt” collection, file “mouvements de jeunesse.”

schoolchildren for their future role as auxiliaries. Youngsters voluntarily joined the movement and were gradually trained into an African elite unit, subordinate to the Europeans. Hence, through Scouting, young boys and girls learned norms and values that framed their lives as “ideal colonial subjects” (Lamba, 1985). Girls were to become mothers and educators in charge of their husbands’ households, while the latter put themselves at the service of the colonial administration.

FROM FRENCH TO IVORIAN SCOUTING (1945–1969)

From the end of the Second World War, Scouting was challenged in its role of training an elite. While part of the younger Ivorian generation became involved in anti-colonial and independence movements, Scouting was no longer in the vanguard of society. Ivorian Scouting was seeking to redeploy itself to the rhythm of political shifts, while Côte d’Ivoire became autonomous in 1960, under the leadership of President Félix Houphouët-Boigny.

From the 1940s (Cooper, 2002), the Ivorian political landscape was turned upside down. The 1940s and 1950s were marked by the growth of anti-colonial claims. Returning World War II veterans (Mourre, 2017), wealthy African planters—through the *Syndicat agricole africain* (African Agricultural Union) founded in 1944 by Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Cooper, 2014)—and educated young men and women (Barthélémy, 2016) protested against the colonial administration through the newly funded PDCL, which was affiliated to the platform of the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (African Democratic Rally, hereafter RDA) which formulated anti-colonial demands in Côte d’Ivoire. The anti-colonial struggle faced massive repression (Joly, 2015). In this stormy context, Scouting movements reacted in different ways to sedition. Thus, while the Catholic movement remained relatively impervious to sedition, the same cannot be said of the secular movement, marked by the Marxist and anti-imperialist orientations of many Scout leaders, whether they were from metropolitan France or Côte d’Ivoire.

Unlike its religious counterparts, in the 1950s, the secular movement was especially influenced by Marxist readings, whether in metropolitan France or in Côte d’Ivoire. Among these young Frenchmen, we may count the former Resistance fighter and member of the Communist Party René Vautier, who went to Côte d’Ivoire in 1950 (albeit after his Scouting days) to shoot the first French anticolonial film, *Afrique 50* (Nicolas et al., 2015). One may also consider the trajectory of René Dumeste, a young French expatriate for whom Scouting had to allow for an emancipation of young people, just as trade unions allowed for the emancipation of the proletariat. These two trajectories were part of a wider reflection on the colonial future within the secular French Scouting movement (Palluau, 2003).

Several Ivorians leaders also had radical views on colonialism. This was the case of Paul Achy and Jean-Baptiste Pango. The first was a teacher who became a school principal in Port-Bouët (Southern region). He trained in Scouting at William-Ponty

school in Dakar²⁷. The second was a member of the Youth of the RDA, and attended the World Federation of Democratic Youth Festival (Kotek, 2003) in 1953 in Bucharest²⁸. Both were resolutely in favor of the autonomy of Côte d’Ivoire, whether in Scouting or political terms²⁹. These two Scout leaders (unlike the Ivorian leaders of the Catholic *Scouts de France*) were not comfortable with the domination of the metropolitan population over their activities. However, beyond these individual lives, as Bancel (2009) has pointed out, this situation should not be viewed as opposing a radically subversive secular Scouting clan to a Catholic Scouting clan allied with the authorities. Most Ivorian leaders occupied more moderate positions between these two extremes.

Beyond these differences, the Catholic Boy Scout movement staked a claim, albeit belatedly, to involvement in African political life. A certain number of publications from the end of the 1950s thus helped to call into question the colonial model. The AOF Catholic Boy Scouts devoted the year 1957 to reflections on the “life of the City”³⁰. As in France at the same time, with the emergence of a Catholic Scouting movement close to socialist circles (Prigent, 2011), the idea was to encourage Scouts to discuss citizenship, trade unionism, political ideology (Marxism, capitalism, the social doctrine of the Church), the notion of service, but also the need to practice sports in order to form a healthy mind in a healthy body³¹. Moreover, between 1957 and 1959, columns and editorials aimed at Rovers (teenage boys) questioned the acquisition of citizenship or political autonomy³². As for Girl Guides, they were once again placed in the background of these debates (at least in their programmatic form). Their focus was largely once again reduced to and focused on their role as future mothers and wives. Girl Guides had to be “Ready to Serve,” while at the same time fulfilling their “role as mothers and African women”³³. However, these belated publications from the Catholic Scouting journal were far from subversive. As the process of independence had largely begun, the issue was no longer to take part in subversive activities, but rather to support the process of empowerment within the framework of the Community instituted in 1958 by General De Gaulle (Cooper, 2014). Catholic Scouts were seeking to take over the debate on the future of AOF subjects. From this perspective, they were in tune with the liberal fraction of the colonial administration. Young Africans were in the process of becoming citizens from one year to the next and it was a matter of supporting this movement. This became necessary not only to keep the Scout and Guide movements alive in AOF but also to conform to the primary objective of Scouting, namely the training of an elite.

²⁷ Letter from René Dumeste to the French Scouting Headquarter, 24 July 1954. VDM, 542J 420.3.

²⁸ Letter from Paul Achy to René Dumeste, 10 December 1954. VDM, 542J 420.3.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ “La vie de la cité” In “Plan d’année,” *Scout AOF*, n° 1, 1957.

³¹ Ibid.

³² “Faire des hommes libres,” *Scout AOF*, n° 2, 1957; Jacques Bonnamour, “Former des hommes au service de l’Afrique,” *Scout AOF*, n° 6, 1959.

³³ “Rôle de mères et de femmes africaines” In “Ta cité,” *Scout AOF*, n° 1, 1957; B. Enreille, “Après Bamako,” *Lettre de la province. Bulletin de l’association des scouts de France, province d’AOF—Togo*, May 1957.

As the process of independence began, Scouting movements, which were (in theory) supposed to form the vanguard of the people, found themselves left behind, overtaken by anti-colonial and independentist political parties. We rarely find revolutionary ideals either within the secular or Catholic movements (Pango or Vautier are exceptions rather than the rule), but rather the ideal of social progress, of abiding order. Thus, the Ivorian Scouting movements remained pedagogical models of reference for the colonial administration as opposed to the seditious movements of other regions of the Empire, first and foremost Algeria and Indochina (Bancel et al., 2003; Fossard, 2017; Kraiss, 2018). In Côte d'Ivoire, despite the occasional involvement of some Scouting leaders within Marxist organizations, Boy Scouting and Girl Guiding remained separate from anti-colonial and independence movements.

The empowerment of the AOF Scouting movements in opposition to their supervision by French movements was discussed by AOF Scout leaders from the end of the 1950s until 1960, in debates that echoed those between Léopold Sédar Senghor (the future President of Senegal and supporter of a West-African confederation) and Félix Houphouët-Boigny. However, this autonomy did not mean completely breaking apart from French movements. On the contrary, Ivorian Scouting continued to collaborate with its French counterparts. As such, this tension between autonomy and collaboration was part of the political project of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who became President of Côte d'Ivoire in 1960. Houphouët-Boigny was a supporter of equal rights between the Ivorians and the French, and, wishing to remain within a French federation, established a system of close cooperation with France (Fauré and Médard, 1982). This resulted in the presence of French *coopérants*³⁴ in many areas, particularly in the field of public services dedicated to youth and sports on which Scouting depended (Nicolas, 2019b).

AOF Scouting movements left the French fold between 1957 and 1960. Over the course of 3 years, this independence was debated at length, particularly at a time when Ivorian and Senegalese Scouts opposed autonomist or federalist paths, echoing the positions of Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny. Finally, Scouting organizations officially became autonomous and Ivorian during the summer of 1960 (Nicolas, 2019b, p. 289–290). However, the French continued to be involved in the leadership of the African Scout movements. Thus, in the early 1960s, both the secular Scouts and the Catholic Scouts in Metropolitan France founded institutions that, although they were led by French people, were intended to be “laborator[ies] for inventing a truly African Scouting,”³⁵ to use the words of the French secular Scouts. At the same time, development workers employed in the fields of Education or Youth and Sports in Côte d'Ivoire were involved in local Scouting. This was the case of Marcelle Pault, who taught physical education and sports in

Ivorian schools. She had been involved in Girl Guiding since the 1950s, and remained so until the 1970s.

As Scouting movements grew, Côte d'Ivoire rapidly became the Mecca of African Scouting. Between the policy of friendship between Côte d'Ivoire and France, and Félix Houphouët-Boigny's desire, as the country's new president, to transform it into a strong regional power (Fauré and Médard, 1982), Côte d'Ivoire was an attractive breeding ground for these continent-wide cooperation movements, which were favorably received by Ivorian political and institutional authorities. Metropolitan secular³⁶ Scouts settled in Abidjan in 1968, and Catholic Scouts in 1969. Scouting movements were thus redeployed in the country, adopting positions between nationalist autonomy and the continent-wide metropolitan support that was on offer, all of this against the backdrop of an “Africanization”³⁷ of Scouting. In the decades following independence, Scouting movements, supported by the French, grew considerably, with several thousand young Ivorians belonging to the movement by the 1970s. From 1961 onwards, Ivorian Scouting (be it secular, Catholic or Protestant, feminine or masculine) was officially supported by the State. Scouts were heavily subsidized by their parent ministry³⁸ and received logistical support through the secondment of popular education and sports officials or through the support of local PDCI members who allowed Scouting troops to use their land or premises. An Ivorian National Scouting College was set up in 1963, bringing together religious and secular Scouts, and unifying the movements in a good relationship with the State³⁹. However, tensions soon emerged. The college found it difficult to function due to the historical oppositions between these movements⁴⁰. Moreover, the movements themselves were not free of internal tensions.

For example, between 1960 and 1964, the movement of the *Éclaireurs laïques de Côte d'Ivoire*, led by Simeon Aka

³⁶“Secular” is used here as a translation of “*laïque*,” which in the context of Scouting referred to movements that were non-denominational but not necessarily non-religious, and certainly not atheist; on the contrary, in the period following independence, *laïque* Scouting groups tended more to be ecumenical, and in particular were often the only groups that would accept Muslim members.

³⁷It was no longer just a question of replacing metropolitan executives with African executives, but also of promoting a discourse on the adaptation of Scouting to the African context through the demand for practices that were defined as traditional.

³⁸At this date, the only organizations that were approved and financially supported by the State were either close to the PDCI or of Western heritage (Scouting, Catholic or Protestant associations, sports associations, reading groups). Regional cultural associations were almost completely deprived of State subsidies, as were Muslim groups or groups of divergent political affiliation. Scouting movements received relatively large subsidies, compared to sports federations, which had a much larger membership. For example, in 1965, Scouting movements received 2,300,000 CFA for the year, including 300,000 CFA for each men's movement. Meanwhile, sports federations received between 600,000 and 800,000 CFA per minor sports federation (volleyball, judo, basketball, handball, or cycling). In view of the membership numbers of the respective groups (much higher for the sports concerned), the political support shown by the government for Scouting movements is remarkable.

Official Gazette of Côte d'Ivoire, 1961–1979. The country's official journals are kept in the National Archives of Côte d'Ivoire.

³⁹Survey filled out by the secular Scouting movement of Côte d'Ivoire and sent to the French Secular Scouting Overseas department, 1963. VDM, 542J 1202.

⁴⁰Letter from Charles Boganski to Pascal Assoko, 3 December 1969. VDM, 542J 1202.

³⁴“*La Coopération*” was a system of partnerships ostensibly aimed at redefining Franco-African relations after decolonization, notably through “technical assistance” programs.

³⁵“Laboratoire[s] pour inventer un scoutisme proprement africain” In *Collège africain et malgache des Éclaireurs laïques*, “Organization,” 1965. VDM, 542J 495.

N'Wozan and his “glorious team,” undertook to “ivoirise” [to use a much later term (Marshall-Fratani, 2006)] the secular Scouting movement and to exclude the Togolese and Dahomeyans (contemporary Beninese) from it, with the explicit aim of countering the latter’s supposed accusations that they viewed Ivorians as “incapable”⁴¹. This ivoirisation of the secular movement took place against a backdrop of heated debates on the issue of nationality in Côte d’Ivoire from 1963 to 1966, when foreigners from AOF became the scapegoats of the country, and were accused taking jobs from national citizens and monopolizing positions of power (Gary-Toukara, 2003). Siméon N’Wozan followed this xenophobic line and accused his colleague Paul Achy of favoring “Daho-Togolese” on the one hand and “friends and especially girlfriends who ha[d] no training in Scouting” on the other⁴². N’Wozan assumed that such groups benefited from trips to and training sessions in France, to the detriment of “good” Scouts. By expressing this view, Siméon N’Wozan betrayed a restrictive, nationalistic and gendered definition of what a Scout should be (i.e., male and Ivorian), and suggested in particular that girl Scouts could only be achieving anything by granting sexual favors⁴³. After some turbulent years, it was Pelkan Diarra who took over the secular movement between 1969 and 1972—which turned out to be a significant turn of events. Pelkan embodied both proximity to political and bureaucratic power (through his ministerial employment and his status as a member of the PDCI’s political bureau), loyalty to the Scouting movement (of which he had been a member for many years) and friendship with French development workers (as evidenced by his close and familiar correspondence with Charles Boganski and René Dumeste).

Thus, just a decade after reaching independence and in spite of a discourse claiming autonomy, the stranglehold of PDCI executives and development workers over the leadership of the Scouting movements was blatant. Moreover, in spite of internal tensions, Ivorian Scouting movements became the preferred space for the implementation of social policies aimed at Ivorian youth. They functioned as a transmission belt between European cooperation projects, youth movements and the social action of the Ivorian State. Ivorian Scouts were to embody Houphouët-Boigny’s political projects for the youth of the country.

TRAINING IDEAL CITIZENS (1960–1979)

In Côte d’Ivoire, Scouting movements appeared to be essential institutions for Houphouët-Boigny’s youth policies. Indeed, the

President and his comrades at the head of the PDCI delegated a large part of the implementation of popular education policies to Scouting movements⁴⁴. After independence, pedagogical Scouting practices were reformulated in the light of the country’s new challenges, particularly the acquisition of a common sense of national pride on the one hand, and participation in building a developed nation on the other. To do so, Scouting and Guiding movements redefined the Scouting syllabus, which now included a patchwork of activities. These were divided into two parts: playful activities (physical activities, discovery of the national territory and supposedly traditional activities) and social and political activities. In this respect, for the PDCI, Scouts at large were a model for young people, just as large sections of Ivorian youth were challenging Houphouët-Boigny’s seizure of power.

Scouting aimed to promote the holistic development of the individual—morally, physically, and mentally. In particular, Katrin Bromber and Jakob Kraiss have pointed out that Scouting’s outdoor practices establish a “specific relation of the human to (national) soil” through self-reliance, physical exposure to hardship, and forming bonds of brother- and sisterhood or solidarity” (Bromber and Kraiss, 2018, p. 17). Ivorian Boy Scouts took part in physical activities which, following Baden-Powell’s model, were inspired by para-military activities: they camped, went on treasure hunts, learned first aid and map reading, made campfires, tied knots, or moorings, trained for self-sufficiency... There was however a degree of novelty involved as more and more sports were included in their range of activities (soccer, volleyball, basketball, athletics), which allowed them to be anchored in a form of modernity that was increasingly defined by urban leisure practices, including sports (Akyeampong and Ambler, 2002). From the 1960s onwards, Girl Guides also became involved in outdoor activities and sports and, as a result, they too incorporated this redefinition of modernity. For example, an Ivorian leader recalls the physical activities practiced in Ivorian Girl Guiding as follows:

“We have track signs, Morse code, how to tie knots... So, we had gatherings like this where you had to show your skill and then we would do it together [girls and boys]. We also made camps. But in the camps, we had sub-camps, with the girls to one side and the boys to the other. But there were certain activities that we did together. [...] At our [girl] level, we had volleyball, basketball. But not soccer. Now the young [girls] are playing soccer. In our time, no one thought a girl could play soccer. No girl of my generation played soccer. But she played volleyball, basketball, running, climbing rope, all that stuff, and we learned how to climb trees and cross rivers”⁴⁵.

⁴¹“équipe glorieuse” et “incapables.” In Minutes of the funding Congress the *Éclaireurs laïques de Côte d’Ivoire*, 2 July 1960. VDM, 542J 1202.

⁴²“Daho-Togolais” and “copains et surtout des copines n’ayant aucune base de formation scoutée.” In Letter from Siméon N’Wozan to Charles Boganski, 29 April 1964. VDM, 542J 1202.

⁴³This may be analyzed in line with Broqua et al. (2014)’s concept of sexual-economic exchange, borrowed from the Italian anthropologist Paola (Tabet, 2004). Their analysis of “transactional sexuality” highlighted how sexuality, gender and economic status were intertwined in twentieth Century Africa. In this perspective, Vidal’s paper (1977) on the “Sex war” held in Abidjan in the 1970s is enlightening. She showed to which extent marriage and relationships were framed by monetary issues, in the context of the emergence of a “small urban bourgeoisie.”

⁴⁴Similarly, the parallel attempt of the Ivorian civic service, founded in the early 1960s, was considered a failure (Guez, 1981; Mbembe, 1985, p. 95; Nicolas, 2019b, p. 282–284). In this regard, I wish to thank Daniel Heller for sharing his knowledge of the history of the Ivorian civic service.

⁴⁵“On a les signes de piste, le morse, comment faire les nœuds... Donc, on a des rassemblements comme ça où il fallait montrer son adresse et là, on faisait ensemble [filles et garçons]. On faisait aussi les camps. Mais dans les camps, on avait des sous-camps, avec les filles à part et les garçons à part. Mais il y avait certaines activités qu’on faisait ensemble. [...] À notre niveau [féminin], on avait le volleyball, le basket. Mais pas le foot. C’est maintenant que les jeunes [filles] pratiquent le foot. À notre époque, personne ne pensait qu’une fille pouvait faire du foot. Aucune fille de ma génération ne faisait de foot. Mais elle faisait le volley, le

The interview with this Girl Guide leader helps to underline once again the symbolic weight of soccer as a male activity. Basketball and volleyball (either through clubs or schools) were female practices that were considered acceptable, and had indeed even been favored by the Abidjan Catholic missions since the 1950s⁴⁶. They were associated with physical training and practices specific to outdoor education (climbing with ropes or trees, river crossings or treasure hunts). Outdoor games, sports and physical training were thus performed by both boys and girls, and, in contrast with the colonial era, while Boy Scouting activities remained more or less alike across time, the landscape of female Scouting underwent important changes. From the 1960s, Girl Guides were widely encouraged to take ownership of outdoor activities and sports. In so doing, girls and boys together appropriated leisure practices that embodied modernity.

In addition to playful physical activities, young people set out to discover their country and visited areas considered representative of the new national territory: remote areas, places of historical significance, nature, historical monuments, and sites of economic development. In this sense, physical activities were also “spatial” activities, as defined by Bromber and Kraiss (2018, p. 18). Thus, during camps, Scouts and Guides moved around the country and visited new regions, and were encouraged to go beyond their regional or ethnic homeland⁴⁷. Young people also set off to discover places that were significant in terms of their national history. For example, in 1970, a troop of Catholic Scouts went on a treasure hunt in order to locate historic graves from the colonial era⁴⁸. Similarly, in 1971, a troop of Guides investigated the history and social life of a village near their campsite⁴⁹. Young people were also invited to observe nature, inventorying the fauna and flora, creating herbariums or collecting fossils. Finally, Scouts and Guides visited places that symbolized the country’s economic development, such as the sites of industrial projects or the buildings of State-owned companies. For example, Scouts and Guides visited the factories of parastatal companies or the offices of *Fraternité-Matin*, the national daily newspaper⁵⁰. These adventures and hikes were not tourism but genuine training, allowing the youths to learn about their national territory. Such learning was meant to highlight modern infrastructure, the natural environment or historical sites. Places of memory, industrial development and natural areas formed a national geography that Scouts and Guides were invited

to appropriate, in order to foster a sense of national belonging and patriotism.

At the same time, the range of Scouting activities included cultural activities that were defined as traditional, such as dancing or singing. These practices were part of the enhancement of the country’s pre-colonial cultural heritage that was supposed to make it possible to build the post-colonial era. They were at the heart of the Africanization of Scouting. According to their promoters, these activities made it possible to “decolonize individuals and structures”⁵¹. In concrete terms, this was achieved through role-playing or theatrical performances based on the staging of practices that were presented as local or pre-colonial. These cultural reinventions were freely associated with dances and songs in local or non-local languages. For example, a group from Bingerville (Southern region) could easily sing a Dyula⁵² song without understanding a word of it, as a former Scout reminisced⁵³. At the same time, during gatherings, each troop put on dance shows that were specific to their region for each other, in order to showcase local traditions⁵⁴. In so doing, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were acting in conformity with the objective of intermingling populations that was frequently asserted by Houphouët-Boigny. The mixing of regions and ethnic groups, embodied by national campfire meetings at which local dances and songs were performed, helped to put Scouting right at the heart of the exo-socialization promoted by the Ivorian State.

Playful activities performed by Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, whether they involved discovering the national territory, appropriating a pre-colonial tradition or engaging in sports, were thus aimed at instilling in young Ivorians a sense of national pride, and an attachment to the newly autonomous and independent country and to the achievements of the new president.

In addition, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were at the forefront of the State’s social policies. Indeed, these educated young people, who generally came from urban areas, embodied an ideal form of youth in the new Ivorian nation. At the end of the 1960s, despite the “economic miracle” (Bamba, 2016) that Côte d’Ivoire was experiencing, the country was marked by considerable disparities between the cost of living and wage levels. The slowdown in economic growth led to protest movements, particularly among the youth. These included, between 1967 and 1970, the Bété autonomist movement, led by a student who had returned from France, Kragbé Gnagnbé (Gary-Touunkara, 2008, p. 227). At the same time, in 1968, students from the University of Abidjan organized protests (Mbembe, 1985, p. 109–121). Félix Houphouët-Boigny suppressed this student opposition by force (imprisonment, military intervention) and, in 1969, replaced the student union with a newly funded and loyal institution: the *Mouvement des Étudiants et Élèves de Côte d’Ivoire* (Movement

basket, la course, grimper à la corde, tout ça et cætera. on apprenait à grimper aux arbres à traverser les rivières”. In Anonymous interview with a former Girl Guide (*Guides de Côte d’Ivoire*), 3 March 2016, Abidjan.

⁴⁶The lack of physical contact and the fact that these sports have historically been played indoors make them sports historically associated with women (Nicolas, 2019b, p. 111).

⁴⁷Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Scouts catholiques de Côte d’Ivoire*), 20 February 2016, Abidjan.

⁴⁸Joseph Bilé Bilé, “rapport sur Assikoi,” 16 March 1970. VDM, 542J 1202.

⁴⁹Isabelle, “Oumé,” *Le Flamboyant*, n°1, 1971, p. 12. Copies of *Le Flamboyant*—Ivorian Girl Guides’ journal in the 1970s—are preserved at the INJS: “Marcelle Piault” collection, file “mouvements de jeunesse.”

⁵⁰Véronique Agbaya and Joséphine Djoe, “Rapport du camp de formation des cheffaines éclareuses unionistes de Côte d’Ivoire,” *Le Flamboyant*, n° 6, 1973–1974.

⁵¹“décoloniser les individus et les structures” In Collège africain et malgache des Éclaireurs laïques, “Organization,” 1965. VDM, 542J 495.

⁵²Generally speaking, Dyula is mainly spoken by Northerners, though this is something of a simplification (Bouquet, 2003).

⁵³Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d’Ivoire*), 18 February 2016, Abidjan.

⁵⁴Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d’Ivoire*), 2 April 2016, Bondoukou.

of Students and Pupils of Côte d'Ivoire, hereafter MEECI). However, Ivorian students continued to demonstrate against the PDCI, whether in the field of education or employment policies (Gary-Toukara, 2008, p. 241–242). As Houphouët-Boigny worked actively to subordinate the youth, Scouting movements were closely associated with this process, whether through direct involvement in the ranks of the MEECI and PDCI, or through the implementation of the State's social action policies.

The secular Scouting movement of the *Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d'Ivoire* was particularly close to the PDCI, as many leaders of the movement joined the ranks of the MEECI during their courses of higher education⁵⁵. In the same way, uniformed Scouting troops provided timely policing services during some official PDCI events⁵⁶. This interference increased during the late 1970s, until some leaders eventually considered officially joining the PDCI, as a youth wing⁵⁷. At the same time, many of the Scout leaders—who were also close to the PDCI and the MEECI—met while conducting fieldwork and became heavily involved in the State's social action missions. These young leaders (who were in their twenties or thirties at the time) and their troops thus directly supported Félix Houphouët-Boigny's desire to bring politicized young people into line.

The Scouts were part of the development programs set up by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Rather than engaging in political activities, they were encouraged to be of service and, in this context, they strived to set an example for Ivorian youth more widely. They carried out public works: the reconstruction of impassable tracks, building of plant nurseries, providing agricultural aid⁵⁸. They went as far as maintaining public buildings such as town halls or prefectures. These activities were defined by the Ministry as “taking on community responsibilities and the beginnings of training in development practices”⁵⁹. For example, in the 1970s, a troop of secular Scouts from Bondoukou (Northeastern Côte d'Ivoire), led by a teacher, offered literacy programs and did clean-up work in public spaces. They drained the gutters and swept the streets⁶⁰. One could enumerate many examples of such work performed by Boy and Girl Scouts from every movement. The Catholic Scouts thus performed “sweep-up” operations⁶¹. While Girl Guides did not seem to be involved in explicitly political activities, they were not to be outdone as far as development policies were concerned. For example, in July 1976, the theme of their annual national camps was “community

development,” focused on rural Scouting⁶². This emphasis on rural areas is worthy of note, since in the nationalist rhetoric put forward by the Ivorian State, the peasant world became the bearer of progress⁶³.

In addition to this subordination to State political movements, Scouting movements were presented as models of probity. Thus, the manufacture of citizenship went beyond the political field *per se* to invest that of morality. The ideal citizen imagined by the PDCI was respectful of moral values. From this point of view, Scouting and Guiding movements thus positioned themselves as exemplary movements, while at the same time providing educational work for the Ivorian population. As such, they took up colonial themes, such as the control of young women's sexuality.

The Girl Guides movement set an example by emphasizing social issues considered to be specifically feminine. A former guide explained that in their pedagogical project, they insisted “on everything that [was] domestic, everything that [concerned] female education, how to prepare the pretty girl, the woman, the home”⁶⁴. Such education was coupled with a “special emphasis on women's empowerment”⁶⁵. While being interviewed in 2016, this retired leader and teacher recalled that during camps, Ivorian Guides learned cooking, childcare, arts-and-crafts and Scouting games. *Le Flamboyant* (a quarterly journal for Girl Guides of all faiths), highlighted this specificity of girls' education. Thus, in 1974, a flower representing the “merry-go-round of activities”⁶⁶ was drawn in the journal in order to showcase activities specific to the social role of the future housewife: childcare, first aid, sewing, cooking, arts-and-crafts (the drawing of the corresponding petal is filled with a bag and a board and not tools). Moreover, the “integral development”⁶⁷ allowed by the Guiding movement presented a corresponding set of skills either deemed specifically feminine (being cheerful, friendly, loving, gracious, and so on) or not (dexterity, physical strength, sports, commitment, responsibility). Thus, if the physical and sporting activities encouraged by the Girl Guides movement had been widened as they appropriated those of the Boy Scout movement, such a moral path particularly echoed the colonial Girl guide movement. The protection of young women in danger stood in opposition to this training. Postcolonial Girl Guiding—like its colonial ancestor—was conceived for the moral protection of young girls in urban areas. Henceforth, the main partners of the Girl Guides movements in the Ivorian State were women's

⁵⁵ Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d'Ivoire*), 18 February 2016, Abidjan.

⁵⁶ Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d'Ivoire*), 4 April 2016, Abidjan.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Such focus on youth work may also be found in Senegal (Tiquet, 2016) or Ghana (Nicolas, 2017).

⁵⁹ “Prise de responsabilités communautaires et des amorces de formation aux pratiques du développement” In Lamine Ba, “Note de synthèse des questions étudiées à Abidjan,” In *Premier séminaire sur le sport*, 1974. Ministry of Youth and Sports archives, “Miscellaneous” collection.

⁶⁰ Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d'Ivoire*), 31 March 2016, Bondoukou.

⁶¹ “Coup de balai” In Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Scouts catholiques de Côte d'Ivoire*), 1 March 2016, Abidjan.

⁶² “Développement communautaire” In Madeleine Boti, “Rapport d'activité 76–77,” 1 November 1977. INJS: “Marcelle Piault” collection, file “mouvements de jeunesse.”

⁶³ Félix Houphouët-Boigny, himself a former planter, places particular emphasis on the advent of a “bourgeoisie de planteurs” who would spearhead the nation (Gastellu and Affou Yapi, 1982).

⁶⁴ “Sur tout ce qui est ménager, tout ce qui est éducation féminine, comment préparer la jolie fille, la femme, le foyer” In Anonymous interview with a former Girl Guide (*Guides de Côte d'Ivoire*), 3 March 2016, Abidjan.

⁶⁵ “Accent particulier sur la prise de responsabilité des femmes” In *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ “Ronde des activités” In *Le scoutisme féminin assure le développement intégral de la jeune fille*, *Le Flamboyant*, 1974, pp. 10, 14.

⁶⁷ “Développement intégral” In *Ibid.*

shelters⁶⁸. Mainly located in urban areas from the Central and Southern regions, they welcomed young women in urban areas in order to protect them. The migration of “little nieces and little maids” (Jacquemin, 2012) from rural outskirts to urban areas was a constant concern for educators and leaders, who viewed cities as spaces of perversion that endangered the moral fiber of Ivorian girls, where they would escape from the control and protection of their families.

Boy Scouts also took part in this moral training, in particular as both Boy Scouts and Girl Guides set up moralization campaigns stigmatizing undesirable behaviors. This included the organization of theatrical performances. The sketches dealt with hygiene, morality, respect for elders, the importance of schooling and help for the elderly. The bad behavior of young people was targeted as “defects of society”⁶⁹. For example, a now retired teacher from the North-Eastern region, who led a troop in the outskirts of Bouna (North-Eastern Côte d’Ivoire) in the 1970s reminisced on the educational and moralizing virtues of Scouting theater as follows:

The Scouts “acted out the household scenes, the maids who go to Abidjan, in the big cities, the consequences of this, unwanted pregnancies, et cetera. People perform this in the villages. And when they perform it, the whole village insists on coming to see it, eh! The defects of society, for example: it’s all bad. It has often helped a lot in some villages. Some chiefs even encourage it!”⁷⁰

The performances given by the Scouts promoted an image of young Scouts concerned with integrity and work to be set against a deviant, disobedient and lazy youth, prone to rural exodus and to an overly-precocious sexuality (here targeting young girls in particular). At the same time, during shows attended not only by other Scouts or Guides, but above all by the surrounding population (parents, neighbors, young people), the sketches made it possible to “show the population [that the Scouts were] not bandits, that they [were] people who can serve and can be trusted,” as another retired teacher, a former leader of a group of secular Scouts in Bondoukou, pointed out⁷¹.

Indeed, while the Scouting movements were institutions that attempted to guarantee the moral probity and subordination of Ivorian youth, the behavior of their members did not always reflect these aims. Contrary to the aforementioned desires of their

leaders, troops could at times engage in begging or petty crime⁷². It thus appears that, while Scouting movements generally seemed to align themselves with hierarchical demands for obedience, young Scouts did not always comply with these demands. For example, in 1968, a group of secular Scouts invited to a camp that had been organized with pomp and circumstance by French and Ivorian Scouting authorities, under the good auspices of the PDCI, stood accused of being “selfish, willingly cranky and pretentious” in one case, “filled with schoolboy derision” in another or even prone to exerting “a detestable influence on those around him, impulsive and vulgar”⁷³ in the last. From this point onwards, these groups of young high school students, teachers, clerks and craftsmen (all aged between 17 and 27 years old), instead of showcasing the good morals of Ivorian Scouting, embodied the cracks in the moralization program that was being implemented by Scouting authorities in cooperation with the Ivorian government. Furthermore, European leaders put great stock in the impact of Scouting as a source of salvation, particularly in terms of sexual abstinence as far as Girl Guiding was concerned. However, their position did not necessarily extend its influence to all girls. In this regard, the letters sent by young women from the Swiss Guiding movement (based in Côte d’Ivoire between 1968 and 1975) to their parent federation in Switzerland are particularly illuminating. The Swiss leaders appeared convinced of the moral and religious⁷⁴ significance of Christian Scouting. However (echoing their French predecessors from the 1940s), they deplored the harmful atmosphere of the metropolis, using the Christian rhetoric of sin and the Fall:

“In Abidjan, [a girl club house] would be particularly appropriate given the number of girls who arrive there – all naïve – from their village. They are disoriented, lost in the big city and poorly supported by distant parents or a guardian. They do stupid things and get lost”⁷⁵.

Here, they particularly target young leaders of both the Protestant and Catholic girl movements who got pregnant out of wedlock. Beyond purely religious considerations, these pregnancies had major social consequences for the young women. For example, in 1973, a leader who was supposed to take over the running of the infirmary of the Unionist Girl Scouts Association became pregnant. According to the Swiss leader, the young woman had to leave the hospital where she worked and was not allowed to return to her family, nor was she allowed to take on the responsibilities that the leaders in the Girl Guiding Movement had planned for her. On this occasion, the Swiss leaders placed

⁶⁸These are mainly located in the South and Center of the country, the most urbanized areas: 24 homes in the southern region and 20 in the central region, compared with 5 in the eastern region, 5 in the central-western region, 9 in the West and 5 in the North (Kouassi-Kouadio, 1979, p. 124–126).

⁶⁹Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d’Ivoire*), 2 April 2016, Bondoukou.

⁷⁰“Jouaient les scènes de ménage, les bonnes qui vont à Abidjan dans les grandes villes, les conséquences que ça engendre, les grossesses indésirées, et cætera. Les gens jouent ça dans les villages. Et quand ils jouent tout le village insiste pour venir assister hein ! Les tares de la société par exemple: tout ça là, c’est pas bon, là. Ça a beaucoup aidé souvent certains villages. Et il y a même des chefs qui encouragent !” In *Ibid.*

⁷¹“Montrer à la population [que les scouts ne sont] pas des bandits, que [ce sont] des gens qui [peuvent] servir et que on [peut] avoir confiance.” In Anonymous interview with a former Boy Scout (*Éclaireurs laïcs de Côte d’Ivoire*), 31 March 2016, Bondoukou.

⁷²Letter from Pelkan Diarra to Charles Boganski, 12 January 1970. VDM, 542J 1202.

⁷³Assessment of the behavior of members of the *Éclaireurs laïques de Côte d’Ivoire* during the 6th session of the annual African Training Camp organized in Abidjan, 1 February 1968. VDM, 542J 1202.

⁷⁴One of the first leaders who left for Côte d’Ivoire even decided to take holy orders. Letter from Wilhelmine Burtat to Maïse Montandon, 19 April 1969 [AFS: J2 334.01].

⁷⁵“À Abidjan, ce serait particulièrement indiqué vu le nombre de filles qui y arrivent toutes naïves de leur village. Elles sont désorientées, perdues dans la grande ville et mal soutenues par de lointains parents ou un tuteur. Elles font des bêtises et se perdent.” Letter from Wilhelmine Burtat to Maïse Montandon, January 1969 [AFS: J2 334.01].

particular emphasis on “the difficulty of making girls aware of their responsibilities”⁷⁶. However, these pregnancies may be questioned in light of the gendered social relations that were upheld within the Ivorian Scouting Movements themselves. In this respect, one letter from a Swiss leader allows us to shed new light on the sweep-up operations during which loyalty to the Independent State and Scouting’s civic training were performed. The Swiss leader recounts that when girls and boys carried out a cleaning operation in the Treichville and Adjamé neighborhoods with the collaboration of the Abidjan garbage service in 1975, “Our 200 girls were a bit shaken up by the 1,000 guys happy to have the chance to command them!”⁷⁷ We do not have any more details about the exact manner in which the girls were “shaken up.” However, this opens up avenues for inquiry. During this event, young Boy Scouts once again deviated from the virtuous path imagined for them and behaved aggressively toward the girls. We thus need to pay particular attention to the redeeming agenda of youth movements more generally, in particular in terms of the way they emphasized the individual responsibility of girls on the one hand, and religious morality on the other. Such themes—which were dear to the Scouting movement—need to be cross-read in light of the history of discursive, physical and sexual violence faced by girls.

Thus, in all Scouting movements, despite a marked political loyalty, there were gaps emerging between the project of training a social elite, as put forward by the leadership of the movement, and the implementation of this project, particularly from the point of view of the moral training of young people. This tension was reflected in the programs organized by Scouting leaders, from sweep-up operations to theater plays. The Scouts implemented the Ivorian youth moralization program, but they were also supposed to promote morals and discipline through example, performing the role of a bulwark against immorality—despite their own behavior often being at odds with these aims. Nevertheless, by asserting the position of a minority fraction of the youth within Ivorian society, Scouting movements supported the elite position of an idealized, educated and uniformed younger generation that supposedly had little interest in opposing the president.

CONCLUSION

Somewhat provocatively, John Lonsdale wrote in 1986 that “much was excitedly expected of the successor African countries. Their civilizing mission did not seem so very different from what had gone” (Lonsdale, 1986, p. 154). Indeed, in many respects, many independent governments perpetuated the civilizing mission of their former colonizers. As far as youth education was concerned in Côte d’Ivoire, strong lines of continuity may be drawn with colonial themes. On the one hand, attention to the sexual behavior of young women and to moral salvation in general became an important theme of colonial governance

from the 1940s onwards and was perpetuated in the following decades, as the State implemented a form of coercive welfarism (Fourchard, 2018). On the other hand, the pedagogical principles of Scouting—which made it possible to establish the political subordination of an elite fraction of youth—were encouraged both by the political administration of the AOF and then by Félix Houphouët-Boigny.

Ivorian Scouting movements thus became places where a model citizenship was being manufactured: a model citizenship steeped in patriotism and morality, respectful of hierarchies and order, and to which undesirable behaviors, ranging from immorality to political sedition, were to be opposed. Such opposition and instrumentalization was not the sole privilege of Côte d’Ivoire, as Bromber and Kraiss (2018) have recently pointed out. However, the case of Côte d’Ivoire allows us to further highlight the cross-cutting nature of this process of training an elite fraction of youth, particularly in a non-Socialist, non-revolutionary State. Moreover, it makes it possible to underline the extent to which these New Men may have been politically subordinated, particularly when their training was based on a youth movement such as Scouting.

In line with the “parental reading of political subordination”⁷⁸ offered by Mbembe (1985, 14–16) and more recently taken up by Havard (2009), we may indeed understand the Scouts as the model of a filial citizenship, subject to the Father of the Nation. However, the desire of the independent Ivorian government to incorporate youngsters under a single, unambiguous, and subordinate collective identity came up against the dissent displayed by these same youngsters. Whole sections of the youth—such as students—took upon themselves to protest the political stranglehold of the PDCI and failed to submit to the codes of morality promoted by the State and the Scouting movements. And even members of the Scouting movements eventually took part in such dissent. One way to see this tension emerge is through the gender studies approach, as set forward in this article. It allows us to highlight the focus of Scouting movements on the moral salvation of young girls. In this perspective, “girling the subject” (George, 2014, p. 1) of Scouting and Sports proves helpful when it comes to analyzing the State’s will and (in)ability to control the morals of young citizens. Finally, this case study, at the cross-roads of Gender Studies, Sport History and African History, further calls for expanding such perspective beyond Sub-Saharan Africa, in order to understand the ambiguous roles played by sporting youngsters within the political manufacture of the subordination of young people.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

⁷⁸“Lecture parentale de la subordination politique.”

⁷⁶“La difficulté à rendre les filles conscientes de leurs responsabilités.” Report, May 1973 [AFS: J2 334.01].

⁷⁷“Nos 200 filles ont été un peu bousculées par les 1,000 gars heureux de pouvoir les commander !” Letter from Corinne Vuilleumier to the Fédération éclairceuse suisse, 28 February 1975 [AFS: J2 334.01].

REFERENCES

- Ahlman, J. S. (2017). *Living With Nkrumahism: Nation, State, and Pan-Africanism in Ghana*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Akyeampong, E., and Ambler, C. (2002). Leisure in african history: an introduction. *Int. J. Afr. Hist. Stud.* 35, 1–16. doi: 10.2307/3097363
- Bamba, A. B. (2016). *African Miracle, African Mirage: Transnational Politics and the Paradox of Modernization in Ivory Coast*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Bancel, N. (1998). *Entre acculturation et révolution: les mouvements de jeunesse et les sports dans l'évolution politique et institutionnelle en AOF (1945-1960)* (Doctoral thesis). Paris: Université Paris.
- Bancel, N. (2009). Scoutisme catholique contre scoutisme laïc? les activités physiques dans le développement comparé de deux mouvements de jeunesse en AOF (1947-1960). *Outre Mers.* 96–364, 143–161. doi: 10.3406/outre.2009.4418
- Bancel, N., Denis, D., and Fatès, Y. (2003). *De l'Indochine à l'Algérie: la jeunesse en mouvements des deux côtés du miroir colonial, 1940-1962*. La Découverte, Paris, France.
- Bantigny, L., and Jablonka, I. (eds.). (2009). *Jeunesse oblige: histoire des jeunes en France XIXe-XXIe siècle*. Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, France.
- Barré, L. (2019). *Le projet conjugal en Côte d'Ivoire, années 1950 – années 1960* (Doctoral thesis). Institut d'études politiques de Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France.
- Barthélémy, P. (2010). *Africaines et Diplômées à l'époque Coloniale, 1918-1957*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.
- Barthélémy, P. (2016). Macoucou à pékin. L'arène internationale: une ressource politique pour les Africaines dans les années 1940-1950. *Le Mouv. Soc.* 255, 17–33. doi: 10.3917/lms.255.0017
- Belliard, C. (2004). *Émancipation des femmes à l'épreuve de la philanthropie. La Charity Organisation Society en Grande-Bretagne et l'Office central des œuvres de bienfaisance en France du XIXe siècle jusqu'à la guerre de 1914* (Doctoral thesis). École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, France.
- Block, N. R., and Proctor, T. M. (2009). *Scouting Frontiers: Youth and the Scout Movement's First Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Blum, F., Guidi, P., and Rillon, O. (2016). *Étudiants Africains en Mouvements: Contribution à une Histoire des Années 1968*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne.
- Bouquet, C. (2003). Être étranger en Côte d'Ivoire: la nébuleuse 'Dioula'. *Géopolit. Afr.* 9, 27–42.
- Bromber, K. (2018). Scouting: training the 'New Man' in post-liberation ethiopia. *Comparativ.* 28, 38–58. doi: 10.26014/j.comp.2018.05.02
- Bromber, K., and Kraus, J. (2018). Introduction: shaping the 'New Man' in South Asia, Africa and the middle east. practices between hope and anxiety (1940s–1960s). *Comparativ.* 28, 7–21. doi: 10.26014/j.comp.2018.05.01
- Broqua, C., Deschamps, C., and Kraus, C. (2014). *L'échange Économico-Sexuel*. Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.
- Burgess, T. (2005). The young pioneers and the rituals of citizenship in revolutionary zanzibar. *Afr. Today* 51, 3–29. doi: 10.2979/AFT.2005.51.3.2
- Chafer, T. (2018). "Conflicting modernities: battles over France's policy of adapted education in French West Africa," in *France's Modernising Mission. Citizenship, Welfare and the Ends of Empire*, ed E. Naylor (London: Palgrave Macmillan), 3–31.
- Chazan, N. (1976). The manipulation of youth politics in ghana and the ivory coast. *Genève Afr. Geneva Afr.* 15, 38–64.
- Cholvy, G. (1999). *Histoire des Organisations et Mouvements Chrétiens de Jeunesse en France: XIXe - XXe Siècle*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
- Cooper, F. (2002). *Africa Since 1940: the Past of the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cooper, F. (2014). *Français et Africains? Être Citoyen au Temps de la Décolonisation*. Trans. C. Jeanmougin. Paris: Payot.
- Denis, D. (2003). "Le sport et le scoutisme, ruses de l'histoire," in *De l'Indochine à l'Algérie: la jeunesse en Mouvements des Deux Côtés du Miroir Colonial, 1940-1962*, eds N. Bancel, D. Daniel, and Y. Fatès (Paris: La Découverte), 195–209.
- Désalmand, P. (1983). *Histoire de l'éducation en Côte d'Ivoire. T.1, Des Origines à la Conférence de Brazaville 1944*. Abidjan: CEDA.
- Diarra, S. (1997). *Les Faux Complots d'Houphouët-Boigny: Fracture Dans le Destin d'une Nation (1959-1970)*. Paris: Karthala.
- Fauré, Y.-A., and Médard, J.-F. (1982). *État et Bourgeoisie en Côte d'Ivoire*. Paris: Karthala.
- Fossard, B. (2017). *Les sports, le scoutisme et les élites indochinoises: de l'entre-soi colonial à la libération nationale (1858-1945)* (Doctoral thesis). Université Paris 1, Paris, France.
- Fourchard, L. (2018). *Trier, Exclure et Policer. Vies Urbaines en Afrique du Sud et au Nigeria*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po.
- Gary-Toukara, D. (2003). Quand les migrants demandent la route, modibo keïta rétorque: 'Retournez à la terre !' les baragnini et la désertion du 'chantier national' (1958-1968). *Mande Stud.* 5, 49–64.
- Gary-Toukara, D. (2008). *Migrants Soudanais/Maliens et Conscience Ivoirienne: les Étrangers en Côte d'Ivoire (1903-1980)*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Gastellu, J.-M., and Affou Yapi, S. (1982). "Un mythe à décomposer: la 'bourgeoisie de planteurs'" in *État et Bourgeoisie en Côte d'Ivoire*, eds Y.-A. Fauré and J.-F. Médard (Paris: Karthala), 231–249.
- Gendry, T. (2020). *Le droit de tuer: la peine de mort au service de l'ordre colonial en Afrique occidentale française, 1900-1950* (Doctoral thesis). Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland.
- George, A. A. (2014). *Making Modern Girls: A History of Girlhood, Labor, and Social Development in Colonial Lagos*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Guez, N. (1981). La militarisation des organisations de service civique dans les États africains modernes. *Outre Mers. Revue d'histoire* 68, 263–267. doi: 10.3406/outre.1981.2299
- Harang, C.-É. (2010). *Quand les Jeunes Catholiques Découvrent le Monde: les Mouvements Catholiques de Jeunesse de la Colonisation à la Coopération (1920-1991)*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
- Havard, J.-F. (2009). Tuer les 'Pères des indépendances'? Comparaison de deux générations politiques post-indépendances au Sénégal et en Côte d'Ivoire. *Revue Int. Polit. Comp.* 16, 315–331. doi: 10.3917/ripc.162.0315
- Hugon, A. (2004). "La redéfinition de la maternité en gold coast des années 1920 aux années 1950 : projet colonial et réalités locales," in *Histoire des Femmes en Situation Coloniale: Afrique et Asie, XXe Siècle*, ed A. Hugon (Paris: Karthala), 145–171.
- Jacquemin, M. (2012). *'Petites Bonnes' d'Abidjan: Sociologie des Filles en Service Domestique*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Jézéquel, J.-H. (2003). Histoire de bancs, parcours d'élèves. *Cahiers d'études Afr.* 43, 409–433. doi: 10.4000/etudesafricaines.207
- Jézéquel, J.-H. (2007). Grammaire de la distinction coloniale: l'organisation des cadres de l'enseignement en Afrique occidentale française (1903-fin des années 1930). *Genèses* 4, 4–25. doi: 10.3917/gen.069.0004
- Johnston, S. (2016). Boy scouts and the british world: autonomy within an imperial institution, 1908-1936. *Can. J. Hist.* 51, 33–57. doi: 10.3138/cjh.ach.51.1.002
- Joly, V. (2015). "Femmes et décolonisation en Afrique occidentale française: autour de la marche des femmes de Grand-Bassam (décembre 1949)," in *Genre et Événement*, eds L. Capdevila and M. Bergère (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes), 105–117.
- Kergomard, P., and François, P. (1983). *Histoire des Éclaireurs de France de 1911 à 1951*. Paris: Éclaireuses et éclaireurs de France.
- Koné, G. K. (2017). *Le scoutisme en Côte d'Ivoire: 1937-2007* (Doctoral thesis). Université de Bouaké, Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire.
- Kotek, J. (2003). Youth organizations as a battlefield in the cold war. *Intell. Natl. Secur.* 18, 168–191. doi: 10.1080/02684520412331306790
- Kouassi-Kouadio, V. (1979). *De l'éducation populaire en milieu rural en Côte d'Ivoire: esquisse d'une participation du ministère de la Jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et des sports, contribution à la formation des cadres* (Masters thesis). Institut National du Sport et de L'éducation Physique, Paris, France.
- Krais, J. (2018). A 'New Man' for a new nation: activism and physical culture in late colonial Algeria. *Comparativ.* 28, 38–58. doi: 10.2307/44078822
- Krais, J. (2019). Girl guides, athletes, and educators: women and the national body in late colonial Algeria. *J. Middle East Women's Stud.* 15, 199–215. doi: 10.1215/15525864-7490981
- Lamba, I. C. (1985). Moulding the ideal colonial subject: the scouting movement in colonial malawi up to 1961. *Transfr. J. Hist.* 14, 63–77.
- Laneyrie, P. (1985). *Les Scouts de France: l'évolution du Mouvement, des Origines aux Années Quatre-Vingt*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
- Lonsdale, J. (1986). "Political accountability in african history," in *Political Domination in Africa: Reflections on the Limits of Power*, ed. P. Chabal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 126–157. doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511558795.008

- Marshall-Fratani, R. (2006). 'The War of 'who is who': autochthony, nationalism, and citizenship in the ivoirien crisis African studies review. 49, 9–43. doi: 10.1353/arw.2006.0098
- Mbembe, A. (1985). *Les Jeunes et l'ordre Politique en Afrique Noire*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Mills, S. (2011). Scouting for girls? *Gender and the scout movement in Britain. Gender Place Cult.* 18, 537–556. doi: 10.1080/0966369X.2011.583342
- Mourre, M. (2017). *Thiaroye 1944: Histoire de Mémoire d'un Massacre Colonial*. Rennes: Presse Universitaire de Rennes.
- Mudimbe, V. Y. (1988). *The Invention of Africa. Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Nicolas, C. (2017). "The ghana young pioneers. Intertwining global connections to build a pan-africanist youth," in *Beyond Boycotts, Sport during the Cold War in Europe*, eds. P. Vonnard, N. Sbeti, and G. Quin (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg), 157–194. doi: 10.1515/9783110529098-009
- Nicolas, C. (2019a). De l'histoire comparée à la démarche multisituée: sur les traces des cadres sportifs africains. *Espaces et Soc.* 3, 55–72. doi: 10.3917/esp.178.0055
- Nicolas, C. (2019b). *Sport, citoyenneté et genre en Afrique de l'Ouest: histoire sociale et politique comparée de la jeunesse au Ghana et en Côte d'Ivoire au XXe siècle* (doctoral thesis). Université de Lausanne et Institut d'études Politiques de Paris, Lausanne, Switzerland; Paris, France.
- Nicolas, C., Riot, T., and Bancel, N. (2015). Afrique 50: le cri anticolonialiste de René Vautier. *Décadrages.* 29, 12–30. doi: 10.4000/decadrages.785
- Palluau, N. (2003). "La décolonisation du scoutisme laïque (1945-1962)," in *De l'Indochine à l'Algérie: la Jeunesse en Mouvements des Deux Côtés du Miroir Colonial, 1940-1962*, eds. N. Bancel, D. Denis, and Y. Fatès (Paris: La Découverte), 273–285.
- Parsons, T. H. (2004). *Race, Resistance and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Prêtet, B. (2016). *Sports et Sportifs Français Sous Vichy*. Paris: Nouveau Monde. doi: 10.14375/NP.9782369423881
- Prigent, F. (2011). *Les réseaux socialistes en Bretagne des années 1930 aux années 1980* (Doctoral thesis). Université Rennes II, Rennes, France.
- Proteau, L. (2002). *Passions Scolaires en Côte d'Ivoire: École, État et Société*. Paris: Karthala.
- Sikes, M., and Bale, J. (2014). Introduction: women's sport and gender in sub-Saharan Africa. *Sport Soc.* 17, 449–465. doi: 10.1080/17430437.2013.815518
- Stoler, A. L. (2002). *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tabet, P. (2004). *La Grande Beffa: Sessualità Delle Donne e Scambio Sessuo-Economico*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino.
- Tiquet, R. (2016). Service civique et développement au Sénégal. une utopie au cœur des relations entre armée et pouvoir politique (1960-1968). *Afr. Contemp.* 4, 45–59. doi: 10.3917/afco.260.0045
- Vidal, C. (1977). Guerre des sexes à abidjan. Masculin, féminin, CFA (The Sex War in abidjan. male, female, \$). *Cahiers d'Études Afr.* 17, 121–153. doi: 10.3406/cea.1977.2496
- Wu, J. C. (2019). 'Cette fraternité merveilleuse': l'appropriation du scoutisme en Malaisie britannique (1907-1942). *Le Mouv. Soc.* 267, 9–23. doi: 10.3917/lms.267.0009

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2020 Nicolas. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Facing the Involvement of Youths in Competitions: Soviet Visions and Adaptations to the Rejuvenation of Elite Sports (Second Half of the 20th Century)

Sylvain Dufraisse*

UMR 6025 CENS, Université de Nantes-CNRS, Nantes, France

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

François Vallotton,
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Reviewed by:

Shushu Chen,
University of Birmingham,
United Kingdom
Daphné Bolz,
Université de Rouen, France

*Correspondence:

Sylvain Dufraisse
sylvain.dufraisse@univ-nantes.fr

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 31 May 2020

Accepted: 02 September 2020

Published: 21 October 2020

Citation:

Dufraisse S (2020) Facing the
Involvement of Youths in
Competitions: Soviet Visions and
Adaptations to the Rejuvenation of
Elite Sports (Second Half of the 20th
Century).
Front. Sports Act. Living 2:568025.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.568025

This article focuses on Soviet sports authorities' adaptations to youth involvement in elite sports during the second half of the 20th century during the Cold War. It demonstrates that the quest for performance and success in world competitions meant that sportsmen needed to start training at younger ages. This trend led to the development of a biopolitical expertise on youth sports, that mixed scientific research, artistic and intellectual stances and public policy making. It contributed to determining age requirements and a specific system to intensify preparation while protecting the sportsmen involved. Since the mid-1970's, this system was not well-received within the Soviet Union as well as by the wider world. These youth systems embodied the poor Soviet management of childhood.

Keywords: soviet union, history, elite sports, soviet sports, youth sports, history of sports science, cold war sports

INTRODUCTION

The Soviet Union's sports administration after 1950 proved its capacity to prepare elite sportsmen. Sports in the Cold War, like music, arts, literature and dance, emerged as symbols of national prestige and were fields of intense political battles. Athletic endeavors could symbolize the superiority of a political system as performances and records, "objective" measures of domination, were diffused worldwide by the media. Soviet champions who stood on world championship podiums and obtained gold medals were flagship representatives of the Soviet Union and gave the state a friendly and cheerful image.

Commentators and journalists were the first to write about Cold War sports. They selected epic "battles" in pools and on pitches, popularized some of the most iconic sports personalities (e.g., Nadia Comaneci), and contributed to shaping a triumphalist Cold War narrative (Mellis, 2019).

Sports were for a long time largely absent from mainstream Cold War historiography, apart from mega-events, symbolic battles or climatic moments like the boycotts, reinforcing the US-USSR rivalry and producing what military history called combat history (“histoire-bataille”) (Edelman, 2019; Clastres, 2020; Vonnard and Marston, 2020). Recent works on Cold War sports, based on new archival materials, have explored new paths and shown how relevant sport can be to analyze the Global Cold War. They highlight the “interactions and exchanges in which multiple players were involved” (Del Pero, 2016), accentuating the instances where members of the divided blocs cooperated (Andrews et al., 2006; Vonnard and Quin, 2017; Vonnard et al., 2018) or turning their attention to the role of sports in newly decolonized countries (Edelman, 2019). This scholarship underlines how gender and race became crucial in the symbolic opposition between Capitalist and Communist countries (Malz et al., 2007; Barker-Ruchti, 2009; Bohuon, 2012; Edelman, 2019). It also analyzes how the Cold War and the growing importance given to sports transformed national sports systems and sporting programs and impacted the relations between sports leaders and athletes (Hunt, 2006; Gyax, 2012; Rider, 2017; Dufraisse, 2019; Mellis, 2019). Moreover, these new works explore “the ambiguous zones within which international organizations, states, sports leaders and athletes interacted in order to achieve their respective goals during the Cold War” (Mellis, 2019).

Soviet sport was long considered a realm of totalitarian control, a “Big Red machine.” Recent works eclipse this simplistic interpretation of Soviet sport, which overemphasized the role of the State and of ideology. Scholars interested in Soviet sports, using archives, interviews and local newspapers, have highlighted new aspects that provide a more nuanced understanding about: the diversity of practices within the Soviet Union, the latent debates about the goal attributed to sports and to physical education and the place given to sportsmen, the tense and precarious balance between the sports administration and sports societies, and the role of patrons within the sport system (Edelman, 1993, 2009; Katzer et al., 2010; Grant, 2013; Parks, 2016; Maddox, 2018; Zeller, 2018; Dufraisse, 2019). Critically, this scholarship illustrates that the development of sports performance policies in the Soviet Union was not linear. Instead, it was the fruit of negotiations and struggles between sports societies, party organs and the administration of sports and physical culture. It was not only endogenous and adjusted to scientific and technical contacts and foreign influence from the Western countries, the newly socialist countries or the territories annexed by the Soviet Union (Dufraisse, 2017). Soviet performance-enhancing activities were also exported and adapted abroad (Krüger, 2016).

The Cold War context gave a boost to transnational debates and controversies on the making of Eastern champions. In Western countries, the Communist milieu largely supported the Soviet champions’ exploits but some Communist sports leaders, for example in France, expressed doubts and criticisms (Martinache, 2019, 2020). Non-Communist journalists and sports leaders questioned the fairness of Eastern practices and blamed the abuses in sport on socialist systems.

Western media polemics also affected the way sportsmen and sportswomen were groomed and focused on successive issues and abuses: the problem of amateurism, the eagerness of Eastern champions for Western goods and way of life, the unfair play in adherence to Western perceptions of fairplay, the use of doping (Hunt, 2011; Edelman, 2017; Dufraisse, 2019).

The Soviet sports administration was not cloistered and adapted its policies. It also ensured its practices adhered to international federation rules, and to criticisms that appeared in the Western media and in the Soviet public sphere. Facing the rejuvenation of elite sports, the Soviet sports administration tried to control more closely the practices of the young sportsmen involved. At the end of the 1970’s and during the 1980’s, the involvement of young sportsmen and sportswomen in elite sports and competitions, age falsification and intensive training at a young age became a public problem in the Western countries and in international federations, and a way to criticize Soviet abuses so as to win at any cost¹ (Cervin, 2017). The question of youth involvement, age requirements and special policies applied to young sportsmen in sports during the 1960’s and the 1970’s aroused a larger interest due to two tendencies: on the one hand, the rejuvenation of elite sports, the necessity to prepare high-level sportsmen from their very childhood and the will to protect them; on the other hand, a broader issue, the bigger visibility of youth in the public sphere and the necessity to deal better with the specificities of this segment of the population, even in the Soviet Union (Bantigny, 2007; Bantigny and Jablonka, 2009; Tsipursky, 2016).

The issue of performance sports for children must also be observed in the Soviet context. The period from the 1950’s to the 1980’s was characterized by contradictory trends: the project of developing a more collective upbringing launched by Nikita Khrushchev, the desire to select and support children with high levels of ability, who would be the next vanguard of the motherland, the wish to develop harmonious individual personalities and the tendency to consider children as vulnerable and needing special psychological protection (White, 2020).

This article demonstrates that, confronted with the requirements of performance sports and the necessity to get podiums and medals, many Soviet sports specialists and public authorities tried to improve the conditions of youths involved in sports, to take care of them and to ponder the potential dreadful consequences of it on their bodies and minds. This trend led to the development of a biopolitical expertise on youth sports that mixed scientific research, artistic and intellectual stances and public policy making (Bantigny et al., 2011).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article examines how elite sport life-cycles were produced, justified and implemented in the Soviet Union, taking

¹AMDUR Neil, « Rift over underage gymnasts », *New-York Times*, December 7, 1981, p. 4; “Olga Bicherova, who a month ago would have been too young to compete...”, *United Press*, November 28, 1981.

into account how global public opinion and discussions in international instances may have influenced internal decisions.

Age can be a medium for categorizing, for governing populations and for organizing the stages of the existence (Mauger, 2010; Bozon and Rennes, 2015; Rennes, 2019). In sports, the effects of the life-cycle and age are determining factors. Age is used to divide official categories; age-based requirements could be implemented to enter training programs or professional careers. Socially, life-cycles shaped one's experience of physical exercise (MacRae, 2016). In sports, age and life cycle concentrate the attention of many agents: national and international rulers and leaders, journalists, physicians, trainers, sponsors, scholars. These protagonists may have contradictory views and opinions on the "age-based" discrimination, on the effects on physical activities on young bodies or on sportsmen's and sportswomen's life-cycles. Contrary to the image that was later developed, the manipulation of Eastern sportswomen's birth date, or that international criticism highlighted, Soviet scientists, physicians and artists worked on the issue of child abuse in sports. Moreover, sports authorities implemented special policies to deal with the rejuvenation of elite sports and increased attention on children's rights. This article draws out discussions and debates that led to regulation of youth elite sports and overcame the common "blame" of the Eastern abuses in elite sport.

To do so, this article follows Antoine de Baecque's proposition of a "non-quantitative serial history" (de Baecque, 1993) and gathers texts that can be read with images and administrative documents that pertain to a common issue. The sources used for this analysis – archives, films, scientific publications – were produced by Soviet institutions from the late 1950's to the 1980's, specifically discussed youth elite sports, and contributed to producing a panoramic vision on how youth elite sports were perceived. The sources examine how a biopolitical expertise on the relations between age and performance was developed in the USSR and illustrate that political demand and funding given to applied research helped to build elite sports and elite youth sports programs.

Three kinds of materials are used to draw out scientific perceptions and prescriptions. Articles from the journal *Problemy únošeskogo sporta* (1958–1962), *Teoriâ i Praktika Fizičeskoj Kultury* and conference proceedings on children, sports and physical activities gathered work from specialists of physical activities, sports and children and assembled the Soviet scientific community dealing with child sports. To obtain a more administrative vision on the way child sports were regulated and defined, this article draws on documents from the secretariat of the Sports Soviet administrations, which implemented sports policies and administered sports (*Pansoviet Physical Culture and Sports Committee, Central Union of Sports associations and organizations*). These documents permit an understanding of how scientific works weighed on political decisions. Also consulted are materials from the Department of Sports and Mass defense works from the Komsomol (Communist Youth organizations). The Komsomol was in charge of the organization of political education in elite sports and tried to diffuse Communist morals to young sportsmen and sportswomen. It also developed a Youth Mass sports program. The Komsomol

was quite critical of the elite-oriented approach to Soviet sports and heartily wished to promote a mass sports program. Archival materials were drawn from the Russian State national archives (GARF, *Gosudarstvennyj arhiv Rossijskoj Federacii*) and from the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI, *Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj arhiv social'no-političeskoj istorii*).

Combining these three institutional views on child elite sport illustrates the circulation of ideas on sports public policies from the academic world to the political milieu. But scholars and political representatives were not the only ones to talk about child elite sports. Soviet directors made documentary and fictional films on children's involvement into sports. Until the late 1960's, youths were not the central heroes of films dealing with elite sports. Presenting younger sports heroes was evidently an adaptation to the growing production of a Soviet mass culture and to the rejuvenation of the public. Juxtaposing the narratives of eight Soviet films – documentary and fictional – released between 1968 and 1988, this article intends to illustrate the evolution and the plurality of discourses on child and youth performances. Importantly, these films are used as historical material and not as a pure representation of reality. Conscious that a plurality of agents and social interests are involved in making films, these films illustrate how cinema can give a "form to history" and "make it visible" (de Baecque, 2007). The depreciative visions of child elite sports appeared in the Soviet Union before criticism on child elite sports and Eastern abuses appeared on the international sports scene. Thus, these films are used as traces and examples of discordant discourses on child elite sports.

This article is also inspired by works that examine Soviet policies in a transnational configuration (David-Fox, 2011), such as childhood questions (Denéchère and Droux, 2015; Niget and Denéchère, 2015). The defense of children's rights was the subject of transnational mobilizations. That's why French and American newspaper extracts are used to point out how these issues were addressed in world-ranging newspapers, as well as in polemical books and in journals specialized in sports and physical activities. In doing so, the international polemic about Soviet child abuse is cast within the national and international context of their breaking.

This article is divided into four main sections. The first section analyzes how youth sports were organized and administered in the Soviet Union. The second section focuses on the emergence of a biopolitical expertise on child elite sports in the Soviet Union. These two sections highlight how children and teenagers' involvement in sports was presented, then accepted, discussed or contested in the administrative organs and the academic milieu. The third section studies eight Soviet films. If some documentary films present Soviet child involvement in elite sports as a necessary step of the 'coubertinian pyramid' (the mass leads to the elite), others could expose a dissonant vision of child elite sports. The fourth section analyzes how Soviet youth involvement in sports, particularly in gymnastics, became a symbol of the derives of the Socialist countries' management of childhood, while international organizations, journalists and specialists of physical activities began to care more about the situation of young sports prodigies.

The transliteration ISO 9:1995 was used to romanize the Russian language from the Cyrillic script into the Latin script.

RESULTS

Structuring Child Elite Sports: Soviet Responses

Since 1934, the All-Union Physical Culture and Sport Committee instituted the “Be ready for Labor and Defense” (*Bud’ Gotov k trudu I oboron’e*) program to promote sport for schoolchildren. This sports program aimed at forming the basis of a movement for national fitness and at improving the physical abilities of youths. The main goal of the BGTO program was clearly to spread the practice of sports and to popularize it. Child competition was not the main issue (Riordan, 1977). Soviet material proved that the question of elite youth sport was on the sports administration’s political agenda since the late 1950’s. The transformation that happened in the realm of sports has to be analyzed alongside the broader evolution of the conception of, and the attention to, childhood in the postwar Soviet Union. This section will examine the responses of Soviet institutions (the Sports Committee, the Sports science scholars) and the way they contributed to shaping new regulations.

The Rejuvenation of the Sportsmen Involved in Elite Sports

In 1960, the Bulgarian scholar Dimitr Mičev published an article in the Soviet sports science journal *Teoriâ i Praktika Fizičeskoj Kultury* in which he analyzed the age of 8,867 sportsmen and 1,426 sportswomen who took part in the Olympic Games from 1896 to 1960. The data he collected showed that very few young sportsmen competed in the Games until 1960: only 3 13-year-old and 5 14-year-old boys (in swimming, sailing, water polo and rowing) (Mičev, 1960). From 1960, the situation clearly started evolving in the Soviet Olympic team, as in others. Russian sociologist Oleg Milštejn compiled the composition of the Soviet teams and demonstrated that athletes were increasingly younger: in Helsinki in 1952, the average age of Soviet Olympians was 32 years old. At Montreal in 1976, it was 23 years old². Nevertheless, the age of the athletes varied from discipline to discipline. The Komsomol archives held statistics from all the Soviet selections preparing for the 1968 Mexico Games. That year, the average age of the track and field team was 27.1 with only two members under 21. The average age of the boxing team was 25,7, the wrestling team 27.

The rejuvenation was particularly visible in disciplines like women’s gymnastics or swimming. At the Mexico Games, 22.7% of the Soviet swimming team was under 16³. During this competition, the average age of women’s gymnasts was 19 years and 10 months (for the Soviet team, 19 years old⁴). Georgia Cervin had noted that this trend toward youth began

counter-intuitively in Western countries and especially in the United States of America. If the average age of the US and the USSR teams was almost 28 in 1952, in 1956, the American age fell under 20 and reached 17.5 in 1976. Many US Olympic gymnasts were aged 15 that year. By comparison, the average age of the USSR women’s gymnastics team was 24.5 in 1960 and fell to under 20 only in 1976. Only one gymnast was younger than 15 in Olympic Competitions between 1960 and 1976: Maria Filatova (Cervin, 2015).

The championships were the tip of the iceberg. To perform at the highest level during their twenties, one had to be trained more intensively and for a long time. Consequently, sports careers began earlier. Sports administrators tried to bridge the gap between youth and elite and to institutionalize programs to identify and to develop incoming champions (Papin, 2007; Tallec-Marston, 2012). In the Soviet Union, a wide network of sports schools for youth was developed. Sports schools were authorized in December 1933, first run by sports societies like *Dinamo*. On September 28, 1945, the Council of People’s Commissaries (the equivalent of the Council of Ministries) issued a decree which officialized the creation of 80 sports schools for youths (males and females aged 17–23 who could attest to a good level of practice). Two years later, according to the report, they had 13,222 members⁵. But the schools were not sufficient to improve athletes’ results and their role was quite blurred: did they exist to extend the participation or to prepare the new sports avant-garde? In 1949, the Council of Ministries approved the creation of another structure: the *high-performance sports school* (*Škola vyšego sportivnogo masterstva*), where sportsmen were trained more intensively under the control of scholars and physicians⁶. These types of structures were not originally set up to welcome children and teenagers. But in practice, they involved ever-younger athletes⁷.

To face the increased competition in world championships, as well as within domestic competitions, some republican or city sports committees developed during the 1960’s sports boarding schools where children and teenagers engaged in high-performance sports while simultaneously receiving an education. The first sports boarding school opened in 1961 in Tashkent⁸. Others followed in Kiev in 1966. The Moscow Sports City Committee took part in the creation of a boarding school⁹. The Ministry of Education, together with the union of sports associations and organizations of the Azerbaijan SSR, opened a national sports boarding school for children from 6 to 16, gathering 690 pupils. The ‘škola-internat’ prepared them for three sports: track and field, gymnastics and football. Teachers from the boarding school were sent across the republic to scout and recruit for skilled children. Gathering young athletes in the same boarding school permitted the harmonization of living

²MILŠTEJN Oleg Aleksandrovič, KULENKOVIC Konstantin Antonovič, *Sovetskij Olimpič*, op. cit., p. 26.

³Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj arhiv social’no-političeskoj istorii (RGASPI), f (m)1, o. 38, d. 206, p. 17–87.

⁴RGASPI, f (m)1, o. 38, d. 206, p. 17.

⁵Gosudarstvennyj arhiv Rossijskoj Federacii, (GARF), f. R7576, inv. 1, d. 578, l. 117.

⁶GARF, f. R7576, inv. 1, d. 760, l. 71.

⁷RGASPI, f. m1, inv. 47, d. 392, l. 42–43.

⁸BATYROV X. A., *Razvitie ūnošeskoj sporta v SSSR, 1946–1970* [dissertation thesis], Moscow, State Central Physical Culture Institute, P. 8.

⁹GARF, f. R9570, inv. 1, d. 94, l. 55.

conditions, medical control and training processes¹⁰. These institutional changes were testimonies of the transformation of high-performance sport and of the necessity to adapt to the extension of the sports career. The Ministry of Education and the Committee of Physical Culture and Sport decided to generalize the schools and to organize a countrywide network in 1970¹¹. By 1976, 25 of them were recorded within the USSR (Dunstan, 1978). The development of sports boarding schools was also the consequence of education reforms. First, Nikita Khrushchev launched in 1957 the promotion of state boarding schools (Coulmel, 2014; White, 2020), Khrushchev wanted to impose a collectivist and meritocratic ideal of state upbringing, aimed at proposing an academic and polytechnical education based on a collective everyday life, and to level living conditions. In the case of the Azeri boarding school, among the 690 pupils, 140 were from rural villages. Secondly, Khrushchev also supported the development of specialized schools for children showing high levels of ability in foreign languages, mathematics, art and music (Dunstan, 1978; Coulmel, 2014; White, 2020). In 1978, 29 sports boarding schools gathered 14,246 students¹¹.

Preserving Children's Virtue Against the Corruptive Power of Money

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Council of the People's Commissaries, then the Council of Ministries of the Soviet Union, reorganized the way elite sportsmen and sportswomen were remunerated. A unique compensation system was set up between 1945 and 1947. This system aimed to rule a sporting world characterized by a lack of organization by inflating remuneration and a physical culture administration with little influence over powerful sports societies. Stipends, awarded by the Supreme Council of Physical Culture and volunteer sports societies, were distributed from 1947. Directives set the numbers of stipends and leveled revenues among athletes from various disciplines. This was implemented to tackle excessive remuneration. A table of bonuses was established to normalize and to limit the amount of money given to victorious athletes and to control the frequency at which they were given (Dufraisse, 2016). A few years later, reports from the Minister of State control attested to a wide range of irregularities¹². New categories of problems also emerged. The growing internationalization of Soviet selections and the development and the diffusion of performance sports within the Soviet Union modified the shape of the Soviet sports elite. In 1955, the head of the Sports Committee, Nikolaj Romanov, sent a letter to the Council of Ministers where he explained that many youngsters 17–19 were now involved in performance sports and could receive a financial help to improve their living conditions¹³. In 1956, the deputy director of the defense and sports committee from the Moscow Komsomol sent to the Komsomol Central Committee a report enumerating misdemeanors in sports societies (*Burevestnik*,

Torpedo...). He indicated that volunteer sports societies were remunerating child athletes, giving them 600–800 rubles a month. The document cited the case of 10th grader (16–17 years old) V. Polevoj, who was hired as a sport “instructor” in a local Dinamo organization (a hidden way to employ and remunerate sportsmen). His family was well off. But Polevoj didn't do well at school and was very undisciplined, according to the report. He finished 10th grade with difficulties. He misbehaved during a training course, from which he was excluded. After parent pressures and excuses to the collective, Polevoj was able to reintegrate into the training courses. The author concluded:

“In most cases, the stipend appointment is justified by sports results. But the family situation and its wealth are not taken into account. The behavior of the head of the family doesn't permit them [the children] to be brought up properly. It is even the opposite: it often spoils them as it was the case with Polevoj and Solovieva. Recently, Solovieva became snobby and undisciplined as she was feeling like a “star” [...] The Defense and the Sports Committee from the Moscow Committee of the Komsomol requests you [the Central Committee of the Komsomol] to clean up the way stipends are appointed to children athletes¹⁴.”

On July 24, 1957, a decree from the Council of Ministers reorganized the system of 600–800 ruble stipends and authorized child remuneration for promising sportsmen or women. Nevertheless, the awarding of stipends to junior athletes was dependent on the material situation of their families. It also determined specific rights, like annual holidays, access to special clinic hospitals, as well as duties: virtuous behavior during training sessions, investment in academic works and ideological programs, individuals training plans...¹⁵ On March 25, 1959, the Council of Ministries of the Soviet Union adapted the table of bonuses to the transformations that had occurred in elite sports since 1945. It limited the rewards that could be given to youths in local competitions to between 300 and 500 rubles. A junior USSR record setter would receive a 30-ruble gift¹⁶. This rule lasted for 20 years, a reform designed to curb the increase of rewards, but one that also had a moral issue. In 1958, just after the FIFA World Cup in Sweden, the Strel'tsov scandal received much media attention. The fall of this popular football player gave journalists the occasion to criticize the poor education of elite athletes and the advantageous conditions youngsters could get from victories. The campaign provided the occasion to denounce honorary titles, rewards and the huge amount of money sportsmen could receive at a young age (Dufraisse, 2019). These reforms illustrated how the Soviet Sport Central Administration had regulated economic issues in sports and had tried to adapt the rewarding systems to practices that were occurring. Rewards were created for some youths to authorize practices that existed but their amounts were limited. Their attributions were controlled by commissions. One year later, a report to the Central Committee of the Komsomol, written after the 1960 Rome Olympic Games, complained about

¹⁰GARE, f. R9570, inv. 1, d. 269, l. 27-30.

¹¹GARE, f. R7576, inv. 31, d. 747, l. 152.

¹²GARE, f. R7576, inv. 29, d. 175, l. 117.

¹³GARE, f. R7576, inv. 29, d. 175, l. 3.

¹⁴GARE, f. R7576, inv. 29, d. 176, l. 14-15.

¹⁵GARE, f. R7576, inv. 29, d. 182, l. 117-120.

¹⁶Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj arhiv novejšej istorii, (RGANI), f. 5, inv. 76, d. 209, l. 8; GARE, f. R9570, inv. 1, d. 14, l. 64.

the negative effects of rewarding youths with stipends and attested that the practice of illegal remuneration still existed¹⁷.

Discussions and proposals to rule youngsters' remuneration attest to their practice in the Soviet Union. But they also prove that the sports administration tried to shield young sportsmen and sportswomen from the ideological vision of the pervasive corruptive power of early remuneration by trying to regulate it. The possibility of youth remuneration might only be justified when it fitted with the Soviet meritocratic and moral ideology. In parallel, scholars also developed knowledge on child sports. Academics began to investigate the process of early specialization, its consequences and the way it could be adapted to fit the characteristics of children.

Developing a Scientific Knowledge on Child Sports

At the end of the First World War, the first institutes of physical education were established in Moscow and Petrograd. The Moscow Institute (GCOLIFK) and the Lesgaft Institute in Petrograd were given a higher school status. At first, they were mostly oriented toward pedagogical and military instruction and workers' physical education. In 1946, chairs for each sport were created and gathered highly skilled and specialized trainers and scientists. University courses for specialized coaches were opened. Another center contributed to developing research in sports science: the All-Union Scientific Institute of Physical Culture (*Central'nyi naučnyj-issledovatel'skij institut fizičeskoj kul'tury*, after 1966, the *Vsesoūznyj naučnyj-issledovatel'skij institut fizičeskoj kul'tury*, VNIIFK). Knowledge about theories and methodologies of training about science sports (biochemistry, biomechanics, physiology...) increased (Riordan, 1977). Soviet participation in international top-level sport stimulated the development of applied sports sciences. The dispersion of sports specialists from Moscow and Leningrad in republican institutes of physical culture across the USSR helped to educate and to train a new generation of sports specialists. Communities of sports science specialists emerged in the Soviet Union and adopted common scientific practices (organization of all-USSR meetings, publication of autonomous academic journals...) (Ryba and Stambulova, 2018).

Among them, scholars focused their investigations on the influence and consequences of intensive sports practice on athletes from different generations. In their studies, some of them – physicians, pedagogues or biologists – focused on youth sports. The physician R. È. Motyl'nskaâ published in 1950 and in 1956 *Sport I Voзраст*. She justified her investigations by explaining that younger and older people were involved in sports in the Soviet Union and that physicians could help optimize training and adapt them to age characteristics. Physical training had to be improved to fit with the specificities of each generation. To write her book, she gathered anthropometrical data from 960 boys and 450 girls aged 15–20. She pointed out the consequences of sports practices on the functioning of the body. She also insisted that these observations could help create new guidelines to

improve early intensive training (Motyl'nskaâ, 1956). Alongside S. S. Grošenkov, she led research on the consequences of youngsters' intensive practices. They progressively extended their investigations to younger children and early specialization. They launched a survey to analyze child involvement in competitive sports (gymnastics, track and field, collective sports, skiing, ice-skating and boxing) in four Moscow schools (22, 325, 407 et 545) between 1954 and 1956.

Observing physical culture sections in those schools, scholars wanted to determine the best ways to initiate young Soviets to tactics and sports activities and the conditions to implement early specialization. In the first issue of the academic journal *Problemy ūnošeskoj sporta* published in 1958, they gathered the results of their first inquiries¹⁸. In this issue, no articles dealt precisely with early specialization. Instead, they discussed a huge spectrum of child sports and physical activities: physical education at school (three articles), training methods and teaching tactics in a variety of disciplines (thirteen articles), *Bud' Gotov k Trudu I oboron'e* diploma (two articles), medical control (two articles), physiology (three articles). One could remark that those inquiries studied younger people and began to analyze how it was possible to teach tactics and techniques to 10- or 11-year-old Soviets.

Two more issues were published in 1961 and 1962 that reflected changed attitudes in a short span of time. The introduction of the 1961 issue proposed huge perspectives. Physical education and sports were a way to improve individuality and bodies, to make them more harmonious and effective, to prepare them to work and to defend the motherland. V. È. Nagornaâ, the issue's editor, used common *fizkultura* mottos. The content differed from the 1958 issue and perspectives set in the introduction [and was instead focused on XX?]. The journal evoked physical education in four articles, training methods in 13 articles (in which two studied early specialization). Five articles were about medical control (one of them about sports boarding school) and seven about physiology. The question of the organization of early training was raised in two disciplines: Nordic Combined and gymnastics. The consequences of teenagers' intensive training were observed in weightlifting.

These articles justified the necessity to develop medical control and to make physicians take part in the planification of athletes' preparation¹⁹. Sports physicians could help trainers adjust training intensity when working with children or teenagers. R. È Motyl'nskaâ insisted on the necessity to combine a double gaze and a double expertise to improve sportsmen's performance²⁰. Physicians were necessary to set training intensity, to protect children and teenagers' bodies and to enable them to reach higher performance levels. In a few words, R. È Motyl'nskaâ noted that intensive training could be harmful.

The 1962 issue also gave an example of how medical control and sports observation were used to determine what kinds of practices were possible. With regard to weightlifting, one article proposed to determine how this activity could

¹⁷ Rossijskij gosudarstvennyj arhiv social' no-političeskoj istorii, fM. 1, inv. 47, d. 67, l. 17.

¹⁸ *Problemy ūnošeskoj sporta*, 1, 1958, p. 3.

¹⁹ *Problemy ūnošeskoj sporta*, 2, 1961, p. 231.

²⁰ *Problemy ūnošeskoj sporta*, 2, 1961, p. 156.

be practiced by youngsters. Some physicians wanted to forbid it under age 17. A group of physicians from the Moscow Physical Culture Institute observed young weightlifters concluded that intensive training could be authorized after 15–16 years old. Nevertheless, they considered that it was possible only if sportsmen were practicing other physical activities (skiing, gymnastics) and closely supervised by trainers and physicians²¹.

The different works gathered in these two issues testified the evolution of sports research dealing with children and teenagers sports. Physiological and medical works gained in importance, as did tactical and training methodological processes. The age limit on intensive practice was discussed. Trials and observations were realized in child or youngsters training groups. In practice, this process permitted to legitimize child involvement in early specialization. In parallel, young sportsmen had to be protected. Interventions were necessary to protect them from traumas and disharmonious development. In doing so, Soviet physicians and specialists of training methods justified their specific intervention to fit with what Baptiste Viaud and Bruno Papin called the “double paradox of the body”: the necessity to increase its profitability and to protect it so as not to interrupt its productivity (Viaud and Papin, 2012).

The development of specific research on youth sports contributed to the institutionalization of a subfield in Soviet sports sciences and to the legitimization of adolescent involvement in elite sports. Conferences about the problems of youth sport were regularly held since 1964. A chair on theory and methodology on sport for children was created at the Moscow Institute in 1966 (Timakova, 2018). Research was launched not only in the central institutes. In the Tbilisi Institute of Physical Culture, scholars studied football for children and youngsters and developed joint research programs with scholars from the department of applied mathematics and cybernetics. In the Institute of Physical Culture of the Armenian SSR, scholars developed investigations about youths’ visual and vestibular systems and pedagogical experiences²². In these studies, the age of the athletes observed by scholars was ever younger. In the introduction of the third scientific conference on the problems of child and youth sport held in 1973, Vladimir Pavlovič Filin, professor at the Moscow Sports Institute, summed up the development of the scientific field. Between 1954 and 1961, 260 PhDs were defended in sports sciences. Seventeen percent of them were on child sports and physical activities. Between 1962 and 1969, 495 PhDs were defended, in which 20% were on child sports²³. Among the new topics that emerged in the 1960’s, one of them was the direct result of a political demand: the early sorting of promising and talented sportsmen.

Tat’ana Timakova, in a book she published about selection in sports in 2018, recalled the major stages of research on early

selection in Soviet sport. She pointed out the role of the applied research organized by V. P. Filin, S. S. Grošenkov and R. È Motyl’nskaâ, both in the GCOLIFK (State Central Order of Lenin Institute of Physical Education) and in the VNIIFK (All-Union scientific institute of physical culture). As noted, V. P. Filin and R. È. Motyl’nskaâ developed studies at the end of the 1950’s to analyze the physiological effects of intensive training at various stages of life. They had also collected anthropometric data on youngsters involved in performance sports. V. P. Filin recalled that in 1963 the “Goskomsport” [the Central Union of Sports Associations and Organizations] asked the VNIIFK to develop research on selection in sports. This demand shows how it is necessary in the study of Soviet sports policies to not separate sports from other policies and other spheres of state intervention. This trend was visible in domains in which the Soviet motherland wanted to show its primacy (arts, music, mathematics) and needed high-skilled representants.

Since the mid-1950’s, a network of specialist schools, “paths to excellence,” existed. To gain entry, a child had to prove his or her high level of ability (Dunstan, 1978). This was accelerated after the Tokyo Olympic Games, where the Soviet sportsmen faced growing competition²⁴. By asking for this applied research, the Central Sports Administration wanted to rationalize and to optimize the selection process in sports and to give impetus to research dealing with this question. Consequently, in the VNIIFK, in the theory and methodology of child sports department, a special laboratory on sports selection was created, led by S. S. Grošenkov. The selection process was based first on physical and anthropometrical criteria, collected from contemporary champions and medalists. The selection process at a given child’s age began to include psychological data and to analyze it by using statistics and computing (Timakova, 2018). By crossing physical, biomechanical and psychological information, scholars established the main characteristics needed in each discipline and fixed the selection on specific criteria.

The norms they established were then implemented and diffused in sports schools for the youth (DÛŠŠ). A methodological letter was prepared and approved by the presidium of the All-Union Council of Sports Associations and Organizations in October 1965. The existence of these instructions shows two elements. First, the DÛŠŠs, which tended at first to promote the practice of sports for youngsters, were included in the process of the making of the sports elite. Many reports in the Komsomol archives or the Committee archives complained about the difficulties faced by the DÛŠŠs, their paucity and their inefficiencies²⁵. This methodological letter aimed at reorganizing sports schools and at professionalizing their activities by setting up official guidelines based on a scientific approach. Secondly, the norms promoted the DÛŠŠs as a key moment to select which child or teenager could be considered as promising and gave them a formative role. The norms also tried to regulate when a sports career could begin by determining the age limit to enter a DÛŠŠ. The age to be

²¹ *Problemy ũnošeskogo sporta*, 3, 1962 p. 222–223.

²² *Sbornik dokladov na 2oj Vsesoũznoj Konferencii po problemam ũnošeskogo sporta*, Metodičeskij kabinet GCOLIFK, 1974, p. 9–10.

²³ *Tezisi dokladov 3oj vsesoũznoj naučnoj konferencii po problemam ũnošeskogo sporta*, Moscou, 1973, p. 3.

²⁴ GARE, f. 9570, o. 1, d. 281, l. 68.

²⁵ RGASPI, f. m1, inv. 47, d. 392, l. 42–43; GARE, f. R9570, inv. 1, d. 270, l. 52.

TABLE 1 | Minimum age to be admitted in a sports school (GARF, f. 9570, inv. 1, d. 281, l. 76–77).

Alpine skiing	9
Artistic ice-skating	8
Chess	10
Football	11
Gymnastics	Girls, 11; boys, 12
Rowing	13
Shooting	14
Table tennis	9
Track and field	12
Volley-ball	11
Water-polo	13

TABLE 2 | Examples of anthropometrical characteristics in three disciplines for a 11-year-old girl (GARF, f. 9570, inv. 1, d. 281, l. 100–109).

	Gymnastics	Swimming	Basket-ball
Height (average/standard deviation)	138.962 (6,642)	143.620 (8,520)	149.258 (8,172)
Weight	31.524 (4,828)	35.968 (6,744)	40.774 (7,962)
Breast girth	65.696 (4,524)	68.642 (6,414)	72.532 (5,120)
Shoulder diameter	34.664 (10,591)	31.420 (3,554)	33.760 (3,830)
Spirometry	1,844.5 (636)	2,037.3 (491.2)	2,399.5 (615.5)
Back strength	52.844 (17,160)	46.450 (21,490)	43.240 (15,230)
Strength of the right hand	18.724 (6,968)	18.320 (6)	18.916 (4,492)

NB, Units of measurement are unspecified in the original documents.

admitted to a sports school varied from discipline to discipline. In swimming, the age limit was set at 7; in boxing, 14; in tennis, 9; in weightlifting, 15 (Table 1).

The entry selection process was divided into two steps: first, general physical activities permitted local coaches to spot children with physical abilities according to the grid prepared by physicians and scholars; secondly, children had to realize specific exercises, which permitted to sort them out between the different disciplines. The second step, according to the instructions, lasted between 3 and 6 months. Trainers looked for physical abilities and moral qualities, as well as working capacities and perseverance. During these months of observation, children were also under medical control and anthropometrical data was gathered by the medical staff: body proportions, limb length. This information was decisive to evaluate the potential growth of the body and its physical capacities. For some sports, such as diving, gymnastics and slalom, the medical staff evaluated the vestibular system of the children²⁶. Tables with average anthropometrical data accompanied the letter to specify child physical characteristics in swimming, track and field, gymnastics, basketball and to make the process of selection easier (Table 2).

²⁶GARF, f. 9570, o. 1, d. 281, l. 68–75.

Documents in the archives consulted did not provide further information on the way these tests were implemented or if this implementation was widespread. Criticism of the DŪSSs remained vigorous. In *Sovetskij Sport*, as was frequently the case in the Soviet press, an article denounced the poor performances of the sports schools for the youth²⁷. A report written in 1970 attested that the preparation in the DŪSSs was not effective. If some had a good reputation and were renowned for the quality of the preparation (Voronej in volleyball, Alma-Ata and Tbilissi in wrestling), the problem of trainers' qualification remained; training was not well-planned; schools had difficulties in attracting young sportsmen, particularly in swimming and track and field; their action was not strongly coordinated, even if common patterns had been designed²⁷.

At the beginning of the 1970's, the laboratory on sports selection disappeared during the reorganization of the VNIIFK. After the 1972 Olympics, criteria of selection were determined by each KCP (*Kompleksnyj celevyj Program*), a targeted program organized in each national selection, where scholars were associated with trainers. In the perspective of the Moscow Olympics, coaches continued to spot high-skilled youngsters but progressively gathered them in Olympic reserve centers (like *Krugloe Ozero* in gymnastics) where they were trained, cared for and observed (Timakova, 2018; Dufraisse, 2019). In 1978, 85 centers grouped 3,283 sportsmen and sportswomen²⁸. In parallel, the network of sports boarding schools where children were admitted at the age of 11 or 12 expanded. Boarding school recruited children who did well in local games or were scouted, or selected children according to physical abilities and anthropometrical criteria (Dunstan, 1978). John Dunstan noted that some groups (teachers, ideologists, parents) expressed worries in *Sovetskij Sport* and underlined frequent dysfunctions: high dropping-out rates, badly designed curriculum, poor infrastructure, objections to sport as a career, neglect of mass sports... The depreciative visions of child elite sport, of the Soviet choice to develop it and its negative consequences on children's minds and education, also emerged in Soviet sports films.

Discordant Appreciations and Visual Representations of Child Involvement in Elite Sports

Soviet film directors produced films about sports elites where they promoted the values and the ethos of the Soviet citizen since the 1930's. The narrative these films developed was not unique and was far from representative of a single model of the new Soviet men or women. The number of films about sports grew during the second half of the twentieth century in the USSR. Narratives of fictional and non-fictional films about champions were adapted to the existing ideological attempts and to the evolution of the Soviet society: the cult of Soviet champions in the context of the Cold War, the development of mass culture for the "Soviet baby boomers" and the multiplication of media where these films could be screened (cinemas, TV) (Dufraisse, 2019).

²⁷GARF, f. R7576, inv. 31, d. 44, l. 7.

²⁸GARF, f. R7576, inv. 31, d. 4797, l. 1.

It was also a way to fit public taste and contemporary issues²⁹. In the 1970's, children and teenagers became heroes of fictional and documentary films on elite sports. This section examines eight films, four non-fictional and four fictional ones, released between 1968 and 1988, and illuminates how films revealed discordant representations of child elite sports in the Soviet Union. By juxtaposing the narratives of the films, this section notes criticisms that emerged in the Soviet Union at a moment when more children than ever were involved in elite sports.

In *Moj pervyj stadion* (Rybakova, 1970), *Dvoe na l'du*, (Grigor'ev, 1974) and *Sport strany sovetov* (Rybakova, 1979), the mass of young sportsmen (*massovost'*) was the fundamental base to the top level (*master'stvo*). The three films developed along the same patterns, portrayed pretty much the same images and gave coherence to the Soviet system of elite sports. They contributed to shaping common representations of how performance was obtained and to justify massive investments in elite sports. Children practiced in sports circles, in pioneer groups (a mass youth organization of the Soviet Union for children aged 9–15) and sports schools under the firm, precise but cheerful direction of their numerous coaches. “The goal was not to produce champions but to preserve the health of the next generations,” noted the narrator of *Sport strany sovetov* (Dufraisse, 2016). From this mass of young athletes, coaches selected the ones who had the best physical and moral abilities to train them more intensively and produce the actual champions. Each of the three films ended with the performances of the best Soviet champions, like Irina Rodnina, Sofia Muratova, Aleksandr Gorškov or Nikolaj Andriānov. These three documentary films developed the same “democratic fiction” (Fleuriel, 2004). They represented the same positive narrative of child involvement in sports: mass sports led to the elite. These films provide a qualified, evolutive vision of youth elite sport.

At the same time, some films presented a bitter image of children and teenagers' involvement in elite swimming and gymnastics. They pointed out the troubles that youngsters could suffer from when looking for records and performances. The film *The New Girl* [*Noven'kaâ*, (Liûbimov, 1968)] depicts how a young Muscovite girl, modern and carefree, Valentina Cernova, enters elite sports. As Valentina is talented, her coach, Anna Ivanovna, a former gifted gymnast, invites a senior coach to watch her performance. He recruits her in the training group in which the champion Ol'ga Kameneva also trains. Valentina spends her time in harsh training. As a result, she enters the national team. This film is centered on the trajectories of three women who were involved in elite sports careers. Coach Ivanovna is a friend of Ol'ga Kameneva's, they were raised in the same gymnastics school, but Ivanovna chose marital life and having kids over the possibility of a sports career. She now teaches gymnastics in a gloomy sports school. Ol'ga Kameneva is used to international podiums, but everyday training is now difficult for her and she has difficulties coping with its intensity, the concurrence and

the more and more difficult acrobatics. Her sports career ends up in lassitude and doubt. Valentina is obliged to adjust the pattern of her life to gymnastics, to temper her behavior and to make sacrifices to be allowed the possibility of entering the national team. No heroism is here visible; only questions, doubts, bitterness and choices raised by a trajectory in elite sports emerge (Dufraisse, 2019).

Even if the film didn't get a large audience, Elem Klimov's *Sport, sport, sport*, released in 1970³⁰, points out the panoptic control and the routinized life of sports boarding schools. Elem Klimov filmed a swimming school training. The film points out conflicting views about sports: children swim enthusiastically but are also tired and bored by the daily intensive training program. During their interviews, they reveal that they swim incredible distances every day: 3 km for a 4-year-old child, 15 km for a youngster (Makoveeva, 2002; Dufraisse, 2019).

The multi-prized film by Viktor Sadovski *A Moment Decides Everything* (*Vse reshaet mgnovenie*, 1978) also deals with the difficulties of elite sport. A gifted 15-year-old swimmer from a provincial city on the shore of the Black Sea is spotted by a national-team scout who invites her to train in an elite sports center. Used to swim in the sea with a dolphin as a hobby and to satisfy her own delight, the intense training regimen, the everyday concurrence in the national training center and the objective of the defense of the motherland make her stressed. At the European Championships, just before the relay team competition, she gives her place to a more-experienced champion because she has difficulties coping with the pressure. Even if she is able to overtake records, she is sent home to the Black Sea to relax. Coaches want to take care of their child prodigy. As Denise Youngblood and Tony Shaw demonstrate, this film illustrates that “maturity proves more important than raw talent” (Shaw and Youngblood, 2017).

This trend was also exploited in documentary films like in Rybakova's *Olympic hopes* released in 1978³¹. This film presents to the Soviet audience the expected champions of the Moscow Olympics: Maria Filatova, Elena Mukhina, Vladimir Markelov. It shows the intense, repetitive and rigorous training Soviet gymnasts are involved in. Some tiny girls are crying, others are tired and bored. The journalist asked Vladimir Markelov: “What is difficult for you? Physical tiredness or the moral responsibility?” The gymnast answered that he was used to physical fatigue and that the moral tiredness was the most difficult to cope with.

The film *Kukolka* was definitely the most critical. Released in 1988, it shows a situation far from the idealized picture that was described in the films evoked earlier. Isaac Fridberg's film presents a bitter vision, typical during the perestroika. A young woman trained to become a champion is severely wounded. She is obliged to come back to normal life and to the college after years traveling abroad, competing at a world level and reaching international podiums. The film highlighted the effect of high-level sports on individuality: poor education, insolence, attraction to material goods and to western bad influences... It illustrated

²⁹To understand the functioning of post-war Soviet cinema industry: Tcherneva, I. (2014). *Le cinema de non-fiction en URSS. Création, production et diffusion (1948-1968)*. [dissertation thesis], Paris, EHESS.

³⁰KLIMOV Elem, *Sport, Sport, Sport*, 1970, 85 min.

³¹RYBAKOVA Alexandra, *Olimpiskie nadeždy*, 1978, 19'34.

the difficulties of young sportsmen, excluded from the sports career, in reintegrating normal life and in coping with it. But the discourse this film presented was not new. It rehabilitated the debate about the “star syndrome” that exploded in the Soviet public sphere around the “Streltsov scandal” at the end of the 1950’s with the example of a young and female teenager, with the same arguments and remarks (Dufraisse, 2019). If some films, in the 1970’s, demonstrated that children could be raised to the top and that sports could lead them to become ideal Soviet citizens, *Kukolka* shows the opposite: sports could be socially and bodily harmful for the youth and sportsmen and sportswomen could be negative examples. Feeling as an alien in an everyday life she was not used to, the “doll” ended up committing suicide (Shaw and Youngblood, 2017; Polivanova and Shakarova, 2018).

These films testify that in the USSR in the 1970’s and the 1980’s, the vision of elite sports was not monolithic. It also shows that debates about childhood evolved. Elizabeth White noted that the conception of what a child was changed between the 1950’s and the 1980’s. “Children were becoming regarded not just as self-sufficient future citizens, but also as vulnerable, unique individuals in need of special psychological protection” (White, 2020).

Obviously, these films did not capture the reality of Soviet youth elite sports in the 1970’s but they contributed to giving it a shape, to perform principles and they attested that discordant visions of sports coexisted within the media. Some films we used as examples highlighted the difficulties of everyday training on bodies and minds and focused on the increasing pressure imposed by adults on young children. The Soviet Union cultural productions were not impervious to the debate that occurred in the international world of sports on child abuses in elite sports.

The Rejuvenation of World Elite Sports and the Internationalization of the “Age Question”

During the 1970’s, in the international world of sports (federations, media), the controversy about child and elite sports came to the forefront. In 1975, Ursula Weiss published an article about “Age and Peak Performance” in the *Olympic review*, which helped put the age issue on the agenda of international sports bodies. As Weiss wrote, “Nowadays, world swimming records are being broken by mere schoolgirls. In other sports too, peak performances are achieved at an increasingly early age, with the result that the age at which young hopefuls start serious training is becoming younger and younger³².” Two sports were particularly at the center of the attention: swimming and gymnastics. This section will retrace how child elite sports became an issue discussed in international federations and media.

In 1971, the International Gymnastics Federations (FIG) began to examine the question of age. Georgia Cervin indicates that the “assumption that Olga Korbut and Nadia Comaneci redefined women’s gymnastics as a juvenile sport,” is overstated

³²WEISS Ursula, « Age and Peak Performance », *Olympic Review*, 89-90, 1975, p. 106-114.

and that younger and acrobatic performers appeared in gymnastics at the beginning of the 1970’s (Cervin, 2015). The FIG published articles in its bulletin to warn about the dangers of intensive youth training and blamed the production of “competitive animals.” As a consequence, the federation implemented age requirements to prevent girls younger than 14 from participating in elite competitions, a ruling that set the tone at the 1972 Munich Olympics. But the breaching of the rules continued as national federations were responsible for ensuring gymnasts were the required age (Cervin, 2015) without outside supervision. The Canadian Karen Kelsall was 13 when she competed at the 1976 Olympics. In July 1980 at the 58th FIG Congress, the minimum age was raised from 14 to 15. These requirements were applied in 1981. The Soviet prodigy Olga Bicherova was the revelation of the World gymnastics championships held in Moscow in 1981³³. Years later, Bicherova admitted that she was younger and had competed with false documents (Riordan, 1993).

National federations had different strategies to enforce the new requirements. But the subversion of age rules began to create international controversies in the context of the renewed tensions between the USA and the USSR. It was invoked in the American press to reveal the socialist countries’ duplicity and the double speech of the international federation of gymnastics. Neil Amdur focused his article about the 1981 Moscow gymnastics championships on the problem of underage gymnasts:

“The phenomenal success of young female gymnasts, some of whom may have been illegally entered in last month’s world championships, has created controversy and division within the fast-growing sport. [...] Two United States bronze medalists in Moscow, Julianne McNamara and Tracee Talavera, charged earlier this week that Olga Bicherova of the Soviet Union, who won the all-around title, was also under 15 [...] Two years ago, Miss Talavera, then 13, was denied entry to the world championships in Fort Worth because of her age [She was 12.5]³⁴.”

The mediatization of sports life and of sports celebrities contributed to highlighting tragic events and to giving them a worldwide resonance and signification. One heartbreaking accident in gymnastics at the beginning of the 1980’s fueled the discussion about age requirements and child abuse in sports. Elena Mukhina beat the well-known Nadia Comaneci and won the all-around title at the 1978 World Championships in Strasbourg. Her gymnastics combined the elegant Soviet ballet style and new acrobatics that corresponded to the trend of “acrobatization” of women’s gymnastics. She was the first to realize a tucked double back salto dismount on beam or a full twisting double back somersault on floor. As she suffered from a broken leg, she was not able to take part in the 1979 World Championship in Texas. After the surgery, she returned to training to prepare for the Moscow Olympics. Her coach,

³³ALBOUY Gérard, “Mainmise soviétique sur les championnats du monde”, *Le Monde*, December 1, 1981.

³⁴AMDUR Neil, « Rift over underage gymnasts », *New-York Times*, December 7, 1981, p. 4.

Mihajl Klimenko wanted her to realize a dangerous new element that ended with a forward roll only men performed: the Thomas salto. Years later, she explained that she hurt herself several times during training. On July 3, 1980, just before the opening of the Olympics, the favorite Elena Mukhina suffered a tragic accident during training. She crash-landed and became instantly quadriplegic. Ten days later, on July 13, American journalist Barry Lorge wrote about her misfortune in the *Washington Post*. He evoked the fact that she crushed several vertebrae in her neck while practicing difficult acrobatic routines. The journalist noted that “her gymnastics career surely ended” and that this accident “must be one of the saddest stories” of the Moscow Games³⁵. In *Le Monde*, on July 23, Alain Giraud was far more elusive and critical toward the Soviets. He used the example of Elena Mukhina to describe the sensation of discomfort that followed the opening of the Moscow Games. “What happened to Elena Mukhina? [...] We know she was terribly wounded during training at the beginning of July. So much for the facts. We don’t know either on which apparatus she felt or the gravity of her injury (vertebrae could be affected) [...] A rumor had been propagating in Moscow: Mukhina is said to be dead and, because of the Olympics, Soviet leaders didn’t want to admit it.” Mukhina’s tragic story became the symbol of abusive training programs. The race for the medals, wished by politicians and implemented by administrators and trainers, might injure Soviet children and teenagers’ bodies and pushed them to their physical limits. Moreover, the Soviet Union sports authorities took some time revealing precisely how Mukhina’s accident took place.

These polemics about children and teenagers’ involvement in elite sports took place in a national and international configuration where the question of children’s rights was evermore at the center of attention in professional communities as in broader media. In France, Jean Paulhac started the controversy about youngsters and endurance race, claiming for the stop of the “slaughter of innocents³⁶” in *Le Monde* in 1975. In 1977, in the professional review *EPS*, the physical education teacher Jacques Personne pursued the controversy by arguing that the process of early specialization did not let children follow their own purpose and choices³⁷. Baptiste Viaud has also underlined that this question divided the milieu of French sports physicians during the 1970’s and the 1980’s, between the supporters of the normalization of child elite sports and the opponents to intensive child practice (Viaud, 2009). In the United States, books began to openly criticize the consequences of child involvement in elite sports. In 1974, the reporter Marty Ralbovsky, in the book *Lords of the Locker Room*, condemned children’s sports intensive training, the violation of young athletes’ rights and the way adults harassed youngsters in their will to win (Ralbovsky, 1974). In 1978, the psychologist Rainer Marten published *Joy and Sadness in Children’s Sports*. He

proposed endorsement of a “Bill of rights of Young athletes” to protect the social and psychological health of children involved in sports (David, 2005).

Intergovernmental organizations worked specifically on sport for children, like the European Council (EC). The EC, which gathered Western European countries at the beginning of the 1980’s, had a key role in the development of norms in Europe and was a precursor in the antidoping cooperation, in the promotion of sports for the disabled or in the struggle against violence in stadiums. The EC also cared about the involvement of youths in elite sports. In response to the recommendation of the 3rd Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Sport held in April 1981, the Committee for the Development of Sport organized a September 1982 seminar on sport for children (6–12) that tackled the question: what effects do early specialization, intensive training and competition have on the psychological, physiological and social development of children³⁸? “The seminar produced a number of practical conclusions which (i) aimed to foster the child’s general and social development, and (ii) showed the physical and psychological dangers of subjecting children to the adult system of competition. It is now up to governments and sports federations to put these conclusions into effect³⁹.”

During the second half of the twentieth century, the Cold War context and the intensification of the competition between the Soviet Union, countries from the Eastern and the Western bloc on pitches and stadiums contributed to modifying national sports systems and sportsmen’s activity. It gave impetus to the extension and the rejuvenation of the sports career and Soviet organs faced this new trend. The Soviet sports administration developed a varied apparatus to include children and youths in elite sports. The will to take into account new considerations about the vulnerability of children, to improve the efficiency of the sports system and also to improve the abilities of high-skilled Soviets led to the development of scientific investigations on methods for training children, on the physiological consequences of intensive practice and on the physical qualities needed, on life-cycle in sports, on sorting processes. In doing so, scholars also contributed to specifying sports career according to the disciplines, to optimizing training, to increasing its profitability and to protecting young athletes, so as not to interrupt their productivity (Viaud and Papin, 2012).

Counterintuitively, from a Soviet point of view, the apparatus that resulted from this biopolitical expertise was designed to take care of the young sportsmen involved into elite sports. In more legitimized spheres, such as music or dance, analogous Soviet structures were admired, even in Western countries. But, even in the 1970’s Soviet Union, dissonant discourses in the press or in films on child involvement pointed out the abuses of intensive children sports practices and of the

³⁵LORGE Barry, “Mukhina Badly hurt in Gym Fall”, *The Washington Post*, July 14, 1980.

³⁶PAULHAC Jean, « Le massacre des innocents », *Le Monde*, May 10, 1975.

³⁷PERSONNE Jacques, « Il faut arrêter le massacre des innocents », *revue EPS*, mars-avril 1977, p. 18-19.

³⁸Council of Europe, Committee for the development of sport, sport for children, Tonsberg (Norway), 27 september-1 october 1982, Invitation and draft programme, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1982. CDDS(82)1_eng_COE155662.

³⁹Council of Europe, Committee for the development of sport, Annual Report for 1981 and 1982, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1982. COE163572.

investments that privileged elite sport and neglected mass sport. The excesses of Soviet early child involvement became the center of the international attention when the question of children's rights in sports arose at the end of the 1970's and at the beginning of the 1980's. Sports boarding schools, Soviet Olympic reserve centers and intensive practice imposed at a young age embodied the abuses of the "totalitarian" Soviet Union. It easily symbolized how the State molded its citizens to reach its goal, without paying attention to its citizens as subjects and individualities. Yet, it's necessary, while speaking about the controversies that arose during the Cold War about Eastern sports, to overcome the "cliché" of the "triumphalist Cold War narrative in the West," blaming the multiple "abuses" of the socialist countries (Mellis, 2019), and to recontextualize them in the national and international context of their breaking.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, D., Edelman, R., and Wagg, S. (2006). *East Plays West*. Essay on Sport and the Cold War, Londres: Routledge.
- Bantigny, L. (2007). *Le Plus Bel Âge? Jeunes et Jeunesse en France de l'aube Des << Trente Glorieuses >> à la Guerre d'Algérie*. Paris: Fayard.
- Bantigny, L., Bard, C., and Blandin, C. (2011). L'expertise face aux enjeux biopolitiques. *Genre, jeunes, sexualité. Hist. Polit.* 14:2. doi: 10.3917/hp.014.001
- Bantigny, L., and Jablonka, I. (2009). *Jeunesse Oblige. Histoire des Jeunes en France XIX e — XXe Siècles*. Paris: PUF.
- Barker-Ruchti, N. (2009). Ballerinas and pixies: a genealogy of the changing female gymnastics body. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 26, 45–62. doi: 10.1080/09523360802500089
- Bohuon, A. (2012). *Le test de Féminité Dans les Compétitions Sportives: Une Histoire Classée X?* Paris: Editions iXe.
- Bozon, M., and Rennes, L. (2015). Histoire des normes sexuelles : l'emprise de l'âge et du genre. *Clio. Femmes, Genre, Histoire* 42, 7–23. Available online at: <http://journals.openedition.org/clio/12823>
- Cervin, G. (2015). Gymnasts are not merely circus phenomena: influences on the development of women's artistic gymnastics during the 1970s. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 32, 1929–1946. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1124859
- Cervin, G. (2017). *A Balance of Power: Women's Artistic Gymnastics During the Cold War and Its aftermath. (Dissertation Thesis)*. Perth: University of Western Australia.
- Clastres, P. (2020). Olympisme et guerre froide. Du paradigme réaliste au paradigme culturel. *Guerres Mondiales Conflits Contemp.* 277, 7–25. doi: 10.3917/gmcc.277.0007
- Coumel, L. (2014). << Rapprocher l'école et la vie >>? *Une Histoire des réformes de l'enseignement en Russie Soviétique (1918-1964)*. Toulouse: Presses universitaires du Mirail. doi: 10.4000/books.pumi.14917
- David, P. (2005). *Human Rights in Youth Sports*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- David-Fox, M. (2011). The implications of transnationalism. *Kritika* 12, 885–904. doi: 10.1353/kri.2011.0059
- de Baecque, A. (1993). *Le Corps de l'histoire. Métaphores et Politiques (1770-1800)*. Paris: Calmann-Lévy.
- de Baecque, A. (2007). Les Formes Cinématographiques de l'histoire. 1895. 51:9. doi: 10.4000/1895.1312
- Del Pero, M. (2016). 'Commentary,' diplomatic. *History* 40:887. doi: 10.1093/dh/dhw029
- Denéchère, Y., and Droux, J. (2015). Enfants et relations internationales : chantiers de recherche. *Relat. Int.* 161, 3–12. doi: 10.3917/ri.161.0003
- Dufraisse, S. (2016). Contrôler, mettre en ordre et réguler : la réforme des revenus des sportifs soviétiques au lendemain de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. *Mouv. Soc.* 254, 103–116. doi: 10.3917/lms.254.0103
- Dufraisse, S. (2017). "The emergence of europe-wide collaboration and competition: soviet sports interactions in Europe, 1945 – mid-1960s," in *Beyond Boycotts, National, Continental and Transcontinental Sporting Relations during Cold War*, eds. P. Vonnard, G. Quin and N. Sbeti, (Berlin: De Gruyter), 71–81. doi: 10.1515/9783110529098-005
- Dufraisse, S. (2019). *Les Héros du Sport : Une Histoire des Champions Soviétiques (Années 1930-1980)*. Seyssel: Champvallon.
- Dunstan, J. (1978). *Paths to Excellence and the Soviet School*. Windsor/Atlantic Highlands: NFER.
- Edelman, R. (1993). *Serious Fun: a History of Spectator Sport in the USSR*. New York, Oxford: University Press.
- Edelman, R. (2009). *Spartak Moscow. A History of the People's Team in the Worker's State*. Ithaca-Londres: Cornell University Press.
- Edelman, R. (2017). The five hats of nina ponomareva: sport, shoplifting and the cold war. *Cold War Hist.* 17, 223–239. doi: 10.1080/14682745.2016.1261114
- Edelman, R. (2019). *The Whole World Was Watching. Sport in the Cold War*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. doi: 10.1515/9781503611016
- Fleurbaey, S. (2004). *Le Sport de Haut Niveau en France, Sociologie d'une Catégorie de Pensée*. Grenoble: Presses universitaires de Grenoble.
- Grant, S. (2013). *Culture and Sport in Soviet Society, Propaganda, Acculturation, and Transformation in the 1920s and 1930s*. New York: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9780203105191
- Grigor'ev, I. (1974). *Dvoe na l'du*. 27'.
- Gygas, J. (2012). *Olympisme et Guerre Froide Culturelle. Le Prix de la Victoire Américaine*. Paris: l'Harmattan.
- Hunt, T. (2006). American sport policy and the cultural cold war: the lyndon B. Johnson presidential years. *J. Sport Hist.* 33, 273–297.
- Hunt, T. (2011). *Drug Games, The International Olympic Committee and the Politics of Doping, 1960–2008*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Katzer, N., Budy, S., Köhring, A., and Zeller, M. (2010). *Euphoria and Exhaustion, Modern Sport in Soviet Culture and Society, Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag*.
- Krüger, A. (2016). Bons baisers de Russie? Soixante années d'expansion du concept de planification sportive de L.P. Matwejew STAPS. 114, 51–59. doi: 10.3917/sta.114.0051
- Liúbimov, P. (1968). *Noven'kaâ*. 90'.
- MacRae, E. (2016). *Exercise in the Female Life-Cycle in Britain, 1930–1970*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. doi: 10.1057/978-1-137-58319-2
- Maddox, S. (2018). Gulag football: competitive and recreational sport in stalin's system of forced labor. *Kritika* 19, 509–536. doi: 10.1353/kri.2018.0028
- Makoveeva, I. (2002). Soviet sports as a cultural phenomenon: body and/or intellect. *Stud. Slavic Cult.* 3, 9–32.
- Malz, A., Rohdewald, S., and Wiederkehr, S. (2007). *Sport Zwischen Ost und West*. Osnabrück: Fibre Verlag.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

FUNDING

This research was funded by the program Etoiles montantes, granted by the Pays-de-la-Loire region and by the laboratory UMR 6025 CENS, Université de Nantes-CNRS.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks are due to Lindsay Krasnoff and Pauline Del Vecchio, as to Laurent Coumel, Gildas Loirand, Bruno Papin, Baptiste Viaud, whose comments and suggestions have strengthened this article.

- Martinache, I. (2019). Simple brokers or creators? French communist sports leaders and the Eastern European sports model (1923–1991). *Staps* 125, 15–30. doi: 10.3917/sta.125.0015
- Martinache, I. (2020). Le parti communiste français et le sport. *Pensée* 401, 34–46.
- Mauger, G. (2010). Jeunesse : essai de construction d'objet. *Agora Débats Jeunes* 56, 9–24. doi: 10.3917/agora.056.0009
- Mellis, J. (2019). From defectors to cooperators: the impact of 1956 on athletes, sport leaders and sport policy in socialist Hungary. *Contemp. Eur. Hist.* 1–17. doi: 10.1017/S0960777319000183
- Mičev, D. (1960). O vozraste i professii učastnikov olimpijskih igr. *Teoriâ I Praktika Fizičeskoj Kulturny.* 23, 458–460.
- Motylanska R. E. (1956). *Sport I Vozrast.* Moscou: Fizkul'tura I Sport.
- Niget, D., and Denéchère, Y. (2015). *Droits des Enfants au XXe Siècle : Pour Une Histoire Transnationale.* Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes. doi: 10.4000/books.pur.89239
- Papin, B. (2007). *Conversion et Reconversion Des élites Sportives, Approche Socio-Historique de la Gymnastique Artistique Sportive.* Paris: l'Harmattan.
- Parks, J. (2016). *The Olympic Games, the Soviet Sports Bureaucracy, and the Cold War: Red Sport, Red Tape.* New York, NY: Lexington Books.
- Polivanova, K. N., and Shakarova, M. A. (2018). The socio-cultural image of childhood (based on an analysis of soviet and russian feature films about children). *Russian Educ. Soc.* 60, 348–369. doi: 10.1080/10609393.2018.1473696
- Ralbovsky, M. (1974). *Lords of the Locker Room: the American Way of Coaching and Its Effect on Youth.* New York, NY: P. H. Wyden.
- Rennes, J. (2019). Âge biologique versus âge social : une distinction problématique. *Genèses*, 117, 109–128. doi: 10.3917/gen.117.0109
- Rider, T. (2017). *Cold War Games: Propaganda, the Olympics and US Foreign Policy.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press. doi: 10.5406/illinois/9780252040238.001.0001
- Riordan, J. (1993). Rewriting sports history. *J. Sports Hist.* 20, 247–258.
- Ryba, T., and Stambulova, N. (2018). "Russia," in *Routledge International Handbook of Sport Psychology*, eds R. J. Schinke, K. R. McGannon and B. Smith (London: Routledge).
- Rybakova, A. (1970). *Moj pervyj stadion.*
- Rybakova, A. (1979). *Sport strany sovetov.* 56'20.
- Shaw, A., and Youngblood, D. (2017). Cold war sport, film and propaganda: a comparative analysis of the superpowers. *J. Cold War Stud.* 19, 160–192. doi: 10.1162/JCWS_a_00721
- Talleg-Marston, K. (2012). *An International Comparative History of Youth Football in France and in the United States (1920–2000): The Age Paradigm and the Demarcation of the Youth Game as a Separate Sector of the Sport (Dissertation thesis).* Leicester: De Monfort University.
- Timakova, T. (2018). *Faktoy Sportivnogo Otbora, ili Stanovitsâ Olimpijskim Cempionom.* Moscou: Sport.
- Tsipursky, G. (2016). *Socialist Fun. Youth Consumption and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1945-1970.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. doi: 10.2307/j.ctt1f89r68
- Viaud, B. (2009). *Panser les deux mondes. Médecines et sports, entre principes hippocratiques et performances.* (dissertation thesis). Nantes: Université de Nantes.
- Viaud, B., and Papin, B. (2012). Temps sportif, santé du champion et logique de l'urgence. *Staps* 96–97, 9–27. doi: 10.3917/sta.096.0009
- Vonnard, P., and Marston, K. (2020). Playing across the 'Halfway line' on the fields of international relations. The journey from globalizing sport to sport diplomacy. *Contemp. Eur. Hist.* 29, 220–231. doi: 10.1017/S0960777319000407
- Vonnard, P., and Quin, G. (2017). Studying international sports organisations during the cold war. *Sport Hist.* 37, 265–272. doi: 10.1080/17460263.2017.1369149
- Vonnard, P., Sbeti, N., and Quin, G. (2018). *Beyond Boycotts: Sport during the Cold War in Europe.* Berlin: De Gruyter. doi: 10.1515/9783110529098
- White, E. (2020). *A Modern History of Russian Childhood.* London: Bloomsbury. doi: 10.5040/9781474240253
- Zeller, M. (2018). *Sport and Society in the Soviet Union: the Politics of Football After Stalin.* London: I. B. Tauris.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2020 Dufraisse. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



A Sporting and Peronist Youth in the Making: The High School Students Union (UES) in Argentina (1952–1955)

Lucie Hémeury*

Centre de Recherche et de Documentation des Amériques, Institut des Hautes Études d'Amérique latine, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France

This article examines the history of the High School Secondary Students (*Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios* or UES), a sporting and cultural youth association created by the Peronist government in 1953. From its inception, this institution has been compared by sectors of the opposition to Fascist and Nazi youth organizations and accused of politically enlisting and morally corrupting Argentine youth. Based on institutional archives, UES publications and Perón's speeches, this study offers a contribution to the historiographical debates on the history of youth, sports and Peronism. It shows how the creation of the UES relates to the social, educational and sports policies of this regime. The article analyses the objectives pursued by the government, but also the limits and contradictions of this attempt to mobilize young people through sports activities.

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

François Vallotton,
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Reviewed by:

Xavier Pujadas Martí,
Universitat Ramon Llull, Spain
Raanan Rein,
Tel Aviv University, Israel

*Correspondence:

Lucie Hémeury
hemeury.lucie@gmail.com

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 31 May 2020

Accepted: 29 September 2020

Published: 12 November 2020

Citation:

Hémeury L (2020) A Sporting and Peronist Youth in the Making: The High School Students Union (UES) in Argentina (1952–1955). *Front. Sports Act. Living* 2:568282. doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.568282

Keywords: Argentina, Peronism, youth, sports, UES

INTRODUCTION

Between 1946 and 1955, the government led by Juan Domingo Perón implemented a wide-ranging sports policy. Perón, a former military fencing champion and an accomplished sportsman, was a fervent advocate of the practice of sport and sincerely convinced of its pedagogical and educational virtues. Since the 1920 and 1930's, sport gradually became an important and valuable activity in Europe and the United States, with many benefits and which, as such, should be encouraged by the public authorities (Lanfranchi, 2000; Darbon, 2008). In Argentina, the radical and then conservative governments of the 1920 and 1930's also undertook the promotion of the sports practice among children and adolescents. The Peronist government multiplied and systematized these first disparate and isolated experiences, giving them a national scope and articulating them to their health, social and cultural policy programs (Hémeury, 2018, p. 43–101).

The proclaimed objectives of the Peronist sports policy—as exposed in the 1952–1957 second 5-years plan—responded to Perón's wish to forge “a nation of sportsmen¹.” The government undertook to provide financial support both for high-performance sport and for the popular and mass practice of physical activities. As sport was perceived as a fundamental element of education which contributed to the physical and moral development of young people, children and teenagers were primary targets of the measures adopted during this decade.

The regime created specific organizations for them: the first one was the Eva Perón Foundation (*Fundación Eva Perón* or FEP), a welfare institution founded as early as 1948 by the Argentinean First Lady, Eva Perón (Plotkin, 2003; Barry et al., 2008). Soon this social welfare organization, aimed at the most disadvantaged sectors of society, especially women and children, became a major protagonist in national sports policy, organizing the Evita Children's Tournaments (*Campeonatos Infantiles Evita* or *Torneos Evita*) with increasing success. This annual sports competition for

¹Perón (1949), *La gimnasia y los deportes*, p. 5.

children, open to girls since 1952, shows the decisive role played by sport in the Peronist programs for the youngest and the importance attached to the care of children by the government. Indeed, for the Peronist leaders, children were the “only privileged of the nation².”

Compared to the FEP, the High School Students Union (*Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios* or UES), the second Peronist sports institution created for young people, was a latecomer organization since it was founded in 1953 by the then Minister of Education, Armando Méndez San Martín. It indicates the priority given to young children over adolescents in the early years of the regime. Actually, the distinction between the two categories was not yet clear: as Manzano pointed out, the Peronist period, and especially the last years of Perón's second term of office, represents a transitional phase that contributed to the emergence of the concept of “youth” as a generational, social and cultural category distinct from childhood and adulthood. Adolescents increasingly tended to be considered by public authorities as a separate category raising specific issues (Manzano, 2014, p. 20)³. The creation of the UES in 1953 was part of this ongoing process.

Despite its short existence—less than 3 years –, the UES is one of the most famous Peronist institutions. Nevertheless, there is still no historical study entirely devoted to it. This historiographical gap is largely due to the lack of available sources, as many documents were lost or destroyed after the overthrow of the Peronist regime by a military coup in September 1955, the 18-years proscription of Peronism and the prosecution of its partisans. Fortunately, the press, Perón's speeches, the brochures and leaflets published by the propaganda services provided much information to the historians who tried to reconstitute the history of the UES (Page, 2011, p. 345–53; Rein R., 1998; Gambini, 2016). Another useful source is the reports on the UES activities drawn up by the commissions of investigation appointed by the ruling military junta, the so-called *Revolución Libertadora* (or “Liberating Revolution”), after the fall of Perón. These volumes reproduce original documents seized by the military junta's investigators within the UES and the Ministry of Education as well as the minutes of the interrogations conducted on members of the UES board. They provide many detailed information on the internal running of the institution, although, due to the context of production of these documents, they should be used and analyzed with caution and critical distance (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. I, p. 313–471; vol. II, p. 214–38).

Since its creation, the UES has been, and is still today, a controversial institution. Anti-Peronist pamphlets have perpetuated the memory of its scandalous aura, especially surrounding the women's section (Confalonieri, 1956; Rabinovitz, 1956; García, 1971). The installation of its

headquarters in Perón's presidential residence shocked several sectors of the public opinion. The pictures of a widowed and aging Perón surrounded by young girls in casual sportswear reinforced the opponents' convictions about the corrupting and immoral nature of Peronism and fuelled suspicions about the President's private life. The case of Nelly Rivas, a young UES teenage girl who allegedly had a love affair with Perón and ended up living with him, was the culmination of this. As a symbol of the social and moral decadence produced by Peronism, the UES was for a long time the subject of a sulfurous reputation, forged and exploited from 1954 to 1955 onwards by the opposition, and especially by the Catholic Church, which was then in open conflict with the Peronist government (Caimari, 1994; Acha, 2011, p. 67–70).

It is only recently that several historians have tried to propose a different perspective on the UES, by situating it within the more general framework of youth and adolescent policies implemented by this political movement (Acha, 2011; Cammarota, 2014). This article intends to adopt a similar approach: reviewing the development of the UES shows how sport was conceived as a central element of the social and political Justicialist policies. It also contributes to a better understanding of the evolution of the regime's perception of youth and its role in society during the period. The UES is an original example of an attempt to provide State supervision of the leisure of a specific category: the secondary school and high school students. But it was also designed to include young people in the “*Nueva Argentina*” project developed by Perón by assigning them a proper place and mission within his political and social model of “Organized Community” (*Comunidad organizada*). This article aims to understand the objectives pursued by the Peronist government with the UES and to question the political dimension of this student institution.

THE UES: A STUDENT SPORTS ORGANIZATION

The exact conditions under which the UES was founded between 1952 and 1953 are still not well-known. The narrative put forward by the supporters of the military junta which deposed Perón has long prevailed. According to the reports of the commissions of investigation, the UES was set up by the Minister of Education to entertain Perón and to comfort him after the death of his wife, Eva Perón, in July 1952 (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, p. 215–7). This new organization would therefore have been founded to “satisfy the vanity and personal pleasures” (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, p. 217) of the president. Then, it would have been gradually erected as a “political instrument to achieve unconditional and total commitment of young people to the leader” (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958 p. 217). The UES would have been a key element of the “peronization” of youth. A more nuanced version proposed by researchers who have studied the history of the emergence of youth as a social and political category in Argentina is now opposed to it (Acha, 2011; Cammarota, 2014). Their analyses compare the creation of the UES with the measures taken by the Peronist government

²There are many references in the sources to this Peronist motto. See, for example, Servicio Internacional de Publicaciones Argentinas (SIPA), *Infancia privilegiada*, Buenos Aires, p. 49.

³In her study of the Argentine youth culture between the 1950s and the 1970s, Valeria Manzano proposes, as the title of her first chapter, a pertinent expression to designate the transformations at work under Peronism: “Carving Out a Place for Youth.”

for young people and the regime's gradual recognition of this specific population category. The very name of the organization is significant in this respect: the Union of Secondary School Students. It highlighted the category of population for which the new institution was designed rather than its sporting and cultural dimension.

What does this name refer to? In Argentina as in many other countries, there are three levels of education: primary, secondary, and higher education (i.e., university). Secondary school students are therefore all those who have completed primary school and enter a secondary school: this can be a general high school (*colegio*), but also a specialized, technical or vocational school (Rein M. E., 1998). Under Peronism, the government sought to improve access to secondary education, especially for children from the working and middle classes (Cammarota, 2014, p. 36–45; Dussel and Pineau, 1995, p. 107–73). The Peronist leaders had several objectives: to enable more young people to continue their studies after primary school; to improve the qualifications of the workforce in general; and to open up access to university, in particular by abolishing the tuition fees (*aranceles*) that existed until 1951⁴. From that date, the public education system was entirely free of charge at all levels of education (Rein M. E., 1998, p. 42). All these measures were quite effective: the population of primary school leavers entering secondary school increased considerably (Manzano, 2014, p. 22). These guidelines of the Peronist educational policy set up frameworks to improve the social inclusion of youth. The creation of the UES in 1953 was a continuation of this policy: the government designed an organization specifically dedicated to secondary school students. The age of UES members was generally between 13 and 18, but could be as high as 25: the criterion for membership was not age, but the fact of being enrolled in any kind of secondary school.

Sport was the main and most visible activity offered to UES members, but it was not the only one. Adolescents could also engage in a variety of cultural and artistic practices, including drama, dance and singing⁵. However, the UES was supposed to be more than just a sports and cultural association. On November 16, 1953, at the inauguration of the headquarters of the men's section, Perón explained that “For some time now, the Ministry of Education has been thinking about the need to create organizations that bring together secondary school students, entrusting them with the administration and management of these organizations, so that young people can begin to manage and govern themselves at that age.” (Perón, 2001, p. 797). The motto of the UES magazine also defined it as a “student organization for students⁶”: it suggests that teenagers were supposed to run the organization themselves.

The UES was conceived as a space of sociability for high school students where they would learn collective

responsibility and self-governance. As outlined by Perón in his inauguration speech, the primary purposes of the UES were to combat individualism, presented as one of the major issues of modern societies; to overcome differences of social origin and class; and to strengthen the sense of common belonging between members of the same generation (Perón, 2001 p. 797). In this sense, the UES was part of the political program of social transformation carried out by Peronist leaders.

The government aspired to set up sections throughout the country. However, this was still far from being a reality at the time of Perón's fall (Cammarota, 2010, p. 388). Outside Buenos Aires, the UES was based in several provincial capitals but it expanded very slowly: in many regions the UES was “an idea rather than a reality” (Acha, 2011, p. 71). In 1954, the magazine *Mundo Peronista* estimated that the women's section had a national membership of 60,000 and the men's 42,000, representing just over 50% of all secondary school students (Manzano, 2014, p. 24). These figures are significant, but they show that the UES was far from covering the entire secondary school population. In addition, official data were very likely to have been exaggerated by the government: membership did not always go hand in hand with active participation in the organization (Cammarota, 2014, p. 154–7).

Argentinean secondary school students did not have any obligation to join or participate in the activities of the UES. However, the authors of the 1958 investigation report stated that membership was neither free nor spontaneous and that an enrolment campaign was orchestrated from the Ministry of Education. The report states that the Buenos Aires secondary students were under constant pressure, even intimidation and threats (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. II, p. 217–8). Adrián Cammarota's research tends to refute the idea that UES delegates would have used coercive methods to enroll their peers. According to the testimony of a former UES female leader, their role was to distribute membership cards during high school sports competitions. And they were not always successful: in Cammarota's detailed case study, the Morón public high school, only a minority of students joined the UES (Cammarota, 2014, p. 155).

A MODEL ORGANIZATION AND A SHOWCASE FOR THE REGIME

To recruit new members, the government did not necessarily need to coerce teenagers. The success of the UES can be explained by its many attractions. The Peronist leaders invested massively to develop the new organization, as evidenced by the exceptional facilities enjoyed by the UES affiliates. In accordance with the social standards of the time, the organization was divided into two sections: teenage girls and boys carried out their activities separately, with a few exceptions (*Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios*, 1954)⁷. Otherwise, each section had

⁴This measure was announced by Perón as early as 1949. On free public education, see Servicio Internacional de Publicaciones Argentinas (SIPA), *Síntesis de la Educación en la Argentina*, Buenos Aires. p. 54.

⁵See the magazine *UES*, Año I, n°4, September 1954 and (*Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios*, 1954). *Teatro Argentino*.

⁶Front page of the magazine of *UES*, Año I, no. 4, september 1954: “*de los estudiantes para los estudiantes.*”

⁷Teenagers of both sexes were often together during fencing demonstrations and shared the same yacht club. The UES section in the province of Eva Perón (La Pampa) put on a play that brought boys and girls together on stage.

its own headquarters, originally located in the most elegant downtown areas of Buenos Aires. Soon, they were also provided with large sports fields and improved facilities: the girls' section was established in the presidential residence, while the male adolescents settled in the Nuñez neighborhood in the north of the capital⁸. This venue comprised a total of six hectares, including several fields previously occupied by different clubs. Some of these clubs had been dislodged by the City Council so that the Peronist authorities could recover the land—as well as the facilities that had been built on it—and transfer it to the UES (Hémeury, 2018, p. 197 and 329–38).

These decisions provoked strong protests from the leaders of the expropriated clubs. They were also heavily criticized by political opponents who denounced the “inappropriate luxury” (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. II, p. 215) of the UES facilities. They were indeed outstanding. The men's section activity center included an indoor swimming pool, a movie theater, a dining hall, dormitories, kitchens, and gymnasiums, 18 outdoor basketball courts, nine football fields, and 11 tennis courts. Several pavilions were used to house the administrative services, the infirmary, and the “American bar” with its billiard tables, a garage and a repair workshop for the members' self-service scooters (*motonetas*) (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. I, p. 362). The women's section enjoyed similar amenities. The UES girls could practice fencing, gymnastics, basketball, volleyball, athletics, or canoeing and ride *motonetas*. The women's section alone employed a total of 320 people (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, p. 392).

The government turned the UES into an unprecedented model institution. It quickly occupied an important role in the regime's propaganda, showing the government's action in favor of the development of sports practice and its physical and educative benefits for the youth⁹. The UES was also closely associated with official public events. Its members took part in the regime's celebrations, parading in the streets and singing their own march, which was an ode to the president and to the “New Argentina”¹⁰. In addition, Perón often visited the UES facilities: he attended lessons, sometimes taking part in them, and handed out prizes and awards to the winners of the competitions (Cammarota, 2014, p. 155). This is why anti-Peronists and the *Revolución Libertadora* identified the UES as an avatar of the Fascist and Nazi youth movements. For them, without a doubt, it was a political organization, akin to a juvenile wing of the Peronist Party, designed by the highest leaders of the Peronist movement and controlled from the top of the State. A review of the internal running of the institution seems to prove them right.

A PARASTATAL ORGANIZATION

In theory, the UES adolescents were supposed to learn how to self-organize and collectively manage an institution presented as their own. This narrative referred to the principles of the Peronist Doctrine which valued team-spirit, general interest and collective commitment¹¹. The UES emerged as a means of integrating a specific group (i.e., young people) into the “Organized Community” project forged by Peronism. Perón advocated a corporatist and top-down conception of society. In this system, each sector of the society should run its own organizations and the State would act as an impartial arbiter, guaranteeing social harmony (Acha, 2011, p. 57–8)¹². But, in the UES as in many other Peronist organizations, this learning of autonomy and self-governance took place under the patronage of the State. Although the members of the organization's board were young students, the institution was in fact operated by employees of the Ministry of Education. After the overthrow of the regime, former leaders of the UES were interrogated by the commission of investigation. They acknowledged that they all had connections with the Ministry and that their functions were, most of the time, “purely formal” (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. II, p. 218). Méndez San Martín and his staff took all the fundamental decisions regarding the institution. The funding allocated to the UES came from the Ministry of Education's budget: according to the investigators, over 270 million pesos had been granted to the youth organization in 3 years (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. I, p. 314–6).

The UES, undoubtedly, was a parastatal organism: theoretically, it was an independent institution, but in practice, it was closely tied to the regime. Still, the creation of this institution shows the shift in Peronist leaders' attitudes toward youth. The social and political context of the early 1950's in Argentina partly explains this change. From 1952–1953 onwards, the Peronist government sought to ensure the continuity of its increasingly contested political project by relying on teenagers. These “citizens in the making” needed to be trained and prepared to continue the work of General Perón.

With the UES, the government intended to address a category of the population which until that date had not been the target of specific political measures. In his speeches addressed to the UES members, Perón gave the teenagers a place in the “*Nueva Argentina*,” by assigning them a mission, and a role to fulfill (Perón, 2001, p. 82). These were both patriotic and political: young people had to take part in national development. Their experience at the UES would enable them to acquire a sense of responsibility and to become enlightened citizens who could perpetuate the task undertaken by Peronism. For Peronist leaders, the institution had to be concurrently a place for the entertainment of young people and a place for socialization and

⁸The men's section moved to No. 1050 Republiquetas Street, currently Miguel B. Sánchez Street. The facilities still exist and now belongs to the Centro Nacional de Alto Rendimiento Deportivo (CeNARD), run by the Argentinean State Department for Sports.

⁹The press of the period, and in particular the newspapers controlled by the Peronist government, such as *Mundo Peronista*, reported extensively on the activities of the UES. For a more detailed study of the UES media coverage, see (Sénen González and Bosoer, 2019).

¹⁰The UES march's lyrics are published in Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios (1954). *Teatro Argentino*.

¹¹Many official publications laid out the Peronist doctrine and its principles: for example, Granata (1954), p. 15–8.

¹²O. Acha stresses the influence of the social-Catholic movement in Perón's doctrine. The Peronists recognized the importance of the society's “intermediate bodies” as the only guarantee of social harmony.

civic education to raise political awareness. And for them, the ideal citizen was necessarily a Peronist citizen.

But the impact of this youth mobilization endeavor was in fact limited. Even the authors of the UES investigation report noted that many adolescents would have “come only to obtain some benefit from this inexhaustible cornucopia” (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958, vol. II, p. 226). This remark contradicts the idea that the UES would have successfully “peronized” its members on a long-term basis. Indeed, many young people would have joined the organization only because they were attracted by the significant bonuses, material rewards, and opportunities offered by the institution. During the sports tournaments, participants could win a motorbike, money, or jewelry. According to the UES investigation report, some of them could even be rewarded with a position in the public administration or housing for those who requested it (Vice-Presidencia de la Nación, 1958).

O. Acha and A. Cammarota’s studies also underline the mixed success of the UES and the low impact it had on the adolescents of the period. Their analyses invite a cautious examination of the triumphalist declarations of Peronist leaders as well as the exaggerations of the supporters of the *Revolución Libertadora*. Both researchers stress the late and somewhat improvised nature of the Peronist political program for youth. If the UES indeed “constituted a massive project of youth organization, Peronist indoctrination and the construction of a new generation” (Acha, 2011, p. 71), its members were never really trained and prepared for political activism. This became very clear during the long conflict between the Argentinean Catholic Church and the regime: the UES was unable to compete with the militant Catholic youth organizations (Acha, 2011, p. 72–3). Young people never gained any real autonomy as political actors, “capable of concretely acting on reality.” (Acha, 2011, p. 77) The government’s attitude toward youth was marked by a paternalistic approach, as reflected in the management of the UES. Despite the promises of the President, the teenagers were always in a subordinate position.

CONCLUSION: CONTRADICTIONS AND LIMITS OF THE UES

The creation of the UES was a political gesture: as a space for socialization, the new organization would contribute to the governmental project of social transformation. Although the

UES was strongly marked by a partisan and propagandistic dimension, it was not, strictly speaking, a political organization. The organization never became the “Perón Youth” or the juvenile section of the Peronist Party, maybe because the recognition of teenagers as a specific category came late and remained unfinished. The UES project itself was contradictory, since the autonomy promised and announced to the members turned out to be extremely limited.

The UES was a relatively short experience that failed to make a significant impact on adolescents, at least politically. However, it confirmed the central place given to sport by the government to reach young people (Gagliano, 1995). The institution was used by the regime to showcase an idealized representation of youth and the Peronist “happy world” (Gené, 2008): a cheerful, athletic, virtuous youth that would gradually emancipate itself, under the benevolent protection of Perón. But the “peronization” of young people seems to have been superficial: the UES was not a space for political struggle during the 1955 military coup. Nor does it seem to have been the source of clandestine networks of Peronist resistance during the dictatorship of the *Revolución Libertadora*. However, it was considered one of the outstanding institutions of early Peronism, as shown by the re-creation of an UES by revolutionary Peronist groups in the early 1970’s. As for many creations of Peronism, the history of the UES did not end with its dissolution.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication. All quotes have been translated from Spanish into English by LH.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This article addresses one of the themes explored in my Ph.D. thesis, which was awarded a 3-year research grant by the Ile-de-France region. The author also wishes to thank Prof. Patrick Clastres for his help and support.

REFERENCES

- Acha, O. (2011). *Los muchachos peronistas. Orígenes olvidados de la Juventud Peronista (1945–1955)*. Buenos Aires: Planeta.
- Barry, C., Ramacciotti, K., and Valobra, A. (2008). *La Fundación Eva Perón y las mujeres: entre la provocación y la inclusión*. Buenos Aires: Biblos.
- Caimari, L. (1994). *Perón y la Iglesia Católica. Religión, Estado y sociedad en la Argentina (1943–1955)*. Buenos Aires: Ariel.
- Cammarota, A. (2010). “Una juventud responsable, disciplinada y peronista. La Revista de la Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios (1954–1955)”, in *Ideas y debates para la Nueva Argentina. Revistas culturales y políticas del peronismo (1946–1955) Vol. II*, eds. C. Panella and G. Korn. (La Plata: Universidad Nacional de La Plata), 387–405.
- Cammarota, A. (2014). *Somos Bachiyeres. Juventud, cultura escolar y peronismo en el colegio nacional mixto de morón (1949–1969)*. Buenos Aires: Biblos.
- Confalonieri, O. D. (1956). *Perón contra perón*. Buenos Aires: Antyguá.
- Darbon, S. (2008). *Diffusion des sports et impérialisme anglo-saxon. De l’histoire événementielle à l’anthropologie*. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme. doi: 10.4000/books.editionsmslh.1035
- Dussel, I., and Pineau, P. (1995). “De cuando la clase obrera entró al paraíso: la educación técnica estatal en el primer peronismo”, in *Historia de la*

- educación en la Argentina. Vol. VI*, ed A. Puiggrós (Buenos Aires: Galerna), 107–73.
- Gagliano, R. (1995). “Consideraciones sobre la adolescencia en el período”, in *Historia de la educación en la Argentina. Vol. VI*, ed A. Puiggrós (Buenos Aires: Galerna), 170–203.
- Gambini, H. (2016). *Historia del peronismo. Vol. 2. La obsecuencia (1951–1955)*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones B Argentina.
- García, E. A. (1971). *Yo fui testigo. Antes, durante y después de la segunda tiranía. Memorias*. Buenos Aires: Laserre.
- Gené, M. (2008). *Un mundo feliz. Imágenes de los trabajadores en el primer peronismo, 1946–1955*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Granata, M. (1954). *Pueblo y peronismo*. Buenos Aires: Presidencia de la Nación – Secretaría de Prensa y Difusión.
- Hémeury, L. (2018). *Le pacte introuvable. Sport, peronisme et societe en Argentine (1946–1955)*. (Ph.D. thesis). Sorbonne-Nouvelle Paris 3 University, Paris.
- Lanfranchi, P. (2000). Entre initiative privée et question nationale. Genèse et évolution des politiques sportives en Europe (Grande-Bretagne, Allemagne, France et Italie). *Politix*. 13:50. doi: 10.3406/polix.2000.1085
- Manzano, V. (2014). *The Age of Youth. Culture, Politics and Sexuality from Perón to Videla*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina.
- Page, J. A. (2011). *Perón. Una biografía*. Buenos Aires: Delbolsillo.
- Perón, J. D. (1949). *La gimnasia y los deportes*.
- Perón, J. D. (2001). *Obras completas*. Buenos Aires: Fundación pro Universidad de la Producción y del Trabajo.
- Plotkin, M. B. (2003). *Mañana es San Perón. A Cultural History of Perón's Argentina*. Wilmington: SR Books.
- Rabinovitz, B. (1956). *Sucedió en la Argentina (1943–1956). Lo que no se dijo*. Buenos Aires: Gure.
- Rein, M. E. (1998). *Politics and Education in Argentina 1946–1962*. New York, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Rein, R. (1998). ‘El Primer Deportista’: the Political Use and Abuse of Sport in Peronist Argentina. *Int. J. Hist. Sport*. 15, 54–76. doi: 10.1080/09523369808714028
- Sénen González, S., and Bosoer, F. (2019) “Perón, juventud y deporte: la experiencia de la Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios”, in *El deporte en el primer peronismo*, eds R. Rein R. C. Panella (La Plata: EPC), 124–46.
- Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios. (1954). *Teatro Argentino. Función Extraordinaria, En Homenaje al Excelentísimo Señor Presidente de la Nación Argentina, Juan D. Perón y a su Excelencia el Señor Gobernador de la Provincia de Buenos Aires Don Carlos Aloé, organizada por la U.E.S. Eva Perón 30 de julio de 1954*. Buenos Aires.
- Vice-Presidencia de la Nación. (1958). *Documentación, autores y cómplices de la irregularidades cometidas durante la Segunda Tiranía*. Buenos Aires.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2020 Hémeury. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Sport at the World Festival of Youth and Students: Between Olympic Ideals and Socialist Internationalism

Lidia Lesnykh*

Faculté de Sciences Sociales et Politiques, Institute of Sports science, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

During the first decade of the Cold War, the communist-sponsored World Festivals of Youth and Students included a program of international sports events that provided elite athletes with a self-standing arena of international competition. They also encouraged mass participation in sports, without social, racial, or political discrimination, thereby implicitly questioning elitism in sport. The present paper argues that through the World Festivals of Youth and Students, the Soviet Union harnessed the universal language of sport as a tool of cultural diplomacy with which to expand develop an international socialist sports youth network. The Festival sporting events represented an alternative model of international sport, run in parallel to the Olympics, whose ideals of peace, friendship, and mutual understanding they shared.

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Jenifer L. Parks,
Rocky Mountain College,
United States

Reviewed by:

Sylvain Dufraisse,
Université de Nantes, France
Amanda Shuman,
University of Freiburg, Germany
Pia Koivunen,
University of Turku, Finland

*Correspondence:

Lidia Lesnykh
lidia.lesnykh@unil.ch

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
*The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports*,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 01 June 2020

Accepted: 21 September 2020

Published: 12 November 2020

Citation:

Lesnykh L (2020) Sport at the World
Festival of Youth and Students:
Between Olympic Ideals and Socialist
Internationalism.
Front. Sports Act. Living 2:567095.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.567095

Keywords: youth and students, student sports, university sports, soviet sports, sports and communism, festival of youth, socialist sport, socialist internationalism

INTRODUCTION

“Regardless of the size of the teams, whether they have won or not, the athletes form a big family under the Olympic motto: ‘Friendship between athletes strengthens the friendship of peoples¹.’” Although these lines could be mistaken for an extract from Pierre de Coubertin’s writings, they actually had a very different origin. In fact, they summarized the Soviet sport ideology underlying the new concept of international sports competitions the Soviet Union created Olympics in the early Cold War. The Festival and its associated sporting events, both of which fit the definition of a “mega-event²,” pursued an original set of goals that combined the aims of Soviet cultural diplomacy and Coubertin’s Olympic ideal. The present study examines to which extent the Festival’s sports competitions can be considered an alternative platform for sports internationalism driven by Moscow during the Cold War.

Sports were a major component of the World Festival of Youth and Students (hereinafter referred to as “the Festival”), which was launched in 1947 and hosted by a different Eastern European capital city in the summer of odd-numbered years. Bringing together thousands of young people, they were initially conceived as a forum for promoting cultural exchanges and mutual understanding, but quickly became a tool of Stalinist propaganda abroad. The program included cultural, political, and educational events, as well as international sports events. It was drawn up at by an International Preparatory Committee under the coordination of Komsomol and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union³. In terms of their ceremonies, number of participants, and

¹“12 dnei rekordov,” *Molodež’ mira* (the Russian version of World Youth, the WFDY official magazine), 10, 1955, 38.

²Müller (2015).

³The International Preparatory Committee of each edition of the event was assisted by local sports institutions and its work was assisted and controlled by the Komsomol (All-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth), Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), and the corresponding Soviet ministries for each part of the program (for example, Committee for Physical Culture and Sports).

sports, the sports events were comparable to the Olympics, whose ideals they claimed to share, while advertising the achievements of the socialist system.

This paper examines the elite and grassroots sports events held as part of the Festival between 1947 and 1957. Grassroots sports events were held both before (“in honor”) and during the Festival. The elite-level competitions were the X and XI World University Games, hosted by Budapest (1949) and East Berlin (1951), respectively, and the I-III International Friendly Youth Sports Games, hosted by Bucharest (1953), Warsaw (1955), and Moscow (1957). Although the elite-level events were run by two communist-sponsored organizations founded immediately after World War II—the International Union of Students (IUS) and World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY)—, they had different origins. The World University Games were rooted in the French universalism of the early 1920s and were open only to students, whereas the Friendly Games were launched as part of the Festival in order to offer all young athletes, whether or not they were students, an opportunity to do sports without social, political, or racial discrimination. The Festival’s sports events aimed at democratizing sport and were strongly tailored to the Soviet Union’s cultural diplomacy purposes, enabling it not only to promote the regime, but especially to create a new arena for sports socialist internationalism⁴. They actually illustrated of how two rival socioeconomic models promoted their universalisms and internationalisms on a global scale with an important participation of the Third World⁵. These events also helped to defend “sports universalism in front of the social division⁶.”

According to Koivunen (2013), the aim of the Festival’s organizers was “to conquer a field that still did not have a dominant leader or patron: youth⁷.” In other words, it was to occupy the domain of youth sports, which had not yet been appropriated by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the international sport federations, rather than to become a rival to the IOC⁸. Koivunen’s pioneering research, based on large volumes of material from Soviet archives, examines the Festival as an instrument of Soviet cultural diplomacy and is a key reference for the present study. In the context of the present study, her thesis’ title, “Performing peace and friendship,” takes on a double meaning, in that “performance” may also be considered to refer to sporting achievements. Koivunen borrowed Caute’s (2003) concept of “Cultural Olympics⁹,” in which sports were an important soft power tool in the Cold War competition between the great powers. She also referred to Keys (2006), who pointed out the strong similarities between the Festival and the Olympics, most notably their ceremonial aspects, their regular

and recurrent nature, and their “universalism going beyond nationalism¹⁰.” Second, she emphasized the Festival’s link with both the mass cultural events of the 1930s and the World Fairs, which were created to highlight modernity and traditions¹¹. I apply the term “cultural diplomacy” in harmony with the works of Koivunen’s who considers it better adapted to the idea of cultural exchange. Gillibert confirms of “cultural diplomacy” in more linked to the cultural policy and the actors of the cultural field,” while “public diplomacy” corresponds “to the use of political communication and of cultural content as its tool¹².” In fact, recent Russian studies design Festival as a tool of public diplomacy¹³. Finally, the Festival sports events inevitably embed in “sports diplomacy” as they participate in the Soviet foreign relations in this field. The literature review by Clastres (2020) underlines that the recent scholarship invites to reassess the contribution of sports to the international relations, both in link with *Realpolitik* and *soft power*¹⁴.

As Kotek (1998) showed in his seminal study of youth and student organizations during the Cold War, the international students and youth movement came to be dominated by communists in the late 1930s¹⁵. As a result, the sports competitions run by the IUS and WFDY were largely vehicles for communist cultural diplomacy. This premise is supported by recent research by sports historians. For example, Schiller (2019) shed the light on the institutional and national specificities of the X Festival in Berlin and the political use made of its sports events¹⁶, and Parks (2013) attributed the rise of Soviet sport and its international integration to the efforts of a “bureaucratic” element and its relations with the IOC and sport federations¹⁷. She argued that this task became easier in the context of peaceful coexistence and détente, because peace and friendship were a central part of this discourse. This “process of melding Soviet and Olympic ideals¹⁸” had already been noted by Riordan (1974), who also maintained that “the USSR attempted to impose itself in international sports by creating new institutions instead of integrating the existing ones¹⁹.” Parks (2014) pointed out the importance of the developing nations in Soviet sports diplomacy²⁰. In addition to these references, the works of Prozumensikov (2004) based on the Soviet archives offered a deep analysis on the state participation in of the Soviet sports relations. Examining the Soviet sports system from an institutional perspective, Dufraisse (2019) suggested that the Soviet sporting champion could be regarded as the product of an engineering laboratory²¹. Hence, the Soviet sportsman was a “new man,” created in the 1930s, who

⁴Through the analysis of the previous scholarship Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild suggest that “socialist internationalism” represents the incarnation of the pre-war proletarian internationalism as a form of “egalitarian cooperation,” which is subject to the Soviet domination after the war. On the other hand, the term characterizes more informal exchanges and cross-cultural interaction fostered by organizations originated from the USSR. Festival seems to perfectly fit into this definition. Babiracki and Jersild (2016).

⁵Kott (2017).

⁶DeFrance (2000).

⁷Koivunen (2013).

⁸Hoberman (1986). Cited by Koivunen, 55.

⁹Caute (2003). See Koivunen (2014).

¹⁰Keys (2006). Cited by Koivunen, P., *Performing Peace and Friendship*, 3–34.

¹¹Koivunen, P., *Performing Peace and Friendship*, 52.

¹²Gillibert (2017). He also explains that these two terms are quite similar but arise from different historiographical traditions.

¹³Možaveva (2015).

¹⁴Clastres (2020). See also Murray (2012) and Rofe (2016).

¹⁵Kotek (1998).

¹⁶Schiller (2019).

¹⁷Parks (2013).

¹⁸Parks, J., 89.

¹⁹Riordan (1974). See also Riordan (1993).

²⁰Parks (2014).

²¹Dufraisse (2019).

acted as an ambassador for Soviet values and contributed to the internationalization of Soviet sport²². Although Dufraisse only alluded to the Festival, he emphasized the importance of youth in post-Stalinist propaganda. His findings actually echo in the part of this paper dedicated to the profiles of some young athletes²³. However, despite the extensive scholarship, very few studies have focused on sport at the World Festival of Youth and Students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This topic lies at the intersection of sports history and the history of youth and students. From a broader perspective, it touches upon the history of cultural diplomacy, the Cold War, internationalism, pacifism, and international relations, as well as colonial and post-colonial history. The research draws material of Russian public archives, archives of the International Olympic Committee, as well as the collections from the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. It also relies on press articles from the USSR, France, Italy, and Switzerland. The goal of the archival research in the Soviet Archives was to understand which aspects of the Festival sports program were particularly discussed at the superior level of Soviet state and which other authorities were implied in this process. The archival material reveals the multitude of interactions and the complexity of the decision-making process. It encompasses reports of delegations, correspondence, and circular letters produced or received by the Committee for Physical Culture and Sports, the Foreign Policy Department of Central Committee of the Party. The exchanges with Komsomol and in particular its leader Nikolaj Mihajlov represent a crucial part of this documentation. Even though archives are open to consultation, many of files are still not declassified, so some demands were refused due the secret character of the documentation²⁴. These restrictions reduced the volume of accessible material. I could partly fill this gap by studying the Soviet press and official publications of the IUS, along with the WFDY found at Russian public libraries as well as the IISH. Secondly, the correspondence of the IOC leaders was an essential source for understanding of personal and institutional points of view. The IOC archives were necessary to take knowledge of the reaction (or of its absence) of its leaders to the introduction of sports to the Festival and the possible exchanges with other IOC members or other organizations on this topic. When analyzing the attitude of national and international sports institutions, it was necessary to reduce the list to the IOC and FISU. Finally, due to the important volume of archival materials, I studied press selectively. I particularly examined Soviet newspapers and magazines in order to assess how much attention sports press paid to the Festival events, and on the contrary, if sports deserved the interest in the newspaper of Komsomol. On the other hand, I had to strictly limit the number of titles of foreign newspapers. Since France and Italy were the two countries with strong communist parties, this

explains the choice of *L'Unità* and *Le Monde* having different political perspectives.

Adopting a chronological approach enabled me to identify links between sport at the Festival and changes in Soviet foreign policy. I begin by examining the World University Games' role in enabling the Soviet Union to integrate the international sports movement during the late Stalinist period then show how sport at the Festival mirrored the Socialist bloc's overtures to the Third World. Finally, I look at Moscow's ambition to become one of the major international sports destinations.

"IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE YOUTH WITHOUT SPORT": SPORT'S FALTERING DEBUT AT THE WORLD FESTIVAL OF YOUTH AND STUDENTS (PRAGUE, 1947)

Sport was also an important part of the Festival's program, as the organizers considered it, by its very nature, to be a youthful activity²⁵. Democratic and autocratic states had begun conjugating sport with youth in the 1920s–1930s, and this association was an important characteristic of physical education in early Soviet Russia²⁶. The sports program of the Festival was run under the auspices of the host countries' sports authorities and youth communist organizations, but the Soviet Union's Sports Committee and Komsomol closely monitored preparations and offered recommendations. Around 17,000 young people from 17 countries, predominantly European, arrived in the Czechoslovak capital in August 1947 for the first Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship. The Festival's sports program appeared quite extensive and encouraged mass participation: "it offered to the guests the possibility to choose among the variety of entertainment activities, from football to ping-pong and chess. The competitions will arrive at the point culminating during the last week, when the best teams of all peoples will compete"^{27,28}. Sport at the Prague Festival was open to all, subject to advance registration, and included 75 events²⁹, ranging from elite individual and team sports, recreational sports, tests of strength, intellectual competitions, and sports demonstrations. According to the events' start sheets, 103 teams from 27 countries, took part, with 1337 athletes competing against their foreign comrades in 13 sports common either for elites, or for working class: swimming, tennis, table tennis, chess, athletics, basketball, volleyball, shooting, wrestling, boxing, weight lifting, cycling, and rugby³⁰.

²⁵ Many publications have highlighted the link between sport and youth: "youth and sport: these two notions are inseparable," *Molodež' mira*, 10, 1955, 38, and "it is impossible to imagine youth without sport," *Molodež' mira*, 10, 1957, 18.

²⁶ Grant (2013).

²⁷ RGASPI (Russian State Archives of Socio-Political History), fund 17 (Central Committee of the Communist Party), inv.172, file 71, 167.

²⁸ Koivunen, P., *Performing Peace and Friendship*, 55.

²⁹ *Activités de la Fédération mondiale de la Jeunesse démocratique*, November 1949–August 1949, Paris, WFDY, 1949.

³⁰ "Meždunarodnyj festival' molodeži," *Sovetskij sport*, 64(1356), August 12, 1947, 4.

²² Dufraisse (2012). See also O'Mahony (2006).

²³ *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains* 277(1).

²⁴ This difficulty related to the selective declassification, and the excessive use of "secret" label were also mentioned in Dullin (2003).

Due to gaps in the archives, it has so far been impossible to find detailed information on selection criteria for athletes. Given that attracting as many participants as possible was one of the Festival's goals, restrictions relating to age, nationality, or club membership are unlikely to have been imposed. Many athletes participated as members of youth or sports associations. For example, the Italian athletics federation (FIDAL) entered a track-and-field team, Italy's volleyball confederation entered a volleyball team, and a left-leaning student organization (Centro Universitario Democratico Italiano) chose athletes in other sports³¹. Soviet athletes competed in six sports (athletics, gymnastics, swimming, weightlifting, volleyball, and basketball), making Prague one of the few occasions on which the Soviet Union competed abroad before becoming affiliated to the international sport federations and the IOC.

Indeed, after having missed from the "bourgeois" sports arena, the USSR affiliated several international sports federations in the late 1940s, and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1951³². Furthermore, the USSR entered in contact with capitalist countries and the federations and sought to observe the Western athletes' training methods with an intention to enrich its own ones³³. In this context, the promotion of regime abroad and establishing sports connections within the socialist bloc were clearly among the main reasons why the Central Committee of the Communist Party decided to send a team to Prague. According to a document sent to the (Komsomol) and labeled "top secret" (like many other documents relating to the Festival), the aim was "[to demonstrate] the achievements of the multinational Soviet Union in the fields of culture, art, and sport, the role of Soviet youth during the war and post-war reconstruction, and to demonstrate the state's care for its youth³⁴." Soviet athletes successfully accomplished this task. For example, the 10-person mixed gymnastics team performed brilliantly and were awarded both a Crystal Cup by the WFDY Executive Committee and the Miroslav Tyrš medal³⁵, and a team from Leningrad won the volleyball tournament. The swimming team participated out of competition, as the country was not yet a member of the international swimming federation³⁶. According to the report written in the best traditions of Soviet state, these performances "highlighted [Soviet athletes'] high moral qualities, their will to win and their great sporting mastery, and, at the same time the government's interest in developing education, culture and sports³⁷."

The number of sports on the program was quite impressive for this post-war period, especially as five of them—volleyball, rugby, tennis, table tennis, and chess—were not on the

Olympic program³⁸. Giving floor to the non-Olympic sports during the Festival was probably an attempt of rapprochement with the respective sports federations. Moreover, the approval from the other international federations was likely to be difficult and there was even a chance they would react negatively to the sudden appearance of an international multisport event in Eastern Europe just before the London Olympics. It is also noteworthy, that in 1948 the WFDY's magazine expressed hostile attitude toward the IOC and described international sport institutions as the "bourgeois" fruits of capitalism³⁹. It accused "the dark forces of imperialism [of compromising the true character of the Olympic Games, which] could become one of the best manifestations of peace and friendship⁴⁰." The link between sport, youth, and peace clearly alluded to the three components of the Soviet sporting universalism advocated by the Festival in contrast to the Western sport. Although Moscow's plans to develop a youth sports movement were not explicit for the West, the IOC's leaders, who were already reluctant to the communist participation in international sport, quickly expressed their concerns⁴¹. In December 1948, the IOC's chancellor Otto Mayer received two telephone calls from "behind the iron curtain⁴²." The Czechoslovak and Polish Legations in Switzerland had unexpectedly requested information about the IOC's plans with respect to youth. The IOC's president Sigfrid Edström immediately suggested that "Moscow [was] organizing something⁴³." These two calls actually seem to have been linked to preparations for the sports events at the second Festival in Budapest, the following August, which had been chosen to host the 1949 World University Games.

THE WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES AT THE FESTIVAL: SPORT IN THE STUDENTS' COLD WAR (1949–1951)

The fact to combine the World University Summer Games with the Festival as of 1949 made it possible to increase collaboration between the WFDY and IUS, and therefore facilitated the goal of bringing together the world's youth through sport. However, the context in which the 1949 and 1951 Festivals took place was far from favorable to peaceful cooperation. The institutional split in the university sports movement since the creation of the International University Sports Federation (FISU) by the Western countries in early 1949 was one of concrete consequences of Cold War: the introduction of the Marshall Plan, the dispute between Tito and Stalin, and the outbreak of the

³⁸The first Men's volleyball world championship was organized in Czechoslovakia in 1949, while the International chess federation became one of the favorite partners of the USSR.

³⁹See for example, Gounot (1998).

⁴⁰"Sport. Olimpijskie igry i Triest," *Molodež mira*, 1(7), 1948, 26–27. The article addressed Trieste's exclusion from the forthcoming Olympic Games in London due to the involvement of Italian fascists in the Olympic movement.

⁴¹Krieger and Duckworth (2020).

⁴²Mayer to Edström, December 6, 1948, IOC Archives, IOC Presidents, Sigfrid Edström, A-P04/002.

⁴³Edström to Mayer, December 9, 1948, IOC Archives, IOC Presidents, Sigfrid Edström, A-P04/002.

³¹Sbetti (2020).

³²IAAF and FIFA in 1946, FIBA in 1947, FIVB in 1948.

³³Parks, J. op.cit.

³⁴RGASPI, f.17, inv.172, f. file 42, 1-12.

³⁵Named after the founder of the Sokol youth sports movement.

³⁶"Tri festivalá: Praga-Budapest-Berlin," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, 8, 1951, 4.

³⁷GARF (State Archives of Russian Federation), f.R7576, inv.1, f.592, 45–46, cited by Dufraisse, S. op.cit., 46.

Korean War directly impacted student and youth movements⁴⁴. Increased tension between the blocs since the autumn of 1947 also led to substantial changes in the rhetoric of the 1949 and 1951 Festivals, which evolved from the 1947 Festival's focus on universalism and the struggle against abstract enemies of peace to the 1949 event's condemnation of the reactionary forces of the United States and Great Britain⁴⁵. And although both Prague 1947 and Budapest 1949 had showcased the Soviet Union's cultural and sporting achievements, by Berlin 1951 the focus was on demonstrating the USSR's geopolitical power⁴⁶.

Moreover, the international sports scene was also changing. In the spring of 1951, the Soviet national Olympic committee was admitted into the Olympic movement. The expansion of sporting exchanges announced at the 1951 World Peace Congress in Vienna "had to allow the best Soviet athletes to spread the notion of peace and friendship between peoples⁴⁷." These events greatly increased the importance of the University Games in Berlin for the Soviet Union, as they provided a major proving ground for Soviet athletes in international competitions. They were also crucial for the International Union of Students because the creation of FISU in response politicization of the University Games had upset the delicate balance of power within it⁴⁸. Although the FISU was a small organization, it was based in Switzerland and was therefore better placed to please the IOC and international sports federations. At the same time, incorporating the university games into the Festival jeopardized the Soviet Union's influence over international student sport and the event's prestige.

The integration of the World University Games to the Festival meant the event could no longer be reserved for elite student athletes and would have to embrace a more inclusive logic centered round youth cooperation. The Festival helped popularize the university games among youth and students from more countries. As well as being the second largest multisport event after the Olympics, the university games had a long history and an excellent reputation within international sport. Consequently, they were able to attract a large number of countries from outside the Olympic movement (countries within the Soviet bloc and developing countries). The Soviet press often compared performances at the university games with those achieved at the Olympics, and foreign communist newspapers claimed that "the presence of many Olympic champions and world record-breakers gives the event the character of a true Olympiad⁴⁹." In fact, the two events were not only comparable in scale and sporting performance, they also had similar ceremonies.

Although the Festival and university games had separate opening ceremonies, both ceremonies usually included sporting elements. A few weeks before the Budapest 1949 opening ceremony, peace relays, in which runners carried WFDY flags, started in several European countries (Bulgaria, England, Norway, France, Belgium, Netherlands). At the same time, youth organizations in Austria and Romania held, respectively, bicycle and motorbike races⁵⁰. On August 14, 1949, 10,400 festival delegates from 82 countries paraded into Budapest's Ujpest stadium⁵¹. The Soviet Union's young delegates, who were dressed in white as a symbol of peace, were warmly welcomed in the speeches addressed to Stalin and the Komsomol⁵². The university games opened the following day with a friendly football match at the Ferencvaros Stadium featuring France and North Korea, the winners of the football competitions at the Prague Festival in 1947. Sixteen countries, represented by 934 athletes, including 303 from Hungary, the host country, and 117 from France, took part in the event⁵³. North Korea's delegation of 24 athletes was bigger than those of Mongolia, Scotland, Austria, Belgium, and Finland, taken together.

The next Festival in 1951 in Berlin took place in "crucial time of diplomatic battles for the GDR's international legitimacy⁵⁴." It was described as a "great cultural, artistic, and sports event⁵⁵," whose opening ceremony was described by Lausanne newspaper as "a great style show, in perfect alignment with the powerful propaganda spread every day in East Berlin⁵⁶." As in Budapest, the university games, held from August 6 to 15, were opened separately. The games were opened not by the GDR's president, Wilhelm Pieck, but by the first secretary, Walter Ulbricht, who used his opening speech, given in the stadium named after him, to stress the games' importance in promoting peace⁵⁷. The traditional oath, pronounced by Georg Frister, a "master of sport⁵⁸" and holder of the East German triple jump record, was adapted slightly so it resonated better with the festival rhetoric. Thus, the expressions "honest combatant" and "contribute to [...] the strengthening of mutual understanding among students from all over the world⁵⁹," which were typical of the Festival's ponderous pacifist discourse, replaced "the glory of sport," which had been part of the oath since it was introduced in the 1920s.

In line with the IUS's objective of making Berlin 1951 the largest and most representative Games ever held, a new record was set in terms of participation, with 2,000 athletes from 40 nations taking part in the sports events, out of the 26,000

⁴⁴Kotek, op.cit., 207–239.

⁴⁵Koivunen, *Performing Peace and Friendship*, 67–74.

⁴⁶Krieger and Duckworth (2020).

⁴⁷Dufraisse, op.cit., 106.

⁴⁸As the World University Games were managed by the IUS, they were object to all the political disagreements between within it. The tensions between Eastern and Western student unions reflected the changes of geopolitical situation, such as the launching of Marshall Plan, the outbreak of Korean War, and Tito-Stalin conflict.

⁴⁹"S'iniziano oggi i Giochi Sportivi del V Festival della Gioventù," *L'Unità* (the Italian communist party newspaper), 4 August 1953, 5.

⁵⁰"Budapest vstrečat gostej," *Sovetskij sport*, 90(1590), 13 August 1949, 7.

⁵¹This decrease in participation was related to the West's increasing awareness of the Festival's political nature. See Kotek (2010).

⁵²"Iz budapeštskogo dnevnika," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, September 9, 1949, 20.

⁵³"Résultats des X^{èmes} Jeux mondiaux universitaires d'été, Budapest, 14–21 août 1949." Prague: IUS, 1949.

⁵⁴Zubok (2014).

⁵⁵Documents et décisions du 7^e Conseil annuel de la Fédération mondiale de la jeunesse démocratique. Berlin, 21–24 août 1951. Budapest: FMJD, 1951, 8.

⁵⁶Perrin (1951).

⁵⁷"Mir! Družba! Mir!," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, 8, 1951, 2–3.

⁵⁸According to the Soviet sports classification.

⁵⁹"Tri festivalá: Praga-Budapest-Berlin," op.cit.

delegates from 105 nations who attended the Festival⁶⁰. The criteria for taking part made it relatively easy to achieve this typically Soviet, maximalist goal, as the regulations sent to national sports organizations in May 1951 did not require athletes to be affiliated to a student sports association and allowed high school students who had reached the age of majority to take part. The Soviet newspaper *Sovetskij sport* noted its impression that “sport has an even more important place in Berlin⁶¹” and that “holding the Games during the Festival [...] would be a wonderful opportunity for student athletes to compete in front of an audience of young people and students from more than 80 countries⁶².” Most of these young people were from Eastern Europe, largely due to the split in the university sports movement and the reluctance of Western student sports associations to send their athletes to the games. In addition, Western countries, such as Italy⁶³, were not adverse to placing obstacles in the path of students to prevent them taking part in the Festival. Such instances of visas being refused or problems crossing the French, Swiss, Spanish, or Italian borders were widely reported in Soviet newspapers and magazines. According to *L'Unità*, the NOCs of numerous capitalist states “sabotaged⁶⁴” the games in order to prevent athletes taking part in this “proving ground” for the Helsinki Olympics.

Budapest and Berlin were key competitions for the Soviet team before its test in international sport at the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki. University games showcase of the advantages of the Soviet sports system, so that Soviet sports authorities needed to organize a meticulous training program and select very carefully the athletes they sent to the Festivals. Nevertheless, choosing the Festivals for the Soviet team's international debut after Stalin's refusal to send a team to the London Olympics⁶⁵, meant that their athletes would not compete against the Americans, who refused to participate in the communist-run event. Despite the Soviet athletes' numerous victories in Budapest and Berlin, the experience showed that many aspects of their training would have to be improved if the team was to be successful at the highest levels. Since the experience of Budapest and Berlin seemed to prove that the Festival was an appropriate platform to achieve Soviet sports diplomacy goals, World University Games were replaced by a new event open to all youth and thus, possibly worrying the IOC leaders.

“NONE OF OUR BUSINESS”: THE FESTIVAL AND THE IOC'S LEADERS

The 1953 edition of the Festival saw the introduction of a modified sports program, in which the International Friendly Youth Games replaced the World University Games. While the latter were already a recognized event in Western Europe and

around the world, the new competitions associated with the Festivals since 1953 would have to build a reputation from zero and stake their place in the international sport. The first edition of the Friendly Games coincided with increased openness to the outside world on two fronts, politics and sport. From a political perspective, Stalin's death in March 1953 had been followed by changes in Soviet foreign policy, including greater openness to countries outside the communist bloc. Moreover, 1951–1956 was a crucial period in forming a new international identity for Soviet sport. Thus, the Friendly Games most probably reflected the ambition of the Soviet authorities to test the new, more accessible international multisport event, since limiting the competitions only to students was incoherent with promoting socialist values among all youth. However, the Friendly Games could not expect to gain automatic recognition from international sports federations and the IOC and need to be intensively promoted: the credibility of the Festival's sports competitions was a major concern for the WFDY. It was important for the sports events to be seen to follow internationally recognized rules in order to avoid similar suspicions of cheating or bias to those leveled at the judges of the Festival's artistic contests. Even though the Friendly Games applied international sport federation regulations and the regulations on amateurism, as defined by the IOC, it did not prevent from participation of state-sponsored professional athletes, as it was common for the socialist countries.

The games' organizers built trust and closer relations with the IOC and the international federations by inviting their leaders to the event⁶⁶. This approach had already been used at the university games in Budapest and Berlin for fear that international federations would recognize the rival FISU as the main student sports organization. In fact, the FISU's International University Summer and Winter Sports Weeks launched in 1949 were a direct threat to the World University Games run by the IUS. Funding was not an issue for the IUS and WFDY, as support from the Soviet Union ensured they had greater financial and human resources than the FISU supplied only by the membership fees. The real problem they actually faced was that the FISU was a purely Western institution and therefore more likely to appeal to international federations and the IOC. In a personal letter to Sigfrid Edström and the IOC's secretariat, the World University Games organizing committee evoked the “great tradition of university sport” and highlighted the fact that the games were founded “on the basis of the Olympic concept in order to contribute to the understanding and friendship of peoples⁶⁷.” The letter was undoubtedly intended to promote the IUS's World University Games ahead of the FISU's Sports Week and thereby help address a worry expressed by the Soviet authorities: “there is a danger that international sports federations will recognize the FISU's meetings as student championships⁶⁸.” Finally, the International Basketball Federation's secretary general, William Jones, attended the games on his own initiative to clarify the situation in student sport. The IUS's invitation for IOC officials

⁶⁰The numbers were provided in *Fizkul'tura i sport, Sovetskij sport, World Youth and L'Unità*.

⁶¹Navstreču festivalu, *Sovetskij sport* 75(1878), June 28, 1951, 3.

⁶²“Flag festivala,” *Sovetskij sport*, 90(1590), August 13, 1949, 3.

⁶³Sbetti, N., op.cit.

⁶⁴Mander, E. “Elevato contenuto tecnico degli XI Giuochi Universitari,” *L'Unità*, August 9, 1951, 4.

⁶⁵Riordan (1977).

⁶⁶Parks, J., 73–106.

⁶⁷International Organizing Committee of the XI World University Summer Games to Sigfrid Edström, 21 July 1951, IOC Archives, E-RE02-FISU/002.

⁶⁸GARF, R7576, inv.2, f.662, 116.

to come to East Berlin came just 2 months after the IOC had recognized West Germany's national Olympic committee and at a time when the only international federations to recognize East Germany were basketball and chess, which meant athletes in other sports who competed against East German athletes risked being unable to participate in future competitions.

During this split in the university sports movement, which lasted from 1949 to 1957, the FISU also asked the IOC for advice, both to obtain moral support and to free itself from having to make the highly political decision about which countries to admit as members⁶⁹. Although the University Games were no longer part of the Festival, the Friendly Games, which were held from 1953 to 1957, were also for students. FISU's secretary general, Carl Schneider, warned Otto Mayer that the Games were "a pure communist propaganda⁷⁰" exercise that threatened sports neutrality. He assumed that some countries were planning to go to the Friendly Games in Warsaw in 1955 but not to the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne, partly because of the cost, but also to avoid the antagonism between the USSR and the United States. His fears were confirmed, he believed, by an article in the Belgian newspaper *Hermès*, according to which the Friendly Games were "a clear attempt to take away the meaning of the Olympic Games and, if possible, take their place⁷¹." According to the article, the Festival's organizers were trying to attract to Warsaw countries which were unsure about going to Melbourne, and concluded: "It is not because the international situation goes through periodic phases of détente that the West should lend itself to participating in a communist organization [...] however naive Westerners may be⁷²."

Nonetheless, Mayer did not openly share Schneider's concerns: "I do not believe, however, that the danger is as great as you assume. Sport is still in the hands of the International Federations and as long as it is the case, it will be very well-governed. Your cry of alarm deserves to be dealt with, but it is not to the IOC to do so. It is rather the responsibility of the International Federations⁷³." Mayer's reply was characteristic of the IOC's strategy of avoiding issues outside the Olympic movement and inviting the federations to deal with them⁷⁴. However, a few months later, he sent quite an ardent letter to the IOC's president, Avery Brundage, about a report he had received from the International Rowing Federation's president Gaston Mülleg. "This is a sort of copy of the Olympic Games, with the difference, that 27,000 athletes were present at the Parade of the Opening Ceremony! [...] There is no Olympic flag at all, and he [Mülleg] did not hear a single word about politics. [...] Besides that, they had wonderful receptions, wonderful food (as

much champagne, caviar as they wanted) and everything free of charge⁷⁵." Mayer was aware of the political nature of the event and agreed with Mülleg, who compared the Festival with "what Hitler had done in Germany before the war," referring to the propaganda campaign of 1936 Summer Olympics. Last but not least, correspondence between Mayer and Brundage reveals the IOC's leaders ambiguous attitude to the Festival, given that the attempts to build a socialist international sports system separately from the Olympic movement existed before the war. It also appears that Mayer's interest in the issue not just due to his capacity as IOC chancellor, as his son was extremely interested in taking part in the Festival, attracted, partly, by the low registration fee, which included meals and accommodation. Although Mayer realized his son was "far from being a communist⁷⁶," and only wanted to go to Bucharest to satisfy his curiosity about the event, Mayer forbid him from going. Other letters show that Edström was also aware of the event's political nature⁷⁷, unlike Brundage, who replied: "this, of course, is none of our business but it might be placed on the agenda of our meeting with the International Federations," adding: "There can be no objection unless they start to mix politics with sport⁷⁸."

SEE THE STARS UP CLOSE: USING OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS TO PROMOTE THE FRIENDLY GAMES

In parallel to the sport leaders' recognition, the Friendly Games organizers needed to gain a reputation among athletes and countries as well as to form positive image in public opinion. The media coverage was not limited to the official festival publications, socialist countries', and foreign left newspapers. They provided interviews with famous athletes invited to compete from all over the world to increase the games' prestige. The Western general and specialized media also reported on the Festival sports events, without citing interviews but focusing on the results.

The International Friendly Youth Games were scheduled so they took place twice between two editions of the Olympic Games. For many athletes, the 4-year gap between Olympic Games was too long and the Friendly Games provided an opportunity to compete against their Olympic and Championships opponents every 2 years. The shorter intervals between Friendly Games and their very flexible (sometimes non-existent) qualifying system made them very attractive to athletes who wanted to test themselves against world-class opposition or when they were unlikely to have a chance of competing in the Olympics. Finally, the opportunity to visit Eastern Europe's capital cities was just as appealing to athletes as it was to

⁶⁹More specifically, Spain and German Democratic Republic.

⁷⁰Carl Schneider to Otto Mayer, May 12, 1955, IOC Archives, E-RE02-FISU/002.

⁷¹Carl Schneider to Otto Mayer, August 1, 1955, IOC Archives, E-RE02-FISU/002.

⁷²Riordan (1977).

⁷³Otto Mayer to Carl Schneider, May 16, 1955, IOC Archives, E-RE02-FISU/002.

⁷⁴Several international federation leaders attended the Games in 1953: Gaston Mülleg (rowing), Roger Coulon (amateur wrestling), Paul Libaud (volleyball), and Bertil Sällfors (swimming). The Festival bulletin highlighted FINA's and the FIVB's satisfaction with the staging of the event and the event model. It also noted the enthusiasm of some European national federations (Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, etc.) for the event, Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee, May 5–11, 1953, 1.

⁷⁵Otto Mayer to Avery Brundage, August 5, 1953, IOC Archives, IOC Presidents, Avery Brundage, A-P05/016.

⁷⁶Otto Mayer to Avery Brundage, June 30, 1953, IOC Archives, IOC Presidents, Avery Brundage, A-P05/016.

⁷⁷Riordan (1977).

⁷⁸Avery Brundage to Otto Mayer, July 8, 1953, IOC Archives, IOC Presidents, Avery Brundage, A-P05/016.

participants in other aspects of the Festival. However, to achieve the aim of becoming “contests of the best”⁷⁹, the organizing committee used to invite famous athletes from both East and West. Athletes from the West were not paid for taking part, so they would not lose their amateur status, but the low registration fees and cheap accommodation meant that the cost of competing was unlikely to deter most of them. The presence of international athletes who had accepted an invitation to compete was sure to increase the event’s prestige, and the desire to meet and/or compete against these champions was highly motivating for other potential competitors. Thus, the Friendly Games would become the place to be: where else could you compete against Emil Zatopek and dozens of other famous athletes? The emergence of the Soviet Union as an elite sporting nation and the increasing number international medals being won by the country’s athletes was a further motivation. Indeed, Soviet and Eastern bloc athletes were beginning to catch the attention of sports fans around the world thanks to their performances in international competitions, most notably the Olympic Games. After rapidly raising standards between 1951 and 1955, the Soviet Union was able to send a truly world-class team to the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, where, for the first, the Soviet Union won more medals than the United States.

Zatopek undoubtedly attracted a lot of public attention. The French *Le Monde*, which reported results from the Friendly Games, mentioned Zatopek more frequently than any other athlete⁸⁰ and a photo of Zatopek featured in the Swiss Festival Committee’s brochure under the heading: “Will Emil Zatopek set a new world record?”⁸¹ As *Komsomol’skaja pravda* noted, several Olympic champions said they were keen to compete in the Friendly Games. They included the Jamaican sprinters Rhoden and McKenley, the Hungarian hammer thrower Csermak, and the Zatopek couple⁸². Other athletes who accepted invitations to compete included the Australian sprinter Shirley Strickland, the Brazilian long jumper Adhemar Ferreira da Silva, the Romanian table tennis player Angelika Rozeanu, the French swimmer Aldo Eminente, the Hungarian long jumper Olga Gyarmati, and the Soviet discus thrower Nina Romashkova (Ponomaryova) and long-distance runner Vladimir Kuts. Interestingly, for rising stars such as the Algerian-French marathon runner Alain Mimoun and the American javelin thrower Dave Stephens, taking part in the Friendly Games proved to be a step on the way to Olympic glory in Melbourne.

Another important way of increasing the games’ renown was through publishing interviews with athletes, who were quoted as expressing great enthusiasm for meeting Soviet “stars” and the spectacular progress they had made. The veracity of many of these interviews appears doubtful, given their propensity to mention the same subjects, such as the victory of friendship and peace being the most important result of the competitions, while noting the high standard of the competitions in general.

Many of the supposed interviewees were national, international, or Olympic champions. For example, Brazil’s double gold medal-winning triple jumper and student, Adhemar Ferreira Da Silva, said that he had “checked the list of participants” before accepting the invitation, and that he had decided to compete and “put everything on the line” after seeing the high standard of the field⁸³. For the Hungarian discus thrower Ferenc Klics, who competed in four Olympic Games between 1948 and 1960, “[athletes] will only be able to gain popular recognition when they understand that sport is closely linked to the great struggle for peace”⁸⁴, while Danish wrestling champion Eigil Iohansen looked forward to hearing the best athletes coming together “in a friendly competition,” which he saw as “an opportunity to renew the friendship of young people from all countries”⁸⁵. Repetitive references to “all countries” underlined the intention of the USSR to democratize sport in parallel to the internationalist ambition of the Festival sports events. It concerned most notably Third World countries, including those whose national bodies had not yet been recognized by the IOC and international federations. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the nationality of interviewees changed in line with the shifts in Soviet foreign policy: most interviewees at early editions of the Friendly Games were from Latin America, Africa, Asia, Scandinavia, and Finland; whereas later editions also saw interviews with Americans, Australians, and New Zealanders. As well as reflecting the Soviet Union’s evolving geopolitical focus, interviewing people from a wider range of countries highlighted the event’s global character, thereby increasing its legitimacy⁸⁶.

MIND AND BODY, PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP: OLYMPIC IDEALS, SOVIET STYLE

Referring to peace, friendship, and solidarity was an effective way of promoting the communist and sports values without directly referring to communism as such⁸⁷. At the same time, as asserts Toby Rider (2018), “the Soviet regime tried to create the impression that the noble aims of its sports model were representative of the virtuous goals of the Soviet state”⁸⁸. Since the 1940s, the heads of the Soviet Union’s sports organizations had capitalized on the similarities between “aspects of Olympic philosophy [and] Marxist-Leninist ideas of mass participation in sport, promoting physical education for all, and peace and friendship between nations”⁸⁹. This transition from criticizing the bourgeois Olympic institution to progressively embracing the values of the Olympic movement marked a shift in the way the WFDY ran the youth sports movement. Its aim was to

⁸³“Fereiro da Silva,” *Molodež’ mira*, 10, 1957, 20.

⁸⁴“Govorât sportsmeny,” *Sovetskij sport*, 95(1898), August 14, 1951, 7.

⁸⁵Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee, May 19–25, 1953, 1.

⁸⁶“Listing as many countries as possible was part of the strategy to give the Festival legitimacy.” See Koivunen, P., *Performing Peace and Friendship*, 201.

⁸⁷Koivunen (2016).

⁸⁸Rider (2018).

⁸⁹Parks, J., *The Olympic Games*, 89.

⁷⁹Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee, May 19–25, 1953, 1.

⁸⁰Unknown author, *Zatopek s’est imposé à Varsovie*, *Le Monde*, August 4, 1955.

⁸¹*Festival de Varsovie, 1955*, Swiss Festival Committee leaflet, Archives cantonales vaudoises, PP798/55.

⁸²“Sportivnye sostâzaniâ,” *Komsomol’skaâ Pravda*, August 1, 1953, 3.

consolidate the symbolic basis of youth sport by establishing links with ideals of friendship and peace proper to Olympism.

The integration of the USSR to the IOC and to the international federations progressively changed the tone of publications after Stalin. In 1956, the Olympic Games became a popular topic in the WFDY's magazine, *World Youth*, which had tended not to write about sport, while the IUS and the Soviet press published innumerable articles in favor of the Olympic tradition. For example, in the run up to the games in Melbourne, *Fizkul'tura i sport* published a two-page article on the history of the Olympic Games⁹⁰. The goal was to show the extent to which the games associated with the Festival helped continue the Olympic tradition. In an interview ran by *World Youth*, the WFDY's secretary for sport, Hungary's Mihaly Biro, stressed the importance of the "physical fulfillment of young people [who had to] stimulate the development of friendship between the youth of different countries and [educate] them in the spirit of the Olympic ideals⁹¹." Another article highlighted the importance of the Olympic Games "for all mankind and the younger generation [since they contribute] to expanding the bonds of friendship between peoples and the youth of different countries and strengthening mutual understanding⁹²." According to the Soviet press, the Friendly Games in Warsaw "had undoubtedly contributed to popularizing sport and the Olympic ideal" and, "in terms of their scale, [were] equal to the Olympic Games⁹³." However, the Friendly Games and Olympic Games were not in competition; rather they "complemented each other [in such a way that the Friendly Games] became a 'pre-Olympiad'⁹⁴." Obviously, this frequent reference to the Olympics did not aim at promoting them *per se* but to underline the internationalization of the socialist sport.

Moreover, the idea of harmonious moral and physical development advocated by Coubertin was also promoted by Soviet sports ideology since the 1920s. In fact, many of the athletes who competed in the Friendly Games were students⁹⁵. Poland's Janusz Sidło, a student at the Academy of Physical Education in Warsaw who competed in the 1954 World University Games and 1954 Athletics World Championships, noted the importance of maintaining a balance between studies and sport. Such a balance was achieved by, among others, Tamara Manina, a rising star of Russian gymnastics, who won two individual silver medals and team gold and bronze medals at the Melbourne Olympics (as well as gold and silver team medals at Tokyo 1964), as well as being both a student of physics and mathematics at the University of Leningrad, and a musician. Combining other commitments with their sporting achievements not only enabled athletes to show they were truly amateurs, the ability to succeed in several fields was trumpeted as showing the advantages of the socialist system and of its

intercontinental expansion. For example, the young captain of a Chinese basketball team had begun life as a peasant and had learned to play basketball with the factory team at the steel plant at which he had found work when the communists came to power⁹⁶. Finally, Soviet sports system frequently hailed the proletarian origins of many of its top athletes. Emil Zatopek's noted Soviet rival, Vladimir Kuts, who was frequently glorified in articles about the Festival, was a typical Soviet "sports hero," who had risen from modest beginnings to become a champion in his sport⁹⁷. This facet of the Soviet sports doctrine going hand-in-hand with its criticism of sports elitism, glorified the socialist educational system, which allowed to develop the personality and talents regardless the social origin.

DEMOCRATIZING SPORT: BETWEEN GRASSROOTS SPORT AND GLOBALIST AMBITIONS

Having set "promoting sport among youth⁹⁸" as its goal, the Festival's sports program aimed to encompass socialist internationalism on a societal scale and to democratize sport. In other words, the Festival helped to expand participation across social groups, thereby reflecting efforts made by the Soviet government to encourage people from all walks of life to take up some form of sport, whatever the level. Sports actually participated in creation of a "new man⁹⁹" within and outside the Socialist bloc. Although grassroots sports events at the Budapest and Berlin Festivals had been low key and run in parallel to the University Games in order to encourage non-students to participate, they took on a whole new dimension as of 1953¹⁰⁰. Sports events at Bucharest 1953 were, according to the Festival's regulations, open "to the youth of all countries" "with no limitation on age, social position, or political, and religious views [...]101," while the competitions at Moscow 1957 were open to "individual athletes or teams, workers, students, and other sport clubs¹⁰²." This latter quotation neatly summarizes the alternative conception of sports meetings drawn up by the WFDY.

To ensure the sports program was inclusive and as a way of encouraging mass participation, numerous different events were held both before ("in honor of") and during the Festival. The most important events were friendship tournaments and festival badge tests. Mass participation events were held in 13 or 14 individual and team sports, including some non-Olympics sports, during the 2-week Festival period. Around 2,000 athletes took part in these events. In addition, hundreds of local play-offs, and cross-country races, involving thousands of participants, were held during the months leading up to the main event. In many countries, including Italy and France, they were associated

⁹⁰"Navstrechu Olimpijskim igram v Melburne," *Molodež' mira*, 11–12, 1955, 16.

⁹¹"Vo imâ olimpijskih idealov," *Molodež' mira*, 10, 1955, 20–21.

⁹²"12 dnei rekordov," *op.cit.*

⁹³"Eto sblizaet narody," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, 9, 1955, 8.

⁹⁴"Po 23 vidam," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, 9, 1955, 7.

⁹⁵Their participation was all the more important because the split in the student sports movement continued until 1959 and FISU's rival competitions took place at the same time of year.

⁹⁶"Poslancy pâti materikov," *Sovetskij sport*, 102(2838), 28 July 1957, 3.

⁹⁷Dufraisse, *Les héros du sport*, 133–168.

⁹⁸Sport at the Festival, Budapest: FMJD, 1957, 4–5.

⁹⁹In the Soviet context this concept describes the new model of ideal citizen created by the state and incarnating specific values, beliefs and culture.

¹⁰⁰"Vesti iz goroda festivalâ", *Komsomol'skaâ Pravda*, 187(9285), August 9, 1955, 2.

¹⁰¹Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee, April 20–27, 1953, 3.

¹⁰²Sports at the Festival, *op.cit.*

with existing events run by organizations close to the national communist party¹⁰³. The WFDY and the IUS also tried to expand their influence outside Europe by holding sports meetings and camps. For example, Young Brazilians played in 208 friendship tournaments at the South-American Festival of Youth in Sao Paulo, even though the Brazilian government had banned them from taking part¹⁰⁴, whereas several clubs in Algeria took part in the Festival Badge scheme¹⁰⁵. The Festival Badge, which was awarded from 1953 to 1957, was designed to encourage all Festival delegates to test their sporting abilities. This voluntary awards system was inspired by the Soviet Union's GTO badge introduced in 1931 to recompense ordinary young men and women physical performance¹⁰⁶. Participants were awarded a gold, silver, or bronze badge according to their performance on a series of athletic and gymnastic exercises. According to statistics for the Warsaw 1955 Festival, 16,000 young people from 57 countries took part in the Festival Badge program, which "incarnated the memories of friendship born on sports fields¹⁰⁷." In fact, the Festival Badge scheme, which was one of the most important programs for popularizing physical exercise and, of course, the Festival and communism, was also open to young people who could not travel to Europe, thereby enabling them to participate indirectly in the Festival. Badges were awarded in Indian villages, "where young men and women, lacking the weightlifting equipment needed for the competition, used bags filled with rice¹⁰⁸." The example illustrates that Soviet authorities employed the GTO-program among other methods to help the developing countries to modernize their national sporting culture. In addition, these local events sensitized youth to the different aspects of the Soviet life: for example, an Indian young lady from West Bengal was interested in "sports and cultural institutions" of the USSR¹⁰⁹.

In parallel, individual athletes and delegations could improve their performances and reassess national training systems, especially in former colonies that had recently gained their independence. It was important not only to participate, but to learn: "athletes come to the Festival not only to fight for victory and compete with the strongest but to learn and accumulate experience¹¹⁰." For example, a Chinese coach photographed famous athletes performing in order to help improve training methods in China, and a member of the Indian Field Hockey Association expressed his wish to spread his sport throughout the world and develop other sports in India in exchange¹¹¹. Festival created a framework favorable

for the improvement of results by providing up-and-coming athletes with the support they needed to realize their full potential¹¹². For the Soviet Union, these events provided a useful political tool through which they could support newly independent countries and national liberation movements and helping them develop sporting culture among their peoples. Thus, the Festival's sports events were also intended to showcase the solidarity of the USSR and the socialist countries with the Global South and probably set the premises of Olympic Solidarity several years before the USSR suggested the idea to the IOC in 1961.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FUND: CONQUERING THE HEARTS AND MINDS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The festival sports program was strongly linked to the geopolitical battle in the colonial and post-colonial world. This especially interested the Soviet Union willing to expand its sports influence in these countries in its self-appointed role as the "champion of anticolonialism¹¹³." Despite Stalin's isolationist foreign policy, the IUS and WFDY had taken an interest in decolonization from their creation. These two organizations aimed at extending their influence beyond the communist bloc in order to "spread and advance the democratic ideology, in other words, help colonial students in their struggle for liberty and independence¹¹⁴." The IUS had support in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, since it "unambivalently backed anti-colonial movements where emerging students' leaders could be found¹¹⁵." References to developing countries were present but still relatively restrained during the late 1940s and early 1950s. For example, in an article relating to the 1949 Festival in Budapest, *Sovetskij sport* wrote: "it was difficult to imagine the enthusiasm with which the young men and women of the Hungarian People's Republic greeted youth ambassadors fighting against the colonial regime, against imperialism, for national independence, peace, and freedom¹¹⁶." The rise of national liberation movements and the accelerating pace of decolonization increased the Soviet Union's interest in these regions during the 1950s, especially following the 1955 Bandung Conference. According to J. Parks, "bring[ing] more nations into the Olympic movement" had become an important target for the Soviet Union's new leadership¹¹⁷. The USSR worked to increase the African influence within the IOC, a process that paralleled the growth in the number of African national Olympic committees granted IOC membership between 1952 and 1960¹¹⁸. In the framework of the Festival, the idea of attracting students from countries fighting for or recently granted

¹⁰³For example, Unione Italiana Sport Popolare (UISP) and Fédération sportive et gymnique du travail (FSGT), whose Cross de l'Humanité was a typical event. This is obviously related to the importance of the communist party in these countries.

¹⁰⁴"Sport pour tous," Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee, March 15–31, 1955, 1.

¹⁰⁵"Massovyje sportivnye sorevnovaniâ," *Molodež' mira*, 4, 1955, 24.

¹⁰⁶GTO—"Gotov k trudu i oborone" (Ready for Labor and Defense). GTO was an unified system of physical training of all Soviet people with a special system of rewards according to the results.

¹⁰⁷"Tri milliona učastnikov," *Molodež' mira*, 10, 1955, 37.

¹⁰⁸Rider (2018).

¹⁰⁹Wishon (2016).

¹¹⁰"Festival' ūnosti i družby," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, 9, 1955, 4.

¹¹¹"Beseda s prezidentom MSS J.Grohmanom," *Molodež' mira*, 10, 1951, 17.

¹¹²"Vo imâ olimpijskih idealov," op.cit.

¹¹³Berstein and Milza (2014).

¹¹⁴Fischer (2000).

¹¹⁵Paget (2004).

¹¹⁶"Na stadione Ujpest otkrylsâ Festival," *Sovetskij sport*, 91(1591), August 14, 1949, 7.

¹¹⁷Parks, J., Welcoming the "Third World," op.cit., 85.

¹¹⁸Charitas (2009).

independence had been turned into a concrete policy by 1950. The International Preparatory Committee for the Berlin Festival created a solidarity fund to help delegates from distant countries attend, specifically young people from colonial and dependent countries from Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and South-East Asia.

More than 700 delegates attended the Berlin Festival, some of whom also took part in the University Games¹¹⁹. World Youth stressed “the importance of the participation of athletes from colonial and dependent countries, as well as from Latin American countries¹²⁰” at Berlin. According to the IUS’s president, Joseph Grohman, the “sports activity [of the IUS] aid the struggle for democratic education and the provision of greater opportunities for students from all countries to practice sport¹²¹.” Several months before the Festival, richer countries began collecting money, via national solidarity committees, cultural and sports events, voluntary work, and donations, that could be used to help countries without the means to send athletes. For example, money from street concerts organized by young Swedes was used to pay for the Sudanese delegation’s trip, young Finns volunteered to help young Senegalese delegates¹²², and young people from England and France held collections for delegates from Malaya and Kenya, and from Tunisia, respectively. According to statistics in the Soviet archives, Poland raised \$50,000, China \$35,000, Hungary \$30,000, Romania \$14,000, France \$7,000, England \$2,500, and Finland, Sweden, and Italy \$1,500, each. However, the Soviet Union did not officially participate in the fundraising¹²³.

Of course, the press and other documents focused mostly on politically unstable regions of geopolitical interest to the USSR, and the countries cited changed as Soviet interests evolved. Greater attention was being paid to distant countries as potential participants in the University Games (e.g., Brazil, Ecuador, Indonesia). India was one of favorite examples, as the Soviet Union had established diplomatic relations with the Indian government in 1947, and had signed a bilateral cultural agreement in 1952. In addition, the press frequently highlighted the achievements of athletes from these countries. For example, India’s Lavy Pinto, the “fastest man in Asia,” who had just won the 100- and 200-m sprints at the first Asian Games in Delhi, appeared at the Berlin University Games. The press and IUS publications frequently mentioned India’s field hockey team, unbeaten Olympic champions since 1928, whose popularity in Warsaw was such that they “set a record¹²⁴” for the number of autographs signed before the final game. As the country was a “guest of honor¹²⁵” at the Festival in Moscow, the field-hockey team was invited to take part in the demonstration of traditional sports, which was part of the unofficial program. Similarly to the traditional dance and music

performance typical for WDFY and IUS events whatever their level, it probably aimed to valorize the cultural richness and authenticity of the faraway regions in front of the Western modern identity.

Only a few African nations competed in the 1951 University Games in Berlin, including Nigeria, which had formed a national Olympic committee in January 1951, 9 years before gaining independence¹²⁶. It was preparing, alongside three other African countries, to take part in its first Olympic Games, the following year in Helsinki¹²⁷. Numerous anecdotes in the press related the participation of Africans in the grassroots events. When the French authorities refused visa requests from two players in the football team of the Association of African Students in France¹²⁸, “two black guys” from Martinique asked the judge for permission to make up the team¹²⁹. Another African student, from Lati Tuakli technical college, whose nationality was not given, said every member of his country’s Festival delegation intended to get the Festival Badge¹³⁰.

The attention paid to African nations increased greatly between 1953 and 1957, many of which were invited to the Festival in the context of growing relations with black power movements. This was a way of expressing solidarity with people struggling for independence and of rejecting racial discrimination, which was depicted in Festival posters. For example, the poster for the 1953 International Friendly Youth Games in Bucharest shows a white runner passing the baton to a black comrade (see **Figure 1**). Although the two runners obviously do not belong to the same team, as they are wearing different colored vests, the idea was to show that nationality, skin color, and performance are unimportant if they are both running for the same ideals. In the distance, the grandstands are topped by the flags of the “Big Four” winning countries from World War II plus communist China and Romania, the host country. Graphics for the Moscow festival also highlighted the participation of black athletes¹³¹. This focus on black athletes was part of the Soviet Union’s desire to stress its antiracist, friendly and equal attitude, contrasting with a poor treatment of the black athletes by the USA.

Less coverage was given to participation by Middle Eastern countries in the sports events before 1955. Nevertheless, following the 1955 Friendly Games in Warsaw, the Soviet authorities published an interview in which the secretary of Egypt’s Olympic committee, Ahmed Touny, highlighted the “exceptional goodwill shown via the friendly help given to weaker rivals¹³².” His comment was prompted by the assistance given

¹¹⁹Brazil (105), Argentina (40), Cuba (25), Columbia (28), India (84), Indonesia (89), Nigeria (47), Iran (119), Liban (114).

¹²⁰“Festival molodyh borcov za mir,” *Sovetskij sport*, 91(1591), August 14, 1949, 1.

¹²¹“Beseda s prezidentom MSS J.Grohmanom,” *op.cit.*

¹²²“Festival’ ūnosti i družby,” *op.cit.*

¹²³GARE, f.R7576, inv.2, f.666, 45.

¹²⁴“Vo imã olimpijskih idealov,” *op.cit.*

¹²⁵Wishon (2016), *op.cit.*

¹²⁶In January 1951, French IOC member François Pietri expressed his concerns about recognizing the Nigerian NOC. See Charitas, P., *op. cit.*

¹²⁷The other three were Gold Coast (Ghana), the Union of South Africa, and Egypt.

¹²⁸“S dalekih beregov,” *Sovetskij sport*, 104(2840), July 30, 1957, 7. This episode is also mentioned in Dieng (2011).

¹²⁹“Na stadionah družby,” *Molodež’ mira*, 10, 1957, 18.

¹³⁰“Massovye sportivnye sorevnovaniã,” *op.cit.*

¹³¹The cover of *Fizkul’tura i sport*, 7, 1957.

¹³²“Sportsmen from Arab countries to Warsaw,” *Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee*, 16–31 May 1955, 2.



FIGURE 1 | Billboard of the International Friendly Youth Sports Meetings, Bucharest, 1953. Source: Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee, April 28–May 4, 1953, 3.

to the Egyptian rowing team, which did not have its own coach, by a Polish rowing coach¹³³, but it is probably no coincidence that it was reported at a time of escalating tension between Egypt and Israel, supported by France and the United Kingdom. Two years later, at the 1957 Moscow Festival, which took place just few months after the Suez Crisis, attention was drawn to an English table tennis player's sporting gesture of offering a glass of water, with a smile, to his Egyptian opponent¹³⁴. Official publications and the Soviet press trumpeted such demonstrations of good sportsmanship as proof of young people's goodwill toward their foreign comrades regardless of the color of their skin or political leanings, and as contrasting with the imperialist behavior of the decadent empires. These examples alluded to the emerging unity of international socialist youth, where Global South could bring a great number of "potential friends" and supporters of the Soviet Union through their participation in the Festival¹³⁵.

¹³³"Festival' ūnosti i družby," op.cit.

¹³⁴"Cem nehorošy igry," *Molodež' mira*, 11, 1957, 8–9.

¹³⁵Koivunen (2016).

WELCOMING THE WORLD TO THE SOVIET CAPITAL: MOSCOW IN THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL SPORTS DESTINATION

Staging the III International Friendly Youth Games during the 1957 Moscow Festival gave the Soviet capital its first taste of being a world's new international sports destination. This third and final International Friendly Youth Games brought the world's youth to the capital of socialism in a spirit of peaceful coexistence, where the Festival had to promote a peaceful image of Khrushchev's USSR¹³⁶. It benefitted from the enduring euphoria generated by the country's performance at the Melbourne Olympics and took place at a time when the Soviet Union was beginning to open the borders to a larger number of visitors¹³⁷. The warm welcome given to the first post-war influx of foreign tourists, who admired the gloss of a modern capital, was a good start in preparing the city for the Festival. After heading the medals table in Melbourne, at only its second Olympic Games, the Soviet Union was keen to flaunt its newfound sporting prestige to an international audience. In addition, Soviet sports officials had returned from Melbourne having learned a lot about organizing major sports events and sports infrastructure. Soviet authorities had decided not to bid for the 1964 Summer Olympics¹³⁸; preferring to focus on this "mini Olympiad"¹³⁹ celebrating internationalism, peace, and friendship, which was organized under the auspices of the country's Olympic committee. In fact, there were strong parallels between the goals of these two events¹⁴⁰. While the Olympic Games were becoming a battlefield between the United States and the Soviet Union, Moscow 1957 was presented as promoting peaceful coexistence and the progress of the Soviet sports system. Every means was used to demonstrate the Soviet regime's modernity and the progress it had made in physical education and sports training. Several dozen physical education and sports specialists (known as *fizorgs*) were trained to conduct fitness sessions for delegates and lead (accompanied by interpreters) guided tours of Moscow's sports venues. In addition, a "sports avenue" through the southwestern part of the city took curious visitors from Lenin Stadium to the city center. Stadiums, swimming pools, and sports halls in and around Moscow were used to stage a festival of international sport. The Moscow Friendly Games included 23 sports, 13 of which were open to women. This was a source of pride for the Soviet authorities because women were only allowed to compete in 7 of the 17 sports on the Olympic program. Thus, 671 women competed at the Friendly Games, compared with only 376 female athletes at the previous Olympics. The Moscow Friendly Games were truly a mass-participation event, involving nearly 4,000 "white, yellow, brown, and black"¹⁴¹ athletes from 46 countries

¹³⁶Koivunen (2009). Some other events organized in the USSR during Détente pursued similar goals: for example, the Congress of Sports Medicine (1958) or especially the World Youth Forum (1961).

¹³⁷Salmon (2006).

¹³⁸Dufraisse (2020).

¹³⁹"Simfoniã družby," *Fizkul'tura i sport*, August 8, 1957, 15.

¹⁴⁰See García and Magnúsdóttir (2019) and Redihan (2017).

¹⁴¹"Un coup d'oeil sur les compétitions sportives," *Étudiants du monde* (French version of World Student News, the IUS official magazine), 8–9, 1956, 15.

(similar numbers to previous editions of the Friendly Games)¹⁴². “Ambassadors of five continents¹⁴³,” as *Sovetskij sport* called the athletes, paraded through the brand-new Lenin Stadium, which had opened in July 1956. “Covering 145 ha, with 1,000 permanent staff¹⁴⁴,” the new stadium was the pride and joy of Moscow’s authorities and would go on to host the 1973 Universiade and the 1980 Olympic Games. In 1957, it welcomed Olympic athletes from Australia, as well as other friends of peace from “faraway shores¹⁴⁵.” In addition, several countries which had boycotted the Melbourne Olympics over the Suez Crisis took part in the Friendly Games, which featured 139 Olympic medalists from Melbourne, as well as 17 world champions and world record holders¹⁴⁶. Defeats of these champions were heralded in the Soviet as proof of the high level of competition.

Détente made Soviet-American sports friendship a favorite topic for the Soviet press. For example, the opening ceremony generated lines such as: “Friends meet again” and “Crowd applauded: Soviet delegation appeared. But when the American delegation came closer, Soviet [athletes] pounced on them to exchange cordial greetings¹⁴⁷.” The athletes from English-speaking countries seemed also to be happy to come to Moscow, even though they were not necessarily supported in their home countries’ governments or sports organizations. America’s Parry O’Brian, who had won the shot-put competition in Melbourne accepted the invitation to the Friendly Games because they represented “a great contribution to strengthening Soviet-American sporting ties¹⁴⁸,” adding that the Russians’ hospitality exceeded anything he had ever seen. New Zealand’s Norman Read, who had won Olympic gold in the 50-km walk, said: “the language of friendship does not need translators¹⁴⁹.” This expression was all the more interesting because sport was also considered to be a universal language. In fact, scenes of famous athletes talking and laughing together showed that differences in language and culture did not prevent the Festival creating a relaxed and open atmosphere. Thus, at a time when the Soviet Union was becoming more open to the world, Moscow seized the opportunity to become the capital of international friendship and showed it was capable of hosting an event on the scale of the Olympic Games.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The World Festival of Youth and Students positioned itself as a champion of the values of peace, friendship and solidarity. The sports events held in conjunction with the Festival were a wonderful channel for spreading this message and created a new space of transnational cooperation. They provided the Soviet Union and the socialist states with an additional cultural

diplomacy tool, whereby they helped to shape the Eastern bloc’s relations with international sports organizations and other countries. By “overcoming Cold War the boundaries¹⁵⁰,” the Festival purported to use sport to bring together young men and women in friendships that surpassed social, geographical, racial, and political differences. Students, office staff, and factory workers could now compete on the same track, for the same medals, regardless of their ability, and socialize outside the stadium. One objective of the Festival was to establish an additional space of repeated cross-border exchanges for the athletes and teams. The other consisted in moving away from the goal of sporting elitism and to encourage young people to take up sport, in line with the Soviet Union’s desire to valorize and develop elite and grassroots sport (masterstvo and massovost, in Russian). The project looked to reform each individual at every level of society to produce the “new socialist man.” Moreover, the idea of “sport for all” took on another dimension in the light of the rise of national independence movements in colonized countries. Young people from throughout the world could compete in the international competitions without having to wait for their country to set up an IOC-recognized Olympic committee. They also could obtain financial support for attending these celebrations of Soviet prowess, at which they were treated as guests.

The goal of Soviet sport ideologists was actually to offer a more inclusive model of multisport competitions, without explicitly competing with the Olympic institution or denigrating it. By moving away from the doctrine of sports elitism and holding the sports events in parallel with the Festival enabled the sports events to attract larger numbers of participants. Moreover, the Festival’s biannual calendar, avoiding clashes with the quadrennial Olympics, meant that elite athletes, some of whom did not even have access to the Olympics, had a regular stage on which to compete. In order to legitimize and popularize the Games held in conjunction with the Festival, and to avoid accusations that they were encroaching on the Olympic Games, the organizers were invited and well-treated the representatives of the Western sports organizations. This was a key aspect of the Soviet Union’s international sports crusade, whose aim was to gain the trust of Western organizations, including during the split in the university sports movement, from 1949 to 1957.

Of course, the absence of most of the West’s top athletes helped ensure the Soviet Union and countries of the Eastern bloc won the vast majority of the medals, but their success in Melbourne showed that athletes from Eastern Europe could match, and often beat, their western counterparts. Unlike musical and artistic talent, sporting records provided quantifiable proof of the socialist system’s achievements. Every victory by a Soviet athlete was projected as a triumph of communist values, so it was extremely important for Soviet cultural diplomacy to demonstrate success in a field where the country had long been isolated from the West. The Soviet Union undoubtedly hoped to continue organizing this forum of massive cross-cultural interaction but they were forced to abandon their plans following the political difficulties experienced by the next Festival, Vienna

¹⁴²Four thousand and three hundred participants from 54 countries in Bucharest and between 4,000 and 5,000 athletes from 42 countries in Warsaw.

¹⁴³“Poslancy pâti materikov,” op.cit.

¹⁴⁴“Un coup d’œil,” op.cit.

¹⁴⁵“S dalekih beregov,” op.cit.

¹⁴⁶“Vokrug družeskih igr,” *Fizkul’tura i sport*, 9, 1957, 13.

¹⁴⁷“Simfoniâ družby,” *Fizkul’tura i sport*, 6, 1957,

¹⁴⁸“Gotovimsâ, priedem,” *Fizkul’tura i sport*, 6, 1957, 4.

¹⁴⁹“V razgovore s druž’ami,” *Fizkul’tura i sport*, 9, 1957, 14.

¹⁵⁰Koivunen (2010).

1959. The other possible reason was the reunification of the international university sports movement under the auspices of FISU and the creation of the Universiade. The focus was now on gaining influence of the socialist countries within FISU. Consequently, future Festival's sports events risked to become much more modest affairs than those held during the "golden age" from 1949 to 1957.

The results cast a new light on a peculiar role of youth and sports as a channel of Soviet cultural diplomacy in Europe and the Global South during the Cold War. The paper also highlights the existence of two opposed models of international university sports promoted by the East and West, independently from the Olympic movement. In line with previous studies, the findings demonstrate the importance of

the Festival sports competitions for the internationalization of socialist sport and the democratization of international sport. Future research could thus focus on the national and regional perspectives as well as on the posterior development of sports at the Festival.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All datasets generated for this study are included in the article/supplementary material.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

LL individually conducted the present research on all the stages.

REFERENCES

- Babracki, P., and Jersild, A. (2016). *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War. Exploring the Second World*. New York, NY: Springer, 4.
- Berstein, S., and Milza, P. (2014). *Histoire du XXe siècle. T.2: Le Monde Entre Guerre et Paix (1945-1973)*. Paris: Hatier.
- Caute, D. (2003). *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy During the Cold War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Charitas, P. (2009). The International olympic committee commission (the CAIO) for rendering assistance: an instrument of Soviet propaganda? (1951-1962). *Sport Hist. Rev.* 40, 143–166. doi: 10.1123/shr.40.2.143
- Clastres, P. (2020). Olympisme et guerre froide. Du paradigme réaliste au paradigme culturel. *Guerres Mondiales Conflits Contemp.* 277, 7–25. doi: 10.3917/gmcc.277.0007
- Defrance, J. (2000). La politique de l'apolitisme. Sur l'autonomisation du champ sportif. *Politix* 50, 13–27. doi: 10.3406/polix.2000.1084
- Dieng, A. A. (2011). *Mémoires d'un Etudiant Africain*. Vol. 1, African Books Collective, Dakar: Codesria, 68.
- Dufraisse, S. (2012). "Le champion, incarnation de l'homme nouveau soviétique : une genèse (1934-1953)", in *Sport, corps et sociétés de masse: Le projet d'un Homme Nouveau*, ed G. Bensoussan (Paris: Armand Colin), 229–242.
- Dufraisse, S. (2019). *Les Héros du Sport. Une Histoire des Champions Soviétiques (Années 1930-Années 1980)*. Ceyzérieu: Champ Vallon.
- Dufraisse, S. (2020). Au-delà de la "machine rouge": implications soviétiques dans la guerre froide sportive. *Guerres Mondiales Conflits Contemp.* 277, 73–90. doi: 10.3917/gmcc.277.0073
- Dullin, S. (2003). Le secret et ses usages: les archives "sensibles" en URSS in Archives "secrètes", secrets d'archives? *Historiens et Archivistes Face Aux Archives Sensibles*, ed S. Laurent (Paris: CNRS Éditions), 189–200.
- Fischer, D. (2000). *Histoire des Etudiants en France: de 1945 à nos Jours*. Paris: Flammarion, 192.
- García, O. J. M., and Magnúsdóttir, R. (2019). *Machineries of persuasion: European Soft Power and Public Diplomacy during the Cold War*. 1–15. doi: 10.1515/9783110560510
- Gillibert, M. (2017). Diplomatie culturelle et diplomatie publique : des histoires parallèles? *Relat. Int.* 169, 11–26. doi: 10.3917/ri.169.0011
- Gounot, A. (1998). "Entre les exigences révolutionnaires et nécessités diplomatiques: les rapports du sport soviétique avec le sport ouvrier et le sport bourgeois en Europe, 1920-1937", in *Sport et Relations Internationales (1900-1941): Les Démocraties Face au Fascisme et au Nazisme*, eds P. Arnaud and J. Riordan (Paris: L'Harmattan), 241–276.
- Grant, S. (2013). *Physical Culture and Sport in Soviet Society: Propaganda, Acculturation, and Transformation in the 1920s and 1930s*. New York: London: Routledge.
- Hoberman, J. (1986). *The Olympic Crisis. Sport, Politics and the Moral Order*. New York, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas, 18.
- Keys, B. (2006). *Globalizing Sport. National Rivalry and International Community in the 1930s*. London: Harvard University Press, 1–2.
- Koivunen, P. (2009). *Moscow Youth Festival: Propagating a New, Peaceful Image of the Soviet Union in Soviet State and Society Under Nikita Khrushchev*, eds M. Ilic and J. Smith (London: Routledge), 46–65.
- Koivunen, P. (2010). "Overcoming cold war boundaries at the world youth festivals," in *Reassessing Cold War Europe*, eds S. Autio-Sarasma and K. Miklossy (London: Routledge), 175–192.
- Koivunen, P. (2013). *Performing peace and friendship: the world youth festival as a tool of soviet cultural diplomacy, 1947-1957* (Doctoral thesis). University of Tampere, Tampere, Finland.
- Koivunen, P. (2014). "The world youth festival as an arena of the "Cultural Olympics": meanings of competitions in soviet culture in the 1940 and 1950s," in *Competition in Socialist Society*, eds K. Miklóssy and M. Ilic (London: Routledge), 125–141.
- Koivunen, P. (2016). "Friends, "Potential Friends," and Enemies: reimagining soviet relations to the first, second, and third worlds at the Moscow 1957 Youth Festival", in *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold-War. Exploring the Second World*, eds P. Babracki and A. Jersild (New York, NY: Springer), 219–248.
- Kotek, J. (1998). *La Jeune Garde: Entre KGB et CIA, la Jeunesse Mondiale, Enjeu des Relations Internationales, 1917-1989*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- Kotek, J. (2010). Youth organizations as a battlefield in the cold war. *Intellig. Natl. Secur.* 18, 168–191. doi: 10.1080/02684520412331306790
- Kott, S. (2017). "Cold War Internationalism", in *Internationalisms: a Twentieth-Century History*, eds G. Sluga and P. Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 340–362.
- Krieger, J., and Duckworth, A. (2020). Vodka and caviar among friends'- Lord David Burghley and the Soviet Union's entry into the International association of athletic federations. *Sport Hist* 2, 1–20. doi: 10.1080/17460263.2020.1768887
- Možava, L. (2015). Vsemirnye festivali mlodeži i studentov kak faktor obshestvennoj diplomatii v bor'be za ukreplenie mira. *Vestnik RGGU* 13, 145–159.
- Müller, M. (2015). What makes an event a mega event? Definitions and sizes. *Leisure Stud.* 34, 627–642. doi: 10.1080/02614367.2014.993333
- Murray, S. (2012) The two halves of sports-diplomacy. *Diplomacy Statecraft* 23, 576–592. doi: 10.1080/09592296.2012.706544
- O'Mahony, M. (2006). *Sport in the USSR. Physical Culture-Visual Culture*. London: Reaction Books.
- Paget, K. (2004). From stockholm to leiden: the CIA's role in the formation of the international student conference," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-60 (Studies in Intelligence)*, eds H. Karabendam and G. Scott-Smith (London: Routledge), 107–137.
- Parks, J. (2013). *The Olympic Games, the Soviet Sports Bureaucracy, and the Cold War: Red Sport, Red Tape*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Parks, J. (2014). "Welcoming the "Third World": soviet sport diplomacy, developing nations, and the olympic games," in *Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft, and International Relations Since 1945*, eds H. L. Dichter and A. L. Johns (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky), 85–114.

- Perrin, J.-D. (1951, September 18). Le Festival mondial de la jeunesse et des étudiants, à Berlin. *Feuille d'avis de Lausanne*, 25.
- Prozumensikov, M. (2004). *Bol'soi sport i Bol'saâ politika*. Moscow: Rosspen, 462.
- Redihan, E. E. (2017). *The Olympics and the Cold War 1948-1968 : Sport as the Battleground in the U.S.-Soviet Rivalry*. McFarland, CA: Jefferson, 149.
- Rider, T. C. (2018). "Projecting America: sport and early US cold war propaganda, 1947-1960", in *Defending the American Way of Life: Sport, Culture, and the Cold War*, ed K. B. Witherspoon (Fayetteville, NC: University of Arkansas Press), 13-27.
- Riordan, J. (1974). Soviet sport and soviet foreign policy. *Soviet Stud.* 26, 322-343. doi: 10.1080/09668137408410957
- Riordan, J. (1977). *Sport in Soviet Society. Development of Sport and Physical Education in Russia and the USSR*. London: Cambridge University Press, 367.
- Riordan, J. (1993). *Playing Politics: Soviet Sport Diplomacy to 1992*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press Inc.
- Rofe, S. J. (2016). Sport and diplomacy: a global diplomacy framework. *Diplomacy Statecraft* 27, 212-230. doi: 10.1080/09592296.2016.1169785
- Salmon, S. (2006). "Marketing socialism: inturist in the late 1950s and early 1960," in *Turizm: the Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism*, eds A. E. Gorsuch and D. P. Koenker (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 186-204.
- Sbetti, N. (2020). L'influence de la guerre froide sur l'activité internationale du sport italien (1945-1953). *Guerres Mondiales Conflits Contemp.* 277, 103-117. doi: 10.3917/gmcc.277.0103
- Schiller, K. (2019). "Communism, youth, and sport: the 1973 World Youth Festival in East Berlin," in *Sport and the Transformation of Modern Europe: States, Media and Markets, 1950-2010*, eds A. Tomlinson, C. Young, and R. Holt (London: Routledge), 50-66.
- Wishon, J. (2016). "Peace and progress: building indo-soviet friendship", in *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold-War. Exploring the Second World*, eds P. Babiracki and A. Jersild (New York, NY: Springer), 251-272.
- Zubok, V. (2014). *Introduction in Cold War Crossings: International Travel and Exchange Across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960*, eds P. Babiracki and K. Zimmer (College Station, TX: A&M University Press), 1-13.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2020 Lesnykh. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Healthcare and Physical Education of Children and Youth in Prague 1869–1914

Marek Waic¹ and Dagmar Pavlů^{2*}

¹ Department of Kinanthropology and Humanities, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Charles University, Prague, Czechia, ² Department of Physiotherapy, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Charles University, Prague, Czechia

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Patrick Clastres,
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Reviewed by:

Sylvain Dufraisse,
Université de Nantes, France
Annette R. Hofmann,
Ludwigsburg University, Germany

*Correspondence:

Dagmar Pavlů
pavlu@ftvs.cuni.cz

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 08 July 2020

Accepted: 17 November 2020

Published: 10 December 2020

Citation:

Waic M and Pavlů D (2020) Healthcare and Physical Education of Children and Youth in Prague 1869–1914. *Front. Sports Act. Living* 2:581285. doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.581285

The article focuses on the healthcare and physical education of children and youth in Prague, the capital city of Czech lands, in the period after the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867. The legislative framework for children's physical development and healthcare consisted of laws passed by the Imperial Council which were in force throughout the entire region of Cisleithania. Its execution and implementation, however, were the responsibility of the Czech territorial assembly and Prague municipality. The study analyses the environment in which children grew up, the quality of their diet, and their medical care, particularly the activities of school doctors. Further, the text concentrates on the organization and the quality of school physical education. Prague serves as an example of an industrial centre of the Cisleithanian region whose industrial development caused rapid urbanization which limited the possibilities of physical development of children and youth. Until the end of the 19th century, the only possibility of organized exercises was school physical education, and its quality was greatly influenced by the modest spatial conditions of schools. Even at the better-equipped grammar schools, physical education was an optional subject until 1909 and was not taught at most of them at all. As part of the modernization of the empire, the Cisleithanian government supported physical education, also for military reasons. The same was done by the Prague municipality, where care for the physical development and health of children and youth did not become the subject of political disputes.

Keywords: 19th century, Cisleithania, children, health care, physical education, legislation

INTRODUCTION

The following study focuses on the Prague municipality's attention to the health and physical development of children and youth in the context of dynamic industrialization and urbanization and other social changes caused by these historical processes. The study also pays attention to the development of legislative norms that were valid throughout the Cisleithanian region and which created the legislative framework within which the municipal authorities channeled their efforts. The December Constitution, adopted in 1867, divided the Habsburg Monarchy into two independent states. Except for foreign policy, the army, currency, and the customs union, most of the legislative and executive power in Hungary passed into the hands of the Hungarian nobility and the administration of the so-called Cisleithania, to which the Czech lands (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia) also belonged, remained in the hands

of the Emperor and the Viennese government. According to the constitution, however, the central power gave the territorial assemblies the power to create legislative norms that could supplement the laws passed by the Imperial Council. The period covered by this study is also characteristic of the efforts of the Imperial Council and the Viennese government to modernize the entire Cisleithanian region. The social legislation and the school system, which are both very important for the physical development of children and young people, were dictated by imperial laws. But the imperial legislation did not interfere much in these particular areas and the practical implementation of the letter of the imperial laws was the responsibility of the municipal authorities. In healthcare, here the imperial laws applied too, but the execution of these laws and financing of healthcare was the responsibility of the Czech territorial assembly and Prague municipality. The implementation of a specific form of health care and physical development of children and youth was, therefore, primarily in the hands of municipal authorities.

The period after the Austro-Hungarian compromise is of particular interest because a few years later, in 1869, a law on primary and middle schools was passed in the Cisleithanian region which introduced compulsory physical education for all children for 2 h per week. This was a turning point in the history of the controlled physical development of children. From the 1860s until the late 1880s, school physical education for children was the only chance to do physical exercise in an organized way. Sokol, the largest Czech gymnastics association, started training children and teenagers only in the late 1880s.

The city of Prague was chosen as an example for the study of the controlled physical development of children and youth for the following reasons: Prague achieved almost the same dynamics of industrialization and urbanization as Vienna, but ethnic conditions in Prague, although a Czech-German city, were clearer and more homogeneous. As part of the economic migration of the inhabitants of the Cisleithanian region, a large number of workers, craftsmen, and women who served in the households of upper and middle classes, migrated temporarily, but also permanently, to the metropolis of the Habsburg monarchy. Vienna thus became a multi-ethnic city in the second half of the 19th century. Its political development was also more complex, and at the end of the century, it led to Germanization, which excluded members of the Slavic nations (Gletler, 1972, p. 293–299).

The political development of Prague in the period under review was simple. In 1861, the Czechs won the municipal elections and controlled the City Hall until the First World War. Although the municipal support, both moral and financial, was directed to Czech associations, the Czech councilors did not attempt to “Czechize” the city. They could not have done it even if they wanted because the Czech and German national powers were equal within the territorial assembly thanks to the strong German population of the bordering regions of Czech lands. Also, the bureaucrats of the Prague governance, which was subject to the Vienna Ministry of the Interior, would not allow the Czechization of Prague. The Prague municipality accepted the division of social and economic life of Czechs and Germans in the 1860s (Cohen, 2000, p. 47–71). Furthermore, Czech councilors

respected the approximate parity of Czech and German schools in the city, which were financed by the territorial assembly, but also by the Prague municipality, because the Germans paid the same taxes to the municipal treasury as the Czechs. Prague City Hall was ruled by representatives of two Czech national parties who called themselves Old Czech Party and Young Czech Party. The goal of their political efforts, i.e., the political and cultural autonomy of the Czechs within the Cisleithanian region, was the same. How to achieve such autonomy, this is where they differed in opinion. However, they reached a mutual consensus on the municipal level at the Prague City Hall. The development of the city, the support of Czech schools, and also Czech associations, particularly Sokol, were understood by the representatives of both parties as necessary steps to strengthen the position of the Czechs in the metropolis of the Czech lands. In the 1860s, the creation of self-governing bodies of the municipality and the internal hierarchy of the City Hall were completed. Self-governing bodies and municipal officials paid particular attention to good management of municipal finances. The increase in the population of Prague brought about by fast industrialization led to rapid urbanization, and from the 1870s, the city had to invest in its infrastructure—remediation, expansion of the street network, installation of the street lights, and construction of the water supply system so that the inhabitants had drinking water (Slámová, n.d.).

The Prague City Council cooperated with external experts, especially school physicians and school principals. Of course, the physical education of young people was not one of the priorities of the Prague City Hall, but the representatives were close to the Sokol organization. Two mayors (Tomáš Cerný—Mayor in 1882–1885 and Jan Podlipný—Mayor in 1897–1900) even headed the Sokol organization.

The health and physical development of children and young people living in Prague were significantly affected by their living conditions, diet, medical care, and physical exercise opportunities, especially at school, as well as their protection by labor legislation, and therefore this article also focuses on these factors. The comparison of children and youth welfare with other provincial metropolises would be very interesting and undoubtedly beneficial for the history of Cisleithania, but the prescribed scope of the study does not allow it.

METHODOLOGY

In the period we analyzed, we also observed the interacting complex of phenomena (housing level, diet, labor legislation, development of the school system, the content of school physical education, child health care), which affected the physical activities of children and youth and their health. We have worked mainly with primary sources, especially with the texts of selected imperial laws, or their passages, which determined the organizational forms and content of health care and physical education of children and youth in the Cisleithanian region. A very important title of contemporary literature is the History of Prague Education 1860–1914. It is a comprehensive chronicle of Prague education in that period while also a great volume

of contemporary resources. Its author, the director of public school and a contemporary witness, cites the legislative norms adopted by the territorial assembly and the decisions of the city council regarding Prague schools, including physical education, the activities of school doctors, etc. Another area of historical sources of the presented study became the texts of selected laws, or their passages, which formed the legislative framework for children and youth social and medical care. Other primary sources were the physical education curricula for primary and secondary schools and regulations for examinations of physical education teachers at secondary schools from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The facts about the economic and social development in the Cisleithanian region and also about living conditions in Prague were taken from the most recent and extensive professional literature of Czech authors who deal with the history of Bohemia and its metropolis and to which we refer in the text.

DEMOGRAPHIC, URBAN, AND SOCIAL CHANGES IN PRAGUE, AFFECTING THE HEALTH AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Czech lands were mostly Czech-German territory in terms of ethnic composition. The revolutionary demographic, social, and lifestyle changes that influenced and limited the development of physical education of children and youth took place in the Czech and German environment almost identically. However, the cultural emancipation of the Czech nation was very dynamic since the 1860s, as evidenced for example by the fact that around 94% of the Czech population of the Czech lands was alphabetized (Hlavačka, 2016, p. 199), which was crucial for the dissemination of physical and health education.

Industrialization, which achieved considerable development in the late 1860s in the Czech lands, brought significant changes in the social structure of society. This process is described by some authors as “decorporation,” i.e., the transition from the Estates Society to the Class Society (Jindra and Jakubec, 2015, p. 134), which is characterized by a society’s division into the bourgeoisie and the working class and by the emergence of the middle class.

The conditions of life of the urban population and its lifestyle corresponded to the development of social stratification of the urban population through two factors—social status and level of income. The social status also corresponded with the nature of the working activity—especially in towns, those who did not work manually were considered “better people.” The middle class became the bearer of a new lifestyle in which the emphasis was on health care, education, and reasonably spent leisure time. The middle class consisted mainly of officials employed in the state or municipal administration (their income and the standard of living varied according to their position in the bureaucratic hierarchy) and officials employed in the private sector, such as banking. The middle class also included technical intelligence and businessmen. Since the mid-19th century, the number of doctors, lawyers, and secondary school professors with university

education also began to increase. Physical activities were more accessible to boys than girls in large cities. During the 19th century, society’s view of the role of women changed, but until the First World War, the majority opinion prevailed that women should realize their potential mainly as housewives and mothers. This dominant masculine attitude made it significantly more difficult for girls to access education and physical activities at school and in associations.

The deficit in physical activities was particularly felt by children and young people living in larger cities. In the period up to the First World War, thanks to industrialization, the cities experienced a continuous development that quickly accelerated at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. After the lost Austro-Prussian War, it was decided in Prague to demolish the city walls (the demolition began in the early 1870s), and gradually, many surrounding villages became part of the city. Between 1869 and 1910, the population of Prague grew from 158,000 to 224,000, taking second place after Vienna in the Cisleithanian region. In 1910, 42.5% of Prague citizens worked in industry or trades, 29.7% in public administration, or as soldiers and freelancers, and 27.1% of the population worked in retail and transport. With this modernization of the economy, Prague was approaching the status of the metropolis of Cisleithania, such as Vienna which showed similar sectors of employment (46.6, 25.4, 27.1%) (Jindra and Jakubec, 2015, p. 129–130).

The economic boom in 1867–1873, which attracted many workers to Prague, caused a shortage of flats. Workers lived in colonies, in small houses or, together with tradesmen, rented apartments in tenement houses, which in many parts of Prague formed a monolithic industrial type of construction. The courtyard gallery replaced the 18th-century peristyle with toilets located at the rear end of the gallery. From the gallery, there was direct access to the kitchen, a room of about 24 m², which served as a kitchen and bedroom for the whole family (Efmertová, 1998, p. 279). The tenement houses were mostly dominated by the spirit of collectivism and mutual help so that children grew up in the collective care of not only mothers but also aunts from the neighborhood. In 1880, women in the Czech lands accounted for 34.4% of all factory workers. Most of them were young single women, those married stayed mostly at home to care for children and because men’s wages were on average 40% higher (Jindra and Jakubec, 2015, p. 139).

Dark housing and inadequate hygienic conditions not only brought health risks, but the nature of living and the resulting lifestyle also created a different perception of the outside world, including corporeality, for children from working-class families, as opposed to middle-class children. Members of the middle class—engineers, lawyers, doctors, university, and secondary school professors, senior officials, and small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, lived in apartment buildings of the wider Prague center in multi-room apartments with private bathrooms with hot water.

The state of health of the inhabitants of larger towns, regardless of social stratification and the associated quality of housing, was negatively influenced by the overall poor hygienic conditions of the whole town. Water reservoirs to supply the urban development with utility water were not built in Prague

until 1880, and by 1900, most houses were still not supplied with drinking water (Hlavačka, 2016, p. 244).

The standard of living in other industrial centers of the Czech lands differed in its specific forms according to the nature and pace of their industrialization, urbanization plans, demolition of city walls, and the annexation of agricultural communities, which were turned into industrial suburbs. The common problem of all larger cities was the remediation of hygienically completely unsatisfactory parts of the city and the construction of infrastructures, such as water supplies, sewerages, and street-lights (Kota, 2010, p. 16–23). In regards to children's health and their physical development, the living conditions of large industrial centers did not differ much.

LEGAL PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The status of children and youth can be seen from two perspectives, first from the perspective of care for children and youth and second from the perspective of legal capacity. Legal capacity was defined by the “Civil Code of Austria” issued by Emperor Francis I, which came into force in the Czech lands in January 1812 and was effective also in Czechoslovakia until 1950. This legal norm divided people into children (up to 7 years), juveniles (up to 14 years), and minors (up to 24 years) (Tauchen and Schelle, 2012, p. 204). The code did not distinguish people by gender and the age of majority meant getting independence from parental protection. If the father died, the minors were appointed a guardian who had the powers of the father. Protection mainly concerned children under 14 years of age.

The population of the Habsburg Monarchy was young and its future was dependent on the children and youth welfare. That is why the executive power paid so much attention to it, although, whether or not it was sufficient remains to be seen. The sheer vastness of the empire and the differences between countries and regions brought a wide variety of issues. The central government had to share the burden of dealing with these problems with representatives of the provincial and municipal governments, but these governments were given only “adequate powers” which would not jeopardize the integrity of the monarchy. Section 12 of the 1867 Constitution stated that: “All other legislative items not expressly reserved to the Imperial Council in this Act are within the competence of the Provincial Councils of the kingdoms and lands represented in the Imperial Council” (Gesetz vom 21. Dezember 1867, Nr. 141, 1867).

The authority in the area of labor legislation was reserved for central executive power, among others to protect children from child labor abuse in the view of the turbulent pace of industrialization. The Trade Ordinance from December 20, 1859, prohibited the work of children under 10 years and required the employer to care for the minors: “He [...] will oversee the morals and behavior of a minor apprentice inside and outside the workshop” and ordered owners of trades and industrial establishments “to refrain from any ill-treatment of the apprentice [and] to protect him against such treatment from other workers.” The Trade Ordinance also required employers

“to watch over the school attendance of their wards” (Kaiserliches Patent vom 20. December 1859, Nr. 227, 1859).

The amendment to the Trade Ordinance from 1885 prohibited child labor under 12 years and limited its duration to 8 h per day for children between the age of 12 and 14. Furthermore, it allowed “the use of juvenile workers” aged 12–14 only “if it is not detrimental to health and does not hinder physical development and it does not obstruct the compulsory school obligations” (Gesetz vom 8. März 1885, Nr. 22, 1885). The law was amended again as early as in February 1897. Underage workers could continue to be recruited only based on an employment contract, and because, the apprentices were used only for various domestic jobs, the amendment prescribed to the owners of the trades: “to teach the apprentice the skills of the trade for which he is trained” (Gesetz vom 23. Februar 1897, Nr. 63, 1897). Compliance with these legal norms could not be rigorously monitored. The level of care for minors depended primarily on the goodwill of the employer.

MORBIDITY AND DIET OF PRAGUE CHILDREN

From the middle of the 19th century to the First World War, a third of the population of the Czech lands were children up to 14 years of age, young people aged 15–20 represented ~12%, the middle-aged population under 59 years of age declined only slightly (to ~50%), and the group over 60 years grew slightly, amounting to 9% in 1910 (Hlavačka, 2016, p. 207).

The main cause of the low average lifespan was high child mortality, especially new-born mortality. In 1850, half of the children born in Prague did not live to see their first birthday (Hlavačka, 2016, p. 208). In the following years, children died of infectious diseases—smallpox, scarlet fever, typhoid, and diphtheria. Child mortality was the highest among factory workers due to poor hygiene conditions of housing and workplaces.

Despite high child mortality, the 19th century brought a significant increase in population. One of the theories of demographic growth in the 19th century in European countries says that its main cause was an improving diet. It has played its role, but in conjunction with emerging medical and social care, progress in labor law, toward the end of the century also with improvements in urban hygiene, the rising quality of education, and last but not least, awareness of the importance of physical activity for children and youth welfare. In the course of the 19th century, the middle-class diet improved, especially in terms of protein content, including beef, pork, poultry, milk, and eggs. Since the end of the 19th century, however, eating habits had not respected the principles of a healthy diet of today. The people started to prefer bread and pastry made of white wheat flour and the consumption of sugar and animal fats increased. Fruits and vegetables were rather seasonal products (Efmertová, 1998, p. 216). The working-class diet was far from being so varied. Eighty percent of the costs of working-class families were payments for rent, heating, and food. Clothes and other consumer goods were luxuries and the only way to save money for them was by

skimping on food. The workers' diet consisted of milk and coffee (it was mostly its substitute made from roasted chicory and later from sugar beet or grain, commonly known as "chicory"), sugar, bread, and porridge or soup made of old bread, potatoes, garlic, onion, and salt. The workers had meat only exceptionally on public holidays, sometimes on Sundays—especially beef, which was first cooked for soup. Dinner consisted of bread with butter or curd cheese or common cheese. Still, roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the workers in the industrial centers did not have enough resources to obtain food in the abovementioned composition or in the amount that would feed their hunger (Efmertová, 1998, p. 269).

The diet given to orphans in orphanages, their nutrition was not much different from their parents. The malnutrition was a significant health risk for a significant percentage of these children. Well-nourished middle-class children, on the other hand, were also susceptible to a dietary danger albeit of a different kind. The physical ideal of the 19th-century child, especially of pre-school age, was a "chubby child," being slightly overweight suggested the child is healthy, and the absence of a visible fat layer signaled possible health problems. Skinny children were "cured" with small doses of alcohol, such as black beer and ferrous wine (Lenderová and Rýdl, 2006, p. 131).

In 1887, the wife of the then-mayor of Prague Mrs. L. Šolcová convened a "circle of Prague ladies" to address the eating of poor children "who did not have nutritious warm food at noon" (Dolenský, 1920, p. 539). The ladies set up a committee to "provide warm, fortifying food for poor school children" (Dolenský, 1920, p. 546). In 1888 the first canteen was opened. The interest in lunches, however, greatly exceeded the offer, and therefore, the number of canteens increased rapidly and reached the number of eleven in 1897. The municipality had two establishments where food was prepared and then delivered to the canteens. The number of canteens increased with the number of children. There were 300 in the school year 1887/1888, and by the school year 1913/1914, the number reached 1750 (Dolenský, 1920, p. 546). Not all those interested could be satisfied, the eligible children were chosen according to the social situation of the family: "orphans, children of widows and working-class families where children were at lunch [...] completely without hot food." The lunch menu consisted of soup "heavily filled with semolina, noodles, rice or groats, to which each child receives a portion of diced beef. Once a week, the soup is made of peas and once a week a roasted soup is served. With it, the children receive a slice of rye bread or a bread roll each, and on Friday, a very popular cake" (Dolenský, 1920, p. 546).

MEDICAL CARE AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Child mortality was mainly due to inadequate hygiene conditions at home, at school, in factories, but also hospitals. Children were dying of infectious and other diseases that are difficult to identify because very often, the cause of death was stated as inherited weakness or intestinal catarrh. A major health threat for the entire population in the 19th and partly in the first half of the 20th

century was pulmonary tuberculosis. The highest mortality from tuberculosis was recorded in large industrial centers, including Prague, where there was a high concentration of people.

The milestone in the health care of Cisleithania was the adoption of the law "on the organization of public health administration" on April 30, 1870. As was typical for Austrian legislation, the enacted legal norm entrusted the state administration with the "direct authority to keep records of all healthcare personnel and to supervise them in regards to all medical matters ..." (Gesetz vom 30. April 1870, Nr. 68, 1870). Nevertheless, the central executive administration was responsible for issuing legal standards "on infectious diseases, endemics, and epidemics [...] on the administration of poisons and medicines and on managing vaccination" (Gesetz vom 30. April 1870, Nr. 68, 1870). The law also entrusted Landtag and municipalities with the supervision of local health care. The stuff was to be proportionate with the size of the region and the number of inhabitants living there. District and municipal doctors with a wide range of responsibilities and powers have become the most important component of the healthcare system.

In 1875, a provincial maternity hospital was opened in Prague, which is still in existence. Outpatient care for pediatric patients began to operate in Prague under provisional conditions in 1888. In 1902, a new modern hospital was opened in Prague. However, only the ground floor with 30 beds for older children was rented to the children's clinic (Havránek, 1998). It follows from the abovementioned facts that the availability of children's hospital care was very low. Private medical practices were also available only to middle-class and upper-class children for financial reasons.

The establishment of an institution of school doctors was essential to the betterment of children's health care. Their task was not to treat children, nor was it possible if we consider their numbers. Their vast contribution to the advancement of the health of pupils and students lay in other duties, such as improvement of school hygiene, mapping of children's health, diagnosing infectious diseases, and then ordering home quarantine to prevent infecting other children at school. The beginnings of medical supervision at Prague primary schools are linked to the decree of the Prague Municipal Council presidium from January 24, 1883, which ordered:

1. Inspection of the cleanliness of the teaching rooms and other premises, including inspection of the heating, ventilation, and cleanliness of toilets
2. Examination of the school children health, including eye examination and control of contagious diseases

The main purpose of the decree was to exempt children who were found to have a health problem ("illness") from physical education or school attendance, particularly in the case of a rash or "queasiness—inducing illness (discharge from the ear, nose, etc.)." The eyesight inspection and its results, especially myopia, were taken into account when seating children in the classroom (Dolenský, 1920, p. 462).

In 1885, the Mayor of Prague, Tomáš Cerný, submitted a proposal to introduce medical examination of students at

primary schools and orphanages, secondary schools, and private schools. Tomáš Cerný, who served as a mayor from 1882 to 1885, was a lawyer and politician with close connections to physical education as he was one of the founding members of Sokol in 1872–1882 and was also its Mayor. In April 1885, the Commission developed two types of programs. The first type was designed for a medical examination at the beginning of school year and included the assessment of growth and body development, eyesight, hearing, hair and skin, spine examination, recording information on past and ongoing illnesses, vaccination, and also an assessment of child's ability to participate in physical education. The second program was for regular check-ups throughout the year and included assessments of school attendance, causes of absence, screening for infectious diseases, assessment of defects in the school building concerning health, and last but not least, physical exercise supervision.

It was stated that: "The children are to be examined carefully outside school hours [...] in a special school room in the presence of a teacher, and in the case of a girl, always in the presence of a female teacher, on special request in the presence of parents." The actual treatment of illnesses was not the responsibility of a school doctor but it was the responsibility of the school administration to inform the parents about their child's illness "in the gentlest way" (Dolenský, 1920, p. 464).

At the beginning of medical supervision in schools in 1883, nine doctors were entrusted with this activity and were assigned 25,531 children at 59 schools (Dolenský, 1920, p. 465). Other milestones in the field of hygiene at schools include the installation of school desks based on student's body height in 1889 and the establishment of showers in 1891 on the proposal of a city physician. In 1880, the office of a city physician was created in Prague. He was a doctor and was responsible for the professional management of municipal health care and also fulfilled the function, in contemporary terminology, of the city hygienist.

The institution of school doctors continued to develop according to several decisions of the City Health Care Commission and the Prague governor from 1901 to 1906. In 1909, there were 12 school doctors and 1 female doctor. Apart from the evaluation of school buildings, their tasks included the medical examination of children (eyesight, hearing, teeth, speech, mental fitness, fitness for physical education, handwork and drawing, etc.) and organization of their vaccination (Dolenský, 1920, p. 465–469).

Almost a fifth of children suffered from malnutrition. In the 4 years (1904–1908), 12.9% of boys and 14.9% of girls in the first grade "suffered from poor nutrition," and in the second grade, the values grew to 18.7 and 20.3% (Dolenský, 1920, p. 469). In the school year 1907–8, 1,713 boys and 1,678 girls in the first grade were examined. In the same year, 47.3% of boys and 51.3% of girls in the first grade were reported "defective" by school doctors, with the term "defective" probably referring to any health problem (Dolenský, 1920, p. 466).

The recorded results cannot be considered accurate due to the absence of laboratory examinations, but school doctors had considerable experience in the diagnosis of these defects and diseases of children. The health condition of Prague children at the beginning of their schooling was alarming, with practically

all indicators showing that girls were a few percentage points worse. We do not have the numbers of students exempt from physical education. However, we can assume that they were not insignificant, which, together with the lack of suitable exercise rooms and only slowly improving levels of hygiene in schools, leads us to the conclusion that the positive impact of physical education on the health of primary school students was low.

Infectious diseases were the biggest health problem for children. According to a general report of school doctors for the school year 1905–6, 67.7% of the children examined in the first grade had an infectious disease. In terms of the frequency of occurrence, these were mostly measles, scarlet fever, chickenpox, whooping cough, diphtheria, and mumps. Early diagnosis and the subsequent isolation of the patient was the only weapon against the spread of the disease. Teachers were trained in recognizing the symptoms and in the appropriate procedures in case they suspected a student to be ill.

The only partially effective way to fight it was to change the environment and stay in the countryside, preferably in the mountains or by the sea. Starting in 1895, children suffering from TBC with a more severe course of the disease were sent to the "Maritime Hospital Ospizio Mario" in Trieste at the expense of the Prague municipality. Between 1895 and 1903, 288 children underwent the treatment which lasted 100 days. Children were examined by a school doctor before and after returning: "The results of the treatment were really surprising. More than half of the children returned healed, others at least improved. These were sent to get the treatment again next year and usually returned healed as well" (Dolenský, 1920, p. 499). From current diagnostics, we can certainly doubt such a high percentage of cured children, but given the experience of school doctors with tuberculosis, we can conclude that a significant improvement indeed occurred.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, efforts were made in the Czech environment to contribute to the improvement of the children and youth health through health exercises. The most notable work in which this effort is reflected is Home Exercise for Girls of Poor Posture by Klemena Hanušová, a pioneer of Czech girls' physical education. The description of the musculoskeletal defects (especially the defective posture) and the exercises to compensate for the harmful consequences of a sedentary lifestyle, which Klemena Hanušová states in 1891, have not lost anything of their relevance today.

The sedentary way of life of urban girls in the second half of the 19th century was not very different from the current one. They had to do housework, such as cooking, cleaning, sewing, crocheting, in which they did not have much movement. At school, as Klemena Hanušová says, the girls were even worse off: "Girls, sitting at school for a long time, start to lounge around from fatigue, especially when writing. They distort their body, and after some time, they lose the sense of straight and correct posture" (Hanušová, 1891, p. 3–4). Klemena Hanušová was a founding member and the first trainer of the "Gymnastics Association of Ladies and Girls of Prague" founded in 1869, where mainly female college students trained. Klemena Hanušová organized and led the training sessions of the association for 27 years.

Adding to the already mentioned fact that the amendment to the School Act of 1883 declared girls' physical education as an optional subject, and therefore, most of them did not participate voluntarily, this lack of movement led to muscle weakness (Gesetz vom 2. Mai 1883, Nr. 53, 1883). The author of health physical education observed as early as in 1891 that: "the cause of incorrect posture and incorrect stature is mostly based on muscle weakness. [...] Her views correspond to the findings of current physiotherapy." Today's procedures for treating improper posture, whether preventive or curative, offer a wide range of methods and concepts. However, the active element—physical activity—is evident in all of them. Hanušová understood the meaning of physical activity as related to physical education: "treatment of spinal curvature is done mainly by physical exercise to strengthen muscles and maintain the skeleton in the right direction" (Hanušová, 1891, p. 3–4). In connection with physical education, she considered 1–2 h at school as insufficient and recommended to include at least 3 extra hours of physical activity outside of school. She joined the ranks of enlightened people who realized that the extent and level of school physical education were insufficient for children and young people. Klemena Hanušová recommends regular physical activities in the family environment: "The state of health of young people will not get better unless physical exercise is practiced more often and unless it is practiced in every family and every day" (Hanušová, 1891, p. 6–7). Klemena Hanušová was a founding member and the first trainer of the "Gymnastics Association of Ladies and Girls of Prague" founded in 1869, where mainly female college students trained. Klemena Hanušová organized and led the training sessions of the association for 27 years.

She designed a series of exercises that are diverse and on different levels of difficulty. Some exercises were simple movements of upper and lower limbs, torso or head, others were performed using aids—rod, barbell, box. A large number of exercises were recommended to be performed using a chair, door, bed, or sofa. In these cases, it was recommended to also perform compensating exercises (in today's terminology stretching) to compensate for unilateral overloads or corrected deviations from proper posture. In several exercises, we can see the element of "muscle strengthening." In some cases, these were quite dangerous—for example, a person lies on two chairs with one supporting only the head and the other supporting half of the calves. All the exercises were divided by difficulty and according to the actual physical condition of the child. There were exercises for "the weakest children," "adult girls," and so on. She also recommended the number of repetitions of each exercise as well as a suitable time to perform them: "morning and evening, not immediately before and after meals, in too tight clothes" (Hanušová, 1891, p. 9).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Following the December Constitution of 1867, the Austrian Parliament passed many laws to modernize and thus improve

the functioning of the Danube monarchy. After the defeat in the Prussian–Austrian War, it was not surprising that the army was not spared these reforms either. The basis for the reconstruction of the army was the universal military conscription: "conscription is universal and every citizen [...], capable of defense, must fulfill it in person" (Gesetz vom 5. Dezember 1868, Nr. 151, 1868). Thanks to the universal conscription duty, in Cisleithania, 470,000 men were to be summoned in the event of mobilization (Gesetz vom 5. Dezember 1868, Nr. 151, 1868). For these soldiers, however, the conscription duty did not end after completing basic military service but they became soldiers in reserve. Obligatory draft, which were strictly controlled, for most conscripts took place after the age of 20, but a significant part of them was exempted from military service for health reason.

Another pillar of the modernization of the Cisleithanian administration was to be the reform of the school system which aimed to transform the whole system of education. Education was to be guaranteed by the state and the state was to be in charge of the decisions regarding the school administration and the framework of the curriculum. The goal was to get the school out of the world of abstract concepts and to prepare pupils and students for life in the real world in the best possible way, especially given their future participation in the labor market. The development of the economy of the Austrian and Czech lands was to become the engine that would stir up the colossus of the Danube monarchy to catch up with the most developed powers, especially Prussia.

In March 1867, the Ministry of Cult and Education was restored. On May 25, 1868, a law was passed "laying down the basic rules on the position of the school to the Church." Its first paragraph stated the following: "The supreme management of all education and its supervision is the responsibility of the State and will be executed by the authorities designated for that purpose" (Gesetz vom 25. Mai 1868, Nr. 48, 1868). Only the teaching of religion remained within the remit of the Church, and in other subjects, as stated in § 2 of the Act, "the Church [had] no effect." The Church could set up and administer church schools at their own expense, but church schools had to comply with "issued laws on education," i.e., they had to comply with all regulations, including the mandatory content of teaching, as state schools (Gesetz vom 25. Mai 1868, Nr. 48, 1868). In short, the letter of the law opened the gate for the creation of a system of modern public education.

The next and fundamental step toward the creation of a new educational system was the adoption of the law establishing the rules for teaching in primary schools in May 1869 (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). This law introduced compulsory 8-years schooling for children from the age of 6.

The law stipulated that the primary school "is a public institution" and must be "maintained at the expense of the state, the country or local municipality [...]" Where and when the obligation to set up a school arises is determined by the provincial legislation," but it is everywhere "in a one-hour radius where there are more than 40 students (by 5-years average) who have to go to school over half a mile away." As regards the number of pupils, the letter of the law prescribed that: "if there is an average of 80 pupils in a primary school for 3 consecutive years,

a third teacher will inevitably be appointed” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). School councils—provincial, district, and municipal—were established for school management and supervision. The school councils also decided: “Whether pupils are to be separated by gender” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). The creation of co-educated schools was prominent mainly in smaller towns and villages solely for reasons of space and finance. In large cities with a significantly larger number of children, even primary schools were divided into boys’ and girls’ schools or in one school into classes for boys and girls.

The law furthermore required the public schools to “educate children in morality and religion, develop their spirit, and provide the proficiency they need for further education in their lives” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). The compulsory subjects at primary school included religion, provincial language, calculus, writing, geometry, natural sciences along with geography and history, singing, and also physical exercise. Physical education was supposed to be taught 2 h per week. However, the letter of the law stated: “the extent to which these subjects should be taught will depend on how many teachers will be set up at one school” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). It shows that the extent to which physical education was taught depended on the local conditions and attitude of the school council, which set up teaching posts and selected teachers, which also applied to the school council of Prague municipal council.

According to the law on public schools, 4-years middle schools were also to be established, which “set up to provide further education to those who do not attend secondary school. [...] Where and from what funds the middle schools shall be established will be set down by the provincial legislation” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). In Prague in the school year 1875/76, there were 18 boys’ and 1 girls’ middle school. Workers’ children mostly followed in the footsteps of their parents and “were employed in factories or larger trade factories.” For them, “factory owners were obliged to set up schools [...] according to the laws on the establishment of public schools” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). Physical education was also among compulsory subjects. However, it was not present at trade and continuing schools.

Compulsory physical education at primary and middle schools was enacted in 1869, but that does not mean that it was taught. In some schools, there was no place to exercise and a qualified physical education teacher, at least at the level of a teacher training institute graduate, was also not always available. However, the material and staffing situation for physical education were continually improving, and in the first decade of the 20th century, boys exercised at the vast majority of schools. In Prague, “for lack of suitable gyms and lack of qualified teachers” (Dolenský, 1920, p. 313), physical education became part of the curriculum in primary schools founded by the city as late as in March 1875. Many meetings and resolutions of the municipal council testify to the fact that: “the Prague municipality assigned considerable importance to the teaching of physical education.” In 1899, Prague councilors decided, among other things, that “when constructing new school buildings, it must be remembered, as far as possible, that the summer gyms

would [...] be provided with glass walls on at least one side [...] so that the walls could be removed in summer and the desired airflow achieved” (Dolenský, 1920, p. 31). Contemporary literature does not mention the extent to which this had been achieved successfully. The glass walls have not been preserved, and even historians of architecture do not know of them. Quite understandably, securing the premises for school physical education took the longest. Few schools had a gym, and in 1911, 21.5% of school districts (Bohemia was divided into 121 districts) did not even have had a playing field (Hanzová, 1992, p. 184).

According to the school regulations for Czech lands from 1870, the goal of physical education was for “young people to gain confidence and courage, to enjoy the orderliness, to have trust in themselves and to maintain the alertness of body and spirit.” The regulation further recommended drills and floor exercises, games, and “at higher levels, where there is sports equipment, also exercises with these” (Hanzová, 1992, p. 41). At primary and middle schools, the teacher had to choose exercises that could be done in modest conditions, mostly in the open air. These were mostly games and gymnastics. The recommended equipment was the one with which it was possible to train in the schoolyard—gymnastic cones, skipping ropes, short sticks, or which could be installed in the absence of the gym, such as ladders. The physical education of boys and girls was similar, while the girls did not engage in strength training, such as climbing, which was recommended only for boys. From the end of the 19th century, teachers in primary and middle schools also had an adequate number of manuals for teaching physical education containing a selection and description of exercises suitable for the physical education of children at public schools.

PREPARING TEACHERS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

The imperial law on primary schools also enriched the education system of Cisleithania with a unified system of education of teachers who were supposed to work in primary and middle schools. The executive power retained the control over the education of teachers who were to educate children and youth in the future as the organizational framework and content of teacher training institutes remained fully in the hands of the Minister of Cult and Education. The representatives of the Austrian government seemed to realize that the contemporary form of child upbringing within the families was strongly influenced by belonging to the social strata, and because of the growing nationalism, the ethos of respect for the reigning family disappeared and was replaced by upbringing which led to the creation of purely national identity. The school thus remained the last and key institution that led or was supposed to lead the children to feel solidarity for the Habsburg House.

A girl or boy who “reached 15th year of his age, was of a healthy and brave body, of integrity, and had a proper preparatory education” could become a participant in a 4-years training course, “separated by gender of partakers.” He or she had to prove this in the “rigorous examination of subjects taught at lower secondary schools or lower gymnasiums

except for foreign languages” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). The curriculum of compulsory subjects at boys’ teacher training institutes included religion, pedagogy, mathematics, introduction to natural sciences of physics and chemistry, geography and history, citizenship education, farm economics, writing, drawing, music, and last but not least physical education (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869). The composition of compulsory subjects at girls’ institutions was similar, including physical education. Instead of the foundations of farm economics, the girls were taught “home economics” and “handwork,” and unlike boys, also the languages that “the Minister of Education determined on the proposal of the Provincial Office.” At the end of the fourth year, the students had to pass a “rigorous examination” of all subjects taught and if he/she was successful he/she received a “maturity certificate,” i.e., graduated. In boys’ institutions, a primary school had to be set up for students’ practice, and girls’ teaching schools were linked to a children’s garden (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869).

The special attention and care given by the Austrian government to teacher education are illustrated by three factors:

- 1) Studying at teacher training institutes was free of charge and “poor, mentally gifted inmates (i.e., students) receive scholarships when they undertake to serve as a teacher for at least 6 years.”
- 2) There were not to be more than 40 students in one class of teacher training institutes.
- 3) The law on primary schools introduced a system of lifelong learning for teachers, which included compulsory attendance at professional conferences and the offer of post-graduate courses “at the time of the autumn holidays” (Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62, 1869).

In the second half of the 19th century, the exclusive conditions and high demands placed on students at teacher training institutes shifted these educational institutions into the field of exclusive education on the same level as gymnasiums. No tuition and the possibility of receiving scholarships opened the gates of these schools to talented, hardworking, and motivated students from lower social classes.

On May 26, 1874, the Ministry of Cult and Education issued an organizational statute for teacher training institutes. In this comprehensive regulation, physical education was given considerable attention. For boys’ teacher training institutes, the objectives of the exercise were formulated rather ambitiously: “To perform dexterity in an exemplary manner, [...] to recognize the mechanisms of movements and changes in their development, to understand the technique of movements, to acquire the ability to decompose them, [...] to become acquainted with the historical development, with the principles and with the pedagogical task of physical education” (Hanzová, 1992, p. 132).

Furthermore, the aforementioned organizational statute defined the content of physical education in individual years, especially didactic procedures, and stated that only in the third year should the “grater consideration be given to individual exercises to increase students’ dexterity” (Hanzová, 1992). Within the female teacher training institutes, the organizational status defined the same goals for physical education, but how they were

to be achieved was somewhat different. Greater emphasis was put on group exercises and practical and theoretical instructions focused on physical education for girls.

A student could be excused from physical exercises only based on a medical certificate, but he/she was not exempt from watching physical education lessons and theoretical physical education lessons. The curriculum of physical education seemed to be well-thought-out and modern. However, the number of lessons per week, i.e., 2 h of physical education per week in the first 2 years, and a lesson per week in the third and fourth years, which were lesser than the violin lessons, were probably not enough to achieve the skills of future primary school teachers.

On May 2, 1883, a law was adopted “amending certain provisions of the law of 14 May 1869.” It brought one important change in the teaching of physical education at primary and middle schools and that was the fact that physical education remained compulsory only for boys, for girls it became “non-obligatory” (Gesetz vom 2. Mai 1883, Nr. 53, 1883). The amendment also allowed an increase in the number of pupils in the class to one hundred during half-day classes. The amendment to the Primary Schools Act gave the school councils room to specify some of its sections. The municipal school council in Prague decided, “that voluntary physical education at girls’ schools should always be put at the end of lessons or in the afternoon” (Dolenský, 1920, p. 276).

The annual report of the Provincial School Council for Bohemia for the school year 1910/1911 confirms that physical education for girls was taught at primary and middle schools only exceptionally because of “lack of suitable premises or [because] the parents of pupils did not want it to be taught.” The negative attitude of parents toward the physical education of girls led to the fact that “not all pupils participated in the teaching of this optional subject [...] nor even at schools when there is the opportunity to do so” (Hanzová, 1992, p. 184). The parents’ negative attitude to non-compulsory physical education could have been caused by their inclusion at the end of their classes, as mothers might have preferred to have their daughters rush home after school and do housework instead of physical education.

THE POSITION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary schools underwent evolutionary development from the mid-19th century until the First World War. There were several causes of the relative conservatism of secondary education, but the elitist nature of this level of education dominated among them. The Czech ethnic environment perceived the growth in the number of secondary schools with the Czech language of instruction as a success of national emancipation efforts. Furthermore, the establishment of the gymnasium strengthened the prestige and importance of the town where it was founded. Graduating from secondary school opened up opportunities for employment outside of manual work, which in itself brought a higher social status.

But the desired social status was not free. Secondary school students had to acquire a considerable amount of knowledge and submit to a discipline that consisted of meticulous homework and orderly behavior in the classroom.

The framework of secondary education in Austria and Austria-Hungary was shaped by Proposal on the Organization of Gymnasiums and Secondary Schools in Austria (Orig. Entwurf der Organization der Gymnasien und Realschulen in Oesterreich), written by University professor of philosophy and the Austrian ministerial councillor Franz Serafin Exner and the German gymnasium professor and philologist Hermann Bonita (Rezníčková, 2006, p. 13). The principles of the proposal began to be applied in 1854 and created the pillars on which Austrian secondary education had been based throughout its upcoming existence. The reform significantly reduced the influence of the Church and strengthened the role of state and provincial authorities in the establishment of secondary schools and administration and the authority of the director and the teaching staff in their day-to-day management. Gymnasiums had 8 years of instructions divided into two stages—lower and higher, the lower gymnasium could exist separately (Rezníčková, 2006, p. 14). The content of the curriculum was supposed to help bring the graduates closer to real life by extended teaching of science subjects. However, the study of Latin and Greek still accounted for almost half of the curriculum of compulsory education. The state graduation exam was introduced and successful completion of this very rigorous exam became a prerequisite for admission to the university or the state administration.

Another type of secondary school was a “Realschule” which was similar to the gymnasium in the number of years of instruction. Graduates of Realschule could study at the Technical University in Prague or Vienna. Learning at these schools was mainly supposed to prepare students for employment in various jobs in public administration and the private sector after graduation. In 1868, the length of Realschule studies was extended to 7 years, and a year later students took their first school-leaving exam. The December Constitution of 1867 did not include their administration in the imperial competences, and thus their establishment and management were transferred to the competencies of the territorial assembly, or rather the provincial school councils. Physical education was mostly taught at Realschule because the provincial school council could classify it as a compulsory subject.

When designing the Proposal on the Organization of Gymnasiums and Secondary Schools in Austria, its creators considered the inclusion of physical education as a compulsory subject. In the end, it was incorporated into a group of elective subjects, which students had to pay for beyond the tuition fee. For that reason, there was no uniform curriculum for school physical education, and each institute, if it wanted to teach physical education, created it separately and submitted it to the provincial school council for approval (Rezníčková, 2006, p. 82).

Most Catholic priests opposed physical education in secondary schools, and a large number of secondary school professors believed that a student of the Austrian gymnasium should study hard and not run around the playfield. However, some gymnasiums taught physical education before the

introduction of the Exner-Bonitz reform. At gymnasiums where physical education was taught, the schedule was mostly in the afternoon after completion of compulsory subjects. The gym could be found in school buildings only exceptionally, and therefore students usually spent the lesson in the open air. They practiced floor exercises, and accompanied by the teacher, made trips to the surroundings of their school. Physical education lessons thus largely depended on the weather and local conditions—in winter, physical education was taught only at schools where the surroundings offered opportunities for skating and sledding.

Vocational secondary schools started to emerge in the middle of the 19th century. There were industrial, commercial, and economic (agricultural) schools, where physical education was mostly not part of the curriculum.

At the turn of the 20th century, some secondary school teachers began to point out the miserable physical condition of the students caused by the lack of exercise and fresh air. Professor Karel Kopecký, a teacher at a gymnasium in Rychnov nad Kněžnou, wrote in 1904: “In the youth entrusted in their care, the teachers observe pale cheeks, stunted growth, humped posture, frequent headaches, sore throats, nose bleeds, the weakening of their mental power and energy for learning” (Rezníčková, 2006, p. 84). The poor physical condition of gymnasium students meant higher sickness rate and lower work performance of future officials and negative social and economic impacts on the activities of middle-class members in education, health care, justice, and private entrepreneurship. Poor health and physical condition of secondary school students also often led to an exemption from military service. Although graduates of secondary schools formed only a small group of the population, they were rather significant in terms of potential mobilization of military reserves. According to the aforementioned conscription law (§ 21), after graduation from secondary school or university, the students could volunteer for a 1-year military service, which was advantageous because the other conscripted soldiers served in the army for 3 years. These 1-year volunteers passed the officer’s test at the end of their service in the army and after leaving active service became officers in reserve (Gesetz vom 5. Dezember 1868, Nr. 151, 1868). In the event of mobilization, they would be called to supplement the professional officer corps as necessary. Quite understandably, a secondary school graduate who was “not fit in terms of spirit and body” could not fulfill the conscription duty (Gesetz vom 5. Dezember 1868, Nr. 151, 1868, p. 400). Although probably “fit in the spirit” as the owner of the school leaving certificate, the recruitment committee quite often assessed his physical condition for service in the army as unsatisfactory.

The Austrian Ministry of Cult and Education invited education experts to carry out the reforms and in 1908 organized a survey on the reform of secondary school. Based on the results of this survey, physical education became a compulsory subject in gymnasiums in 1909 in the amount of 2 h per week.

The content of teaching at gymnasiums fell within the competence of the imperial Ministry of Cult and Education, and therefore the curriculum, which was designed for 8-years-long gymnasiums, came into force by ministerial decree in June

1911. The goals of physical education were declared as follows: “Versatile and uniform body development. Maintenance and strengthening of health. Acquiring a natural, beautiful posture. Education toward the conscious will-controlled movement. Body strength and dexterity. Sensitivity, mental alertness, and joy. Courage, prudence, perseverance. Sense of order and sociability. Stimulating a lasting taste for body strengthening” (*Učebná Osnova*, 1911).

The teaching of physical education according to the new curriculum was based on the principle of gradual addition of different physical activities and an increase in their intensity. Essentially, this meant that demands on students in terms of physical and motor skills were gradually increasing. Students of gymnasiums were supposed to learn floor and drill exercises, as well as exercises on apparatus, play games, and practice so-called “folk exercises,” which included walking, running, jumping, throwing and catching, batting, and tugging. In the fourth grade, basic fencing exercises (advance, retreat, lunge) were added, as well as exercises with light dumbbell and iron bars. From the sixth grade, the dumbbells were little heavier (2 kg) with which the students circled and lunged. They also practiced with a two-pound rod as with a self-defense tool (*Učebná Osnova*, 1911).

On September 10, 1870, the Minister of Cult and Education established an examination committee in Vienna for those who wanted to “become a teacher of physical education at a secondary school.” In the theoretical exam, the candidate for physical education teacher at a secondary school had to prove knowledge of the history of physical education, knowledge of the works of “Jahn, Eiselen, and Spiess” as well as knowledge of exercise apparatus and “how to establish exercise stations.” Another part of the theoretical examination focused on the candidate’s knowledge of anatomy and physiology and first aid. During the practical exam, the candidate had to demonstrate his skills in “floor and apparatus exercises” (*Verordnung des Ministers für Kultus und Unterricht vom 10. September 1870, Nr. 116, 1870*). In 1879, the same examination committee began to operate in Prague.

In 1871, a 2-years training course was set up in Vienna for future physical education teachers. In 1892, a similar course was open in Prague. The courses were held for four semesters and their content corresponded to the topics of the above-mentioned exam. In 1906, the Czech course was connected to the Institute of Anatomy of the Faculty of Medicine of Charles University, and the position of the course director was assumed by the university professor, usually a professor of anatomy. This “promotion” of the course brought an increase in its prestige and led to a better quality of teaching. However, if a graduate wanted to work as a full professor at secondary school, he had to study another subject at least eight semesters at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University.

CONCLUSION

This article focused on the development of health care and the physical growth of youth in Prague, the metropolis of the Czech lands, in the period after the division of the Habsburg

monarchy into the Cisleithanian and Transleithanian regions. The fundamental legislative framework for this agenda was gradually created through laws enacted by the Imperial Council, which were valid throughout the territory West of the Leitha River. This legislation included labor law, laws on education, and health care. The concept of the modern constitution of 1867, which guaranteed the civil rights and freedom of the individual, was based on the division of power between the central executive and legislative power and the provincial and municipal bodies. Especially in education and health care, a considerable part of the competencies was entrusted to the territorial assemblies and municipalities, which was the right decision in such a large and unevenly developed area, such as Cisleithania. Vienna was motivated by an effort to modernize the entire Cisleithanian region, which was extremely difficult. Eighteen countries formed a very disparate unit with industrially developed areas—such as Lower and Upper Austria and Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, alongside very underdeveloped regions—such as Galicia and Bukovina. Although Prague did not reach the economic significance and cultural level of Vienna, which was the center of the entire Cisleithanian region, it was the most developed provincial metropolis. Especially in the period studied, Prague became a regional center marked by the rapid development of industrialization with corresponding rapid urbanization. This negatively affected the environment in the city, which harmed the health of children and youth and limited the possibilities of their physical activities. We focused on school physical education, which was the only opportunity for regular physical activity for most of the children and young people in Prague until the end of the 19th century. School physical education, as well as the work of school doctors, had its limits, but the Austrian, or rather the Prague school showed one of the key paths for the physical development of children and youth. On the example of Prague, we can see that Prague councilors paid considerable attention to the welfare of children and young people but it never became a part of the political struggle. From the 1860s, the Czechs controlled the Prague City Hall, and all councilors agreed to support Czech education. The rivalry between the Czechs and the Germans was an advantage for the welfare of children and young people because the social elites of both nationalities paid considerable attention to it. Also, at the provincial and imperial levels, the children and youth welfare was not a very politicized topic, and most representatives of the legislative and executive powers were guided by the effort to develop it with rational tools. The well-intentioned effort came up, quite understandably, against the material condition. A vast majority of the population of the relatively “rich” Cisleithanian region lived in modest to poor conditions, and only the absolute elite of society was truly affluent. Public budgets also had limited resources. This also applies to the Bohemian territorial assembly and the Prague municipality as both were responsible for the material part of children and youth welfare.

At the end of the 19th century, there was already a decent awareness within society about the necessity of physical activity for children’s health and physical development and the importance of physical activities in the lives of young people. In most cases, however, more important and necessary areas

worthy of support emerged in the care of children and young people. It was, and probably still is, true that: “everyone knows the refreshing effect of physical education, especially games; nobody doubts that properly conducted exercise prevents the emergence of various school diseases and yet exercise is still neglected!” (Bešták, 1895).

Between the mid-19th century and the outbreak of the First World War, the Cisleithanian part of the Habsburg monarchy underwent a process we call the transformation of traditional society into modern. The goal of our study was to analyse the conditions in which children and young people grew up—mainly in terms of health: where they lived, what they ate, what education and health care they received, and what physical activities they could do. The period we have studied starts in 1867 when a new constitution was adopted by the Austrian Parliament. This constitution divided the monarchy into two units in terms of state administration and made Cisleithania a modern decentralized parliamentary state. In 1869, the Law on Primary Schools

brought a revolution in the education of the entire population, and what is crucial for our study, made physical education a compulsory subject within primary education. Conducting our research for the whole area of the western part of the Danube monarchy would require much more space than an academic journal allows us, and therefore, we have concentrated on Prague, as an example of a dynamically developing industrial center.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

MW and DP took part in the writing of this paper. Both authors have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

REFERENCES

- Bešták, V. (1895). *Tělocvik pro školy obecné a měšťanské [Physical Education for Primary and Middle Schools]*. Praha: Nákladem vydavatele kalendáře učitelského. Available online at: https://ckis.cuni.cz/F/195X79C275MGPVUVUDHL95KYPT3SD7LAVXQJAV6Q7U86C9AFGX-34163?func=full-set-set&set_number=000401&set_entry=000002&format=999.
- Cohen, G. B. (2000). *Němci v Praze 1861–1914 [Germans in Prague 1861–1914]*. Praha: Karolinum.
- Dolenský, J. (Ed.). (1920). *Dějiny Pražského Školství V Létech 1860–1914. [History of Prague Education System 1860–1914]*. Praha: Nákladem hlav. města Prahy. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/6PHAGH8EY6H114L49PQT6G7GAHGN3F97D1PYP2J188YMNLTLDG-19318?func=full-set-set&set_number=122956&set_entry=000067&format=999.
- Efmertová, M. C. (1998). *Ceské země v letech 1848–1918. [Czech Lands in 1848–1918]*. Praha: Libri. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/9M11JDXQ4XF5QP2MEGUTBKMBCI237IGTTYSLTYUMPQ61G6YBX-17355?func=full-set-set&set_number=089680&set_entry=000004&format=999.
- Gesetz vom 14. Mai 1869, Nr. 62. (1869). “Durch welches die Grundsätze des Unterrichtswesens bezüglich der Volksschulen festgestellt erlassen (Nr. 62),” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für Kaiserthum Osterreich*. Jahrgang 1869. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18690004&seite=00000277&size=45>.
- Gesetz vom 21. Dezember 1867, Nr. 141. (1867). *Wodurch das Grundgesetz die Reichsvertretung vom 26 Februar 1861 abgeändert wird*. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?aid=rgb&datum=1867&size=45&page=417>.
- Gesetz vom 23. Februar 1897, Nr. 63. (1897). “Betreffend die Abänderung und Ergänzung der Gewerbeordnung,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für die Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*. Jahrgang 1897. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18970004&seite=00000375&size=45>.
- Gesetz vom 25. Mai 1868, Nr. 48. (1868). “Wodurch grundsätzliche Bestimmungen über das Verhältniss der Schule zur Kirche erlassen werden (Nr. 48),” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für Kaiserthum Osterreich*. Jahrgang 1868. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18680004&seite=00000097&size=45>.
- Gesetz vom 2. Mai 1883, Nr. 53. (1883). “Womit einige Bestimmungen des Gesetz vom 14. Mai (R. G. Bl. Nr. 62) abgeändert werden,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für die Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*. Jahrgang 1883. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18830004&seite=00000199&size=45>.
- Gesetz vom 30. April 1870, Nr. 68. (1870). “Betreffend die Organisation des Öffentlichen Sanitätsdienstes,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für die Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*. Jahrgang 1870. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18700004&seite=00000125&size=45>.
- Gesetz vom 5. Dezember 1868, Nr. 151. (1868). “Womit für die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder die Art und Weise der Wehrpflicht geregelt wird,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für Kaiserthum Osterreich*. Jahrgang 1868. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18680004&seite=00000437&size=45>.
- Gesetz vom 8. März 1885, Nr. 22. (1885). “Betreffend die Abänderung und Ergänzung der Gewerbeordnung,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für die Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*. Jahrgang 1885. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18850004&seite=00000035&size=45>.
- Gletler, M. (1972). *Die Wiener Tschechen um 1900*. München; Wien: R. Oldenbourg Verlag.
- Hanušová, K. (1891). *Domáci tělocvik pro dívky chybného držení těla [Home Exercise for Girls of Poor Posture]*. Praha: Nákladem vlastním. Available online at: https://ckis.cuni.cz/F/IJDDPPLGGIB1T5VSY43SHXC99SMKM829JVKM1KRFRJMJ3GQGM-05386?func=full-set-set&set_number=000883&set_entry=000012&format=999.
- Hanzová, M. (1992). *Dějiny školní tělesné výchovy v českých zemích v letech 1848 až 1918 [Disertační práce]. [History of School Physical Education in the Czech Lands 1848–1918]* (Dissertation), Univerzita Karlova, Praha, Czechia.
- Havránek, J. (Ed.). (1998). *Dějiny Univerzity Karlovy III. 1802–1918 [The History of Charles University III. 1802–1918]*. Praha: Karolinum. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/T15N/JUA2FD8BC4LB1TVLFCQPACNEVXYXKQC4X93U1ARU1IUCI-60174?func=full-set-set&set_number=114480&set_entry=000002&format=999.
- Hlavačka, M. (2016). *Ceské země v 19. století: proměny společnosti v moderní době (II. doplněné a rozšířené vydání) [The Czech Lands in the 19th century: Changes in Society in Modern Times]*. Praha: Historický ústav. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/G4P86UJD8PI58TAVBCNP2BAGXIQFH9C3H45AC5RDEDKMGT2TPM-44866?func=full-set-set&set_number=107508&set_entry=000006&format=999.
- Jindra, Z., and Jakubec, I. (2015). *Hospodářský vzestup českých zemí od poloviny 18. století do konce monarchie. [The Economic*

- rise of the Czech Lands from the middle of the 18th century to the end of the monarchy]. Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Nakladatelství Karolinum. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/MD8XUJULLPDPD7DDLF7RNYV3Q1HR6HTU1ICLR6F1UVLC4QFR-25646?func=full-set-set&set_number=108301&set_entry=000017&format=999.
- Kaiserliches Patent vom 20. December 1859, Nr. 227. (1859). “Womit eine Gewerbe-Ornung für den ganzen Umfang des Reiches, mit Ausnahme des venetianischen Verwaltungsgebietes und der Militärgränze erlassen,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für das Kaiserthum Ostereich*. Jahrgang 1859. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18590004&seite=00000619&size=45>.
- Kota, M. (2010). *Proměny města Brna v letech 1848–1914 [Transformations of the City of Brno in the years 1848–1914]* (Bachelor thesis), Masaryk University, Brno, Czechia.
- Lenderová, M., and Rýdl, K. (2006). *Radostné dětství?, Dítě v Cechách devatenáctého století [Joyful Childhood? A Child in the 19th-Century Bohemia]*. Praha: Paseka. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/NXP4UPQCAH81QXHD8SFMGDT4LR2MNJU22XAVLQJRLAPIMISI-08235?func=full-set-set&set_number=111354&set_entry=000034&format=999.
- Rezníčková, K. (2006). *Ceské střední školy, jejich studenti a profesori v letech 1867 až 1918 [Czech grammar schools, their students and teachers, 1867–1918]* (Dissertation), Univerzita Karlova, Praha, Czechia. Available online at: <https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/27389/>.
- Slámová, P. (n.d.). “Obnovení samosprávy a její vývoj do vzniku Velké Prahy (1848–1922) [The renewal of self-government and its development until the establishment of Greater Prague],” in *Vývoj městské správy a samosprávy v letech 1784–2000. [Development of City Administration and Self-Government in the Years 1784–2000]* (Praha: Archive of the Capital City of Prague). Available online at: http://www.ahmp.cz/index.html?mid=46_wstyle=0_page=page/docs/vyvoj-prazske-samospravy-II-A.html.
- Tauchen, J., and Schelle, K. (2012). “Obecný zákoník občanský (ABGB)–cisarský patent č. 946/1811 JGS z 1. června 1811 [The general civil code (ABGB)–imperial patent No. 946/1811 JGS from 1 July 1811],” in *Občanské zákoníky [The Civil Codes]* (Ostrava: KEY Publishing), 201–334. Available online at: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/BT5HB6B9XKY8QR64F7ANEXARLIHV3ES7THLGMPKT6F26TF9SJK-24611?func=full-set-set&set_number=141351&set_entry=000030&format=999.
- Učebná Osnova (1911). “Učebná osnova a instrukce k vyučování tělocviku i nariadení o porádání her mládeže na gymnasiích (všech typu) a na reálných školách [Curriculum and instructions for teaching physical education as well as regulations on the organization of youth games at grammar schools (of all types) and at middle schools],” in *Věstník c. k.* (Minister. kultu a vyučování), 213–249. Available online at: [https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/LMX7CYXPJG41XLCHAFTUN32GYM6IP3CKIADPGT1MFQ6PJGPN-25587?func=find-b&find_code=WTL&request=%E2%80%9CU%C4%8Debn%C3%A1%\\$osnova%\\$a%\\$instrukce%\\$k%\\$vyu%C4%8Dov%C3%A1n%C3%AD%\\$t%C4%9Blocviku](https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/LMX7CYXPJG41XLCHAFTUN32GYM6IP3CKIADPGT1MFQ6PJGPN-25587?func=find-b&find_code=WTL&request=%E2%80%9CU%C4%8Debn%C3%A1%$osnova%$a%$instrukce%$k%$vyu%C4%8Dov%C3%A1n%C3%AD%$t%C4%9Blocviku).
- Verordnung des Ministers für Kultus und Unterricht vom 10. September 1870, Nr. 116. (1870). “Womit eine Vorschrift über die Prüfungen der Kandidaten für das Lehramt des Turnens an Mittelschulen und Lehrer-Bildungsanstalten kundgemacht wird,” in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt für die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*. Jahrgang 1870. Available online at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=18700004&seite=00000261&size=45>.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2020 Waic and Pavlů. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



“Sports Maternalism”, to Train and Take Care: Ethnographic Investigation in Baton Twirling Clubs

Shia Manh Ly^{1,2*}

¹ Institut de Sociologie, Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université de Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, ² Haute école de travail social et de la santé Lausanne HETSL – HES-SO, Lausanne, Switzerland

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Patrick Clastres,
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Reviewed by:

Mark Doidge,
University of Brighton,
United Kingdom
Kyle Rich,
Brock University, Canada

*Correspondence:

Shia Manh Ly
shiam.ly@gmail.com

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 27 April 2020

Accepted: 07 December 2020

Published: 06 January 2021

Citation:

Ly SM (2021) “Sports Maternalism”, to Train and Take Care: Ethnographic Investigation in Baton Twirling Clubs. *Front. Sports Act. Living* 2:556195. doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.556195

This article is the result of an ethnographic work on baton twirling clubs in Switzerland: clubs with few members coming from a modest origin, offering a social and physical activity with little resonance, composed of children, and young girls. The supervision is mainly the responsibility of close volunteers: family members, friends or neighbors and, for the majority of them, women. It is therefore an environment where people know each other, where gestures of familiarity are the rule and where tensions may sometimes arise due to various conflicts of proximity. Baton twirling is based on a public display of participants and the competitive aspiration for a self-presentation that solicits feminine stereotypes. It shows sociabilities and socialities framed by gender and age relationships: within clubs, knowledge transmission and childcare are combined in women’s practices. The relationships between women and children transcend learning relationships. These relationships, which go beyond a vertical transmission of knowledge, call for approaches inspired by the theories of *care*. What is the meaning of these relationships based on women’s care from the point of view of sociality and in relation to the institution of sport? This is the main question that will be addressed here. Approaches of care emphasize accompaniment, maintenance. They seem to be a good way to identify the contours of a “sports maternalism” which makes such a commitment valid while at the same time conferring legitimacy on a sports practice that is poorly considered.

Keywords: ethnography, sports club, sociabilities, care, gender, sportification

INTRODUCTION

If the historiography of sport has for a long time largely marked out the themes of identities—be they political, cultural, social, ethnic or gender -, it has not shown the same interest in questions relating to the characteristics and determinations linked to age in sporting practices. In Switzerland, proportion of children and adolescents joining sports clubs is increasing, more than a third of active members are under 20 years of age and the greatest growth is seen among children (Marston Tallec, 2015) under 10 years of age (Lamprecht et al., 2017). Although well established, sports clubs have a lack of attention in terms of producing social identities.

While cultural practices and behaviors of children and adolescents have been extensively studied in relation to institutions such as family or school as places of socialization, only some research has dealt with leisure activities in the context of associative life. Sport clubs occupy the reflection in French-speaking sociology of sport for example in terms of response to social problems (Pantaléon, 2003; Gasparini and Vieille-Marchiset, 2008; Coignet, 2013). To sum up, sociology of sport addresses sports clubs generally following, regardless of their national focus, a vertical transmission of values approach. However, the interest of this article is to grasp the club from the perspective of associative socialities and sociabilities.

The subject of this article is the result of a sociological analysis that follows a 3-year ethnographic method in the framework of a thesis¹. This thesis is devoted to baton twirling clubs in Switzerland, which are small clubs offering a social and physical activity with feminine connotation. The stereotypical but also outdated character of this activity makes it little known and undervalued², contrary to football or tennis for example. These undervalued practices, by valuing their own codes and symbols, resist the cultural forms placed higher up in the hierarchy of social values and confront the cultural contempt they are likely to suffer (Radway, 1984; Brown, 1994) by the place they occupy, i.e., on the margins of "legitimate culture" (Bourdieu, 1979).

Clubs are mainly composed of girls aged between 5 and 20 years. The supervision is the responsibility of close volunteers: family members, friends or neighbors and, for the majority of them, women. It is therefore an environment where people know each other, where gestures of familiarity are the rule (kisses, hugs, confidences, jokes, etc.) and where tensions can sometimes arise due to various conflicts fueled by this great closeness (jealousy, slander, etc.).

Like any sport discipline, baton twirling is based on public exposure of the participants and the competitive aspiration to a self-presentation that solicits female stereotypes (pink bodysuit decorated with sequins, sexualized choreography, etc.). The baton twirling shows sociabilities (ways of living in society) and socialities (set of social bonds) woven by social relations of sex and age: within the clubs, transmission of knowledge and childcare are combined in women's practices.

These practices are invisible, as they are carried out by women and fall within the private sphere. What meaning then do these women give to their practices and how do they give them legitimacy? Questioning these practices from the angle of the notion of *care* from a feminist perspective, notably with the contributions of Laugier (2009) and Gilligan (2009), allows us to talk about the situations, commitments, and spaces occupied by women and the gestures associated with them. These care practices seem to be well-suited to identify the contours of a sports maternalism which, in addition to guiding the action of the instructors, makes such a commitment valid. At the same time,

this sports maternalism confers legitimacy on a sports practice that is poorly considered.

CARE APPROACHES

The focus is on a popular and meaningless activity, baton twirling, by the image it reflects of an aesthetically traditional and conservative femininity, of an ordinary corporality (clubs choose to accept all bodies), but also of low valued cultural tastes (baton twirling is practiced on variety music by athletes with handmade personalized costumes).

If there is little interest in the activity, it is also because it is based on a form of sociality articulated around the poles of the feminine and the familial. Indeed, baton twirling is an activity that mobilizes women, mothers who care for girls, children. These women and girls, which are characterized by gender inequalities and female stereotypes that are poorly valued, are also people from modest backgrounds. The study thus brings together feminist approaches, particularly of care.

Care (Tronto, 2009; Molinier, 2013; Modak, 2015; Skeggs, 2015) is all the material and emotional practices involving support, guidance, assistance, etc. provided by women of lower social status. Historically, these practices have been perceived as private, because they are carried out by women and involve feelings. However, care contains a political dimension because it is public, as Sandra Laugier explains, by the fact that dependence and vulnerability "are features of everyone's condition" (Laugier, 2009). For Laugier, the ethics of care, by its concrete character, is a real activity, a work and an attitude, the "guiding thread" of humanity (Laugier, 2009). Care approaches are feminist. On this point, Laugier agrees with Gilligan when she claims the ethics of care as a democracy without forms of intolerance such as patriarchy, sexism, racism, etc. (Laugier, 2009). The feminist ethics of care wants to detach itself from the gender dichotomy and articulate itself around democratic norms and values (Gilligan, 2009).

Typically, care to children is qualified as feminine and popular and revealing of an unequal distribution system. Susan B. Murray explains the difference between men's "primary" incomes and the "supplements" provided by women, which lead women workers to accept "emotional compensation" instead of financial rewards (Murray, 1996, p.372). Care also allows us to understand how these practices, which are denigrated because they are unregulated and based on a sociality of familiarity and love, are defined and categorized by committed actors.

QUESTIONS

What is the meaning of relationships based on the care taken by women from the point of view of sociality and in relation to the sports institution in the case of baton twirling clubs? How are the values of closeness and support defended or even claimed? How do they stand out in the ordinary life of clubs? Or how do the status of mothers who look after children and the status of instructors who train young sportswomen combine? These are the questions that will be addressed in this article with the help

¹This thesis is the result of research carried out by Division 1 of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) in collaboration with Thomas Zannin, Prof. Dominique Malatesta and Prof. Christophe Jaccoud. It was also financed within the framework of this project.

²This has repercussions with less infrastructure or reduced financial resources.

of excerpts from observations, interviews and field notes. The aim is to grasp how a "sports maternalism" is constructed and how it directs and maintains a fragile sport (to make the practice "pleasant" in a "warm" environment), whose legitimizing horizon lies in a threatening sportification.

METHODS

Procedure

The sociological analysis carried out follows an ethnographic, inductive, and interactionist method. The aim is to analyze the practical action, interactions, categories and interpretations of the actors on their commitment and the meaning they give to it. Within the framework of this research, for the duration of 3 years, 35 observations were carried out to capture the interactions between adults, between adults and children and between children, during training sessions, competitions, general assemblies, and end-of-season parties. Sixteen collective interviews were conducted by a member of the research team with groups of two to four athletes, selected according to their affinities. They have been provided with a parental agreement document to fill in beforehand. Interviews with the children were carried out in groups in order to help them to speak more freely (Golay and Malatesta, 2012). Twenty interviews were also set up with members of the coaching staff, clubs committees and the federation. For the observations, the aim was to follow a precise framework in order to target the research objectives quickly. The interviews followed the same process with open-ended questions also grouped by theme (choice of sport, entry into the "career," etc.). Documentary analysis, press articles, official documents of the clubs and the federation, etc., were also used, which made it possible to understand the functioning of the institution and the processes of visibility of the clubs.

Participants

The chosen fields are three baton twirling clubs in French-speaking cantons of Switzerland. Close to gymnastics and ice skating, baton twirling differs from majorettes³ by its sportification and competitiveness. It is part of Swiss Olympic, the umbrella organization of Swiss sports federations, and is recognized by Jeunesse + Sport, the Swiss program for the promotion of sport among young people in the discipline of gymnastics and dance. The Swiss baton twirling club federation FSTB has around 300 athletes in 12 clubs and is therefore one of the "small" federations (Lamprecht et al., 2017).

Two of the clubs are located in cities (one of more than 200'000 inhabitants and the other of more than 20'000), and training takes place in gymnasiums (school, sports complex, cultural complex). One of them is on the outskirts (village of about 5,000 inhabitants) and training always takes place in the same school.

One of the urban clubs is the result of a split of majorettes troops and has a family management, the grandmother being

responsible for the athletes, the mother being president of the club and the daughter, a former athlete, being the technical manager and in charge of the instructors. Nevertheless, kinship ties between adult club members and athletes are almost non-existent in contrast to the second club located in the city or the village club.

Each club is composed of about twenty athletes, a few coaches and a committee (often with a president, secretary and treasurer, who are also sometimes coaches). In the committees, there are many former athletes, or mothers/fathers of athletes who fill in positions because of a lack of people volunteering. The same goes for coaching, where parents, brothers and sisters are brought in, and sometimes find themselves coaching members of their own family. In many cases, adults wear two hats, as club president and instructor, or technical manager and instructor. Moreover, recruitment is done by word of mouth. Athletes are often neighbors, classmates, brothers, sisters, etc. They are between 5 and 20 years old and have origins that can be qualified as popular, by sociabilities and tastes.

RESULTS

The examples mobilized have been classified according to defined thematic categories. These thematic categories are specific to the approach of analytical induction, i.e., they are derived from the field through interviews and observations. They answer the following question: What is fundamental in this word or gesture? (Paillé and Mucchielli, 2012) To do this, it is necessary to proceed in two steps, first to identify the significant ideas and then to categorize them. This is how the raw data is processed (Negura, 2006). These thematic categories include the relationship to health and pain, to learning through caring and listening, to managing disappointment and attachment to the athlete, and to managing sportification. They seem to be the most relevant for understanding the articulation between care, sociality, and sports institution. The following are excerpts illustrating these care practices in both training and competition.

To get to the heart of the matter, the first excerpt summarizes the close relationship between athletes and instructors during training sessions, through the nicknames given as well as the tactile behavior:

The coach Christelle⁴ calls [the beginners] "come over here sweeties." She gets closer to the stage of the room, looking at a sheet of paper, and shows something to the girl who was drinking "It's beautiful, isn't it? These little hands, these little feet." They were looking at a figure cut from yellow paper. Then, the coach takes the girl in her arms and smiles at me before crossing the room. (Observation, 16.11.15)

Relation to Health and Pain

Throughout the sport season, there is concern for the athlete and her health. The instructors scold the girls when they go outside without a coat during the cold season, make sure that they breathe and eat well-before a performance. There is in the

³Traditionally, majorettes troops are composed of girls. They dress in costume and wield a metal stick following a choreography during public parades. They are usually accompanied by marching bands.

⁴First names have been changed in order to preserve anonymity.

following excerpt another type of concern, at first sight a desire to preserve the athlete's privacy:

When Aline [senior athlete] finishes her choreography, Josette [coach and club's president] makes her understand that her performance was average. Aline is about to cry. Josette takes her in her arms. They walk together and go outside the gym hall. Josette announces to the other girls, "time for a break, I'll be back" [...] Tania [coach] is about to leave. [...] Before she goes, she asks Josette, who comes back alone, if Aline is okay. Josette doesn't answer the question. "It's something else," she says. (Observation, 27.01.16)

The examples given above illustrate care as they relate to the "physical" aspect, the body but also the mental of the athletes. The relationship to health and pain is an eloquent theme about how adults care for the well-being of children as if they were their own. Sorignet (2006) shows that pain is inseparable from the practice of professional dancers, perceiving it as something to be overcome and necessary for progression. Here, the logic is different. The observations have shown that instructors never "force" athletes to continue when they feel physical pain. On the contrary, they are invited to rest. When possible, the instructors arrange to treat them:

Lena [junior athlete]'s foot still hurts. She stays aside and Carla [coach] comes to see her, she quickly massages her foot. (Observation, 23.11.15)

Caring and Listening, Keys to Learning

Learning is always done with benevolence. The instructors never go against the abilities and desires of the athletes, as these excerpts underline:

Eleonor [invited coach] shows Lucia [junior athlete] a maneuver "you don't have to throw yourself." Lucia tries. Eleonor corrects, "stretch your legs a bit, d'you think you can do that?" [...] Lucia smiles and says "no." Eleonor answers, "I won't force you to do that." (Observation, 29.10.15)

I ask Chloé [coach] if the athletes train hard before the championships. Chloé says, "they are kids, they've got their own rhythm." (Observation, 21.01.16)

At the end of the performance, Valentina [junior athlete] does a back walkover [acrobatic maneuver] and falls back on her feet. Tania [coach] concludes, «Vale, if the back walkover doesn't work, we won't do it.» (Observation, 27.01.16)

Murray explains the extension from maternal qualities to professionalization, "perceiving women childcare workers as mothers and conceptualizing their work as mothering, for instance, overshadows other possible perceptions of them as teachers and professionals." (Murray, p.383). In these examples, we can see that for the choreographies and the preparations for competitions, the instructors remain attentive to the children. We can find in coaches an extension of the so-called "maternal qualities."

Managing Disappointment and Commitment to the Athlete

The competitive moments are a major stress for athletes who sometimes perform below their expectations. They train the whole season to present a choreography of <2 min, which can generate some frustration. These disappointments often go hand in hand with sadness or anger. The athletes see the chance of qualifying or obtaining a medal disappear. The excerpt below shows how hard it is to manage these situations:

"- How do you feel about the athletes not wanting to disappoint you?"

"- Sometimes it's hard to handle because no matter what happens, they give the best of themselves. [...] I've seen that with Béatrice [junior athlete] last year, when she did her artistic performance. [...] She wasn't selected. It was very hard to see her cry [...]. But despite everything, I was very proud of her. She gave the best of herself and that's it. It's very hard to handle this for her, but for me, too [...] And at our ages, we learn to relativize, to let things go. But not at their ages [...] Because after that, she lost her motivation, she thought that her skills sucked. [...] I can't let them down because I'm affected. If they are too sensitive, I'll be too sensitive too and I'll want to protect them. And we'll find ourselves in a vicious circle." (Interview, 20.09.17)

This excerpt illustrates the empathy felt by the instructors. They not only follow their performances closely, but also by share with them their disappointment as this coach explains. We note that she nevertheless speaks of a "vicious circle" which may imply a willingness not to get too involved in the intimate life of the athlete despite the desire to take care of the vulnerable child in front of her.

Managing Sportification

Baton twirling faces the logic of "sportification," a social and institutional process aimed at promoting an edutainment of sports status (Parlebas, 1999, p.379). It is illustrated here by an increase in requirements and, consequently, a pronounced individual selection of athletes. Threatening sportification is the most revealing dimension of these care relationships. Indeed, there is a willingness on the part of instructors not to "rush" the athlete and to make the activity "good." For example, during the exploratory interview, a club president stated that "elite is good, but it punishes others." She added that "competitions should be open to everyone" but that "now they [Federation members] are closing all the doors." For her, "we do baton twirling because we like it" (Josette, exploratory interview, 11.06.15). The subject came back during a training session:

Josette [coach and club's president] says that sometimes, there is too much pressure and the girls stop their activity. I ask if it has already happened in her club. Josette answers that "we make sure that they don't go that far." [...] She explains that the Haldi's cup was made for the little ones but now, you have to pass some qualifying exams, this "stuff." [...] Sometimes the juniors can't participate at all. She shows me a girl with orange pants, walking

in front of us, "for example, she has to pass this stuff and for the moment, she's left out." (Observation, 25.11.15).

There has been a mobilization in the name of the principle of integration of all sportswomen notably through a collective letter addressed to the federation, which resulted in a positive outcome, with the opening of a new, less restrictive category during the various rounds of the Swiss championship.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this article was to understand the relationships and meanings that are played out within small clubs and in relation to the sports institution. The previous excerpts illustrate in a concrete way the stakes around this sports maternalism from the point of view of care, a notion that makes it possible not to lock the actors on the field into a closed universe but to emphasize what this type of relationship to the other means.

It is possible to find these words and examples in other clubs. It is not characteristic or specific to the baton twirling. However, this approach from the angle of care is essential to the analysis of these practices and the places in which they take shape. The examples make particular sense when clubs face sportification. The practices that take place within these small communities can then be read as a claim for a better place for sportspeople who do not meet the criteria of excellence. Sportification provides an understanding of how clubs "reinterpret" their practice by intensifying a "common membership" based on caring relationships, without paying attention to each other's abilities (Malatesta et al., 2014). We are moving away from judgement to create a more local "sports culture" (Malatesta et al., 2014).

In fact, we can see it in the mobilized excerpts touching different categories, in reactions and gestures, that mothers, sisters, etc. take on several roles such as instructor, animator, etc. but what deserves to be retained is that young athletes are not on the bangs of the phenomenon. Taking on the roles of friend or teammate, it goes without saying that they have above all their primary role: that of a child (Malatesta et al., 2014). This plurality of roles taken on explains the specificity of relationships and their meaning. It can be said that this sports maternalism is not an application of a "savoir-vivre." It is a response to the message addressed by the sports world, which not only marginalizes the practice of baton twirling but which at the same time forces it to become sportified.

Analyzing clubs as places of socialities and sociabilities has relevance for research in sociology and development. This leads to a better knowledge in terms of organized leisure, all the more so when it has a low social and cultural value. It helps to understand associative engagement as well as the relationship to the public and democratic space, a relationship that reveals various issues, notably interests and power between social groups.

Taking into consideration care and "sports maternalism" within the associative life also contributes to the understanding of the commitment of minority publics in society. This contribution thus has a resolutely political dimension. It offers knowledge on a theoretical and empirical level, but also on a methodological level insofar as it opens up the discussion on the modes of investigation of the involvement of minority groups in fragile organizations.

CONCLUSION

We have seen through this article how care practices are at the base of baton twirling clubs through the different interactions that take place. Within the clubs, it is almost not possible to wear a unique hat, the status are combined. It is a question of caring relationships in the face of the ever-increasing sportification of baton twirling. The aim is to encourage girls to persevere and to "keep" them in a fragile sport. It is therefore a question of moving away from this logic of sportification imposed from "above," in order to make the practice more enjoyable.

Above all, there is a strong will to preserve a solid being together, which translates into a "gift of self." One takes care of an athlete as one would take care of one's own daughter. Care thus takes on its full meaning when talking about sports commitments, but also about promoting the activity and "fighting" against the institution. It allows us to understand the meaning of this care for others but also for ourselves since it is a human condition.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

ETHICS STATEMENT

No potentially identifiable images or data are included in this article.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This article is the result of a sociological analysis that follows a three-year ethnographic method implemented in the framework of a thesis and of a research carried out by Division 1 of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) in collaboration with Thomas Zannin, Prof. Dominique Malatesta and Prof. Christophe Jaccoud.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

REFERENCES

- Bourdieu, P. (1979). *La distinction. Critique Sociale du Jugement*. Paris: Minuit.
- Brown, M. E. (1994). *Soap Opera and Women's Talk. The Pleasure of Resistance*. London: Sage.
- Coignet, B. (2013). *Sport et Innovation Sociale. Des Associations Sportives en Mouvement Dans les Quartiers Populaires*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- Gasparini, W., and Vieille-Marchiset, G. (2008). *Le Sport Dans les Quartiers. Pratiques sociales et politiques publiques*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France. doi: 10.3917/puf.gasp.2008.01
- Gilligan, C. (2009). Le care, éthique féminine ou éthique féministe? *Multitudes* 37–38, 76–78. doi: 10.3917/mult.037.0076
- Golay, D., and Malatesta, D. (2012). L'amitié entre filles de 9 à 11 ans : entre affinités individuelles et enjeux statutaires. *SociologieS*. Available online at: <http://sociologies.revues.org/4089>
- Lamprecht, M., Bürgi, R., Gebert, A., and Stamm, H. (2017). *Clubs sportifs en Suisse. Evolutions, défis et Perspectives*. Macolin: OFSPO.
- Laugier, S. (2009). L'éthique comme politique de l'ordinaire. *Multitudes* 37–38, 80–88. doi: 10.3917/mult.037.0080
- Malatesta, D., Jaccoud, C., and Golay, D. (2014). Des publics juvéniles fabricants de cultures sportives : Le cas de deux sports pratiqués en club par des filles en Suisse romande. *Agora débats/jeunesses* 68, 113–126. doi: 10.3917/agora.068.0113
- Marston Talleg, K. (2015). "A lost legacy of fraternity? The Case of European youth football," in *Routledge Handbook of Sport and Legacy. Meeting the Challenge of Major Sports Events*. Holt, R. and Ruta, D, Ed (London: Routledge International Handbooks), 176–188. doi: 10.4324/9780203132562-14
- Modak, M. (2015). Pascale Molinier: Le travail du care. *Nouvelles Questions Féministes* 34, 126–130. doi: 10.3917/nqf.341.0126
- Molinier, P. (2013). *Le travail du Care*. Paris: La Dispute.
- Murray, S. B. (1996). "WE ALL LOVE CHARLES": men in child care and the social construction of gender. *Gender Society* 10, 368–385. doi: 10.1177/089124396010004002
- Negura, L. (2006). L'analyse de contenu dans l'étude des représentations sociales. *SociologieS*. Available online at: <http://journals.openedition.org/sociologies/993>
- Paillé, P., and Mucchielli, A. (2012). "Chapitre 11 - L'analyse thématique," in *L'analyse Qualitative en Sciences Humaines et Sociales*. Paillé, P and Mucchielli, A eds. (Paris: Armand Colin), 231-314. doi: 10.3917/arco.paill.2012.01
- Pantaléon, N. (2003). Socialisation par les activités sportives et jeunes en difficultés sociales. *Empa* 3, 51–53. doi: 10.3917/empa.051.0051
- Parlebas, P. (1999). *Jeux, sports et sociétés*. Paris: INSEP. doi: 10.4000/books.insep.1067
- Radway, J. (1984). *Reading the Romance. Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Skeggs, B. (2015). *Des Femmes Respectables. Classe et Genre en Milieu Populaire*. Marseille: Agone. doi: 10.3917/agon.berve.2015.01
- Sorignet, P. (2006). Danser au-delà de la douleur. *Actes Recherche Sciences Sociales* 63, 46–61. doi: 10.3917/arss.163.0046
- Tronto, J. (2009). *Un Monde Vulnérable. Pour Une Politique du Care*. Paris: La Découverte.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2021 Ly. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Swann's Way: Youth, Personal Affinities, and Acculturation Through Sport in Nineteenth Century France

François Bourmaud^{1,2*}

¹ Centre d'Histoire du XIX^e Siècle (CRHXIX), Sorbonne Université, Paris, France, ² Centre d'Etudes Olympiques et de la Globalisation du Sport (CEO&GS), UNIL, Lausanne, Switzerland

This study of two Franco-British cultural mediators and their entourage explores the criteria of age and personal affinities in the process of acculturation through sports in nineteenth century France. The youth of those who were the first to take up on modern sports is an element that at first seems obvious, but it is probable that up until now this has been underestimated in the understanding of the way individuals opened up to embrace these new activities. Nevertheless, this factor is powerful, in particular when crossed with personal links such as friendship or camaraderie which prompt the sharing and discovery of sporting activities. Despite their dual culture, Alfred Swann (1863–1928) and Cosme de Satgé (1840–1898) did not adopt British pastimes with the same enthusiasm: the former discovered modern sport when he was an adolescent and became an active agent in their spread in Paris whereas the latter did not manage to truly appreciate and pass on British Leisure activities he discovered after he had turned 30. Moreover, both cases underline the fact that sports diffusion often follows the channels of personal affinities: the young lycée pupils around Alfred Swann, like Cosme de Satgé's children, were acculturated through British sports at the time of their adolescence, not by adults, but by friends and chums of their age.

Keywords: sports diffusion, cultural mediators, France, youth, sport history, Swann, Satgé

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Pierre-Olaf Schut,
Université Gustave Eiffel, France

Reviewed by:

Xavier Pujadas Marti,
Universitat Ramon Llull, Spain
Thomas Bauer,
University of Limoges, France

*Correspondence:

François Bourmaud
francois.bourmaud@net-c.com

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 12 May 2020

Accepted: 16 November 2020

Published: 04 February 2021

Citation:

Bourmaud F (2021) Swann's Way:
Youth, Personal Affinities, and
Acculturation Through Sport in
Nineteenth Century France.
Front. Sports Act. Living 2:561542.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2020.561542

INTRODUCTION

Studies on the spread of sport throughout the world are currently the focus of a certain interest. Some of them are focused on one sport in particular while others feature geographical areas (Eisenberg, 1999; Van Bottenburg, 2001; Darbon, 2008; Dietschy, 2011; Holt, 2011; Tomlinson and Young, 2011; Van Bottenburg, 2010). They attempt to analyse both the conditions which make these cultural transfers possible and the actors who take part but also they examine the changes that ensue. The aim of this article is to contribute to a better understanding of this dissemination mechanism by underlining the point that in studies on sports diffusion the criterion of age needs to be taken into account as well as the relationships between the individuals concerned.

The youth of those who were the first to take up modern sports is in fact an element that at first sight seems obvious but it is probable that up until now this has been underestimated in the understanding of the way individuals opened up to embrace these new activities. Nevertheless, this factor is powerful, in particular when crossed with personal links such as friendship or camaraderie which prompts the sharing and discovery of sporting activities.

In France the introduction of modern British sports in the second half of the nineteenth century is an interesting case for the illustration of the importance of youthfulness and personal affinities when it comes to the spread of sport. First, we have chosen to focus on a pioneering group, the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne (The Bois de Boulogne Running Club) which was one of the first in Paris where athletic sports as they were called were played, in particular running and football. Around the central figure of Alfred Thomas Swann (1863–1928), who inspired Marcel Proust for the famous first volume of *À la recherche du temps perdu*¹. *Remembrance of Things Past*, translation by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, London, Chatto and Windus, 1922 (*In Search of Lost Time*), pupils from the prestigious Lycée Condorcet school were introduced to these physical activities from across the English Channel between 1879 and 1880. Through a sociological and a cultural approach, we propose to study this group of young chums, thus more closely examining the question about “first contact” (Darbon, 2008) which begins the process of the dissemination of sports. In the second part we will compare this study with that of an older person, Cosme de Satgé (1840–1898), whose discovery of physical sports from across the Channel can be examined through his personal diary². This counterpoint and the relative failures that he shows in terms of acculturation therefore bring the focus back to the criterion of age and the importance of camaraderie and friendship in the study of the spread of sports.

Our two case studies rely on different sources. Cosme de Satgé’s personal diary is a 4,000 pages first-hand account of his life from 1873 to 1897. It is now part of the family archives kept by his great grandson, Jeremy de Satgé, in London. As for Alfred Swann, we could not find any primary sources apart from his portrait also located in London and retained by his descendance. It is however possible to reconstruct part of his adolescent and adult life through civil status documents, as well as school and clubs archives. Moreover, local and national newspapers were particularly useful to cross-reference our primary and secondary sources: they both provide valuable information to complete and enlarge Cosme de Satgé’s assertions included in his journal on the one hand and bring testimonies from Alfred Swann’s schoolmates on the other hand.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIÉTÉ DES COURSES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE (BOIS DE BOULOGNE RUNNING CLUB) AROUND ALFRED THOMAS SWANN

A Pioneering Club in 1879

The history of the introduction of athletic sports in Paris is largely bound up with that of the Bois de Boulogne and in particular with that of its oldest club, the Racing Club de France. It was in fact in this vast open space laid out during the Second Empire,



FIGURE 1 | Portrait of Alfred Swann, photo courtesy of Yvonne Swann.

that lycée pupils founded a sports society in 1882, using the paths and lawns in the Bois before fixing on a spot called the Croix-Catelan in 1886. If the Racing Club de France has claimed since the end of the nineteenth century that it is the oldest for the practice of athletic sports in Paris it is above all because it managed to establish itself and has lasted over time. However, the first histories of sports played in the capital show that before the Racing Club’s foundation a large number of young people’s groups, more or less informal, used to meet up on the same grass bordering the Cercle des Patineurs (Skaters’ Circle) at the end of the 1870s³: the Club des Coureurs (Runners’ Club) (1875–76), the Cercle de Madrid (1876), the Paris Football Club (from 1877, with only British members), the Foot-Ball Club of Ecole Monge (1878), or even the Société Sans Nom (Club with No Name) (1880) were all relatively fleeting pioneering groups at the time the Racing Club started in 1882.

Among these unknown groups the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne (Bois de Boulogne Running Club) is one of the few cases where witness accounts still survive. In the autumn of 1902 when the Paris daily paper *La Presse* published a series of sports articles on the beginnings of the Racing Club de France authored by Gustave Lafreté, a journalist, one Georges Bertrand

¹Proust (1913)

²De Satgé C., Private Diary, owned by the de Satgé family in London.

³In particular, see Bourdon Georges, *La Renaissance athlétique et le racing Club de France*, Paris, published by the RCF, 1906. Also, Daryl (1894). Finally, Blum (1924).



FIGURE 2 | La sortie du lycée Condorcet, Jean Béraud, 1903, Musée Carnavalet, Paris.

wrote to the paper to inform him of the existence of an “older club.” This letter, reproduced in its entirety in the 18 November edition is a remarkable source for it precisely details the manner in which a certain number of boys from the Lycée Condorcet would meet up in the Bois de Boulogne to have running races or to play football.

After having drawn up a list of the members of this society, Georges Bertrand, came to the key role played by a certain person in the acculturation process of British sports: “nearly all the merit, in my opinion, is due to Alfred Swann, who, upon his return from his annual holiday in Brighton knew how to inculcate in us the first rules concerning methodological and reasoned training which he had seen in action in England and in 1879–1880 he formed us into football teams; he transmitted to us his sacred flame” (La Presse, November 18, 1802).” From our point of view this passage is of particular interest for it clearly identifies him as what historians call a cultural mediator.

Alfred Thomas Swann: The Duality of a Young Man

The history of cultural transfers has long taken an interest in those persons who play the role of mediators, who

are known in the English-speaking world as “cultural go-betweens” or “brokers” (Cooper-Richet, 2013). These people are intermediaries who capture a cultural product in a geographical area or a social space and then transmit it in full awareness or unwittingly to others. In the case of the spread of sports, a few remarkable personalities have already been the subject of detailed studies, such as the British missionary and educator Cecil Tyndale-Biscoe who introduced many Indian pupils to modern sports in the Kashmir region (Mangan, 2003). The sporting acculturation of non-British peoples in the nineteenth century is not immediately clear. In order to be passed on to new players, the sporting activities codified in Britain must be mastered by those individuals who wish moreover to share them with neophytes. However, knowing a sport and the desire to pass it on are not self-evident: while the first wish was shared by a growing number of Britons who traveled abroad in the nineteenth century, the second case was rather more exceptional in many countries. This reveals the importance of the cultural mediators.

In the case of France, as with many countries in the former British Empire (formal and informal), a certain number of characters have been identified but few of them have been the subject of in-depth studies or works centered on their role as

cultural mediators. Moreover, while these studies have been on Georges de Saint-Clair (Bourmaud, 2020), Paschal Grousset (Lebecq, 2013) or even Pierre de Coubertin (Clastres, 2010) where Paris was concerned, they focused mainly on vertical transmissions, which is to say from adults down to young players. The case of the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne, where one of the lycée pupils played the role of mediator for his classmates therefore encourages us to take an interest in the person of Alfred Thomas Swann (1863–1928) (Figure 1).

He really was an Anglo-Parisian in that Alfred was a young man with a dual cultural identity, both French and British. He was the son of an English pharmacist Henry Hind Swann (1823–98) and a Parisian mother Judith Félicie Davoust (1830–1903). His father was born in Grantham, in the United Kingdom and he studied medicine in London before settling in Paris in 1847. He opened a renowned pharmacy in Rue Castiglione and quickly became well-known for the sale of medicines sold in the then novel form of pills. Moreover, Swann's father was particularly famous for his skill in the use of chloroform as an anesthetic, the techniques of which had recently been perfected on the other side of the Channel. When the Empress gave birth in 1856 his intervention in alleviating her pain linked to a fracture of the pelvis ensured his brilliant social and professional integration which had been hinted at 3 years previously when he had married the granddaughter of a Marshal of the French Empire (Diehl, 2016). In 1863 an only son, Alfred Thomas Swann⁴ was born to the couple.

The story of this person reflects his ancestry, both British and French, with both cultures constituting two sides of the same coin. Swann was most definitely French since he lived his life south of the Channel. Born in Paris on the 15th of April 1863, he grew up in the very select 16th arrondissement⁵, between the Bois de Boulogne and the Lycée Condorcet which he attended at the end of the 1870's and in the early 1880's. Alfred remained a lifelong Parisian all and spent his life between the capital and the Calvados area where the family manor of Cantepie was located (in Cambremer), as well as spending time in holiday destinations between Houlgate and Cabourg (Le Gaulois, June 11, 1899). It must be said that Swann lived a life of great luxury. On his death his father left him a fortune of around 40,000 pounds, which was about a million francs⁶, which allowed him to live off the income of his investments and to frequent artistic circles in Paris. Alfred was a member of many literary societies in the capital⁷, and his friendships with the journalist Georges Bourdon, the writer Jules Renard [who dedicated his work "Le Rêve" (The Dream) to him in 1906] (Renard, 1906), also the painter Henri Morisset and the sculptor Raymond Bigot, made him part of Parisian high society. He was also one of the contributors to the very select review *Le Guide du Concert* (The Concert Guide) in which he introduced new composers, in particular Russians⁸. His marriage

in 1885 to the charming young Parisian, Suzanne Guillaume, bears testimony to his attachment to France⁹.

However, English blood flowed through Swann's veins. Apart from his surname, which his friend Proust had noted, he spoke the language of Shakespeare perfectly, thanks to his father who often accompanied him on his holiday trips to seaside resorts in the south of England as a young man. There was thus an emotional attachment that crossed the Channel, as is borne out by his desire in June 1894 to keep his father's nationality and to give up French nationality which the law of 22 July 1893 would otherwise have allowed him to have, because of the *jus soli* (born in the territory) as well as the *jus sanguini* (blood right) through his mother¹⁰. His only son, born in 1898 had an English first name, Cecil, and remained a British subject. Alfred Thomas Swann was thus the incarnation of an Anglo-Parisian type, a truly "dual young man" according to the expression used by Christophe Charle to describe these intermediate people who "belong to two cultural levels that are normally separate and who act as go-between" (Charle, 1992, p. 75).

Alfred Swann: A Cultural Go-Between

This dual culture bestowed on him the role of sports mediator. The holidays spent on the Sussex beaches, at Brighton in the 1870's meant that he learned about running races and also football as is evidenced when, upon his return, he took up a coaching role at the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne. However, although from 1882 onwards Swann also took part in setting up the Racing Club, he did not practice these two sports, preferring to be an honorary member although he was only 20 years old in 1883. His interest at the time was in lawn tennis. Alongside Georges de Saint-Clair, he played an active part in introducing this game to the shady lawns of the Croix-Catelan in 1886 (Bourdon, 1906). He became a member of the lawn tennis committee of the club that same year and remained in this position until 1889, having been the president between 1890 and 1894¹¹. Lastly, he was also one of the founders of the Racing Club in Cabourg, which from 1893 onwards organized competitions on the Normandy beaches during the summer season (Le Sport, August 9, 1893). It is quite possible that Alfred Swann discovered this racket sport on British beaches and we can see quite clearly how the fact of belonging to two different cultures allowed him to be a sports go-between. He was definitely not a top player nor a great leader but he was an essential component that began the transfer mechanism by establishing a bridge between the two shores of the Channel. While others were responsible for spreading the sport, he was at the origin, transmitting the "sacred flame." Cultural transfer is not however dependent on just one man; there is an exchange and interaction between two parties and this is why the group of lycée pupils around Alfred Swann in 1879–1880 needs to be considered more closely.

⁴Paris Archives, Civil Register, Register of births in the 1st arrondissement, year 1863, registration n°696.

⁵His father first lived in Rue des Belles Feuilles, then in Avenue du Bois de Boulogne.

⁶Probate Registry year 1899, page 121.

⁷*Bulletin de la Société du Livre d'Art*, Paris, January 1904, page 2.

⁸*Le Guide du Concert*, n° 28 and 29 (25 April and 3 March 1911).

⁹Paris Archives, Civil Register, register of marriages in the 8th arrondissement, for the year 1885, registration n°364; for the year 1893 registration n°929 (divorce ruling).

¹⁰*Alphabetical list of the children of foreigners having turned down or given up French nationality*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1946, page 523.

¹¹*Racing Club de France directories*, years 1885–1914.

A CULTURAL TRANSFER BETWEEN FRIENDS AT LYCÉE CONDORCET

Alongside Alfred Swann, the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne included a group of young lycée students. In his 1902 letter Georges Bertrand gives a few names: “If I looked, I would certainly find a few of the programmes of these meetings which include the names of a few members who went on to become members of the ‘Racing,’ in particular the Carvallo brothers and Alfred Swann. To these names I could add all those with whom I have kept in touch since that sadly far-off time! Forget, Riollet, Vallarché. The Grant brothers, gone to America, Gaston, Lavoisier, Lacroix are all former sporting chums” (La Presse, november 18, 1802). This list of young men who were eager to discover British sports from Swann poses the question of the responsiveness to a cultural product, in other words the desire to embrace it or not.

In this case, there does not seem to have been any notable resistance to the acculturation by British physical practices, on the contrary. Thus, the particular environment in which the youth of the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne lived needs to be examined as well as their age and the affinities between them in order to understand the implementation of the early and easy spread of these sports.

The Originality of the Lycée Condorcet in the Paris School System

The first point that these young men had in common was that they all attended the Lycée Condorcet. Among the educational establishments that catered to the elite of the capital this school had a certain originality (Albertini, 2017) (Figure 2).

In the first instance it is a particularly prosperous and elitist establishment. With 1,600 pupils in 1880 (the largest in France; Dupont-Ferrier, 1913, p. 140), Condorcet was the only lycée on the Right Bank, along with the Lycée Charlemagne, and its situation in the heart of the smartest neighborhood, in the 9th arrondissement, meant that its catchment area was very posh¹². Fees were the highest in Paris, rising to 1,000 francs a year, for each school level. This was about the annual income of a skilled workman or a primary school teacher. In his social study of school pupils in 1867, Pierre Albertini demonstrates how the aristocracy and the upper middle class made up the principal recruitment base for the institution (Albertini, 2017, p. 22). Some professions dominate among the pupils’ parents, in particular doctors, lawyers and bankers. In this socio-economic environment the young sportsmen were no exceptions to this rule: for example, Swann was the son of a pharmacist (in a neighborhood with the highest medical concentration in Paris) and the Carvallo brothers’ father was a graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique and was a civil engineer. This elitism was matched by a strong cosmopolitan slant. Religious minorities (Protestants and Jews) were greatly overrepresented as were foreign pupils.

¹²However it was not the only secondary school in the smart areas of Paris because there were also two municipal collèges (middle-schools) (Rollin in the 9th arrondissement and Chaptal in the 8th arrondissement), as well as a private school on Boulevard Malesherbes: l’École Monge.

Within this group, the largest body were Polish but Pierre Albertini notes the presence of Romanians, Germans, Austro-Hungarians, Swiss, Portuguese, a few Ottomans, British (or Franco-British), Americans and many South Americans. Among the names mentioned by Georges Bertrand, there is no surprise in seeing Jewish names (Carvallo), American ones (the Grant brothers) and British (Swann)¹³.

These characteristics were not without effect on the atmosphere that reigned at Condorcet. A teacher from Eton, on a visit in 1865, noted that it was “the most fashionable lycée in Paris” (Albertini, 2017) where social differences were particularly pronounced, liberalism was encouraged and snobbery highly popular. Taking this environment into account it is easier to understand the attraction which pastimes from across the Channel held for 1,879 schoolboys probably on the lookout for leisure time novelties, and the latest fashion from Brighton did not leave them unmoved. Alfred Swann was probably seen by his pals as being at the cutting edge of modernity because of his ability to satisfy their Anglomania.

The second original feature of the Lycée Condorcet lies in the fact it was only a day-school. Unlike all the other Paris state-run lycées, which subjected their pupils to the strictest of disciplines, with no outings possible, Condorcet provided a more flexible atmosphere and also the young people were able to leave the lycée. This relative freedom was the absolute prerequisite for meeting of the Société des Courses to be held in the nearby Bois de Boulogne. The boys who belonged to the club saw each other in the evenings after class and also on Thursdays and Sundays, and enjoyed free time which they could use for organizing athletic games.

Youthfulness and the Dissemination of Sports

The group of young people who discovered football and athletics alongside Alfred Swann was a gathering of adolescents. In 1879–1880, Alfred Swann was 16–17, the same age as his schoolmate Oscar Carvallo, while this friend’s brother Julien was only 13. No longer children and not yet young adults these lycée pupils match perfectly the definition of the nineteenth century adolescent according to Agnès Thiercé’s research on the topic. This age is an element to be taken into account in the analysis of this phenomenon of the spread of sports. Within a French population which was ignorant of athletic sports coming from the British Isles the fact that it was young people who were behind such wide-ranging acculturation is not insignificant. Research into immigration and integration of populations into a new cultural context does in fact show that the younger the individual, the easier his or her acculturation in the host country. It might be surmised, beyond the fact that while sports require physical activity which better suits younger people, that they also have a certain open-mindedness linked to the socialization process which is still going on and which makes them more likely to catch on to new practices.

¹³Paris Archives, folder D4T3 96 (admission registers of Lycée Condorcet, year 1878).

Research carried out in youth sociology can also be called on in order to understand the horizontal transmission of sporting practices between Alfred Swann and his school chums. In fact, these youngsters organized themselves, entirely independently, having chosen one of their number to be the initiator. This tradition of free organization and pupils being responsible for themselves is at the heart of the teaching ethos in British public schools. But above all this is possible because of their age: most of the members of the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne were aged 16–17 so it may be considered that they were able to achieve what Berger and Luckmann call secondary socialization, which comes after the primary stage and allows individuals to acquire skills and expertise through peer to peer relations and not just from their parents or other institutions incarnated by adults (school, church...) (Berger and Luckmann, 2006). This first acculturation through sports for and by the young is also to be found in other groups of sports participants who met in the Bois de Boulogne at the end of the 1870's and in the early 1880's, in particular the Racing Club de France (Bourdon, 1906).

Youth and the age criterion therefore need to be taken more into account in the analysis of sporting cultural transfers.

Camaraderie or Manly Friendships?

The last element to be examined regarding this topic of the members of the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne concerns the friendly relations between the young men which were likely to foster the spread of sports. It is not possible to imagine the weekly encounters between the lycée pupils in the same meeting-place and the exchanges that took place without taking into account the degree of closeness that existed between them.

Affinities between schoolboys were the object of ambiguous views and judgements in the nineteenth century. At a time when there was strict segregation of the two sexes, “particular friendships” were feared and this Specter haunted teachers and school heads (Thiercé, 1999). But at the same time pedagogy was still partly shaped by Rousseau, whose influence was significant, and it set value on closeness: according to Emile “le premier sentiment dont un jeune homme élevé soigneusement est susceptible n'est pas l'amour, c'est l'amitié” (“the first sentiment of which the well-trained youth is capable is not love but friendship”) (Rousseau, 1911, p. 181). In the same way, many people saw in friendly relations a powerful means of flowering development and socialization. In any case, this is what seems to have happened in the case of the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne where the young knew and frequented one another and where they shared an activity.

The question therefore is whether one should speak of their friendship or camaraderie, the two words being frequently employed at the time with not much distinction between them, but they refer to real situations which were not exactly the same. Friendship implies a certain degree of affection (which goes beyond empathy) and a relationship which is very often dual in nature. Moreover, as Agnès Thiercé points out, in the nineteenth century “friendships in lycées were very strong. They were often close and long-lasting because they were rooted in a shared life” (Thiercé, 1999, p. 189). These dimensions, both affective and

temporal, seemed to have an effect on some of the members of the sports club. In his article Georges Bertrand stresses that 20 years on he had not lost touch with three of his playing partners. As for Alfred Swann, he had a very deep friendship with one of the first members of the Racing Club de France, Georges Bourdon, who was the witness at his marriage in 1903 and the two men used to move in the same literary circles¹⁴. Thus, friendship can be one of the not unimportant sources for the spread of sports as Pierre de Coubertin recalled when he regretted the mistrust with which it was viewed, thinking as he did that, on the contrary, friendship can be one of the most powerful channels of education (de Coubertin, 1889, p. 10).

However, it seems to us that the idea of camaraderie better characterizes the relations within the group of lycée pupils. Firstly, because many of the members lost contact with one another thereafter or could not remember the names of their teammates and such forgetfulness is difficult to imagine in the case of friendship. Also, the very definition of the word seems to us to be better suited to the relationships that these schoolboys had, as a school friend is “a companion with whom one shares a common activity (studies, leisure pursuits)¹⁵.” Camaraderie does not require a strong and emotional closeness but implies acquaintance with the other and above all a shared activity, which here was sport. If we add the fact that we often speak of a playmate or a schoolfriend, we can understand that Georges Bertrand recalls his discovery of football in the company of “former sports mates” (La Presse, November 18, 1902). A final element which could be deployed in favor of camaraderie is manliness. In fact in the nineteenth century the comrade was first to be found among members of the same sex and the relationship with him helped to forge the basic qualities of a man¹⁶. So, inherent in the practice of athletic sports is the encouragement of the manly qualities and relationships to be found in clashes, courage, strength and stamina. Here in the past we find traces of the types of lycée cultures studied by youth sociologists. Dominique Pasquier suggests that friendly relations between girls “are based more on pairs or very small groups (the famous ‘Best Friend’ scenario) and they function along the lines of sharing intimacy” while masculine sociability at lycée “is based around groups and on the principle of shared activities [...]. The collective practice of activities such as sports or video games means that the principles of competition and hierarchy which characterize masculine groups are reaffirmed” (Pasquier, 2005, p. 279).

AN ACCEPTABLE FORM OF SOCIABILITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Pioneering Société Des Courses Du Bois De Boulogne

The fact that lycée boys aged 13–17 were meeting up with no adult present and with the aim off doing physical exercises

¹⁴Paris Archives, Civil Register, register of marriages in the 17th arrondissement, year 1903 number 112.

¹⁵*Le Petit Larousse Illustré*, 1994.

¹⁶Vincent-Buffault (1995)

introduced from abroad and which were reportedly violent does not seem to have met with any opposition on the part of their parents. This seeming lack of any reaction cannot be put down to any kind of negligence involved in the education of these adolescents seeing how much importance the ruling classes paid to their offspring's education, to their acquaintances and to their eventual careers. The legal guardians of the lycée pupils were anyway perfectly aware of these sporting practices which used to take place on the Pelouse de Madrid grass in the middle of the Bois de Boulogne. Since this wood had been transformed into a veritable Parisian Hyde Park during the Second Empire, it had become "the epicenter of Parisian high society" (Hopkins, 2003, 2015), whose denizens were in the habit of going there on a daily basis to take a stroll around the lakes. The gathering of young sportsmen around Alfred Swann thus took place in full view and with the full knowledge of their parents or at least of some of their acquaintances.

This acceptance of a form of independent and sporting adolescent sociability seems to have been most original in a context of distrust regarding gatherings of young folk. Adolescence, as a time of life set between childhood and adulthood, in fact provoked a real distrust among French elites in the nineteenth century (Thiercé, 1999). It was associated with the notion of crisis, the crisis of sexuality, linked to puberty, but also the crisis in morality as the adolescent was considered as being progressively inhabited by an enthusiasm, excitement and fervor which made him swift to rebel and to being ill at ease, or even prone to sexual deviancy. French educators and doctors in the first two thirds of the nineteenth century thus insisted on the need for strict control of the young. It was a matter of occupying, supervising and isolating individuals and this role fell chiefly on the educational institutions: the very many hours of lessons and the permanent supervision of the young, in particular in the case of boarders, was part of this strategy of warding off adolescent vices. Wariness of pupils also concerned their meetings: pupils' gatherings was widely seen as being despotic, vice-ridden and vulgar and helped to disseminate "a bad spirit" among group members this being characterized by war against authority and potentially shameful pleasures. In this regard, the years 1870–1880 constituted the apex and the beginning of the decline of this vision of adolescence. Agnès Thiercé in fact shows how a pedagogical turning point took place giving way to a more liberal attitude at the end of the 1880's and the beginning of the 1890's. More attention was being paid to the conditions in which the adolescent personality might flourish and a partial opening of lycées onto the outside world was begun. Young people's clubs and especially sports societies were also valued as they allowed pupils to be responsible for themselves and they acted as a propedeutic for their future role as citizens.

However, the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne appeared 10 years before these changes; the years when Alfred Swann and his pals got together and exercised freely in the Bois de Boulogne were also the years when many violent lycée revolts took place in Paris. Agnès Thiercé counted over 150 of them in the second half of the nineteenth century with a peak in the 1870–80 decade. How else then can the early establishment

of this sports club and the freedom that its members enjoyed be explained?

Anglophilia at the Lycée Condorcet

Over and above the special material conditions which the pupils at Condorcet enjoyed, in particular the fact that it was a day-school, one of the major reasons which allowed the existence of the early sports club, was due to the Anglophilia that pervaded this institution. In the conclusion of his study of the lycée in 1867, Pierre Albertini noted that the main characteristics of the lycée (liberalism, elitism, snobbery, and cosmopolitanism) were all so many components of a kind of Anglomania. The historian noted this about Condorcet: "They love almost everything about England, the fact that she has known how to preserve her monarchy and her aristocracy while exploring the paths of economic modernity, her model of parliamentarianism, her religious tolerance, her reformism, her openness to the world, the unconditional political asylum she offers to the outcast, her liking for sport, the gentlemanly conduct of her elites, and even Gladstone and Disraeli, who began their alternance in that same year of 1867" (Albertini, 2017, p. 89). There was therefore a close link between the Anglophile atmosphere which reigned in the neighborhoods of western Paris at that period, the spirit of the Lycée Condorcet and the sports played by the young men around Alfred Swann.

In the educational domain, this British influence led to the pupils being granted greater liberty (day-school, free association tolerated outside the establishment) and value being placed on physical activities. Interest in the school system across the Channel and the British model in general did not in fact date from the 1880's even if the successful novels by Paschal Grousset (alias Philippe Daryl) and the "pedagogical crusade" brilliantly headed by Pierre de Coubertin led to decisive steps being taken. In fact one has to go back to the end of the Second Empire to find traces of research into schooling on the other side of the English Channel and the sporting activities that were so prized. They were developed by doctors and educators seeking for a better balance between intellectual and physical activities as well as teaching that would form entrepreneurial elites. As early as 1867, Victor de Laprade, author and teacher of literature, published *L'Education Homicide*, a famous pamphlet in which he savagely criticized lycéens' living conditions, where they remained seated listening to their teachers for 11 hours a day (de Laprade, 1868). Basing his comments on the British example, he proposed reducing this teaching by half and using the time gained for the pupils to get fresh air and play (de Laprade, 1868, p. 114–115). These recommendations were published the same year as a report by two lycée teachers on their return from a pedagogical mission to Britain (Demogeot and Montucci, 1867). The authors write of the essential role played by sports in the public schools and insisted on the "considerable" advantages of these activities which reinforce energy, courage and the desire for glory ("here we see at its source the flow of a true and legitimate aristocracy" (Demogeot and Montucci, 1867, p. 22), even though they judged that the time spent on open-air sports to be excessive and thus harmful to intellectual performance.

Their conclusion invited the decision makers at the Ministry to reflect on the means required to integrate more physical activity into lycée life without falling into the excesses seen across the Channel.

The influence of these early accounts and reports of the British educational model did not at first go beyond the limited circles of those interested but the events of 1870–71 gave them an unexpected boost. The terrible French defeat by the Prussians, which brought about the fall of the Second Empire and was a national humiliation, in fact stimulated a number of discourses and reflections seeking to build France, ever stronger and able to prepare for Revenge on Germany, while more generally re-establishing a global ambition of the first order. Among the vital forces to be regenerated, the young were a priority and in particular the elites of the Republic, formed in the lycées. Educators and essay writers were therefore interested in the education systems of neighbors which might provide inspiration and in particular in the cases of Germany and Great Britain (Matasci, 2015). While many pieces appeared in the 1880's, two major essays were published in the preceding decade: *La Réforme de l'Enseignement Secondaire (Reform of Secondary School Teaching)* by Jules Simon (Simon, 1874), professor of philosophy and government minister but especially *Notes sur l'Angleterre* by the historian and essayist Hippolyte Taine in 1872 (Taine, 1872). He was a liberal like Jules Simon, and had authored a particularly influential piece. This was due initially to his personality and to the context, for at the beginning of the IIIrd Republic Hippolyte Taine was a famous intellectual who wished to study and understand the *Origines de la France Contemporaine*, but who also sought, in British Otherness, the keys for analyzing and reforming his country. His *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, written just after the 1870 defeat came therefore from a renowned intellectual and met with instant success with the public. This success was all the stronger at Condorcet where Taine enjoyed a most flattering reputation. He had been a pupil there and his school career had been remarkable. With Henri Bergson and Théodore Reinach, he was one of the great French intellectuals educated at Condorcet and his influence in that establishment was particularly strong. Yet, what does he tell us in Chapter IV of his *Notes sur l'Angleterre* entitled "Education?" That he admires the house system that operated in British public schools for it was not reduced to "a barracks communism like in France" (Taine, 1872, p. 136); that the fresh air which the pupils at Eton and Harrow enjoyed was in contrast with the lack of greenery and the confined spaces of French lycées; that the pupils' freedom gave them a sense of initiative and responsibility; that the sports played were the logical response to a "need for physical movement" felt by the pupils and this helped them to learn how to command as well as how to obey. His conclusions are however more subtle because while he recognized the ability of British establishments to forge the character of their pupils, he regretted the weakness of theoretical teaching and the "basic instincts" (Taine, 1872, p. 143) that an excess of sport awakened in the boys. In short, a fusion of French intellectual excellence and the apprenticeship of life so dear to British public schools would lead to a school system that was well-balanced and of quality.

New Educational Methods and the Spread of Sports

The situation regarding the members of the Société des Courses du Bois de Boulogne seems very much like a practical application of Taine's recommendations. Attending a French lycée whose academic reputation was impeccable, their twice daily sorties and their frequenting the Bois de Boulogne under the auspices of a free and autonomous association seemed to incarnate to perfection the school-life balance preached by the glorious former pupil. Moreover, since 1875, they also had access to the French translation of Thomas Hughes's famous novel, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, which Hippolyte Taine highly recommended (Hughes, 1875). There is no doubt that the parents of many pupils at Condorcet were already won over to the liberal cause and to the Anglophilia of the Parisian elites and they doubtless looked with a kindly eye on their offspring affirming their character and liberating their adolescent energies yet without jeopardizing their scholarly success.

Outside Condorcet, the first groups of pupils playing sports in the Bois de Boulogne at the end of the 1870's systematically belonged to establishments offering innovative teaching methods, partly inspired by the British model. This was the case of the Ecole Monge, founded in 1869 and which had a Football Club from 1878, and also the Ecole Alsacienne, which opened in 1874 and where some of the pupils founded the Société Sans Nom (No Name Club) in 1880. The school and family environment in which these first players of British sports grew up played an important part in their acculturation insofar as it accepted and often encouraged the wish to take up these manly pursuits from across the Channel.

THE INCONVENIENCE OF BEING OLDER: THE EXAMPLE OF COSME DE SATGÉ

The discovery of British sports by an older person stands in counterpoint to the study of Alfred Swann and his schoolfellows and allows the emphasis to be more strongly placed on the importance of youthfulness and friendship or camaraderie in acculturation thanks to sports.

Cosme De Satgé: A "Dual Figure" Within the "English Colony" in Dinan

Cosme de Satgé (1840–1898) was a Franco-British man of the second half of the nineteenth century whose singular story has recently been brought forward by the historian Diane Monier-Moore in her research into the English colony in Dinan (Monier-Moore, 2017). Cosme was born in Pau, the son of a French aristocrat, Antoine de Satgé (1807–1870) and a British woman of Irish origin, Harriet Rowley (1808–1892). He spent the early part of his childhood in the Béarn region and then in Ariège before being sent to Paris as a boarder at the Collège Sainte-Barbe (1852–58). He then studied law in Paris and obtained his doctorate in 1865. However, he never followed a legal profession and led the life of an idle aristocrat living off unearned income until the mediocre state of his investments pushed him into teaching French to British boys who boarded with him.

In 1872 Cosme de Satgé married Frances Knippe, a British woman from Stratford upon Avon, and they set up home in the small Breton town of Dinan, located about 30 km from the Channel coast. He lived there for 25 years, raising five children (Henriette, Yvonne, Philippe, Béatrice, and René, born between 1874 and 1885) before dying suddenly at the beginning of 1898. The Satgés' choice of Dinan in 1873 can be partly explained by its proximity to the British Isles but also by the presence of a large "English colony." Drawn by the climate and the presence of restorative and therapeutic mineral springs, many British citizens had settled in this town in the Côtes d'Armor department during the nineteenth century. Out of the 8,000 or so residents in Dinan in the 1850–1860's about 400 were British (Monier-Moore, 2017, p. 36). This figure doubled during the summer season because of the number of holidaymakers who crossed the Channel. The colony consisted mainly of retired officers from the Indian Army or the Royal Navy, of families from the Caribbean who found themselves in difficulties because of the abolition of slavery or British widows and their children. All were eager to enjoy the pleasant setting of the little town of Dinan where it was possible to have a comfortable lifestyle at less cost than in Britain. The community, which mainly lived off investment income and pensions, rapidly organized themselves: an Anglican church, a Masonic lodge, an English library and a British club founded in 1868, were all progressively established and became pillars of a contained social life, living in the English style but on foreign soil. Playing games and sports also brought these expatriates together; cricket had already been established in the 1850's and lawn tennis was then introduced. Already in 1875 the colony newspaper, *The Dinan Weekly*, spoke of it being played on Tuesdays and Fridays "on the most seedy grass" (*The Dinan Weekly*, August 17, 1875). As for ice-skating, the nearby river Rance froze over for part of the winter providing yet another leisure activity appreciated by the British.

We know about the life that Cosme de Satgé led in Dinan thanks to an exceptional document: his private diary, most of which was written following his arrival in the Côtes d'Armor. It comprises 22 volumes, containing nearly 5,000 pages and is a remarkable first-hand account which helps to understand the way this "English colony" functioned in France in the nineteenth century while offering insight into the itinerary of a Frenchman in this British environment. While his mother was Irish and his wife English, Cosme de Satgé was basically a man of French culture. Besides his nationality his own story was situated in France where he was born, educated and where he had friends, before settling in Dinan. His visits across the Channel, though frequent, did not begin until he was 19 and his lack of knowledge about athletic sports testifies to an incomplete Britishness. However, moving to Dinan with his mother and his wife plunged him into the world of the "English colony" though it was not exactly open to local people. The British people in the town in fact mainly existed in a vacuum all the more so as none had any local roots. Most had arrived in France at some point in their lifetime and did not work there, living off unearned income and pensions. Those who did have a profession carried it on within the community, like the dentist, the doctor, the grocer and even the Anglican clergyman. As for the few children present, most went to private schools

in the colony like Ker Even and were then sent back across the Channel to continue their secondary education. Thus, there was no strong desire for integration as can be borne out by the very few mixed marriages celebrated in the Anglican chapel during the nineteenth century, as well as the colony members' poor command of the French language. Relations between French and British were not non-existent though because day to day life involved meetings and relations with local administrative, political and religious authorities. This is why there was a point in the colony's having a go-between who was both bilingual and well-versed in the habits and customs of the Hexagon, France. Cosme de Satgé was progressively called upon to bridge the gap. Thanks to his perfect command of English but also and above all thanks to his wife and mother he wove a relatively dense network of relationships within this colony which took him into its inner circles and in return it was requested that he help with its functioning. His services were called on when a delegation went to see the député-maire (mayor and member of parliament) of Dinan to get permission to open an English school, to protest to the sub-prefect when the British Club was accused of having organized clandestine gaming, or more prosaically when it came to hiring a servant or finding a lavatory for the circle (de Satgé, 21 January 1880, 30 July 1883, 29 November 1884, 9 February 1886, 9 November 1886). His affability as well as his knowledge of national legislation and the workings of French administration—which already irritated the British to quite some degree—encouraged many families to ask his advice.

Playing and Passing on Youthful Pursuits

Among the sporting leisure pursuits in which Cosme de Satgé indulged, a distinction should be made between those he had discovered during his youth and those he found at Dinan when he was an adult. He regularly participated in the former and these pastimes were passed on in the family. Such is the case for horse-racing which is first mentioned in his diary in 1861. At that time Cosme de Satgé was 21 years old and studying law in Paris. He relates how he used to stroll through the Bois de Boulogne after class in summer and was not averse, from time to time, to going further, as far as the racecourse at Longchamp in order to see a few races with some of his friends. His later sojourns in the capital see him return to the western end of the Bois in order to bet on one or two top runners after having observed them during the weighing-in. Similarly, during his trips to Britain he would regularly visit British racecourses such as Southampton (in the summer of 1869) or Ascot (1870). As soon as he moved to Dinan in 1873 he became a member of the Société des Courses (Racing Society) (de Satgé year 1873). Although he was not as passionate about the turf as he was about hunting or skating, Cosme de Satgé regularly paid his fees to the local society and took his children to the local racetrack at Aublette on several occasions.

Ice-skating on the other hand was a true passion for our Franco-Englishman. His diary has several entries relating to the wait for the first freezes and the hope of a hard winter, and neither age nor weight curbed his enthusiasm. It must be pointed out that he had cherished this pastime since his years at the Collège de Saint-Barbe where the harsh regime of the boarding school left him few free afternoons when he could go to "the Bois" with

his pals. Thus, it was on the ponds of the Parisian Hyde Park that he took his first skating steps and the pleasure he found in this would never leave him. In December 1873, freshly arrived in Dinan he took advantage of a trip to the capital to go to the Cercle des Patineurs (Skaters' Circle). There, he decided to buy a pair of skates in the hope of being able to practice in Dinan (de Satgé, 13 December 1873). While it was not possible for him to skate on the river Rance during the first Breton winters, the month of January 1897 was particularly cold. Cosme de Satgé copied the British in the town and discovered the best spots for skating. He practiced using the edges of his blades and discovered ice-hockey during a game with "English officers" (de Satgé, 9 December 1879). He cherished the idea of sharing this activity with his children. As early as January 1889 he began to teach his two eldest children, Henriette and Béatrice, and he did not take long to buy them skates. The two girls were then aged 15 and 13. The following winter it was Philippe on the eve of his 11th birthday who discovered the joys of winter sports alongside his father. In his journal Cosme de Satgé recounts the wait for the cold weather, then his impatience while waiting to fetch the children from school to take them to the Rance, despite the fact that he was over 50 years old. However, the pastime that Cosme de Satgé enjoyed the most and the one to which he devoted the most time was hunting; not hunting with hounds (the famous British fox hunting) but carried out on foot, which gave rise to long walks which could take up the whole day and where the trophies bagged (hares or birds) were almost secondary in his eyes because for him pleasure was being in the open air. His earliest hunting memories came from when he was in his 9th year and his father took him for the first time out on this manly pastime which could be solitary or else a shared experience (de Satgé, volume 1). This transmission, vertically from his father contrasts with his acculturation thanks to skating but it marked him all the same. He would also recall clearly gaining his first hunting permit in 1856 (at the age of 16) and of hunting parties in France as well as in Ireland and England. Settling in Dinan offered him the chance to indulge in this pastime which he did between once and three times a week during the season, which is in autumn and winter. Sometimes he went out hunting alone but he liked company and that of the British in particular. Major Hinchcliffe, whom he met for the first time in February 1875 and who accompanied him every week thereafter over several seasons, became a real friend of Cosme de Satgé (de Satgé, 1 February 1875). The hours they spent together walking and talking, between two shots were the occasions for sharing memories, opinions and close chats. Cosme de Satgé actually only used the letter H to refer to his companion whereas otherwise the rare abbreviations in his journal were reserved for his wife and his mother. Afterwards, Hinchcliffe became the godfather to his second son and when the major left Dinan this deeply saddened the Frenchman who nonetheless kept up his activities and began to initiate his son Philippe, who initially followed his father along the path on a tricycle and eventually went all the way on foot. These were special moments shared between the father and the young man who seemed to take a liking for hunting, since according to the last years of Cosme de Satgé's diaries increasingly Philippe was going out game hunting alone.

The common point between these three leisure activities, horse-racing, ice-skating, and hunting, was that Cosme de Satgé discovered them early in life, through a precocious acculturation which manifested itself through regular practice and being passed down through the family. However, the arrival of the Franco-Englishman in Dinan and his acquaintanceship with the "English colony" was the opportunity for him to discover pastimes introduced from over the English Channel.

The Discovery of New British Sports in Dinan

Like many other intimate writings, Cosme de Satgé's diary remains a personal document, above all factual, in which he notes down the activities and high points of his day. In the tone of the accounts set down in these journals and the few impressions that the author lets through and the very nature of his timetable, it is possible to outline the elements of his personality. Three character traits in particular arise from reading these notes: his relative humility, his graciousness and his simplicity.

Although he was nobly born and above all idle, he did in fact try to lead a peaceful life, as is evidenced by his reading sessions either alone or out loud to his children, and his taste for gardening. Moreover, there was nothing of rebel vanity about him; the tiresome administrative tasks that he took upon himself to aid the English colony and the many visits paid or received at teatime or for a picnic bear witness to this civilized character who voluntarily submitted to the demands made by his entourage. This made him a man who was relatively open to new practices and not much inclined to wholesale, swift rejection, as is borne out by his relation to cricket and golf. Even though he does not mention it in his journal it is most likely that he knew these two sports before 1870, the date at which he notes that he had attended a cricket match during his first visit to Dinan. But even though his curiosity made him an interested spectator, he nevertheless never played these games. His daily strolls with his wife often took him close by the players of the United Dinan Cricket Club, practicing during the high season. This spectacle seems to have been part of the town décor for Cosme de Satgé. Several times he mentions games that were going on but he obviously did not know the rules and was unconcerned about the result. The same went for golf which was played on the Breton seashore and which he happened to watch during his summer holidays in July or August in Dinard or Saint Lunaire. In July 1891, relating a stroll with his daughter he noted this: "With Henriette, followed a game of golf on the dunes near the Hotel du Panorama. The game interests us. Interrupted by light drizzle" (de Satgé, 26 August 1891). Never having encountered these sports other than as a spectator the attraction for him never went beyond simple, occasional curiosity all the more so since these games are marked by long pauses which are not likely to incite sustained interest. Beyond the swift mention of these sports when he was out on a walk, it was Cosme de Satgé's involvement in the life of the English colony or his local friendships which brought him onto the golf course and cricket pitch. So, his election to

the British Club in 1879 came with obligatory membership of the Cricket Club. That same year, in August, he attended a match, noting “Everyone we knew was at the cricket match—interesting game—Dinan seem to have beaten Avranches” (de Satgé, 6 August 1879). Similarly, when he accompanied his friend Colonel Garnett to Dinard in August 1894 he followed him to the Golf Club where he was present at “the beginning of a game” along with many leading members of the local English colony (de Satgé, 28 August 1894). There was therefore no rejection of these leisure activities but his relation to golf and cricket remained platonic.

This was not the case for tennis which he discovered in the course of 1879. After having seen a member of his family play at a Lawn Tennis Club, in June during a stay in England, on 4 July he went to a garden party given by Major Young in Dinan. He writes “Game of lawn tennis. M Chevallier, a beginner, like me. Very nice game, but rather hard.” This first contact seems to have been quite conclusive because straight away Cosme de Satgé paid his membership fees at the Dinan Lawn Tennis Club and he played on the club courts on 26 July. He also took advantage of the presence in Dinan of Tottie, his British sister-in-law, in order to play against her in the garden. The first games were deemed difficult with “not much success” (de Satgé, 10 September 1879), but seven matches are noted in his diary for the second fortnight in August. The pace flagged somewhat in the autumn, the end of the fine days, allied with the departure of his sister-in-law and the obligation to leave his house in the Mont-Parnasse neighborhood for another rental in town, which left Cosme de Satgé without a regular tennis partner (his wife was pregnant and little inclined toward sports) and no garden to play in. This dual loss, both in relational and spatial terms seems to have been fatal for his acculturation. Certainly, he continued to play lawn tennis from time to time, such as in the autumn of 1882 or in August 1885 when he met up with his sister-in-law during trips to England (de Satgé, 6 October 1882 and 18 August 1885), but these events were only occasional and de Satgé seems to have played to please his partners. In this semi-failure the absence of a regular playing partner (someone like Major Hinchcliffe for the hunting) and his relatively late discovery of this sport (he was 39 in 1879) seem to have been the main causes. However, we can note that visits to Dinan by his few French friends were always the occasion for Cosme de Satgé to introduce them to the sporting curiosities of the English colony. When his former collègue chum Chautard spent a few days at the villa at Mont-Parnasse in August 1873 he was taken “to see a cricket match¹⁷.” In the same way, Pettereau, a childhood friend was taken to the lawn tennis courts in 1885: “there was in fact a good match going on and the game interests him¹⁸.” Cosme de Satgé is therefore positioned as a cultural go-between in that he offers his friends a first visual contact with the sports along with a few introductory remarks. Moreover, he contributed to the successful acculturation of his children regarding British sports.

¹⁷Vincent-Buffault (1995), 8 August 1873

¹⁸Vincent-Buffault (1995), 8 August 1885.

The Successful Sporting Acculturation of the Satgé Children

Unlike their father, Cosme de Satgé's five children, who were born in Dinan and grew up within the English colony, enjoyed both an early acculturation and relatively many playmates. Their case is interesting insofar as their mother, although British, was not a sportswoman and their father was only able to pass on them his enjoyment of hunting or skating and his taste for horse racing. While he gave them a liberal education and was not above joining in their tennis matches, at best he can be considered as a facilitator and not as a mediator regarding British sports.

By what means then did these sports pass among the young people? In the first instance there were invitations from other families in the English Colony. Picnics brought together a number of guests and were occasions for playing together, like in July 1892 at the home of the Filgates where “the young ones played cricket” (de Satgé, 21 July 1892). But the invitations were also individual and Cosme's children played tennis several times at their friends' homes. Besides, all the de Satgé girls went to school at Ker Even, a British institution, where racket sports were played by pupils. The children's sporting culture was also part of their holidays across the Channel. In August 1885, Henriette, aged 11, played tennis with her aunt and her father in England and “begins to understand the game” (de Satgé, 19 August 1885). Her sisters then in turn went to visit their mother's family from 1890 onwards. This British influence on the children was further strengthened from 1893 when Cosme de Satgé decided to take as paying guests students from across the Channel who came for him to teach them French. The young people, who spent between 2 and 6 months with the family, got on very well with the de Satgé sons and daughters. Thus, in 1895, the Osbourne brothers who did not distinguish themselves by their application to learning the French language, encouraged Philippe and Yvonne to play tennis (de Satgé, 20 June 1895). There were many students who passed through Dinan who paid their membership fees at the Lawn Tennis Club. However, the tennis virus, and cricket for the boys, was really caught on the beaches of Brittany where the de Satgé family spent several weeks each summer. Cosme de Satgé and his wife nevertheless provided a range of activities for their children, from sea bathing to fishing, walking on the dunes and board games. Several summers passed without tennis or cricket playing a part in the daily life of the de Satgés. But, it is also true that the family spent time on holiday with British friends, in 1892 and 1893 with the Forrests, whom they met up with several times on the beach. Tennis and cricket matches are then frequently mentioned in Cosme de Satgé's diary. The turning point which saw the de Satgé children definitively adopt tennis and cricket was in the summer of 1896 on the beaches of Saint Lunaire in the company of the Bateson sons and daughters. The youngsters, busy with their rackets and bats, thus refused to go fishing with their father (de Satgé, 9 September 1896). This attitude can be put down to a kind of adolescent autonomy but also a successful acculturation through sports. The following year most of the de Satgé children became members of the Dinan Lawn Tennis Club. They were then aged between 12 and 23 and both boys and girls enjoyed this leisure activity.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at highlighting the need to combine general cultural factors with methodological individualism in order to better understand the ways in which British sports spread in nineteenth-century France. In this process, one must try to analyze the different variables that make the chain of dissemination possible. The dual identity of the cultural go-betweens is often a prerequisite without which no bridge can be built between two cultural areas. But it proves insufficient to fully understand the motivations of these brokers and must therefore be completed by other elements. On the other hand, recipients are not as passive as one could think. They forge links and build relationships with their donors. To use Sébastien Darbon's expression, historians, anthropologists and sociologists interested in sports diffusion must take into account what is "in the way of being acceptable (or unacceptable), compatible (or incompatible)" among those individuals who are faced with a new cultural product (Darbon, 2008, p. 5). Some studies can emphasize more or less favorable national contexts but also get down to the level of the individual actor in order to understand what, in the story and the personality of some people, can explain the enthusiasm or the rejection of certain sports. If Anglomania (or Anglophobia), religious practice or even professions are often advanced, other criteria are sometimes underestimated.

This study of two Franco-British cultural mediators and their entourage has insisted on the importance of age and personal affinities in the process of acculturation through sports. Despite their dual culture Alfred Swann and Cosme de Satgé did not adopt British pastimes with the same enthusiasm: the former discovered modern sports when he was an adolescent and became an active agent in their spread in Paris whereas the latter

did not manage to truly appreciate and pass on the British leisure activities he discovered after he had turned 30.

Moreover, the spread of sports often follows the channels of friendly relations and camaraderie. The young lycée pupils around Alfred Swann, like Cosme de Satgé's children, were acculturated through British sports at the time of their adolescence, not by adults, but by their friends and chums of their age: friendship and camaraderie favor the desire in some to share a pastime and the desire in others to open up to a new activity. The spread of sports is thus a condition as well as the culmination of personal relations between those who transmit and those who receive.

Underlying the importance of age and the role of interpersonal relationships in the process of sports diffusion opens new avenues of research for the future. To a certain extent, the relevance of these two factors could lead sports historians to reassess some analyses: youth, camaraderie (or friendship) and horizontal dissemination could offer both a new angle of approach, and a broader look at subjects such as cultural mediators and sports clubs.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary materials, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

REFERENCES

- Albertini, P. (2017). *Notre Lycée en 1867, Talk Given on 19 October 2017 at the Lycée Condorcet*. Available online at: <http://www.lycee-condorcet-paris.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Conf%C3%A9rence-le-lyce%C3%81e-Bonaparte.pdf> (accessed April 26, 2020).
- Berger, P., and Luckmann T. (2006). *La Construction Sociale de la Réalité*. Paris: Armand Colin.
- Blum, R. (ed.). (1924). *L'Encyclopédie des Sports*. Paris: Librairie de France.
- Bourdon, G. (1906). *La Renaissance athlétique et le Racing Club de France*. Paris: published by the RCF.
- Bourmaud, F. (2020). "Les parrainages de georges de saint-clair au racing club de France: entre Réseaux de pouvoir et légitimation sportive," in *Le Sport et ses Pouvoirs*, eds. J. Vincent and Joris and M. Schotte (Villeneuve-d'Ascq, Presses: Universitaires du Septentrion), 236–256.
- Charle, C. (1992). Le temps des hommes doubles. *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 39, 73–85. doi: 10.3406/rhmc.1992.1621
- Clastres, P. (2010). "Rares portraits de pierre de coubertin en sportsman," in *Images de Sport. De l'Archive à l'Histoire*, eds. F. Bosman, P. Clastres and P. Dietschy, (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions), 27–38.
- Cooper-Richet, D. (2013). Transferts culturels et passeurs de culture dans le monde du livre (France- Brésil XIX^e siècle). *Patrimônia e Memória* 9, 128–143. Available online at: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/5703238.pdf>
- Darbon, S. (2008). Diffusion des Sports et Impérialisme Anglo-saxon. *De l'histoire Événementielle à l'Anthropologie*. Paris: éditions MSH. doi: 10.4000/books.editionsms.1035
- Daryl, P. (1894). *Jeux de Balle et de Ballon*. Paris: Librairie-imprimeries réunies.
- de Coubertin, P. (1889). *L'Éducation Athlétique*. Paris: Imprimerie Chaix.
- de Laprade, V. (1868). *L'éducation Homicide: Plaidoyer pour l'Enfance*. Paris: Imprimerie Toinon et Cie.
- Demogeot, J., and Montucci, H. (1867). *De l'Enseignement Secondaire en Angleterre et en Écosse: Rapport adressé à son Excellence M. Paris: Le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique Imprimerie Impériale*.
- Diehl, F. (2016). Ce Mystérieux monsieur swann. *Le Pays d'Auge*. 66, 27–30. Available online at: <https://www.lepaysdauge.org/revue/2016-1.html#2016-1-29-32>
- Dietschy, P. (2011). French sport: caught between universalism and exceptionalism. *Eur. Rev.* 19, 509–525. doi: 10.1017/S1062798711000160
- Dupont-Ferrier, G. (1913). *L'Enseignement Public à Paris*. Paris: Librairie Renouard.
- Eisenberg, C. (1999). "English Sports" und Deutsche Bürger: Eine Gesellschaftsgeschichte 1800-1939. Schöning: Paderborn.
- Holt, R. (2011). Le destin des 'Sports Anglais' en France de 1870 à 1914: imitation, opposition, séparation. *Ethnol. Française* 14, 615–614. doi: 10.3917/ethn.114.0615
- Hopkins, R. S. (2003). "From place to espace: napoleon III's transformation of the bois de boulogne," in *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society of French History Conference*, 197–211. Available online at: <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/p/pod/dod-idx/from-place-to-escape-napoleon-iiis-transformation.pdf?c=wsfh;idno=0642292.0031.012;format=pdf>
- Hopkins, R. S. (2015). *Planning the Greenspaces of Nineteenth-century Paris*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press.

- Hugues, T. (1875). *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Paris: Hachette.
- Lebecq, P.-A. (2013). *Pascal Grousset: Sport et Education Physique à la Française (1888-1909)*. Paris: Riveneuve.
- Mangan, J. A. (2003). "Christ and the imperial games fields; evangelical athletes of the empire," in *Sport Critical Concepts in Sociology. Volume II: the Development of Sport*, eds. E. Dunning and D. Malcolm (London: Routledge), 324–342.
- Matasci, D. (2015). *L'Ecole Républicaine et l'Etranger: Une histoire Internationale des Réformes Scolaires en France 1870-1914*. Lyon: ENS Editions. doi: 10.4000/books.enseditions.3851
- Monier-Moore, D. (2017). *Dinan: La Colonie Anglaise (1800-1940)*. Jersey: Editions Plessis.
- Pasquier, D. (2005). *Cultures Lycéennes: la Tyrannie de la Majorité*. Paris: Éditions Autrement.
- Proust, M. (1913). *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu (In Search of Lost Time, volume 1: Swann's Way)*. Paris: Grasset. Remembrance of Things Past, translation by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, London, Chatto and Windus, 1922.
- Renard, J. (1906). *La Lanterne Sourde*. Paris: Ollendorff.
- Rousseau, J.-J. (1911). *Emile or Education*, trans. Barbara Foxley. London & Toronto: JM Dent.
- Simon, J. (1874). *La Réforme de l'Enseignement Secondaire*. Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie.
- Taine, H. (1872). *Notes Sur l'Angleterre*. Paris: Hachette.
- Thiercé, A. (1999). *Histoire de l'Adolescence: 1850-1914*. Paris: Belin.
- Tomlinson, A., and Young, C. (2011). Towards a new history of european sport. *Eur. Rev.* 19, 497–507. doi: 10.1017/S1062798711000159
- Van Bottenburg, M. (2001). *Global Games (Sport and Society)*. Oxford: University of Illinois Press.
- Van Bottenburg, M. (2010). Beyond diffusion: sport and its remaking in cross-cultural contexts. *J. Sport Hist.* 37, 41–53. Available online at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/45280068_Beyond_diffusion_sport_and_its_remaking_in_cross-cultural_contexts
- Vincent-Buffault, A. (1995). *L'Exercice de l'Amitié: Pour une Histoire des Pratiques Amicales aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*. Paris: Le Seuil.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2021 Bourmaud. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Doomed Youth: Antonio Cánovas, a Young Sportsman in Time of War in 1930s Spain

Alejandro Viuda-Serrano^{1*} and Iker Ibarrondo-Merino²

¹ Department of Education, Universidad de Alcalá, Alcalá de Henares, Spain, ² Faculty of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

During the Spanish Civil War (SCW) 1936–1939, many young working-class sportsmen volunteered. They were both physically and politically active and some of them outstanding athletes. The search of these unknown men has just begun. *Doomed Youth* is a tribute to them and the first step toward a bigger attempt to better comprehend the role of sportsmen volunteers enlisted during the first months of the SCW, a fact that to date has received little scholar attention. Archival research, especially war combatants' family records as well as newspaper archives, oral memories of the protagonists left alive, and historical contextualization were defined as the appropriate methods to conduct the research. This paper is devoted to one of these young volunteers, Antonio Cánovas, recently dead in 2018 at the age of 98, whose life story in the 1930s and 1940s may be taken as the epitome of the young working-class sportsman of the cutting-edge regions of Spain in the first half of the 20th century: youngsters aware of their political and social rights whose dreams of social justice and active life were dashed by the war.

Keywords: youth, 1930s Spain, Spanish civil war (1936–1939), exile and diaspora, sports in wartime, working-class sportsmen

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Patrick Clastres,
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Reviewed by:

Kyle Rich,
Brock University, Canada
Juan Antonio Simón Sanjurjo,
European University of Madrid, Spain

*Correspondence:

Alejandro Viuda-Serrano
alejandro.viuda@uah.es

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
The History, Culture and Sociology of Sports,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 30 June 2020

Accepted: 06 January 2021

Published: 15 February 2021

Citation:

Viuda-Serrano A and
Ibarrondo-Merino I (2021) *Doomed Youth: Antonio Cánovas, a Young Sportsman in Time of War in 1930s Spain*.
Front. Sports Act. Living 3:577814.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2021.577814

INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Civil War (SCW), one of the most important world conflicts of the 20th century, resulted in the death or exile of a large number of renowned professional Spanish sportsmen. Although no systematic study has been carried out, some authors have made significant, albeit partial, efforts to assemble their names (Fernández Santander, 1990; Polo, 1993; García Candau, 2007). However, far greater was the number of young amateur practitioners who lost years or lives in the war and its consequences. The activities of many can be traced by carefully trawling newspapers of the period, but none of them have been the subject of in-depth historical research. Our study sheds light on one such life-story that could be taken as an archetype of thousands of working-class youngsters in 1930s Spain.

The main objective of this research was to expose the untold story of Antonio Cánovas as an example of politically engaged young popular athletes at a turning point in Spanish and European history. This concept of “popular” is a core and essential idea to understand sport as a working-class phenomenon, what authors such as Gounot (2005) call “working-class sports movement,” something more specific than “popular sport” or sport being practiced by workers, something clearly different from the upper-class or the middle-class concept of sport (Hargreaves, 1986; Sleep, 1998). In this sense, we can define Antonio Cánovas as a popular athlete before the war but as a working-class sportsman during and after it. The usual concept of sportsman probably does not



FIGURE 1 | Antonio Cánovas BAC swimmer's license of children's category (1934). Source: Cánovas family archive.

fit with our protagonist and the other popular athletes who enrolled when war began. Examples of these athletes can be traced back from lists of combatants in battalions made up of sportsmen like the “Batallón Cultura y Deporte” or the “Batallón Deportivo.” They were not only footballers (Crónica, 1936; El Progreso, 1936; Hoja Oficial del Lunes, 1936) such as Eugenio Martínez and Julián Alcántara (CD Nacional team), Francisco Gómez and Francisco Trinchant (Ferroviaria team), and José Cotillo and Pablito (Tranviaria team) but also athletes like José Luque and Manuel Moreno (FCDO team) (El Liberal, 1937); boxers like Emilio Iglesias, José Martínez, and Ángel Fernández; cyclists like Pablo Jallola and Fernando Esparza; swimmers like Juan Borreguero; or football referees like Valentín Bravo and Tomás Balaguer (Díaz Roncero, 1936). All of them were widely unknown non-professional popular sportsmen, as in the case of Antonio Cánovas.

The authors will manage to cope with some other specific objectives on this paper. First, to discuss about sport as a multifactorial social construction that shapes reality in multiple and overlapping ways, but which is also influenced by that reality, specially by adverse life events as a civil war. In highly unstable settings twisted by such events, sport may be used as a tool to maintain a sense of coherence and meaning and may facilitate the socialization processes during or after radical life changes (Michelini, 2018). Second, to reflect on the utility of sport and physical condition for war and their immediate and indirect benefits for the military (Mason and Riedi, 2010).

Regarding research methods used in this paper, as historical sources of any kind only provide a fragmented and partial view of the past, they should be just the point of access to that past, which must be completed with other reliable sources. This is what Day and Vamplew (2015) call the process of “complementarity, synergy and triangulation.” As these authors assume, the process of converting the past into history involves finding data, judging their validity, and accurately presenting them through a historical narrative. Being archives the main traditional source of information for historians (Johnes, 2015), authors have had the

invaluable support of Antonio Cánovas’ family. It was important to count not only on personal memorabilia, especially letters, but also photographs, the most used visual medium for sports historians (Huggins, 2015), identity cards, or team badges, as well as oral memories recounted by Cánovas to his relatives. We will identify these contributions into the text as part of the “Canovas family archive.” Among the dozens of letters Cánovas wrote to his brother Alfons and his family from 1936 to 1962, six were chosen to be used in this paper for their relevance about Cánovas involvement in sports. Among many photographs owned by Cánovas family, three were selected to better illustrate the Antonio’s most important life stages: his first steps in sport and swimming activity during childhood (Figure 1), his first competitions (Figure 2), his involvement in the civil war as an adolescent (Figure 3), and his engagement in sport, mainly football, during his imprisonment after war (Figure 4).

Secondly, even if press narratives are not neutral and newspapers are not sources of plain fact (Hill, 2006), historians of sport, especially contemporary historians, have usually resorted to the press. Authors have traced newspapers from Spain, France, and North Africa to sustain archival sources. Translation of newspapers was carried out by the authors, native speakers of Spanish and fluent in English and French. Just a few literal quotations were eventually used. Periodicals were collected from both physical and digital Spanish and French archives:

- Biblioteca Virtual de Prensa Histórica (BVPH) of the Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sport (<https://prensahistorica.mcu.es>): “El liberal,” “El Progreso,” “Hoja Oficial del Lunes,” and “La Libertad.”
- Bibliothèque Numérique (GALLICA) at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (<https://gallica.bnf.fr>): “L’Echo d’Oran” and “L’Humanité.”
- Center de Documentació Antiautoritari i Llibertari (CEDALL) at the Biblioteca de Catalunya (<http://www.cedall.org>): “Tierra y Libertad.”
- Hemeroteca Municipal de Madrid (HMM), physical archive: “Ahora. Diario de la Juventud.”
- Hemeroteca Digital (HD) at the Biblioteca Nacional de España (<http://www.bne.es/es/Catalogos/HemerotecaDigital>): “Crónica,” “Estampa,” “Mundo Gráfico,” and “Mi Revista.”
- Hemeroteca Digital de El Mundo Deportivo (HDMD) (<https://www.mundodeportivo.com/hemeroteca>): “El Mundo Deportivo.”
- Hemeroteca Digital de La Vanguardia (HDLV) (<https://www.lavanguardia.com/hemeroteca>): “La Vanguardia.”

Press sources will enable us to gain empirical support for the third historical source, a relatively under-used one, oral history. This method, with some concerns about possible poor memory, mis-remembrances or even nostalgia of the subjects interviewed can be invaluable if situated within a well-contextualized and well-triangulated historical narrative (Skillen and Osborne, 2015). We have used the last memories of Antonio Cánovas, overwhelmingly alert at 98 years old, interviewed by the authors in Barcelona on 12 August 2018, a few months before his death, to be checked out via a complete contextualization using dozens of research publications and some primary sources of Cánovas

contemporaries, being the most important of them his brother Alfons Cánovas (2015).

Following an initial analysis of the socio-political context, especially involving sports, as well as of main concepts such as youth and war, we offer a chronologically coherent narrative (Day and Vamplew, 2015) to gain legitimate knowledge of society, moving away from simply reporting data but developing understanding of social phenomena through an adequate contextualization of biographical narratives (Oldfield, 2015). We will analyze Antonio Cánovas' life as a child before the civil war, as a soldier during the conflict, as a refugee and a prisoner after the war, as a militant communist in adulthood, but above all as a popular sportsman during his entire lifetime. Finally, we will discuss and reflect on sport as a multifactorial tool for shaping and be shaped by reality, as well as on the importance of our protagonist as the epitome of the young working-class sportsman of the cutting-edge regions of Spain in the turbulent 1930s.

CONTEXT

Sport in Times of War

From a historical point of view, the relevance of sport in modern warfare requires further study and attention from historians. Mason and Riedi (2010) claim that it was during World War I (WW1) that sport came to play a major role in armies as a form of social control and a means of training. Sports competitions between regiments were common, as well as betting and athletic challenges (Mason and Riedi, 2010). However, equally remarkable is the participation of sportsmen in battle. In many cases, they formed specific units, battalions of athletes. Studies have focused mainly on footballers who fought and died in WW1, especially in the British armed forces (Luedtke, 2012; McCrery, 2014a). Specific football battalions have been studied by different authors (Milner, 1991; Nannestad, 2002; Alexander, 2003; Riddoch and Kemp, 2008). Cycling and skiing have been particularly relevant to the war. In the case of the bicycle, numerous battalions of specialized cycling soldiers have been used in armies since the late 19th century (Fitzpatrick, 1998). During WW1, cycling battalions existed in practically all armies, including British (Martin, 1944), German (Stone, 2015), Canadian (Glenn, 2018), French (Allen, 1935), Belgian (Pawly and Lierneux, 2009), and Australian (Wilson, 2002) armies. Skiing is also of clear military utility. In the French army, there had been specialized battalions (*Chasseurs Alpins*) since the 19th century, just as in the Russian army. During WW1, there were units of Austrian, German, Italian, and French skiers and mountaineers, and during the Second World War (WW2), skiing was prominent in the Soviet, Norwegian, and Finnish armies. German (Williamson, 1996), Italian (Bull, 2013), and American (Shelton, 2003) armies had skier and mountaineer units. Battalions of other sports were also formed during WW1. In the British army, this was the case with rugby (Woodall, 2000; Collins, 2002; McCrery, 2014b), although there were also general sports battalions (Ward, 1920; Bilton, 2014). Australia also set up sports battalions (Phillips, 1997; Blackburn, 2016). In Canada, although there were no

dedicated sports battalions, many hockey (Wilson, 2005) and baseball players (Horral, 2001) enlisted. In the Irish army, there was a battalion made up of rugby players (O'Callaghan, 2016).

Sports battalions in Spain have a shorter history. It did not participate in WW1, but from the early 20th century, thought was already being given to the importance of physical exercise in the army and its military use. Thus, in the first few decades, manuals for military cycling, military gymnastics, and physical education appeared. Before the civil war, cycling units had already been introduced in the Spanish army, such as the *Batallón Ciclista* created in 1931 (Huerta, 2016). During the war, thanks to the development of associative and workers' sports during the 1920s and 1930s, sports battalions held some prominence on the Republican side. These included the following: the *Batallón Deportivo* (García Candau, 2007), the *Batallón Ciclista Enrique Malatesta* (Ferragut, 1937), and the *Batallón Alpino del Guadarrama* (Arévalo, 2006) in Madrid; the *Batallón Ciclista* in Valencia (De Luis, 2019); the Alpine Militias in Barcelona (Flores et al., 2008); or the 96th Mixed Brigade, called the *Brigada de los Toreros* (Bullfighters' Brigade) in Murcia (Pérez, 2005). The war efforts of the Federación Cultural Deportiva Obrera (FCDO), the Spanish workers' sports organization, which created the *Compañía FCDO del Batallón Joven Guardia* (Comité Nacional de la FCDO, 1936a) and the *Batallón Cultura y Deporte* (Ibarrondo-Merino, 2019), were also noteworthy. There were many other battalions during the SCW, especially those made up from enlisted young volunteers.

The Political and Sports Background

Political dynamism characterizes the 1920s and 1930s Spain. In about a decade, its inhabitants would see a major shift from a "dictatorship with king" (Juliá, 1999) headed by General Primo de Rivera (1923–1930) and being the king Alfonso XIII (the great-grandfather of the current king, Felipe VI) to an unstable republic (1931–1939), to finally dash against a ferocious and long-standing dictatorship (1939–1975) imposed by reactionary forces (Tuñón de Lara, 1981) after a long civil war prelude to the WW2. The advent of the Republican democratic regime came through municipal elections that would peacefully relieve Alfonso XIII (Tuñón de Lara, 1981; Brenan, 2011; García de Cortázar and González, 2016), giving way to a progressive legislation that would affect both agricultural, labor, and territorial sphere and receive broad support even from sectors such as the clergy or the army (Tamames, 1973; Vilar, 1978). Although this Republican experience has gone down in history linked to progressive ideas, it also had a conservative period (1934–1936) in which conservative measures were noted, an issue that triggered a popular revolt in Asturias and a subsequent repression (Tuñón de Lara, 1981; Brenan, 2011). However, this stage steeped in repressive episodes and government corruption would eventually regrant the government to progressive forces that unleashed the outbreak of civil war following a right-wing coup d'état (Jackson, 2005).

Internationally, the main players in the field of sport during the first third of the 20th century were international workers' sport and the Olympic movement (Pujadas and Santacana, 1990).

In 1936, the strategic turn taken by the Communist International (Gounot, 2005) led to the union of the workers' sports sectors—thitherto divided between the more socialist ones aligned around the International Workers' Sports Union and the more communist ones aligned around the Red Sports International (RSI)—in order to join forces and take on the official Olympic movement. The most relevant event in the calendar of the workers' sport was the proletarian alternative to the Olympic Games, the Workers' Olympiads, held regularly during the 1920s and 1930s in Europe (Jones, 1988). It is in this context that the People's Olympics (PO) of Barcelona (Stout, 2020), one of the most significant and influential events in workers' and popular sport at international level, was held, in response to the choice of Berlin as the venue for the 1936 Olympic Games, to the detriment of, precisely, Barcelona's candidacy. The IOC's inaction in the face of Hitler's arrival to power in 1933 and the decision not to change the venue sparked an international movement initiated in the USA by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) that would lead to the creation of the Committee on Fair Play in Sports and to the idea being aired of boycotting Berlin. In Europe, the protest movement was orchestrated from the Anti-Fascist Conference in Paris, which agreed in late 1935 on the constitution of the International Committee for the Defense of Olympic Ideals (Pujadas and Santacana, 1990; Gounot, 2005). Barcelona had not only been a candidate to organize the Olympic Games on several occasions (Mercader, 1987) but also boasted a series of political and social characteristics and sporting infrastructures that made it the perfect host of such an event (Colomé and Sureda, 1995). Although these anti-Berlin sentiments coincided with the intentions of the RSI and were influenced by it, the PO was an event that cut across the currents opposed to fascism and was located in a different place not only from the official Games but also from the Workers' Olympiads and the so-called Spartakiads (Pujadas and Santacana, 1990; Colomé and Sureda, 1995; Gounot, 2005).

Sport in Spain had begun to thrive in the 1920s in a modernizing process, albeit late in Europe, whose foundations rested on a nascent sports mercantilism in sports such as football, boxing, and cycling and the growing development of the sports press (Bahamonde, 2011). This process was particularly important in the cities, especially in the Basque Country and Catalonia, in what Pujadas (2011) calls the "sports explosion" and resulted in an extension of sports associationism to the most popular sectors of society, the working classes, rural areas, and women. In fact, an alternative discourse emerged that created a transversal popular sports movement with roots in athenaeums, gymnasiums, sports clubs, trade unions, or political party youth movements. In all these developments, there were two reference organizations: the FCDO, on the national level (Ibarrondo-Merino, 2019), and the Comitè Català pro Esport Popular (CCEP) in Catalonia (Colomé and Sureda, 1995; Gounot, 2005).

FCDO deserves further consideration for its key role on the sports context being probably the most relevant organization in Spanish working-class sports. It emanated from the previous FDO (Federación Deportiva Obrera) founded in Madrid in 1931 (De Luis, 2019). That organization came to fulfill expectations of socialist sectors of sport showed an unofficial, working-class,

and progressive interpretation of the sport phenomenon as a utilitarian activity to gain political awareness, opposed to the official, capitalist idea of sport as a lucrative spectacle or a simple pastime. Both visions turned into almost antagonistic ideas of sport in Spain. Internal disputes ended up leading to the formation of the Federación Cultural Deportiva de Castilla La Nueva in 1932 (Pujadas, 2011) including the city of Madrid. This organization would merge back with the FDO by 1933 during the term in FDO office of Manuel Vento (De Luis, 2019). This new Federation would be the FCDO that channeled the most part of the working-class sport during the 1930s and extended throughout Castille as well as the Andalusian, Galician, Asturian, Basque, or Catalan territories, with little implementation in Catalonia (Pujadas, 2011) where the Catalan branch of FCDO became even autonomous (Gounot, 2005). The FCDO, which developed sports sections in different disciplines like football, athletics, or swimming among others (De Luis, 2019), stood out for the hegemony of socialist and communist ideas inside the organization that determined its sports policy until the end of the civil war.

Sport in Catalonia had undergone a dramatic change since the beginning of the 20th century, with the emergence of a sporting concept that was not only different from the rest of Spain but also different from the rest of Europe; it was forward-looking and influenced by progressive and also Catalanist ideologies. A discourse developed that was linked to citizen and class awareness, as well as to the recovery of Olympic values such as fraternity, solidarity among young people, mutual respect, and equality. Various newspapers such as *La Nau* (1927), *La Nau del Sports* (1929–30), or *La Rambla* (1930) were key propagators of this ideology, according to which doing sport was doing politics and being patriotic. It was an ideology nourished by a citizenry aware of its rights and far removed from the elitist conception of aristocratic sport, and its generalization came with the Second Republic, which created the right conditions in a favorable terrain such as Catalonia (Pujadas and Santacana, 1990). In these circumstances, the youth sectors of the Catalan popular classes had the opportunity to enjoy their free time more and to become members of various gymnastic and sports societies. The CCEP was the political base that supported this Catalan sports movement, which carried on the previous activities of several associations such as the *Ateneu Enciclopèdic Popular*, the sporting section of the *Center Autonomiste de Dependents del Comerç*, the *Club Femení i de Esports*, or the *Center Gimnàstic Barcelonés*. The CCEP brought together most of the sports societies in Catalonia, although it was only short lived due to the civil war, which changed the priorities of the sportsmen and women, many of whom were politically engaged and participated actively in the war. That is the case of Antonio Cánovas, the main character in this paper.

During the SCW, sport was used mainly for propaganda purposes (López, 2019). On the Republican side, between 1936 and 1938, sports festivals were held to promote and support the Republican cause, war victims, blood hospitals, and anti-fascist militias (Domínguez and Pujadas, 2011). In Catalonia alone, Pujadas (2007) identified more than 60 such festivals until the fall of Barcelona in January 1939. Although most were dedicated

to football (39), there were also cycling (10), swimming (3), athletics (3), or boxing competitions (2), among others. Likewise, Spanish sportsmen, most of them Catalans, attended various sporting events organized by the workers' movement during the war, especially the Antwerp Workers' Olympics (García Candau, 2007; Arrechea, 2019) and the events organized by the *Fédération Sportive et Gymnique du Travail* (FSGT) in France (L'Humanité, 1937). Pro-Franco rebels, however, from the beginning of the war used sport as a diplomatic weapon (Domínguez and Pujadas, 2011), a usual Francoist strategy during the next years (Viuda-Serrano, 2010), with the clear intention of legitimizing the rebel institutions at an international level, creating a double sporting officialdom with governing bodies different from the Republican ones. The rebels were victorious in this war too, for in 1937 they achieved international recognition for the new Spanish Football Federation from FIFA and for the new Spanish Olympic Committee from the IOC.

Youth, Politics, War, and Sport

Talking about youth as a whole is complex, since it is a very large and heterogeneous group of people with varying ages, as well as different demographic, economic, and cultural contexts, which depend on different national and local conditions. Nevertheless, in Europe, we can speak of the emergence of two different youth traditions throughout the 19th century, that of the working class and that of the middle class (Gillis, 1981). These came into conflict during the first half of the 20th century, when there was an unprecedented political mobilization of young people (Getman-Eraso, 2011). In the case of Spain, belated industrial and urban development, the key influence of the Catholic Church, and the exceptional nature of the more industrialized Basque Country and Catalonia as pioneering regions (Merino et al., 2018) conditioned the entry of young Spaniards into public life.

The ideas of modernization ushered in by the 20th century coalesced in the Spanish Republican project of the 1930s, which was supported by both the working and the middle classes and opposed by the upper class and the Catholic Church, which had enjoyed economic and cultural hegemony until then. The outbreak of the civil war in 1936 made clear the determination of the privileged classes in Spain to resist the process of social, political, and cultural modernization undertaken by the Republic (Boyd, 1997). Therefore, the clash of traditions in Spain was not, as in the rest of Europe, between young people from the middle class and the working class but between, on the one hand, young Catholics, educated in conservative values in a process undertaken with brio at the end of the 19th century and, on the other hand, young lay people, immersed in movements of educational renewal aimed at combating illiteracy, extending compulsory education, and promoting new educational methods (Merino et al., 2018).

The growing radicalization of left and right—there is knowledge of over 60 political youth organizations during the Second Republic (Casterás, 1974), especially from 1934 onwards—contributed to the increase in social tension during the years preceding the civil war (Getman-Eraso, 2011). University student movements, too, were divided on the political spectrum and often clashed with each other and with the authorities

(González Calleja, 2005). Spanish leftist youth organizations were able to join against a common enemy, fascism, facilitating in April 1936 the merger of socialist and communist youth as the *Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas* (JSU), which did not happen between the same adult parties (Souto, 2004). Even more, young people are bellwethers of social change and reflect, in rather dramatic fashion, the struggles taking place in the larger society (Braungart, 1984) and usually arise in periods of crisis or radical change.

Being mobilized by the youth organizations, youngsters played a significant role in the Republican war effort (Souto, 2013). Of the three million people, with an average age of 28, who fought in the civil war, 7–8% were volunteers (Matthews, 2012). Most of them were very young and quite a number were under 18, despite the fact that the legal age of majority in Spain was 21 at the time. It is well known that the case of Antonio Cánovas was not uncommon, and many underage boys were encouraged to join. From the very beginning, premilitary physical education was established for adolescents aged 15–18 who were not permitted to enroll in the army (Consejo Nacional de Educación Premilitar Física y Cultural de la Juventud, 1937). Even boys born in 1921, the so-called “quinta del biberón” (baby-bottle generation) because of their youth (Molero, 1999), were officially called up owing to the need for soldiers on both sides of the conflict.

Connections between youth and sport were also clear during the conflict and was usually highlighted in the youth periodicals and publications that proliferated during the first months of the war. Physical activity acquired a distinct utilitarian and military nature linked with the previous political awareness that characterized sport in the 1920s and 1930s when doing sport was doing politics and being patriotic. According to these publications, the main objective of sports in wartime is gaining physical fitness of soldiers, being the time of militarizing sport to help in the war effort, because “who is better physically prepared (for war) than we (the sportsmen) are?” (Lacomba, 1936). The stated goal of the “sporting movement” inside the Republican Army was to create sport teams “in each Battalion, Company and Section” and set regular competitions to train soldiers (Ahora. Diario de la Juventud, 1937). To sum up, “the true sportsmen must be in the front line and this is not the time for trivial pastimes” (Comité Nacional de la FCDO, 1936b).

ANTONIO CÁNOVAS, A YOUNG SPORTSMAN IN TIME OF WAR

The Child Swimmer

Antonio Cánovas was born in 1920, the son of two Murcians who emigrated to Catalonia with their families when they were 17 and met in Barcelona. He had four brothers, two younger than him, one 2 years older than him, Alfons, and another 7 years older, Juan. He always had a special relationship with Alfons, which himself describes in his book of memories (Cánovas, 2015). He went to the municipal school in the Barceloneta district. When he was 11 years old, he was a direct witness on 14 April 1931 of the proclamation of the Second Republic in Barcelona. In 1932,

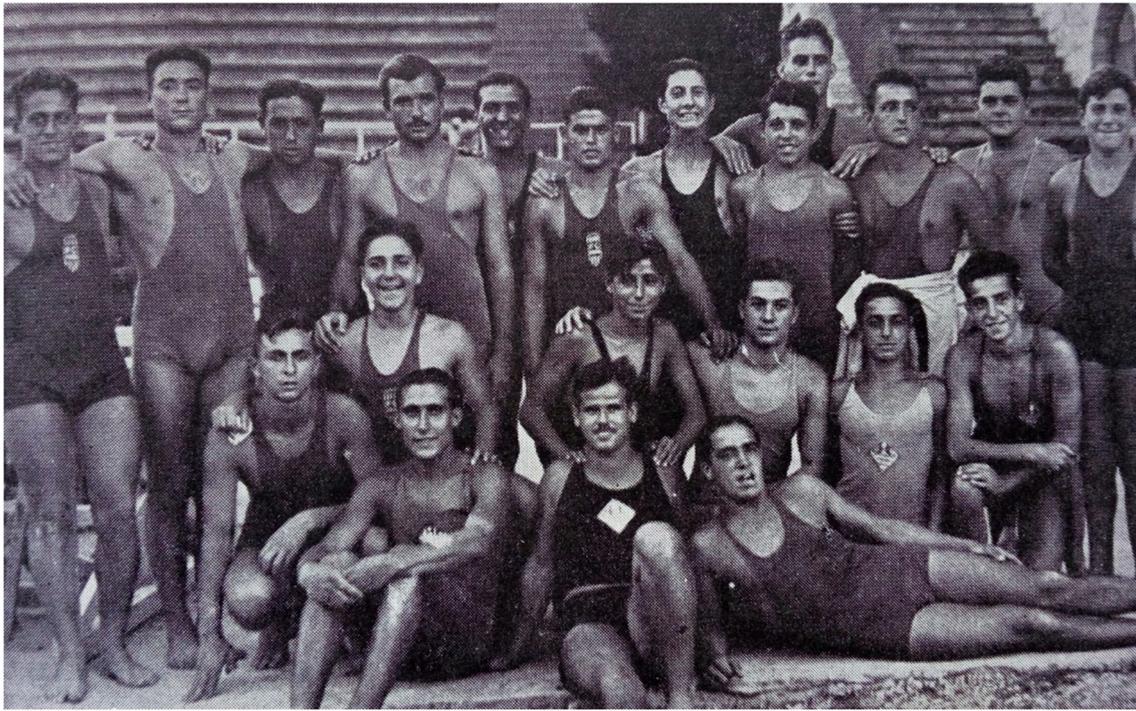


FIGURE 2 | Antonio Cánovas (standing fifth from right) and his BAC teammates (1935). Source: Cánovas family archive.

due to lack of work, his parents moved to Guadalupe, in Murcia, where he was born, taking him and all his brothers with them (Cánovas, 2015). His father bought some land with the intention of cultivating it. Antonio was in charge of collecting fertilizer for the crops with an old donkey. The Murcia experience was short-lived and the whole family returned to Barcelona in 1934. He was 14 years old.

Through his brother Alfons, who was a member before him, Antonio joined the *Barceloneta Amateur Club* (BAC), a workers' swimming club founded in 1929 in a working-class neighborhood. His teammates called him "El Puça" (Flea). He competed in BAC's first international match against the "Star Olympique" (Marseilles) on 24 September 1935, on a trip by the French club to Catalonia, where they competed in swimming and water polo with several Catalan teams (*El Mundo Deportivo*, 1935; *La Vanguardia*, 1935). After the civil war, the club's name was changed to *Natació Barceloneta*. The fact that he would never forget that club can be seen in the many letters he wrote from exile to his brother Alfons (Cánovas family archive, 2020), who became the president of the club years later in 1952 (Cánovas, 2015).

In July 1936, Antonio participated in the Catalan swimming championships in the children's and beginners' category, where he swam the 200- and 400-m breaststroke in the Montjuïc pool, the only one in Barcelona which was 50 m long (Cánovas, 2018). The competitions ended at midnight on 18 July. The next day, he was due to return for the PO opening ceremony. The BAC, which was associated to the CCEP, was one of the clubs that had worked

hardest on the organization of the international event. Antonio was to have formed part of the BAC team that would compete at the PO, after passing the club's selection tests (he was a substitute in the breaststroke tests), and he took part in the rehearsals for the opening ceremony planned for the 19th, which was eagerly awaited by many Barcelona residents (Stout, 2020).

On his way home that night, he saw strange troop maneuvers in the Captaincy General's office and heard some shots. His father said to Antonio and his brother, "Do what you want, I can't stop you. But whatever you do, do it for the people, never against them" (Cánovas family archive, 2020). He was a member of the anarcho-syndicalist *Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores* (CNT), the leading workers' union in Catalonia with 137,000 members in 1936 (Calero, 2009). After the military coup, the CNT was transformed from a trade union organization into the governing body of a large part of the rear guard economy and, after entering government, into a political body representing the workers in the Republican institutions (Vadillo, 2019).

In the early hours of the morning, they heard shots and gunfire in the street. In fact, the orders of the military uprising were to leave the barracks and take to the streets at 4 a.m. to take control of the important centers of power in the Catalan capital (Martínez Bande, 2007). Antonio took to the streets with his brother Alfons. There were soldiers and barricades blocking the way. It was already dawn when they arrived at the Captaincy General's office where they received one rifle for the two of them. They took part in positioning a cannon that fired directly at the facade of the military government and achieved the surrender of

the rebels in Barcelona (Cánovas family archive, 2020). One of the Cánovas brothers' friends, who was also a swimmer in the BAC, died there. The CNT militants and many Barcelonans fought in the streets with the few weapons they had, and their actions were decisive in frustrating the military coup in Barcelona (Vadillo, 2019).

The PO did not take place. Most of the athletes and journalists who had arrived in Barcelona for the event were evacuated by their countries in the following days, although some of them remained in Spain to join the International Brigades that fought for the Republic. Each political party created its own militia groups and many young people close to socialism, communism, or anarchism (Getman-Eraso, 2011) led the large number of volunteers who fought from the very first moment against the coup d'état (*Tierra y Libertad*, 1936). On 20 July, Antonio, like many of his friends in the BAC, was the first of his brothers to volunteer in the militias of the *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (PSUC), a party of Trotskyist and Catalanist ideology founded at the beginning of the civil war (Puigsech, 2002), another member of which was George Orwell.

The youngster, who until that moment had remained on the sidelines of the political conflict and focused on swimming, the same boy who very recently played on a donkey while helping his father on a vegetable patch in Murcia, suddenly found himself caught up in military training at the Carlos Marx barracks (Rubio, 1936), where the PSUC's military recruitment and training office was located (Closa, 2011). During the following years, the aptitudes of a promising swimmer and the hopes of a young sportsman were irreversibly shattered by the reality of war.

The Boy Soldier

During the civil war, Antonio saw action on four different fronts (Mallorca, Aragón, Madrid, and Teruel) and participated in three of the most important and bloodiest battles of the entire conflict (Belchite, Teruel, and Ebro). After just over a week of military training, he joined the Carlos Marx Column (Alpert, 2013). Recently created in July 1936 in Barcelona, it had some 2,000 soldiers, members of the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT), a Marxist trade union, and the PSUC (Gabriel, 2011). Most of the Carlos Marx militiamen were young sportsmen, "because young people are more inclined to go forward" (Cánovas, 2018). On 1 August 1936, they were sent to the Mallorca front with a contingent of some 8,000 militiamen, most of them communists, under the command of Captain Alberto Bayo. In the early morning of August 16, they disembarked in Mallorca (Bayo, 1987). In spite of outnumbering the rebels, the inexperience of the young soldiers and a series of poorly planned actions ended in the operation's failure (Aguilera, 2015). During these early days of the war, Antonio experienced the worst moments of his tragic experience. One August night, in the trenches, one of his young comrades died in his arms, calling out desperately to his mother (Cánovas, 2018). After little more than 2 weeks, the column withdrew from the island of Mallorca on September 4, embarking 3,000 soldiers on a hospital ship bound for Barcelona and 4,000 on a cargo ship bound for Valencia (Martínez Bande, 1989). However, in the haste of the escape, they left behind some soldiers and equipment. Antonio had to swim out while being



FIGURE 3 | Antonio Cánovas at the beginning of the civil war (1936). Source: Cánovas family archive.

shot at with machine guns from the beach. He was picked up by the Republican naval vessel *Jaime I* and ended up disembarking in Valencia, from where he returned to Barcelona (Cánovas, 2018). His swimming skills had saved his life in his first taste of war.

After Mallorca, the Carlos Marx Column regrouped in Barcelona and was sent to help in the defense of Madrid on 27 September 1936 (Berger, 2017). He fought in the Casa de Campo, where he served as a liaison carrying communications between trenches for the different companies on the front. At the end of 1936, he returned to Barcelona from where he was sent to the Aragón front. From May 1937, following the reorganization of the Republican army (Salas, 1973), the Carlos Marx Column became the 27th Division, known as "La Bruja" (The Witch) for its mobility and efficiency during the war (Soriano, 1989; Closa, 2011), a shock force with no fixed location, which went where it was necessary to reinforce the trenches. It included the 122nd, 123rd, and 124th Mixed Brigades (De Aragón, 1938; Maldonado, 2007). Antonio was assigned to the 122nd. He participated in the battle of Belchite, from 24 August to 6 September 1937 and was then sent to the Teruel front, where he fought in the offensive on the city from 15 December 1937. The Republicans lost the battle in February 1938. On January 19, in Visiedo, he met up again with his two brothers, Juan and Alfons. That very same day, his father was killed in an Italian bombing raid on the port of Barcelona while working in his small vegetable patch (Cánovas, 2018).

After Teruel, Antonio's brigade, which had suffered many casualties, was deployed in the rear, although shortly afterwards he was sent to the Battle of Ebro, the last major battle of the civil war. Antonio was promoted to sergeant at the age of 18. He was a true veteran despite his youth. He took part in the Republican offensive on the Ebro on 25th July 1938. After an early string of victories, the battle of Ebro became one of the attritions that the Republicans eventually lost on 15 November 1938 due to insufficient supplies and transport. The defeat at the Battle

of Ebro meant that the Republican army had lost the war for good. Antonio neither returned to Barcelona out of precaution nor was he able to see his family (Cánovas family archive, 2020). His aim was to flee to France with the barely 40 soldiers from his brigade, of about 3,000, who were still alive. They were constantly bombarded and attacked on their journey through the villages of Catalonia. They advanced through rural areas and reached the French border, which they crossed at Le Perthus, on February 12, 1939 (Cánovas, 2018).

The Young Prisoner

More than 500,000 people lost their lives in the SCW, whether in action at the front or victims of repression in the rear guard (Thomas, 2001). However, the figures for exile are even higher; 700,000 Spaniards fled during the war, of whom almost half a million fled to France between late January and early February 1939 (Rubio, 1997). Faced with pressure from hundreds of thousands of refugees, and after the failure of negotiations with Franco to create a neutral space on Spanish soil under international control, France opened the border on January 27, although only for women, children, the elderly, and the sick. Men of military age had to wait until 5 February (Alted, 2005). They were forced to surrender their weapons to the French authorities and had all kinds of vehicles and belongings seized.

In February, several concentration camps were hastily set up on the beaches near the border: the sand was fenced in and soldiers were posted to watch over them. Antonio was first held at the camp of Argelès-sur-Mer (Pyrénées-Orientales). For the first few days, there was nothing to eat and tens of thousands of Spaniards and some members of the International Brigades were literally left lying on the beach in cramped conditions (Coale, 2014). At the beginning of March 1939, a camp was opened in Agde (Hérault), where Antonio was sent, along with 24,000 other exiles, most of them Catalans (Parello, 2011). Not only did the appalling living conditions in the concentration camps drive many to return to Franco's Spain but they were also actively pressured into repatriation through Francoist and French propaganda campaigns inside the camps (Coale, 2014). Some 50,000 exiles would eventually cross back into Spain during the month of February. However, at the age of 19, Antonio knew that if he returned, at best he would be forced to do several years of military service in Franco's army; at worst, he would be tried for sedition and, having been a volunteer and holding the rank of sergeant, might be sentenced to death or summarily executed (Cánovas, 2018).

He was better off at Agde. He took part in sporting activities such as athletics and met several prestigious Catalan athletes who had been selected to take part in the PO: Jaume Àngel, Spanish 1,500-m champion in 1930 and 1935, Catalan 1,500-m record holder and working class athlete who took part in the 1937 Workers' Olympics (Arrechea, 2019) and other workers' competitions (L'Humanité, 1937); S. Puig, Catalan 100-m champion; Francisco Lorenzo, high jumper and pole vaulter from Barcelona; the Tugás brothers, José and Felipe, throwers and runners from Badalona; and J. Valls, 100-m sprinter (Etayo, 1992). He remained at Agde until the official closure of the facility in September 1939 (Parello, 2011) on France's entry into

WW2, when he was sent to the Saint Cyprien camp (Pyrénées-Orientales), where they were looking for men to work and take the place of the Frenchmen dispatched to the front. However, at the end of 1939, as a volunteer worker for a company under French military command, he was sent to the naval base in Brest to build an arsenal in the port. He remained there until the Germans reached the city gates on June 19, 1940, when troops, the government, and any civilians who were able left the city without a fight (Cointet, 2017). In his escape bid, Antonio posed as a French sailor and stowed away on one of the ships leaving the port. Although the German bombardment did not succeed in sinking his ship like others, he was discovered by the French sailors and shackled in the hold (Cánovas, 2018). After several days at sea, on June 24th Antonio disembarked handcuffed in Casablanca (Morocco)—not America, which he thought was the vessel's destination—and was imprisoned.

After the civil war, 10,000–12,000 Spaniards had gone into exile in North Africa, in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco (Vilar, 2008). Following the armistice of June 1940, under the Vichy administration, the concentration camps in North Africa had become an openly repressive military system, which turned the Spaniards in the *Compagnies de Travailleurs Étrangers* (CTE) into virtual slaves (Charaudeau, 1992). Cánovas was tried for war crimes and sentenced to hard labor in the concentration camp of Bou Arfa, a village located on the border between Morocco and Algeria, in the middle of the desert (Martínez Leal, 2016). Despite the absence of chains, fences, and bars, there could be no bigger cell than the desert itself, which surrounded the camp on all sides. There he worked on the construction of the trans-Saharan train (Gaida, 2014), the French colonial dream for northern Africa that would link Niger to the Mediterranean Sea. The authorities saw a great opportunity for finding manpower among prisoners and expatriates fleeing the war. Some 1,200 prisoners worked on this stretch (from Bou Arfa, Morocco to Kenadsa, Algeria), most of them Spanish exiles from Oran (Algeria). Living conditions were very hard (Gaida, 2014; Cánovas, 2018). Work began at dawn and, after a break due to the high temperatures in the middle of the day, resumed in the afternoon until sunset. They ate and slept in dirty, dilapidated tents from the colonial era, in which 8–12 people were crammed together, twice their capacity, enduring temperatures that dropped to zero degrees at night.

Although all political activity was banned, an underground communist network was created with the aim of sabotaging the work of the trans-Saharan railway. Conditions worsened when punishment companies were set up to deal with acts of sabotage by the prisoners. Those punished did the hardest work, among them Antonio because of his relations with the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE). He was part of a cell of four people who held clandestine meetings. Among other activities, they buried shovels, rakes, or drills and overturned carts (Cánovas, 2018). Thanks to the contacts he had made, he was appointed head of the JSU, and from then on, he left the hard work of building the tracks and moved to more comfortable jobs in the village of Bou Arfa. He had a certain freedom of movement within the village, although always under close military surveillance and forced to attend daily roll calls.



FIGURE 4 | Antonio Cánovas (the crouching man with dark jersey) and his Bou Arfa concentration camp teammates (1941). Source: Cánovas family archive.

They worked from Monday to Saturday and spent Sundays playing sports. Antonio remembered those Sundays as the only good thing about this time. He missed being able to swim. That is what he wrote in the letters he could send to his family, especially to his brother Alfons, who would send him sports newspapers in return and tell him about the news at the BAC. He was only 20 years old, but he felt that it had been decades since he had swum in Barcelona. In spite of everything, like many exiles, he hoped to return to Spain soon (Cánovas, 2018). In one of his letters, he addressed his former swimming partners, encouraging them with the club's motto: "*Bacallà, sec, sec, bacallà, sec, sec ;!b bac! ;!b bac! ;!b BAC!*" ("Cod, dried, dried, cod, dried, dried, BAC! BAC! BAC!") (Cánovas family archive, letter from October 15, 1940). Faced with the impossibility of swimming, he began to play football. Every Sunday, he would go down to the village of Bou Arfa with other prisoners. He played as a goalkeeper and proved to be one of the best. In 1941, he was selected to play for another team from the camp and even entered the lineup for a game in Oujda (267 km north of Bou Arfa). He played other sports. He took part in an international athletics meeting in the region, becoming the 100-m and 4 × 100 relay champion and runner-up in the long jump (Cánovas family archive, 2020). The Spanish team won the championships. Whenever he could, he also produced a small sports newspaper on Sundays, which gave the results of the Spanish football league taken from the news he could hear on the radio.

Since sabotage in the prison camp was constant, in June 1942, the communist organization was discovered and reported to the French authorities, who arrested Antonio and the others involved, thus ending his 2 years in the hard-labor camp of

Bou Arfa. He was taken to a police station, interrogated, beaten, and tortured. He was then transferred to Meknès, where a military tribunal accused him of sabotage at a court martial and sentenced him to 3 years in the Port Lyautey prison, known as the *maison central*, built in 1930 as the first maximum security prison in Morocco and used for prisoners with long sentences, especially political prisoners (Slyomovics, 2005). In the prison, with a capacity of 425 people, conditions were much stricter and harsher than in the desert. He was taken out to quarry stone morning and afternoon. He was kept in a cell with common prisoners, separated from the rest of the communists imprisoned with him, although there too he came across an underground communist organization. The prison routine was not interrupted until the American troops landed at Port Lyautey on November 8, 1942. Heavy Allied bombing destroyed part of the prison. Some common prisoners escaped. However, the political prisoners decided to stay in their cells. The guards shot anyone who tried to escape, and they were convinced that they would soon be released. Indeed, within a few days, the victorious American forces arrived at the prison handing out tobacco and chewing gum. They offered them freedom if they joined their army to fight on the European front, with the promise of paying them a salary and granting them American nationality (Cánovas, 2018). He refused the offer and remained in prison. He was held for eight more months, while the French collaborators were arrested, and the Americans took control of the colony. At least they no longer had to quarry but worked in an agricultural factory, a much less arduous task. In April, under pressure from French communist organizations, the work camps were closed, and in July, the inmates were released. The Spanish prisoners in Port Lyautey

were also released. Toward the end of July 1943, Antonio was sent to Casablanca.

The Militant Free Sportsman

Antonio was physically free, although he was still far from his family. The *Parti Communiste Français* (PCF), along with the *Parti Communiste du Maroc* (PCM), newly founded in 1943, organized a network coordinated through a committee for the reception of former prisoners to welcome them into the homes of like-minded families. He had to integrate himself into a society that was totally foreign to him. He found a job as a mechanic in an American army truck workshop. When not working, he attended social gatherings with other exiles. At a dance to help refugees, he met his future wife, Micaela. She was 17 and he was 23.

From this point on, he was able to return to sports. He played as a goalkeeper in the *Honneur* Division in Morocco, at first as a substitute, but later he would earn a place in the first team. In 1943, in a letter to his brother Alfons, he wrote: “Of the four games I’ve played, I haven’t let a single goal in” (Cánovas family archive, letter from November 3, 1943). Those letters were his only contact with his family in Barcelona. Both Antonio and Alfons maintained an intense sporting life in spite of their different life paths. “Football is my destiny, I have been made some offers for next season,” Antonio wrote in another letter to Alfons in 1944 (Cánovas family archive, letter from August 1, 1944).

He remained in contact with the PCF and attended their meetings to raise money to help refugees and the clandestine struggle in Spain. He collaborated with the anti-Franco resistance in Morocco. The PCE, in which he was an activist, sent Antonio to Bordeaux to work underground, where his brother Juan already lived. Like many in exile and inside Spain, he was confident that the Franco dictatorship would fall after the allied victory in WW2. On July 1, 1946, he left Casablanca via Oran with his wife and 1-year-old son. He landed in Port-Vendres (Pyrénées-Orientales), on a false passport, posing as a PCF repatriate returning after the war. While in Bordeaux, he was required to support Spanish guerrilla activity on the French border. Under the alias of Ricardo, he infiltrated the Pyrenees rear guard. He lost all contact with his wife, Micaela, who had to return to Casablanca in September 1947 due to financial difficulties in Bordeaux where she was unable to work because she lacked official papers. Antonio’s role was to act as a “passer,” escorting and transporting people and materials from France to the other side of the border. He used isolated paths to reach a specific point in Spain, leave what he was transporting, and return to France. The clandestine network was suddenly dismantled, and he had to return to Bordeaux without explanation. From there, he moved to Paris, where he was reunited with his wife and son. These were difficult times marked by hunger and cold. In that period, his work consisted in making false-bottomed suitcases to pass documents to Spain (Cánovas family archive, 2020).

In September 1948, the PCE allowed Antonio to return to Bordeaux, where his daughter Nadia was born in 1949. Micaela returned to Casablanca, but Antonio had problems with his illegal passport. To travel legally to Casablanca, he needed a

job contract in Morocco that he would not get until July 1950, through a Spanish player from the *Idéal Club Marocain* football team, in exchange for playing for the club.

During the 2 years of waiting in Bordeaux, Antonio left the underground and returned to sport. He played football in Bordeaux, although it was hard to reconcile it with work. In a letter, he explained that “when you win you don’t feel the blows or the tiredness until the next day you have to go to work” (Cánovas family archive, letter from February 24, 1949). In 1950, at the age of 30, he returned to swimming training to fill the void left by the enforced separation from his family. He participated in a local competition, winning the 100- and 200-m breaststroke. “The times are not bright, but it is a satisfaction after such a long time away from the pool; and winning has boosted my morale,” he said in a letter (Cánovas family archive, letter from July 3, 1950).

In Casablanca, he became a great angling enthusiast, as he wrote in a letter: “It is one of my biggest distractions right now” (Cánovas family archive, letter from August 26, 1951). He continued with athletics and football. At 31, he was in excellent shape, playing two games a week. In 1951, his team, the *Idéal Club Marocain*, was promoted to the *Honneur* Division of Moroccan football (*L’Echo d’Oran*, 1951). In 1952, he made it to the first team, although the following season they were relegated to *Pre-Honneur* again (*L’Echo d’Oran*, 1952). Antonio carried on playing sport until his return to Barcelona in 1962, after 23 years of exile.

CONCLUSION

Along this paper, we have discussed sport as a pastime and leisure activity; as an effective means of getting a good physical condition; as a way to fill the void or to think of something other than extremely adverse situations, to improve life conditions, or to achieve employment; as an opportunity to travel or to meet new people; and as a way for political awareness... It is clear to us that sport not only shapes reality but is also influenced by real experiences, especially by traumatic events. Antonio Cánovas not only took advantage of his physical condition during war and exile but also used sports to deal with his imprisonment and loneliness, being sports practice a means to forge personality. This paper also states the FCDO’s key role in Spanish working-class sports movement and the political boost of the Republican regime to bring Spain closer to the European sports development.

Antonio Cánovas died in 2018, at the age of 98, a few months after being interviewed by the authors. He had a long and full life although not free of obstacles. He had been swimming since his adolescence in Barcelona, the Spanish city of sport par excellence, as many Catalan laborers’ and workers’ children did during the modernizing process of the 1920s and especially the 1930s. He saw friends and enemies die in the SCW, like most of the nearly three million people who fought in the conflict. Furthermore, he volunteered out of political and moral convictions as all the estimated 240,000 young leftist volunteers did. He endured hunger, cold, and loneliness in the French concentration camps and was treated as a dangerous criminal,

the same as the almost half a million who fled from repression between late January and early February 1939. He was subjected to forced labor in North African concentration camps, like a few thousand Spaniards, most of them Catalans, and got involved in political activism. He was imprisoned as a political prisoner in a maximum security penitentiary, and even when Allies freed North Africa, he was held for eight more months. He was an anti-fascist and anti-Franco activist who risked his life and his family's safety during the harshest post-war years out of strong convictions. He spent 23 years in exile away from his family, his friends, and his home country. But, he also practiced sports all his life, even in hard conditions, during the war, in the French and Moroccan concentrations camps, in prison, in the underground, and as a free man. He met new friends and raised a family. Neither adversity nor suffering succeeded in breaking the youthful vitality of a character forged in sport from childhood, something remarkable even in his old age.

Antonio is one of those thousands of anonymous sportsmen that neatly explain the intersection between youth, war, and sport in Spain of the turbulent and critical 1930s, whose life story may be taken as the epitome of the young working-class sportsman of the cutting-edge regions of Spain in the first half of the 20th century: a generation where youth were doomed to failure, youngsters aware of their political and social rights whose dreams of social justice and active life were dashed by the war.

REFERENCES

- Aguilera, M. (2015). El desembarco de Bayo en Mallorca según las cartas del periodista Gabriel Fuster Mayans 'Gafim'. *Hist. Comun. Soc.* 20, 45–65. doi: 10.5209/rev_HICS.2015.v20.n1.49547
- Ahora. Diario de la Juventud (1937, November 4). El deporte en el Ejército. *Ahora. Diario de la Juventud*, 5.
- Alexander, J. (2003). *McCrae's Battalion. The Story of the 16th Royal Scots*. Edinburgh, London: Mainstream Publishing.
- Allen, R. L. K. (1935). Cyclist units. *R. U. Serv. Institut. J.* 80, 109–115. doi: 10.1080/03071843509421336
- Alpert, M. (2013). *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Alted, A. (2005). *La voz de los vencidos. El exilio republicano de 1939*. Madrid: Aguilar.
- Arévalo, J. M. (2006). *El Batallón Alpino del Guadarrama*. Madrid: La Librería.
- Arrechea, F. (2019). Los deportistas españoles durante la Guerra Civil: exilio y competiciones internacionales (Berlín/Barcelona, 1936, Amberes, 1937). *Migraciones Exilios* 18, 13–31.
- Bahamonde, A. (2011). “La escalada del deporte en España en los orígenes de la sociedad de masas, 1900–1936,” in *Atletas y ciudadanos. Historia social del deporte en España 1870–2010*, ed. X. Pujadas (Madrid: Alianza Editorial), 89–123.
- Bayo, A. (1987). *Mi desembarco en Mallorca*. Palma: Miquel Font.
- Berger, G. (2017). *Les Milícies Antifeixistes de Catalunya. 21 de juliol - 31 de desembre de 1936*. (Dissertation thesis). Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona.
- Bilton, D. (2014). *Hull Pals. 10th, 11th, 12th & 13th Battalions East Yorkshire Regiment. A History of 92 Infantry Brigade 31st Division*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books.
- Blackburn, K. (2016). *War, Sport and the Anzac Tradition*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Boyd, C. P. (1997). *Historia Patria. Politics, History, and National Identity in Spain, 1875–1975*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

ETHICS STATEMENT

Written informed consent was obtained from the individual(s) for the publication of any potentially identifiable images or data included in this article.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank Antonio Cánovas for the memories he shared with us and also his family for providing materials, letters, and photographs for our research, especially his daughter Nadia and his son Ricardo. Without their help, this research had been no possible to afford.

- Braungart, R. (1984). Historical and generational patterns of youth movements: a global perspective. *Compar. Soc. Res.* 7, 3–62.
- Brenan, G. (2011). *El laberinto español*. Madrid: Diario Público.
- Bull, S. (2013). *World War II Winter and Mountain Warfare Tactics*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.
- Calero, J. P. (2009). Vísperas de la revolución. El congreso de la CNT (1936). *Germinal Rev. Estudios Libertarios* 7, 97–132. Available online at: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=3785901> (accessed February 02, 2020).
- Cánovas, A. (2015). *Memòries des de la Barceloneta*. Barcelona: Alrevés.
- Cánovas, A. (2018). *Interview with Antonio Cánovas by the Authors*. Barcelona.
- Casterás, R. (1974). *Diccionario de organizaciones políticas juveniles durante la Segunda República*. La Laguna: Universidad de La Laguna.
- Charaudeau, A. (1992). Les réfugiés espagnols dans les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord. *Hommes Migrations* 1158, 23–28. doi: 10.3406/homig.1992.1894
- Closa, F. (2011). ‘La Bruixa’: Els voluntaris del PSUC a la Guerra Civil espanyola (1936–1939). *Ebre* 6, 27–50. Available online at: <https://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/ebre38/article/view/18016/20667> (accessed January 15, 2020).
- Coale, R. S. (2014). Lincoln Brigaders: firsthand accounts of french camps, 1939. *Bull. Spanish Stud.* 91, 61–74. doi: 10.1080/14753820.2013.868650
- Cointet, J. P. (2017). *Hitler et la France*. Paris: Éditions Perrin.
- Collins, T. (2002). English Rugby Union and the First World War. *Hist. J.* 45, 797–817. doi: 10.1017/S0018246X02002686
- Colomé, G., and Sureda, J. (1995). *Sport and International Relations (1919–1939): The 1936 Popular Olympiad*. Barcelona: Center d'Estudis Olímpics UAB. Available online at: <https://hdl.handle.net/2072/4867> (accessed May 04, 2020).
- Comité Nacional de la FCDO (1936a), November 4. *En Valencia se ha constituido la Federación Cultural Deportiva Obrera. El Mundo Deportivo*, 4.
- Comité Nacional de la FCDO (1936b), Decemebtr 29. *La Federación Cultural Deportiva Obrera en el sexto mes de lucha*. La Libertad, 6.
- Consejo Nacional de Educación Premilitar Física y Cultural de la Juventud (1937). *La cultura física factor fundamental en la educación de la juventud*. Valencia: Ediciones “Alerta”.

- Crónica (1936, September 6). *La Compañía "José Suñol", de las nuevas Milicias Deportivas, que se está formando en estos días*, 7.
- Day, D., and Vamplew, W. (2015). Sports history methodology: old and new. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 32, 1715–1724. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1132203
- De Aragón, M. (1938, August 1). Así nació el Ejército de la República en Aragón. Sinfonía en gris y caqui. *Mi Revista*, 8–10.
- De Luis, F. (2019). *Historia del deporte obrero en España (De los orígenes al final de la guerra civil)*. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca.
- Díaz Roncero, F. (1936, September 12). Futbolistas, árbitros, boxeadores y ciclistas forman el Batallón Deportivo de Madrid. *Estampa*, 8–9.
- Domínguez, A., and Pujadas, X. (2011). "Estadios y trincheras. Deporte y retaguardia en la guerra civil, 1936-1939," in *Atletas y ciudadanos. Historia social del deporte en España 1870-2010*, ed. X. Pujadas (Madrid: Alianza Editorial), 169–201.
- El Liberal (1937, January 3). Banderines del frente. *El Liberal*, 1–3.
- El Mundo Deportivo (1935, September 25). El "Star Olympique" venció al Barceloneta, por 6 a 1.... *El Mundo Deportivo*, 4.
- El Progreso (1936, October 28). *Futbolistas en los distintos frentes. El Progreso*, 2.
- Etayo, J. J. (1992). *Listas anuales de España 1926-1936*. Madrid: Asociación Española de Estadísticos de Atletismo (AEEA).
- Fernández Santander, C. (1990). *El fútbol durante la guerra civil y el franquismo*. Madrid: Editorial San Martín.
- Ferragut, J. (1937, March 24). El batallón Ciclista Enrique Malatesta. La útil colaboración del deporte. *Mundo Gráfico*, 5.
- Fitzpatrick, J. (1998). *The Bicycle in Wartime. An Illustrated History*. Washington DC, London: Brassey's.
- Flores, M., Gascón, A., and Martínez, F. (2008). *Guerra civil Aragón: El Pirineo*. Zaragoza: Delsan Libros.
- Gabriel, P. (2011). *Historia de la UGT. Vol. 4. Un sindicalismo en guerra (1936-1939)*. Madrid: Siglo XXI de España Editores.
- Gaida, P. (2014). *Camps de travail sous Vichy. Les "Groupes de travailleurs étrangers" (GTE) en France et en Afrique du Nord 1940-1944*. Bordeaux: Lulu Press.
- García Candau, J. (2007). *El deporte en la guerra civil*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.
- García de Cortázar, F., and González, J. M. (2016). *Breve historia de España*. Madrid: Alianza.
- Getman-Eraso, J. (2011). Too young to fight: anarchist youth groups and the Spanish second republic. *J. Hist. Childhood Youth* 4, 282–307. doi: 10.1353/hcy.2011.0019
- Gillis, J. R. (1981). *Youth and History. Tradition and Change in European Age Relations, 1770-Present*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Glenn, T. (2018). *Riding into Battle. Canadian Cyclists in the Great War*. Toronto: Dundurn.
- González Calleja, E. (2005). Rebelión en las aulas: un siglo de movilizaciones estudiantiles en España (1865-1968). *Ayer* 59, 21–49. Available online at: www.jstor.org/stable/41325126 (accessed April 21, 2020).
- Gounot, A. (2005). The project of the people's olympic games of Barcelona (1936), between Communism and Regional Republicanism. *Cultura Ciencia Deporte* 1, 115–123. doi: 10.12800/ccd.v1i3.120
- Hargreaves, J. (1986). *Sport, Power and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Hill, J. (2006). "Anecdotal evidence. sport, the newspaper press, and history," in *Deconstructing Sport History. A Postmodern Analysis*, ed. M. G. Phillips (Albany: State University of New York Press), 117–129.
- Hoja Oficial del Lunes (1936, August 24). Batallón deportivo, Compañía Sunyol. *Hoja Oficial del Lunes*, 2.
- Horral, A. (2001). 'Keep-a-fighting! play the game!': baseball and the Canadian forces during the First World War. *Can. Mil. Hist.* 10, 27–40. Available online at: http://scholars.wlu.ca/cmh/vol10/iss2/3 (accessed January 11, 2020).
- Huerta, J. A. (2016). *Gobierno y Administración Militar en la II República española (14 de abril de 1931/18 de julio de 1936)*. Madrid: Boletín Oficial del Estado.
- Huggins, M. (2015). The visual in sport history: approaches, methodologies and sources. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 32, 1813–1830. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1108969
- Ibarrondo-Merino, I. (2019). Basque sportspeople under the shelling of the Condor Legion. 'Batallón Cultura y Deporte' during the Spanish Civil War. *Eur. Stud. Sports Hist.* 12, 169–192.
- Jackson, G. (2005). *La república española y la Guerra Civil*. Madrid: Crítica.
- Johnes, M. (2015). Archives and Historians of sport. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 32, 1784–1798. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1108307
- Jones, G. (1988). *Sport, Politics and the Working Class. Organised Labour and Sport in Inter-war Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Juliá, S. (1999). *Un siglo de España. Política y sociedad*. Madrid: Marcial Pons.
- La Vanguardia (1935, September 26). En la piscina de Montjuïc. *El festival internacional, Star Olympique P. L. M. de Marsella - Barceloneta Amateur Club*, 10.
- Lacomba, J. (1936, November 4). El momento obliga a militarizar el deporte. Los pioneros y menores de 18 años, deben inscribirse en el Comité Deportivo Unificado para colaborar en la retaguardia. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 4.
- L'Echo d'Oran (1951, May 20). La WAC probable champion marocain, 6.
- L'Echo d'Oran (1952, May 11). L'USM leader devant le WAC, 4.
- L'Humanité (1937, August 9). La Réunion Athlétique Internationale de Colombes. *Les athlètes soviétiques démontrent leur supériorité*, 4.
- López, B. (2019). Propaganda on two wheels: the Spanish Republican Team in the 1937 Tour de France. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 36, 267–293. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2019.1650026
- Luedtke, B. (2012). Playing fields and battlefields: the football pitch, England and the First World War. *Br. World* 5, 96–115. doi: 10.3366/brw.2012.0036
- Maldonado, J. M. (2007). *El frente de Aragón. La Guerra Civil en Aragón (1936-1938)*. Zaragoza: Mira Editores.
- Martin, E. J. (1944). The cyclist battalions and their badges, 1888-1921. *J. Soc. Army Hist. Res.* 22, 277–280.
- Martínez Bande, J. M. (1989). *La invasión de Aragón y el desembarco en Mallorca*. Madrid: San Martín.
- Martínez Bande, J. M. (2007). *Los años críticos: República, conspiración, revolución y alzamiento*. Madrid: Encuentro.
- Martínez Leal, J. (2016). "Exilio y campos de internamiento en el norte de África (1939-1943). La odisea de los republicanos españoles," in *Chemins de fer, chemins de sable: los españoles del Transahariano*, eds. C. Barciela, and C. Ródenas (Alicante: Publicaciones Universidad de Alicante), 59–80.
- Mason, T., and Riedi, E. (2010). *Sport and the Military. The British Armed Forces 1880-1960*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Matthews, J. (2012). *Reluctant Warriors. Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCrery, N. (2014a). *The Final Season. The Footballers Who Fought and Died in the Great War*. London: Random House Books.
- McCrery, N. (2014b). *Into Touch. Rugby Internationals Killed During the First World War*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books.
- Mercader, J. (1987). The Games (in Barcelona) after sixty-six years' wait. *Olympic Rev.* 233, 100–103.
- Merino, R., Feixa, C., and Moreno, A. (2018). "A brief history of youth in Spain," in *The History of Youth Work in Europe. Youth Work and Social Work. Connections, Disconnections and Reconnections. The Social Dimension of Youth Work in History and Today*, eds. H. Williamson, T. Basarab, and F. Coussée (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing), 163–178.
- Michellini, E. (2018). War, migration, resettlement and sport socialization of young athletes: the case of Syrian elite water polo. *Eur. J. Sport Soc.* 15, 5–21. doi: 10.1080/16138171.2018.1440949
- Milner, L. (1991). *Leeds Pals. A History of the 15th (Service) Battalion (1st Leeds). The Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment). 1914-1818*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books.
- Molero, E. (1999). *Les quintes del biberó*. Barcelona: Rúbrica Editorial.
- Nannestad, I. (2002). 'The charge of football is good, that with the bayonet finer': the formation of the footballers' Battalion, 1914. *Soccer Hist.* 1, 3–9.
- O'Callaghan, L. (2016). Irish rugby and the First World War. *Sport Soc.* 19, 95–109. doi: 10.1080/17430437.2015.1038916
- Oldfield, S. J. (2015). Narrative methods in sport history research: biography, collective biography, and prosopography. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 32, 1855–1882. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1132202
- Parello, V. (2011). Un Ailleurs concentrationnaire: le camp d'Agde dans l'Hérault (1939). *Cahiers d'études romanes*, 23.
- Pawly, R., and Liernaux, P. (2009). *The Belgian Army in World War I*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.
- Pérez, J. (2005). *La brigada de los toreros. Historia de la 96 Brigada Mixta del Ejército Popular*. Madrid: Almena.

- Phillips, M. G. (1997). Sport, war and gender images: the Australian sportsmen's Battalions and the First World War. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 14, 78–96. doi: 10.1080/09523369708713966
- Polo, J. (1993). *El fútbol en Madrid. De actividad lúdica a espectáculo de masas (1898-1945)*. (Dissertation thesis). Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Madrid.
- Puigsech, J. (2002). Guerra civil y militancia en Cataluña: Las particularidades del perfil ideológico y social de los militantes del PSUC, 1936-1939. *Hispania. Rev. Española de Hist.* 62, 259–282. doi: 10.3989/hispania.2002.v62.i210.272
- Pujadas, X. (2007). Entre estadis i trinxeres. L'esport i la Guerra Civil a Catalunya (1936–1939). *Aloma Revista de Psicologia, Ciències de l'Educació i de l'esport* 21, 19–34. Available online at: <https://www.raco.cat/index.php/Aloma/article/view/92042/117236> (accessed January 16, 2020).
- Pujadas, X. (2011). “Del barrio al estadio. Deporte, mujeres y clases populares en la segunda República,” in *Atletas y ciudadanos. Historia social del deporte en España 1870-2010*, ed. X. Pujadas (Madrid: Alianza Editorial), 125–167.
- Pujadas, X., and Santacana, C. (1990). *L'Altra Olimpíada*. Barcelona: Llibres de l'Index.
- Riddoch, A., and Kemp, J. (2008). *When the Whistle Blows: The Story of the Footballers' Battalion in the Great War*. Somerset: Haynes.
- Rubio, E. (1936, Decemebr 1). El Cuartel Carlos Marx. *Mi Revista*, 18–19.
- Rubio, J. (1997). *La emigración de la Guerra Civil de 1936-1939*. Madrid: San Martín.
- Salas, R. (1973). *Historia del Ejército Popular de la República*. Madrid: Editora Nacional.
- Shelton, P. (2003). *Climb to Conquer. The Untold Story of World War II's 10th Mountain Division Ski Troops*. New York: Scribner.
- Skillen, F., and Osborne, C. (2015). It's good to talk: oral history, sports history and heritage. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 32, 1883–1898. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2015.1132204
- Sleap, M. (1998). *Social Issues in Sport*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Slyomovics, S. (2005). *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Soriano, A. (1989). *Éxodos. Historia oral del exilio republicano en Francia, 1939-1945*. Barcelona: Crítica.
- Souto, S. (2004). Taking the street: workers' youth organizations and political conflict in the Spanish Second Republic. *Eur. Hist. Q.* 34, 131–156. doi: 10.1177/0265691404042505
- Souto, S. (2013). *Paso a la juventud. Movilización democrática, estalinismo y revolución en la República Española*. Valencia: Publicaciones de la Univesitat de Valencia.
- Stout, J. (2020). *The Popular Front and the Barcelona 1936 Popular Olympics. Playing as if the World Was Watching*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tamames, R. (1973). “La República. La era de Franco,” in *Historia de España*, ed M. Artola (Madrid: Alfaguara), 306–309.
- Thomas, H. (2001). *The Spanish Civil War: Revised Edition*. New York, NY: Random House Publishing Group.
- Tierra y Libertad (1936, July 30). ¡Paso a la juventud!, 1.
- Tuñón de Lara, M. (1981). “Segunda parte. La Segunda República,” in *M. Tuñón de Lara, Historia de España, Tomo IX, La crisis del estado, dictadura, república, guerra (1923-1939)* Barcelona: Labor, 222–229.
- Vadillo, J. (2019). *Historia de la CNT. Utopía, pragmatismo y revolución*. Madrid: Los Libros de la Catarata.
- Vilar, J. B. (2008). El exilio español de 1939 en el norte de África. *Hist. Presente* 12, 19–42. Available online at: <http://historiadelpresente.es/sites/default/files/revista/articulos/12/12.3juanbautistavilar.elexilioespanolde1939enelnortedeafrica.pdf> (accessed February 25, 2020).
- Vilar, P. (1978). *Historia de España*. Barcelona: Grijalbo.
- Viuda-Serrano, A. (2010). A diplomatic mission. Spain and the 1948 London olympics. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 27, 1080–1103. doi: 10.1080/09523361003656282
- Ward, F. W. (1920). *The 23rd (Service) Battalion Royal Fusiliers (First Sportsman's). A Record of its Services in the Great War, 1914-1919*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson.
- Williamson, G. (1996). *German Mountain & Ski Troops 1939-1945*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.
- Wilson, G. (2002). ‘Caught the cycling craze’: AIF cyclist units, 1916-1919. *Sabretache* 43, 3–22.
- Wilson, J. J. (2005). Skating to Armageddon: Canada, Hockey and the First World War. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 22, 315–343. doi: 10.1080/09523360500048746
- Woodall, D. (2000). *The Mobbs Own 1914-1918: The 7th Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment*. Northampton: Northamptonshire Regiment Association.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2021 Viuda-Serrano and Ibarrondo-Merino. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



From Mandatory School Gymnastics to Physical Training for Youth. How the *Société Fédérale de Gymnastique* Became a “Gymnastic State” Dedicated to the Physical Preparation of Swiss Youth From 1873 to 1907

Gil Mayencourt* and Grégory Quin

Institut des Sciences du Sport de l'Université de Lausanne, Université de Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Mahfoud Amara,
Qatar University, Qatar

Reviewed by:

Keith Allen Rathbone,
Macquarie University, Australia
Billy Graeff,
Federal University of Rio
Grande, Brazil

*Correspondence:

Gil Mayencourt
gil.mayencourt@unil.ch

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
*The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports*,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 18 May 2020

Accepted: 26 January 2021

Published: 26 February 2021

Citation:

Mayencourt G and Quin G (2021)
*From Mandatory School Gymnastics
to Physical Training for Youth. How the
Société Fédérale de Gymnastique
Became a “Gymnastic State”
Dedicated to the Physical Preparation
of Swiss Youth From 1873 to 1907.*
Front. Sports Act. Living 3:563324.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2021.563324

The aim of this contribution is to analyse the special role that gymnastics clubs played, under the umbrella of the *Société Fédérale de Gymnastique* (SFG), in the formation of the Swiss nation and in the representation of a strong and united national youth at a time when the unity represented by the Swiss federal State founded in 1848 was strongly questioned by the conservative opposition. The purpose is mainly based on extensive statistical data gathered within the SFG about its members throughout the country at three particular moments (1873, 1895, and 1907) and on institutional archival funds. Our analysis is based on three successive points: after defining the relationship between the SFG and the Swiss Federal State (founded in 1848) for the unification and defense of the homeland, whether in terms of institutional mimicry or the building of a “national youth,” a second part defines which type of “youth” is specifically targeted by the SFG and what it meant at the time to be a “young” or an “old” gymnast, in particular through the participation of the SFG in the National exhibition of Geneva in 1896. Finally, a last part widens the perspective by highlighting, on one side, the cultural, political, and cantonal constraints on national expansion through youth of Swiss gymnastics and, on the other side, how these constraints have generated unifying and patriotic ambitions and discourses within the SFG.

Keywords: gymnastics, physical education, Switzerland, youth, nation-building

INTRODUCTION

From as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, Swiss associations prepared the ground for the political and social processes that resulted in the Switzerland of 1848 (Jost, 1991; Humair, 2009). Thus, the foundation of the *Société Fédérale de Gymnastique* (SFG) in 1832 anticipated and announced, both with the use of the term “federal” and by the “supracantonal” structure it established, the installation of the federal State: the “modern Switzerland.”

Indeed, the institutionalization of Swiss gymnastics at the federal level happened 16 years before a countrywide and centralized political structure was established by the liberal-radical stream,

which gradually took precedence over the conservative power from the 1830's onwards (Zimmer, 2003). The new federal State of 1848 was henceforth regulated by a national constitution which, among other things, united and governed all the Swiss cantons, even though these multi-faceted entities (with varying degrees of industrialization and urbanization, which are multilingual and multi-faith, and whose topography ranges between plains and mountains) retain part of their sovereignty through a tiered political system called "federalism." Thus, it should be noted that the associationist trend—which can be defined as a regular meeting of people who follow a common goal and which is governed by free participation, equality among members and a general interest (Jost, 1991, p. 10)—marked the first steps of a common consciousness in a group of confederated cantons that wasn't yet "modern Switzerland." In addition, the institutional operation of the associations has introduced very concrete ways of governing the group and allowing everyone's voice—even minority ones—to be heard.

In this process, the first gymnastics clubs appeared in German-speaking Swiss cantons in the first decades of the nineteenth century (1816 in Bern, 1819 in Basel and 1820 in Zurich) and the SFG was created on the occasion of what came to be recognized as the first "federal" gymnastics festival (Niggeler, 1882, p. 4–7). Organized in 1832 in Aarau by clubs from Aarau, Bern, Basel, Zurich and Luzern, it aimed to bring together all the local clubs in the country. The SFG, together with the *Société Suisse des Carabiniers* (1824)—the first genuinely "Swiss" association built around physical exercise—and the *Société Fédérale de Chant* (1842), opened the door of associationism to a wider section of the population, so that it was then no longer reserved for the elites alone (Wimmer, 2011, p. 726). In the specific case of the SFG, this democratization goes hand in hand with a strong ambition to target young people and to be a place for youth to experience the nation together.

To date, Swiss gymnastics has not really received very much attention from historians, and there is a huge lack of knowledge around this specific discipline in the field of physical and sports activities, especially in comparison with football or even skiing, first because it is the most popular sport in the country (Berthoud et al., 2016; Vonnard and Quin, 2019) and next because of its link with the tourism industry (Tissot, 2017). Actually, neither the national institution—the SFG—nor the gymnasts nor the leaders themselves have been the focus of any major research project (Vonnard et al., 2019). Nevertheless, several works have been published about the gymnastics festivals and their impact on the process of nation building (Schader, 1992; Schader and Leimgruber, 1993; Triet and Schildknecht, 2002), and we should also mention works on women's gymnastics, by Herzog (1995) and Quin (2015), which also tackled institutional processes. Similarly, gymnastics-based physical exercise was included in several research projects on physical education in schools from the nineteenth century onwards, thus directly related to the issue of youth (Burgener, 1952; Marcacci, 2000; Giuliani, 2001; Bussard, 2007; Czáká, 2008; Brühwiler, 2017; Horlacher, 2017). However, the gymnastics federal institution and its affiliated clubs, which are the main objects of this paper, were not at the core of any of these discussions.

With this in mind, several studies linking gymnastics clubs, youth and nation building carried out particularly in France and in Germany are inspirational and can definitely be seen as real resources for our analysis (Mosse, 1980; Arnaud, 1987; Defrance, 1987; Krüger, 1996). Furthermore, we will see that, based on a large sample of empirical data and through an approach focused on the territorial distribution of gymnastics clubs, our arguments corroborate the hypothesis already advanced in the literature that gymnastics in nineteenth century Switzerland was above all "an essentially urban, industrial and Protestant phenomenon." (Marcacci, 2019, p. 141).

Parallel to that, youth history has only really emerged in the last couple of years, and although we can cite some general "women's history" or "workers history," "youth" as a category has never really been studied from a historical point of view. The recent book by Bühler (2019) opens several new perspectives on the Swiss case, and points to references from abroad such as Marwick (1998) or Bantigny and Jablonka (2009), that might help us to think about the category, but also about the pre-First World War moment with Thiercé (1999) or also in Germany with several studies conducted around the "Wandervogel movement" (Klotter and Beckenbach, 2012). Alongside those references, considering "youth" as a specific group within society also raises questions about the "definition" and the "boundaries" of the group itself, especially at a time—around 1900—when life expectancy at birth was around 50 years (Floris et al., 2019, p. 220), not least because of the high infant mortality rate, and when reaching the age of 20 meant already having lived more than a third of one's life.

With this contribution, our aim is to underline the special role that gymnastics clubs played in the formation of the Swiss nation and in the representation of a strong and united national youth, at a time when a so-called centralism of the federal State was strongly questioned by the conservative opposition, but also sometimes in several French-speaking cantons (Humair, 2004). To do this, we undertake a combined analysis of the nationalization of Swiss gymnastics, including instances of resistance toward this process, and of the SFG's relationship with the "youth" group from the 1870's to the 1910's, keeping in mind that this moment was decisive for the institutionalization of the gymnastics movement (Jost, 1991) and for the introduction of mandatory gymnastics lessons in school (Burgener, 1952; Bussard, 2007). Indeed, instituted officially in 1874, on the ashes of the Sadowa battle and because of the threat caused by the Prussian army (Burgener, 1952, p. 81), the process of making gymnastics mandatory at school (for ages 10–16 years old), relied on the involvement of the gymnastics circles, both in order to train the newly required teachers and to offer courses for schoolboys between 16 and 20, to ensure that they remained fit for military service (Jaun, 1999). Also knowing that this was framed by the introduction of a mandatory primary school, often also influenced by the idea that the Prussian victories were those of the elementary school teachers (Westberg et al., 2019).

Our analysis is based on official documentation from the SFG (minutes, annual reports, and official bulletins—notably *Le Gymnaste* and *Schweizerische Turnzeitung*), but we also want to draw on extensive statistical data, compiled within the

organization about its members all over the country, at three particular moments: 1873, 1895, and 1907. If these data sets are not always based on exactly the same framework, because they are compiled by different central committees, nevertheless all three address the spread of the practice in the country and the “age” of the gymnasts. To control the data provided in the three sets, we went through a systematic cross-referencing scheme, using the data sets and looking in the meantime into the annual reports and the minutes of the central committees where, year by year, meeting after meeting, data are compiled, compared and discussed within the gymnastics’ elite. With the same ambition of cross-referencing data, we must mention some commemorative books written for the 50, 75, and 100th anniversary, which are often quite subjective in their interpretation, but which can also address very precise contexts, with eye-witness accounts. In this idea, through the use of institutional archives, we have always compared published data (in commemorative books in particular) with the first data collection documents (handwritten tables sent by the member clubs for example), to ensure that there is no discrepancy between what is collected and what is then published. Having found no gap between these two types of sources, we included the data compiled in the handwritten tables in our research method and also supplemented them with official information published by the SFG. It should be noted that we are adding to this quantitative analysis a “discourse analysis” (Oger, 2005). Thus, we consider the published writings of the gymnastics’ elite in official bulletins and commemorative books as characteristic of the ideological aims of their institution (SFG) that “configure and orient the production of discourse [written or oral] and the meaning given to activities within it” (115). This “discourse analysis” allows us to highlight the processes leading to the institutionalization of gymnastics, as a (sub)field influenced by politics, religion or even some economic dynamics (Quin, 2011; Vonnard and Quin, 2019).

After an introductory chapter that aims to define the relationship between the SFG and the federal State for the unification and defense of the homeland, whether in terms of institutional mimicry or the building of a “national youth,” the second part will define which type of “youth” is specifically targeted by the SFG and what it meant at the time to be a “young” or an “old” gymnast, in particular through the participation of the SFG in the National Exhibition of Geneva in 1896. Finally, the third part will widen the perspective by highlighting, on one side, the cultural, political and cantonal constraints on national expansion through youth of Swiss gymnastics and, on the other side, how these constraints have generated unifying and patriotic ambitions and discourses within the SFG.

THE SOCIÉTÉ FÉDÉRALE DE GYMNASTIQUE: AN ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO BUILD A “SWISS NATIONAL YOUTH”

A look at the official 1848 statutes of the SFG highlights the close links between gymnastics, patriotism and youth at the very moment when the unity of modern Switzerland was

being formed. According to its statutes, the aim of the SFG is to “encourage body exercises among the Swiss people, to thereby enable them to bear arms for the defense of their homeland, and to unite young Swiss people through bonds of friendship and patriotic feelings” (SFG, Statutes, La Chaud-de-Fonds : 1848, p. 1). It was therefore a matter of preparing young people physically and ideologically for the defense of the homeland, but also of uniting them around the new liberal Swiss federal State created in the same year. From 1848 onwards, the interaction between the State and the SFG grew and a mirror effect was created by the gymnasts during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Between Mimicry and Parastatism

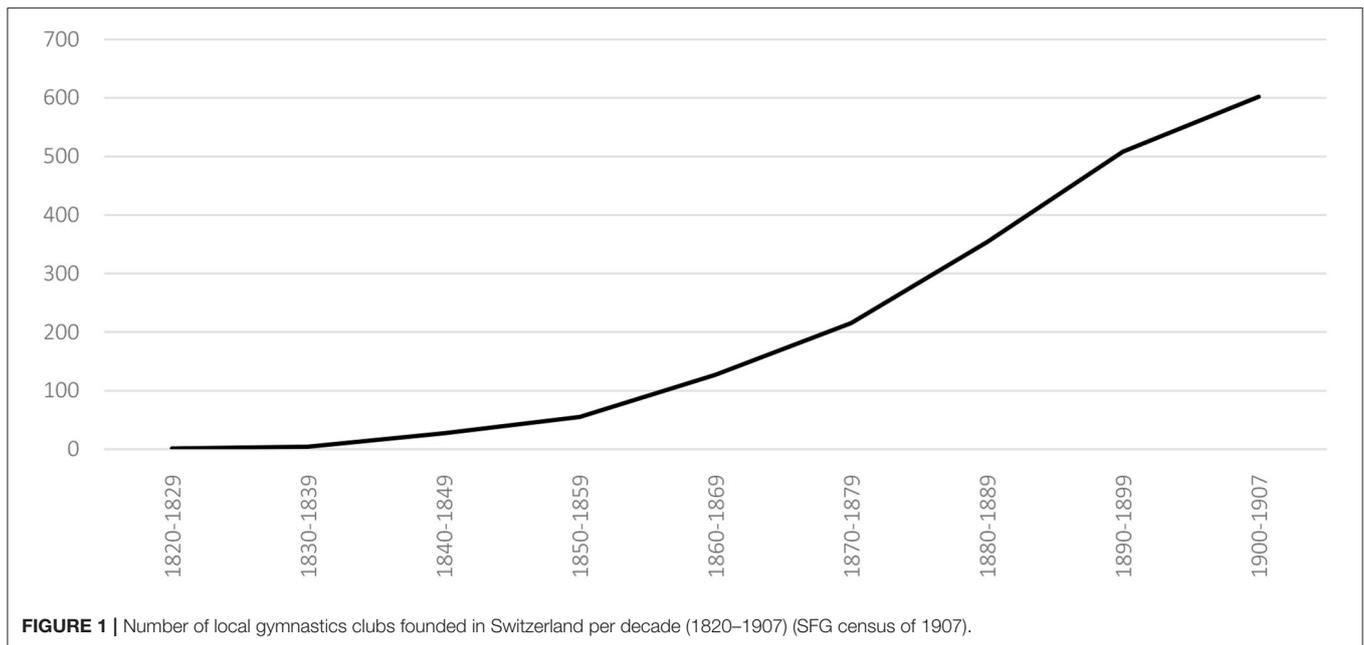
Although the first gymnastics clubs were founded in Switzerland mainly by students in the first two decades of the nineteenth century (Czáka, 2008, p. 26), especially in the Bern-Basel-Zürich triangle, **Figure 1** shows that the expansion of gymnastics clubs really began around the 1860’s, before slowing down at the turn of the century.

About 450 clubs were founded between 1860 and 1900 (SFG census of 1907), while the SFG had a total of about 530 clubs in 1900 (Spühler et al., 1907, Annex 3). It is interesting to note that this trend was part of the wider development of associations in Switzerland in all fields. Indeed, Hans-Ulrich Jost estimates that there were about 30,000 associations and societies in Switzerland in 1900, half of which had been created after 1880 (Jost, 1991, p. 14, 15). In this context, the political role of the associations was growing in importance. The strengthening of the federal State, which had been under way since the 1870’s (Meuwly, 2013), required, among other things, institutions that were capable of directly assisting it in certain governance tasks (Jost, 1991, p. 11), especially when successive governments chose to keep the size of the federal administration quite small and having the network of the associations function as a parallel one.

In this context, the SFG made an active contribution to the affirmation of the Swiss nation after 1848 and gradually assumed a “parastatal” function in the physical training of a specific section of the youth, so that in some of the speeches given by the gymnasts the SFG is mentioned in the same breath as the federal State (Jost, 1986). For instance, in 1907 the authors of the *Festschrift zum 75 jährigen Jubiläum des Eidg. Turnvereins* [SFG] (1832–1907) (Spühler et al., 1907) described the association as a “gymnastics state” and made a direct comparison between the evolution of Swiss State structures and that of the SFG’s mode of governance:

“Whoever compares the present institutions of our gymnastics state, which [...] are a reflection of our republican state institutions, with those of earlier and earliest times, will find the latter immensely primitive. They were; but the conditions to which our first constitution [that of the new state of 1848] was adapted were also small.” (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 20)

Beyond the patriotic symbol and the will to assert the national importance of the gymnastics institution which would function as a “miniature State,” a parallel can indeed be drawn



between the evolution of the SFG's institutional structures and those of nineteenth-century Swiss politics, where actors tried continuously to balance the powers between the federal, the cantonal and the local levels. During the first 40 years of the SFG, the management of the organization was closely linked to the annual federal festivals. Between 1832 and 1869, the organizing club each year was awarded the central governance of the SFG and organized the general assembly during the festival. The system took advantage of the theoretical presence of members from all over the country during the festivities to hold votes, following the traditional model of direct democracy: the "landsgemeinde" (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 26). This model of "rotating presidency" can be compared to that of the *Vorort*, or *Canton directeur*, which between 1815 and 1847 saw the cantons of Bern, Zurich, and Lucerne handing over the federal destiny every 2 years, in an Assembly called the "Diet" which brought together delegates from all the confederated cantons before the creation of the federal State of 1848.

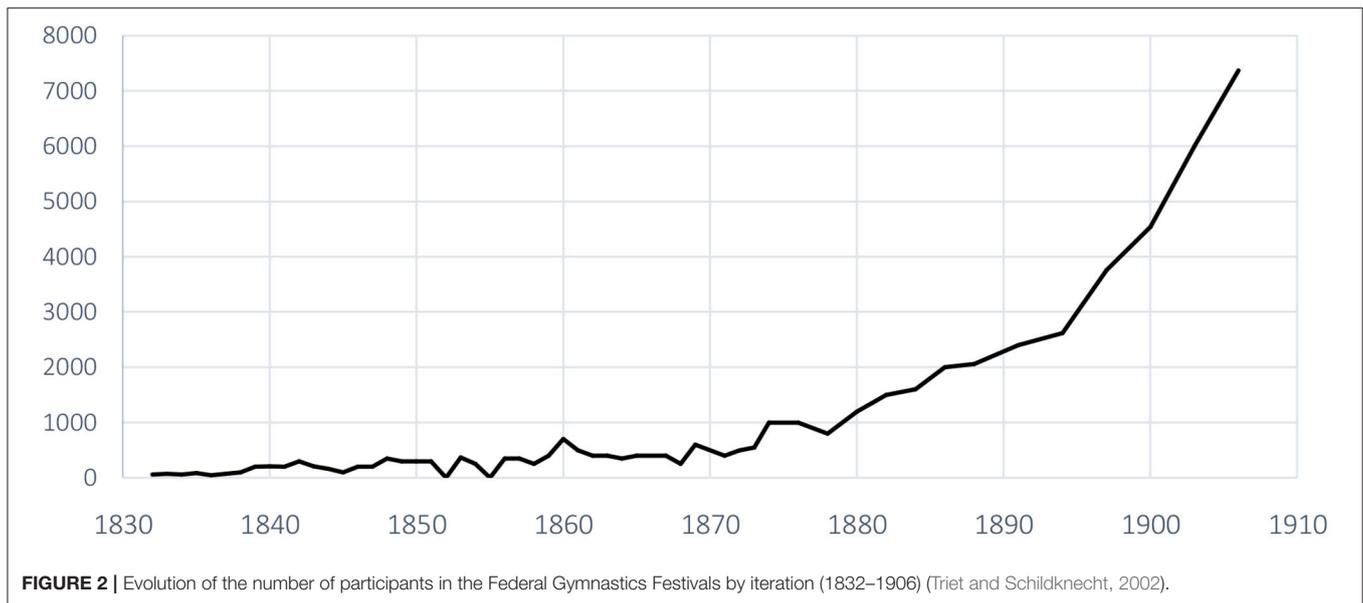
However, this itinerant mode of governance of the SFG was called into question from the early 1860's, precisely when the significant development of gymnastics clubs began and the practice became truly national in scope. Indeed, the general assembly did not sufficiently represent all the Swiss gymnasts, whose massive participation in the federal festivals remains complicated (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 26). Facing the complexity of centralization at a national scale, when the national and unified railways were still only projects, cantonal gymnastics societies (which bring together all the clubs of a single canton) were created from the 1850's onwards, a dynamic which initially generated tensions with the hegemonic will of the SFG (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 30). To counter this problem, a change in SFG statutes in 1861 set up a representative assembly of the delegates. Following the idea of the semi-direct Swiss democracy in which

people and cantons are represented by members of parliament, each local club was now represented by delegates (one delegate for every 30 members). The function of this assembly was mainly legislative. It aimed to "promulgate or amend constitutional decrees and regulations [...]" (SFG, Statutes, Soleure : 1861, p. 5) and thus goes hand in hand with the executive function of the central committee.

Looking at **Figure 2**, the number of participants in the federal gymnastics festivals only began to increase steadily from 1880 onwards, with the milestone of 1,000 participants being passed in Lausanne in 1880, and then rose to 7,000 in 1906. To illustrate the fact that the federal festivals do not by any means gather together all the gymnasts in the country, the particularly well-attended—for the time—festival of 1860 in Basel, a dynamic canton in the beginnings of Swiss gymnastics, with 700 participants, barely managed to bring together half of the members of the SFG (Spühler et al., 1907, Annex 3). It should be noted that the attendance declined again during the decade 1860–1869.

The beginning of the 1870's marked the official break between the management of the SFG and the organization of federal festivals. Indeed, in late 1869, it was decided to create a permanent central committee whose members served for two years (Niggeler, 1882, p. 121). This new permanent central committee was composed of six members (including a president) elected by the members of the SFG from the 12 candidates proposed by the assembly of delegates. Only one part of the old system persisted: a seventh member was elected annually by the club that organized the federal festival (SFG, Statutes, Bâle : 1873, p. 7).

This break, which saw a drastic reduction in the importance of the organization of federal festivals in the governance of the SFG, must be put into context. While the new and more centralizing federal constitution was rejected in 1872 and accepted in 1874



(Meuwly, 2013), the 1870's saw the organization of the last truly political federal festivals, in their initial dimension as forums for the liberal-radical current. The official political parties gradually assumed this function, while the federal festivals became more and more independent from politics and more specifically focused on their own discipline (Schader, 1992, p. 812). With this in mind, a “technical commission” was founded within the SFG in 1871 alongside the central committee. Composed of three members, of whom at least one came from the central committee, it aimed to “pre-advise or decide purely on questions of gymnastics techniques” (SFG, Statutes, Bâle : 1873, p. 9).

While the increase in the number of participants in federal festivals reflected the expansion of gymnastics in Switzerland during the second half of the nineteenth century (see **Figure 2**), it should also be noted that, initially organized every year, the festivals took place every 2 years from 1874 onwards precisely to encourage participation, even though at the time a trip inside the country was very costly and the gymnasts had little or almost no free time. For instance, the Factories Act of 1877—which “limits” work to 65 h a week including Saturdays and prohibits child labor—was then genuine social progress. In the same vein, the festivals were then held every 3 years from 1888 onwards.

In addition to this organizational change, it should also be noted that the democratization of the railways can also explain the increased participation in festivals (Fritzsche et al., 2001, p. 85). As mentioned in the report of the organizing committee of the 1900 Festivals in La Chaux-de-Fonds, while the Federal Railways Company, founded in 1898, seemed reluctant to grant preferential prices for gymnasts, the committee nevertheless obtained free return tickets from local companies during the period of the festivals, and special trains were chartered from Zürich (SFG, La Chaux-de-Fonds, 1900, p. 69–70).

To continue with the turning point of the 1870's, the acceptance of the new federal constitution of 1874 saw the SFG's direct involvement in physical education gradually becoming institutionalized. Indeed, in 1866, the overwhelming Prussian

victory at the Battle of Sadowa prompted Emile Welti, the Federal Councilor in charge of the military department, to campaign for a more centralized army and better training for military service (Burgener, 1952, p. 81). Under the new constitution, which, among other things, strengthened the centralized power of the federal State in military matters (Meuwly, 2013; Jaun, 2019), “gymnastics [...] is recognized [by political bodies] as being of national and military utility” (Burgener, 1952, p. 98). Physical education thus became compulsory for Swiss boys over 10 years old until the end of primary school—back then, secondary or high school did not exist in Switzerland—and became the only discipline driven by the federal State, whereas the rest of public schooling remained in the hands of the cantons (Bussard, 2007, p. 26).

The extra-parliamentary *Commission fédérale de gymnastique* (CFG) was also created in 1874, having its first meetings in the very first months of 1875, in order to set up the new rules and to define the content of a federal textbook for gymnastics at school. The CFG was initially composed of four members, three from the school environment and one, a senior officer, representing the federal military department (Eichenberger, 2001, p. 85). The initial composition of the CFG included representatives from the SFG's central committee, whose stabilization since 1869 favored long-term project management and partnerships with the State (Jost, 1986). Thus, the founding members of the CFG include Johannes Niggeler, SFG president since 1870 and disciple of Adolf Spiess (Horlacher, 2017), who also served as a physical education teacher, and Carl-August Rudolf, another member of the SFG central committee from 1870 to 1873 (Flatt, 1945), along with Wilhelm Schoch and Johann Jakob Egg, two of the pioneers of the *Société Suisse des Maîtres de Gymnastique* (SSMG), created in 1859 in order to coordinate early attempts to introduce gymnastics into schools (Müller, 1910).

On the financial side, the central fund of the SFG was mainly provided by the half-yearly contributions of members of each affiliated club (50 cents per gymnast in 1873), the

interest on the association's capital and a 10% share of the profit of each federal festival (SFG, Statutes, Bâle : 1873, p. 11). However, while compulsory physical education was about to be introduced, the SFG received federal subsidies from 1873 onwards, to organize teacher training courses (CHF 1000.- in 1873, representing more than a quarter of the association's annual income) (Spühler et al., 1907, Annex 7). Indeed, the SFG took partial charge of the federal courses of physical education for teachers from the beginning of the 1870's, but then as an official duty from 1889 until 1911 (Burgener, 1952, p. 155). This process led to the SFG being legally recognized by the State in 1907, following the adoption of new military legislation (Burgener, 1952, p. 187), as officially responsible for the training of young men at the end of compulsory schooling within the framework of what is known as "preparatory instruction" (Eichenberger, 2001, p. 88).

Gymnastics and Statistics

Bearing in mind that federal associations represented first a "proto national cohesion" (Im Hof and Bernard, 1983, p. 10) before 1848 and with the idea, proclaimed loud and clear by the leaders of the SFG, that they later took on the function of "miniature States," the SFG conducted and published statistical surveys from the 1850's onwards. The emergence of statistical surveys within the association suggests that it was fairly stable in its structure and had enough members in the mid- nineteenth century to undertake such census work. These statistical surveys were institutionalized within the SFG in 1852 through the new article 15 of its statutes which charges the central committee to "monitor" the development of the organization (SFG, Statutes, Genève : 1852, p. 10). Finally, in 1861 new statutes explicitly mention that the central committee must publish statistical records of gymnastics clubs and that all clubs wishing to be affiliated must provide a statement of the number and age of their members (SFG, Statutes, Soleure : 1861, p. 8–11).

The purpose of those censuses was to measure the growth of the SFG, in the manner of national statistical offices founded for the purpose of building, unifying and administering young nation-states during the first half of the nineteenth century (Desrosière, 1993, 16–17). This interest of the SFG in the statistical statements within its clubs underlines once again the extent to which it reflected the federal State and the "parastatal" function of the institution, which quickly played a role in the census of the young Swiss nation, whereas the first inventory of the population of the federal State dated back to 1850 (Humair, 2004, p. 804) and the Federal Statistical Office was only created in 1860 (Jost, 1995). However, it is important to stress that those dynamics were not specific to gymnastics; just a few examples of a broader landscape include the installation of a permanent committee at the head of the Swiss Shooting Association, in 1877, which was directly followed by several statistical projects (Gamma, 1924) and the founding of a peasants union (the *Union Suisse des Paysans*) in 1897, which had as its main objective the establishment of agrarian statistics (Humair, 2004, p. 646).

In its official report of the year 1853–1854, the SFG had already published a table showing the gymnastics clubs that had responded to its request, with the number of members, their

year of affiliation to the SFG and the names of the individuals making up their central board (SFG, Annual Reports, 1853–1854, p. 3–4). The early date of this gymnastics survey—which takes precedence over the state institutionalization of statistics—supports the fact that until the beginning of the 1860's, statistics in Switzerland were mainly collected by notables (pastors, doctors and magistrates) and by public utility societies (Busset and Le Dinh, 2001, p. 58), in which the SFG can be included.

In order to work on gymnastics statistics of the time, the main empirical resources of this paper are three surveys carried out by the SFG during the second part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The oldest one, carried out in 1873, shows, according to the leaders of the SFG, "a constant increase in the number of gymnastics clubs, which corresponds to the uninterrupted diffusion of gymnastics in Switzerland" (Reports on the SFG for 1873, Bern, 1874, p. 4). The fact that this survey took place in the same year as the first federal grant for the SFG and 1 year before the introduction of compulsory physical education is not insignificant and shows that statistics were also an instrument of power for the SFG. Indeed, the figures had to show to the political leaders the reach of the SFG and its clubs, in particular in the field of youth, in order to consolidate the partnership of the gymnasts with the State. Thus, it should be noted that, at the beginning of 1874, the federal Department of the Interior, in order to deliver for a second consecutive year the grant of CHF 1000.-, asked SFG's central committee to send, in addition to its budget, the official report of the SFG's activities in 1873 (Reports on the SFG for 1873, Bern, 1874). This contains the final version of the 1873 statistical survey (SFG, Central Committee, January 17 and 18th 1874).

The most recent survey, conducted in 1907 as part of the 75th anniversary of the SFG, also aimed to establish a broad statistical statement of the members of the institution. The goal was to trace its historical development in the context of the writing of the commemorative book *Festschrift zum 75 jährigen Jubiläum des Eidg. Turnvereins (1832–1907)*. However, it should be noted that this census also came at a key legislative moment, with the adoption of the new military legislation of 1907, which fully institutionalized the parastatal role of the SFG, as previously discussed, along with the introduction of mandatory rifle practice creating the same role for the *Société Suisse des Carabiniers* (Gamma, 1924).

Following the traditional federalist scale of the political system, tables were sent in both cases (1873 and 1907) to the cantonal gymnastics associations in which they were to fill in, among other things, the names of all the local clubs in the canton, the date of their foundation, the number of active members and their ages (under 20 years old/between 20 and 30 years old/over 30 years old for 1873; under 20 and over 20 years old for 1907). The cantonal associations had then to return the completed tables to the SFG. This interest of gymnastics leaders, at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in statistics and figures, as a historical and governance tool, is also to be seen as part of the administrative revolution that had been at work since the 1890's, which saw the deployment of new forms of large-scale processing of written and numerical data as well as a wider circulation of these data (Gardey, 2008, p. 16). Furthermore, the SFG used a

private professional service to process the information it collected on its member clubs in 1907, entrusting the Steiner statistical office in Bern with this task (SFG, Central Committee, December 7th–8th 1907).

GETTING TO KNOW YOUTH, A WAY OF ATTESTING THE NATIONAL UTILITY OF GYMNASTICS IN SWITZERLAND

Besides the fact that the categories changed between the 1873 and 1907 surveys, placing more importance in 1907 on the turning point of reaching the age of 20, one must also emphasize that youth had been at the core of the SFG's nation-building role since the middle of the nineteenth century, as a tool to defend the "homeland against alien hands and to learn about patriotism" (*Le Gymnaste*, 1860, p. 10).

The SFG at the 1896 National Exhibition: Between Power Display and Physiological Measurement of Youth

In the framework of the second National Exhibition organized in Geneva in 1896, statistics supported by graphs and maps were also a means of emphasizing the SFG's contributions to nation building, especially by illustrating the benefits of gymnastics on the bodies of Swiss youth. The National Exhibition was intended to:

"provide an overall picture of Switzerland's productive capacity in the fields of science, industry, arts and crafts, fine arts, agriculture, public education and the social economy. It should make the Swiss people appreciate its own strengths, open up new domestic markets for national production and give them a concrete sense of the importance of its activities." (Official Guide to the 2nd Swiss National Exhibition, Rey-Malavallon : Genève, 1896, p. 63)

It was in order to be part of this idea of the perception of "national strengths" that the Central Committee of the SFG suggested taking part in the Exhibition at the 1894 General Assembly held in Solothurn. The proposition was unanimously accepted a year later after the presentation of a more concrete project (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 64). As evidenced by the words of President Erwin Zschokke during a working meeting of the Central Committee in September 1894 (SFG, Central Committee, September 22nd–23rd 1894), the SFG—which was to have an exhibition area of 16 m² in pavilion number 21, where several social and professional associations would be brought together—would have to present to the public, among other things, a topography of gymnastics in Switzerland ("Turn. Topographie der Schweiz"), a graphic representation of the growth of gymnastics clubs and information on the members (age, state of health) to demonstrate "the influences of the practice of gymnastics."

In the discussion around the project, Ernest Baud from Geneva, who was also the president of the office of pavilion number 21 (Gavard, 1896, p. 70), insisted that illustrating the health benefits of gymnastics would be the most valuable aspect

of the SFG's participation in the exhibition. He added that such scientific work based on measurements and observations should be provided by a doctor or a professor. Finally, as subjects for the study, it would be a matter of selecting young people ("Jünglinge") who "cultivate" gymnastics, in order to compare them with those who don't practice it (SFG, Central Committee, September 22nd–23rd 1894).

Thus, our third source survey is the result of the SFG's participation in the National Exhibition and of the project that SFG leaders had been working on since September 1894. The survey was carried out during the year 1895 in order to provide body measurements of individuals members of local clubs that were affiliated to the SFG (chest circumference, arm circumference and general state of health of gymnasts). This survey was similar to the administrative procedure organized in 1873 and 1907, but was conducted by doctors as requested by Ernest Baud. Participants were to give their date of birth (which tells us exactly how old they were rather than only a range) but also how long they had been practicing gymnastics, which is particularly interesting in the context of this paper.

From our three source surveys, three data tables can be established. The first two (1873 and 1907) bring together local gymnastics clubs (89 clubs for 1873, 651 clubs for 1907) affiliated with the SFG, their date of foundation, the canton they belong to, the number of active members and the age brackets of these. The third data table is based on the 1895 survey which unfortunately is not available in its entirety in the archives. It provides the age in 1895 and the age of starting gymnastics practice for 914 individuals, who account for ~9% of all the active members of the SFG in 1895, distributed across 36 clubs (mainly from the Swiss German part of the country).

Regarding the body measurements, it is not known whether the SFG followed the will of Ernest Baud and compared young gymnasts with non-practitioners. However, the anniversary book of 1907 indicates that results, based on three successive measurements taken on only 329 gymnasts, "demonstrated in figures the effects of gymnastics on the muscles and chest circumference, a work which has received full attention in scientific circles" (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 65). The short phase of taking measurements (only 20 months between the first discussions around the survey and the beginning of the National Exhibition) and the selection of 329 individuals from a sample of more than 914 lead us to be cautious about the real scientific validity of these results. We can also assume that the leaders of the SFG had selected the data to present their results, selecting "young" gymnasts only. Indeed, the sample of 914 gymnasts includes entire clubs and also contains individuals over 25 years old, who don't correspond to the definition of "youth" within the SFG, a definition that we must now focus on by describing pragmatically the trends of club membership in terms of age and seniority.

The Definition of Youth in the SFG

While the very notion of "youth" spread throughout the nineteenth century, its predominant place in the discourses and activities of the SFG, particularly in the areas of national unification and defense, reflects the magnitude of the political

function that was quickly attributed to it (Bantigny and Jablonka, 2009, p. 11). However, by examining the age of the SFG members, it is now a question of studying the real amplitude of this “youth” in the national development of Swiss gymnastics during the second half of the nineteenth century. Besides, the aim is also to determine in fact what was meant at that time by a “young” or an “old gymnast” in Switzerland.

First of all, it must be specified that the SFG, in its definition of youth, left out a whole section of it for a long time by setting the minimum age of its members at 16 (Bussard, 2007, p. 151–158). Compulsory physical education since 1874 and the process of establishment of public schooling (in particular the compulsory and free primary school) can explain the position of the SFG and its choice to consider only boys over 16. It may not have considered it necessary to integrate these age groups because in theory they already practiced physical education at school, partly under the aegis of the SFG which took care of a growing part of the courses for teachers (Flatt, 1915).

Of the three censuses studied, only the one of 1895 gives the exact age of the gymnasts. The average age of the 914 subjects it contains is 19.8 years old. It is important to note that the average age of gymnasts is a relative indicator of youth at a time when the average life expectancy at birth for Swiss men was 45.5 years due to the high infant mortality rate. Above all, it should be noted that reaching the age of 20—which not everyone did—meant having already lived about one third of one’s life. Indeed, a 20-years-old Swiss man could expect to live up to 60 years on average during the decade 1890–1900 (HSS, Average life expectancy, by sex, from 1876 to 1995).

We note that the trend among the subjects of the study was not to join the SFG at the minimum allowable age of 16. Indeed, gymnasts only joined a gymnastics club at an average age of 17.8 years. The indicator of the length of the gymnastic career is particularly interesting because the sample shows that the population is very young in terms of years of practice. On average, in 1895 the subjects had only 2.2 years of activity in their club. On the other hand, this very low seniority of members is not reflected in the structures, which would logically see recently founded clubs principally attracting young and novice members.

Indeed, the seniority of the clubs from which the gymnasts of the 1895 census come is 27.5 years on average. Similarly, the more long-established clubs did not have an older membership, making it quite obvious that a high turnover might be the rule, the SFG’s clubs mostly providing space and time for youth between school and recruitment in the army, as set out in the federal military organization of 1874. For instance, in 1895 at the “Zurich Alten Sektion,” the third oldest club in Switzerland founded in 1820, the average age of members was 20.3 years and the average duration of membership was 2 years.

The censuses of 1873 and 1907 classify the gymnasts by age group, rather than the precise age of every member, which allows us to discern some trends in the SFG population. The 1873 survey is the most precise and offers four distinct ranges, represented in **Figure 3**, showing a clear predominance of gymnasts under 30 years old. It should be noted that the 16–20 age group still represented 33% of the members although that age group is half the age range of the others (5 years instead of 10).

The commentary of this census—which officially appeared in the 1874 annual report of the SFG distributed to all affiliated clubs—explicitly links the 16–25 age group to an understanding of what “youth” is, as opposed to a “more mature age:”

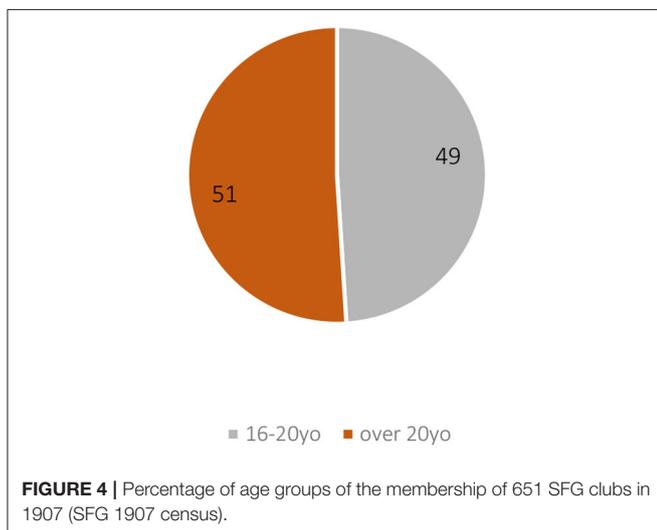
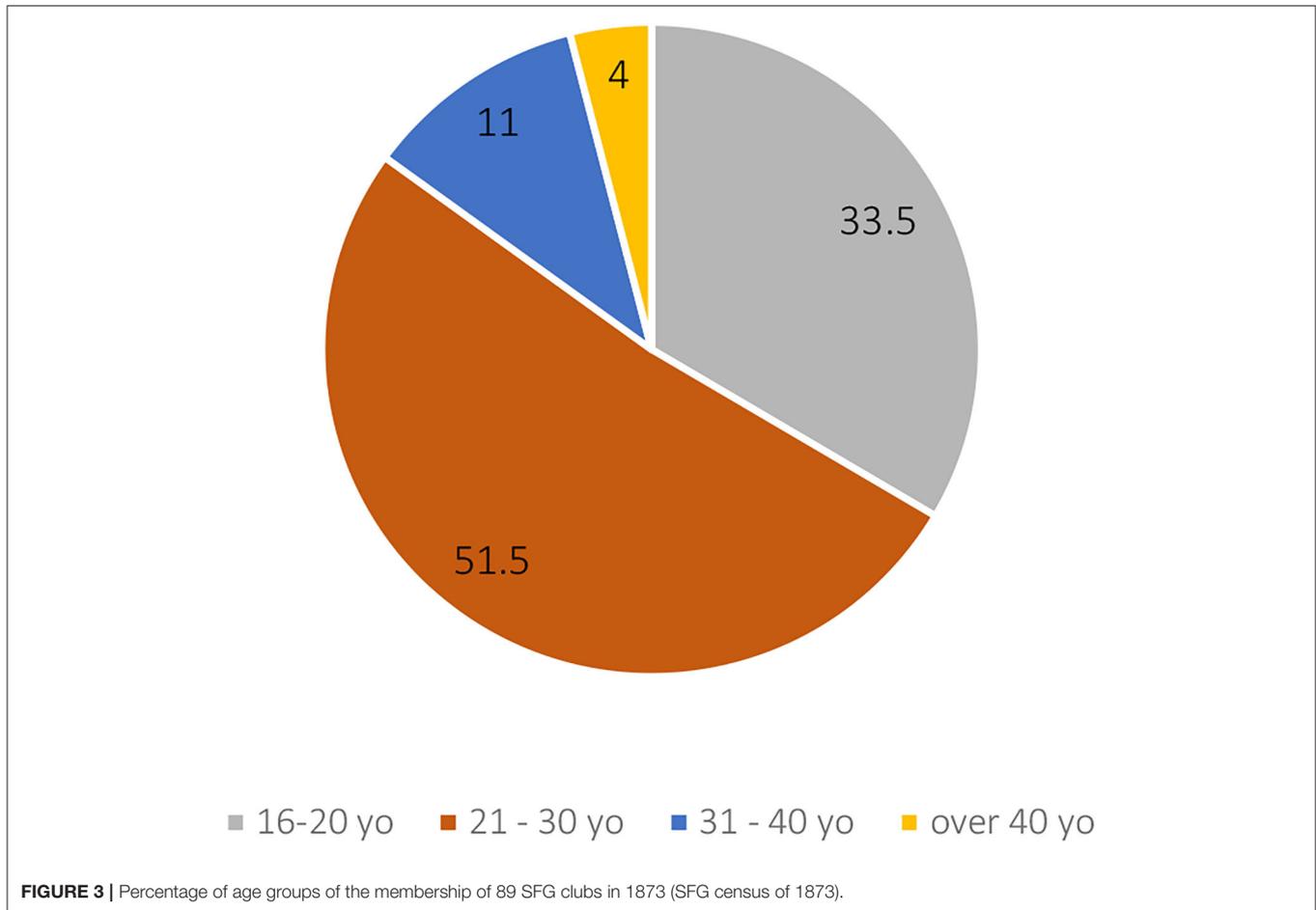
“From the table we’ve just drawn up, we can see that our clubs aren’t mainly recruited from the more mature age groups, [...], but that they are mainly populated by the younger generation. It would have been even more striking if the period from the 20th to the 30th year had been divided into two parts.” (Reports on the SFG for 1873, Bern, 1874, p. 4)

According to this quotation, the majority of the gymnasts in the 21–30 age group would be concentrated between 21 and 25 years old. Moreover, the insistence on this division and the fact that the 30 and 40-year-olds are already defined as belonging to the “mature age” group is characteristic of a time when being 30 years old meant, on average, being beyond the middle of one’s life (HSS, Average life expectancy, by sex, from 1876 to 1995). This life expectancy that lowers the “boundaries” of old age may partly explain the drastic drop in the number of people practicing once they pass the age of 30.

The 1907 census is much larger (651 clubs out of a total of 690 in 1907) but unfortunately less accurate than the 1873 survey in terms of age, presenting only two categories of classification. **Figure 4** nevertheless retains the 16–20 age group, which alone in 1907 accounted for 49% of the SFG’s membership, compared with 33% of the 1873 sample. This upward trend reflects the fact that the “younger generation,” and in particular the under 20’s, became even more important over three decades within the total population of gymnasts. This pivotal period between 1880 and 1900, which experienced a particular boom in gymnastics in Switzerland, thus saw the SFG’s membership become even younger, while being responsible for the nationalization of gymnastics during the post-1880 wave already described and which affected not only gymnastics (Jost, 1991).

It is now necessary to look in more detail at the examples of Zurich—the third canton to present the most gymnasts over 20 years old—and of Berne—the fifth canton to present the most gymnasts over 20 years old. In these particular cases, this is partly because the two cantons are pioneers in the foundation of “Männerturnvereine” or “Sociétés d’homme” that designate clubs for “senior gymnasts.” In 1907, the membership of these clubs represented 230 of the 1,703 individuals over 20 years old in Zurich (distributed among four clubs) and 318 of the 1210 individuals over 20 years old in Berne (distributed among three clubs), the canton where the first “Männerturnverein” was founded in 1846 (SFG 1907 census).

These clubs for “senior gymnasts” are particularly interesting in the context of this article, which paradoxically aims to examine youth in Swiss gymnastics. Indeed, the great majority of Swiss gymnasts were under 25 years old during the second half of the nineteenth century and the SFG did not seem to have any problems targeting what it defined as “youth,” an objective which was, moreover, totally assumed in its official aims. However, the greatest difficulty for the SFG seems to have been to sustain the commitment of members within the clubs, members who,



the older ones involved in the clubs, and refrain from using representations that associate old age and physical decline. In addition, the “Männerturnvereine” were directly designated as a good way to prolong the commitment of the gymnasts:

“It is deplorable to ‘keep out’ the most mature elements [gymnasts] [...]. Young people must try to hold on to the old with all their might, but they must also take care of them and not directly turn away from what they see as less solid and less attractive. Wouldn’t it be possible to set up an organization [clubs for senior gymnasts] in all big cities, like the one in Bern?” (Reports on the SFG for 1873, Bern, 1874, p. 4–5.)

An examination of the “Männerturnverein” membership of the city of Zurich through the 1895 census tells us more about those who were considered “old gymnasts” in Switzerland at the end of the nineteenth century. The oldest gymnast in the clubs was an honorable 47 years old followed by a 43-year-old and two 40-year-old gymnasts. In fact, these subjects could claim to live to the age of 65.5 on average, but they were already exceptional cases in terms of their longevity, which was coupled with a commitment to a gymnastics club. However, 62% of the members were under 30 and the average age was 26.3 years old, which is only 8 years

as we have seen, generally had a very short gymnastics career at this critical period that follows the compulsory school years. The comment made by the SFG on the 1873 census highlighted the problem and enjoined the young gymnasts to act to keep

older than the average age of standard clubs (SFG, Census 1895 SFG census).

The case of these clubs for “senior gymnasts” with a surprisingly young membership underlines once again the need to question our traditional boundaries in terms of youth and old age within the framework of this historical approach to gymnastics in Switzerland. With regard to the life expectancy, and while the Factories Act of 1877 mentioned earlier reflects the hardship of the weekly workload, the youth and the short career of gymnasts are probably characteristic of an era in which long-term investment in clubs dedicated to physical activity remained complicated. The nationalization and expansion of gymnastics in Switzerland was therefore mainly achieved through its youth. In fact, the spatial and temporal dimensions show that the increased development of gymnastics clubs in Switzerland between 1880 and 1900 mainly affected individuals under the age of 25, if not under the age of 20.

It is necessary to end this chapter by highlighting the eminently masculine character of the youth which made up the membership of the gymnastics clubs studied. At the level of physical education firstly, young women’s bodies were not invested with the virile role of patriotism and national defense. Although initiatives and “specialized” manuals have existed since the end of the nineteenth century, it was not until 1972 that women’s physical education in schools was formally made compulsory. The development of women’s gymnastics in Switzerland is based “on very classical, even conservative, aesthetic and physical standards, around the maternal figure that women should aspire to remain” (Quin and Mayencourt, 2020, p. 1). The SFG has therefore long been a man’s world that

doesn’t directly include women. Indeed, l’*Association Suisse de Gymnastique Féminine* (ASGF) was founded in 1908, with the status of a “sub-association” of the SFG. The historical study of the ASGF’s national expansion and its relationship to youth has yet to be completed.

A “GYMNASTICS STATE FOR YOUTH” FACING COMPETITION

The SFG’s unifying and patriotic rhetoric with regards to Swiss youth perhaps never resonated as much with the political context as it did at the time of the publication of the 1848 statutes, when the cantons were emerging from the *Sonderbund* civil war. In 1847, the conflict revealed a deep split between the industrialized areas, mainly governed by the liberal-radical political current, and the rural areas mainly run by conservative Catholics (Humair, 2009, p. 58–59). The victory of the first, which translated into the creation of the central state, did not mean that the tensions between the two camps had completely subsided. The liberal-radical hold on federal politics in the early years led the conservative Catholics to withdraw into a cultural and traditional “ghetto,” although they began to organize themselves politically countrywide around the 1860’s (Altermatt, 1994, p. 71–73).

The SFG’s Expansion From Chiasso to Basel and From Geneva to St. Gallen

Beyond the process of development of a Federal State that Switzerland had been experimenting with since the early years of

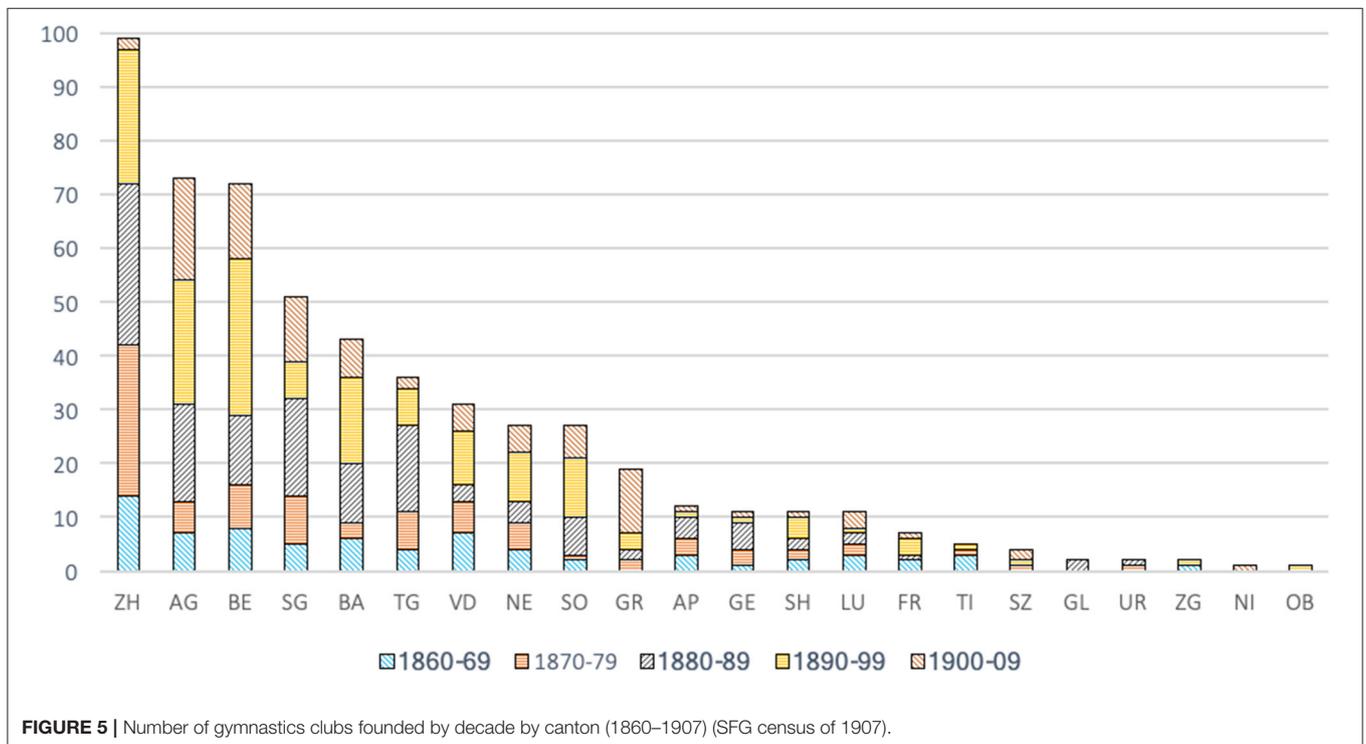


FIGURE 5 | Number of gymnastics clubs founded by decade by canton (1860–1907) (SFG census of 1907).

the nineteenth century, cantons (or regions) continued to be key players to understand the political, cultural, and social processes influencing the rise of gymnastics, creating the conditions of a heterogeneous landscape for a “nationalized cultural practice.”

Moreover, the resistance to the federal State that was present in some cantons echoes the desire for national unification in the discourse of gymnasts who designed their practice as having a real national scope and unifying potential. This is shown by SFG participation at the National Exhibition of 1896 which aimed to demonstrate the extent of gymnastics clubs throughout the country—even if in reality this was very uneven according to the cantons as we will see—as well as the physical benefits of the practice on the bodies of Swiss youth in the whole country.

Figure 5 shows the development over time of gymnastics clubs in Switzerland, by canton and by decade from 1860 until 1910. At first glance, this figure allows us to see at once that there has been at least one gymnastics club in each canton—besides Valais which was not part of the census, but which had eight clubs in 1895 (Spühler et al., 1907, Annex 3)—only since 1906 when the club in Stans in Nidwalden (NI) was founded.

The first stage of the expansion of gymnastics clubs during the decade 1860–1869 mainly concerned western and northern Switzerland, the two mainly industrialized and Protestant parts of the country (Humair, 2009). For 1860–1869, 51 of 68 clubs founded are in the cantons of Zurich (ZH), Bern (BE), Aargau (AG), St. Gallen (SG), Basel (BA), Vaud (VD), Thurgau (TG), and Neuchâtel (NE). We note the strong dynamism of the canton of Zurich from 1860 onwards, which was confirmed during the following three decades, so that, as shown by the few clubs founded in the whole canton of Zurich between 1900 and 1907 (only two), the process of institutionalization of gymnastics probably reached a first milestone around 1900. Following the increase of the population in the city of Zurich, it is also to be noted that the city itself had more gymnastics clubs than other towns in Switzerland: already 15 by 1879 and more than 20 just before 1900, as the city quadrupled its population between 1850 (~50,000 inhabitants) and 1900 (~200,000 inhabitants).

Besides the case of Zurich, which precedes the trend from the 1880's, the main peak of the creation of clubs in the west and north of the country was in the period from 1880 to 1900, especially along the northern border from Basel to St. Gallen, where the rise of the Swiss industrial complex happened first. Interestingly, it is also in the same regions (notably SG, BA, and ZH) (Koller, 2016) that new sports such as football would find their place and new players, beyond the dichotomy of “tradition–modernity” and ideological conflicts between gymnasts and followers of the new sports.

Keeping **Figure 5** in mind, we cannot discern by looking at **Figure 6** a trend that would see the cantons with a later development of gymnastics having younger memberships, in particular individuals <20 years old, and vice versa.

In terms of religious confession, Aargau (AG) and St. Gallen (SG) are cantons where the difference in proportion between Catholic and Protestant is quite small, and Catholics were in the majority in SG at the end of the nineteenth century (see **Figure 7**). However, they are located in industrialized areas dominated by the radical-liberal current. The fact that these two cantons

experienced a rapid increase of the number of their gymnastics clubs (affiliated to the SFG and not from Catholic confessional circles), especially from 1880 onward, suggests that the criteria of liberalism, industrialization and urbanization outweigh the religious component in the diffusion of gymnastics. It also calls for a more precise “geographical analysis,” based on the example of Zurich, where the urbanization might have played an important role, and where, probably, the ramification of a rural exodus from its hinterland to the city itself concentrated a younger population in towns.

The opposite cases of Solothurn (SO) and Glarus (GL) are also emblematic: SO, mostly Catholic but a western canton, saw the foundation of 11 gymnastics clubs (also affiliated to the SFG and not from Catholic confessional circles), on its territory from 1890 onwards. The very “liberal” character of SO, despite its Catholic faith, must be emphasized here. For example, the canton did not take part in the conservative alliance of the *Sonderbund* which led to the civil war of 1847 (Humair, 2009, p. 66). Conversely, in GL, a rural canton close to central Switzerland but in which nevertheless 79% of people were Protestants in 1880, the development of gymnastics was almost zero, even considering the small population of the canton.

It is also important, therefore, to be aware that the “cantonal level” is probably not the best one from which to understand precisely the spread and flourishing of gymnastics. Aargau is a very good example, as shown in **Figure 9** below, its northern districts (or municipalities) being more Catholic and showing a lower concentration of gymnastics clubs, and the same for the south of the canton along the Reuss river, at the border with the Catholic cantons of Luzern and Zug.

The alpine and rural canton of Graubünden (GR) is another good example, having a small difference in the Protestant–Catholic ratio similar to AG and SG, experiencing some development of gymnastics from 1900 onwards, but being also quite divided between valleys. We must also mention Ticino (TI) which shows a certain dynamism in the decade 1860–1870 with four clubs affiliated to the SFG founded in its main towns (Bellinzzone, Lugano, Locarno, and Chiasso). TI is close in its characteristics to the rural, Catholic cantons of central Switzerland where gymnastics developed only timidly from 1870 onwards, and even later, from 1890 and 1900 on for Obwalden (OB) and Nidwalden (NI), independently of the confessional orientation of the gymnastics clubs and their institutional affiliation.

However, the Italian-speaking canton wanted to show its attachment to the confederation quickly through gymnastics, in particular thanks to the investment of radical political personalities in the movement (Marcacci, 2019, p. 141) such as Giovanni Jauch, a fervent defender of radicalism, deeply anti-clerical and president of the federal gymnastics festival organized in 1868 in Bellinzzone. Like Solothurn, Ticino also did not take part in the *Sonderbund* alliance despite its Catholic faith (Altermatt, 1994).

Finally, it should be noted that the confessional Catholic gymnastics clubs are not included in our data, as they were not included in the SFG surveys. Thus, following the proclamation of the encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*” of 1891, they are part

Canton (by gymnastics cantonal associations)	Average age of clubs in 1907	Percentage of gymnasts under 20 years old
AP	34	51%
TI	34	57%
GE	30,5	57%
FR	30	50%
VD	28	43%
SH	27	51%
NE	27	40%
ZH	26,5	42%
BE	24,5	47,5%
TG	23,5	50%
SG	22	53%
BA	21	59%
GL	21	51%
AG	20	58,5%
Central Schweiz (LU, SZ, ZG, NI, OB)	19,5	41%
GR	17,5	53%
SO	17	50%

FIGURE 6 | Comparison of the age of the clubs according to the proportion of gymnasts under 20 years old (SFG census of 1907).

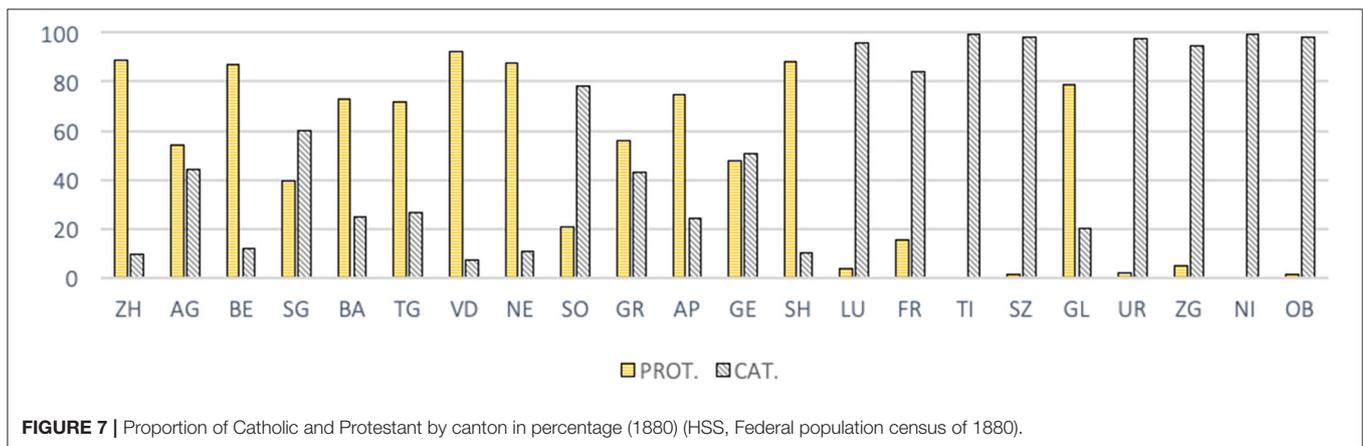
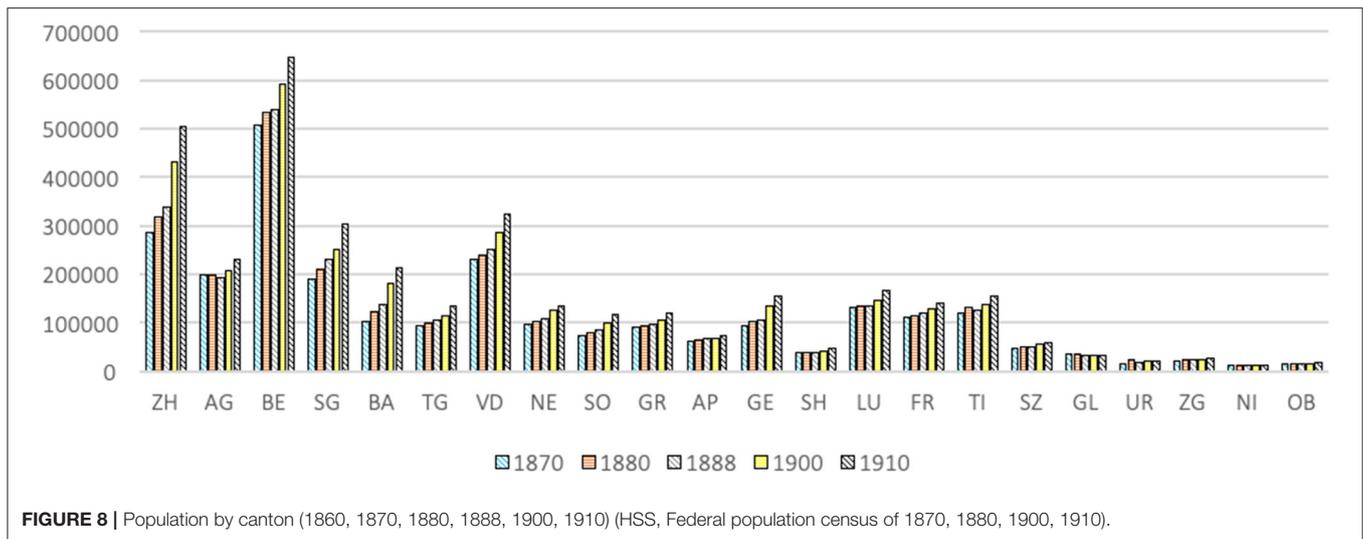


FIGURE 7 | Proportion of Catholic and Protestant by canton in percentage (1880) (HSS, Federal population census of 1880).

of an associative movement launched by the Catholic Church in order to update itself through modern means (Altermatt, 1994, p. 44). However, the extent of their development, which therefore began around 1900, was not comparable to that of the traditional clubs affiliated to the SFG. Besides, Urs Altermatt explains that Catholic associations (of all types) have to be considered as means of resistance against Protestant power, as demonstrated by their origination in cantons where political

Catholicism had a smaller scope. Conversely, their development was weak in the cantons where political Catholicism was fully established (80).

In addition to the religious issue, **Figure 8** shows that the population of the cantons must also be considered along with the spatial development of gymnastics in Switzerland. On the one hand, the cantons of Central Switzerland are less populated and, beyond the resistance to gymnastics practice



due to their Catholic and rural nature, one should also be aware that they have a smaller pool of potential gymnasts. On the other hand, more populated cantons which are strongholds of the conservative Catholics, such as Luzern (LU) and Freiburg (FR), show a much more modest development of gymnastics than certain industrialized cantons in western Switzerland, which are less populated. It can also be noted that Aargau, which over the period from 1870 to 1910 had less than half the population of the canton of Bern, experienced a boom in the expansion of its gymnastics clubs from 1880 onwards.

It is a complex matter associating certain demographic shifts with a change in the founding of clubs. For Zurich, for instance, the sharp increase in population during the period from 1888 to 1900 does not correlate to an increase in the number of clubs—which had already increased—but, as the increase is almost only due to the population of the city of Zurich, it shows how vital it will be in the future to understand in more depth those underlying socio-demographic processes. For Bern, on the other hand, the demographic leap in 1900 could be associated with the fact that the decade 1890–1900 also saw the highest number of clubs founded in the canton for the whole of the period from 1860 to 1907. Furthermore, the question of population again highlights the predominance of industrialization as a factor in the development of gymnastics. Indeed, large cantons such as Vaud (VD), which were less industrialized, experienced a slower growth in their clubs than other, less populated but more industrialized cantons (such as AG, SG, BA, and TG), also being at the core of the development of modern sports such as football (Berthoud et al., 2016).

The map showing the “topography of gymnastics in Switzerland” (Figure 9) offers a good summary. The idea of this map, on which black dots represent all the gymnastics clubs in Switzerland, was launched by SFG president Erwin Zschokke, using data produced for the 1895 census. This map, whose physical format was imposing (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 1), was officially presented at the 1896 National Exhibition. It was intended to support the SFG’s discourse to promote the

national and patriotic dimension of gymnastics. The version shown here was published in the 1907 SFG anniversary book, updated from 1895 by the 1907 census. Interestingly, and to make the connection with the “mandatory gymnastics” introduced in 1874, the CFG received at its meeting of July 1907, a statistical report on gymnastics courses provided in each canton and, not surprisingly, the map is almost the same as that presented in Geneva in 1896. Basel offered all the apparatus and even an indoor infrastructure in each school, while schools in Obwalden, Fribourg or Ticino had to struggle; Obwalden for example apparently had no indoor facilities in 1907 (Burgener, 1952, p. 130).

The map highlights, above all, the arc containing the industrialized and mainly Protestant northern and western areas of the country as a particularly fertile ground for the development of gymnastics. It also emphasizes the urban component of the practice with important concentrations of clubs around the “biggest” cities such as Bern, Basel, Zürich, Winterthur, and St. Gallen. The presence of clubs in Catholic and especially rural areas is much more scattered. It is generally limited to one club per city and some villages, all located in the main valleys. One should also stress that while gymnastics was not homogeneously spread through the country, its growth was clearly following the roots of industrialization, especially those from a first industrial revolution based on control of the rivers, for energy production, but still leaving space for the expression of genuine “Swiss traditions” especially during the federal festivals of all kinds (Schader and Leimgruber, 1993).

From Nationalization to New Competitions

The new regulation of the federal gymnastics festivals adopted by SFG in 1854, which saw the addition to competition programs of typically Swiss folkloric practices such as wrestling, stone throwing and flag handling, marks the official integration of gymnastics in traditional activities, connected with a “longue durée” vision of the Swiss society and participating in a new process of “inventing a tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger,

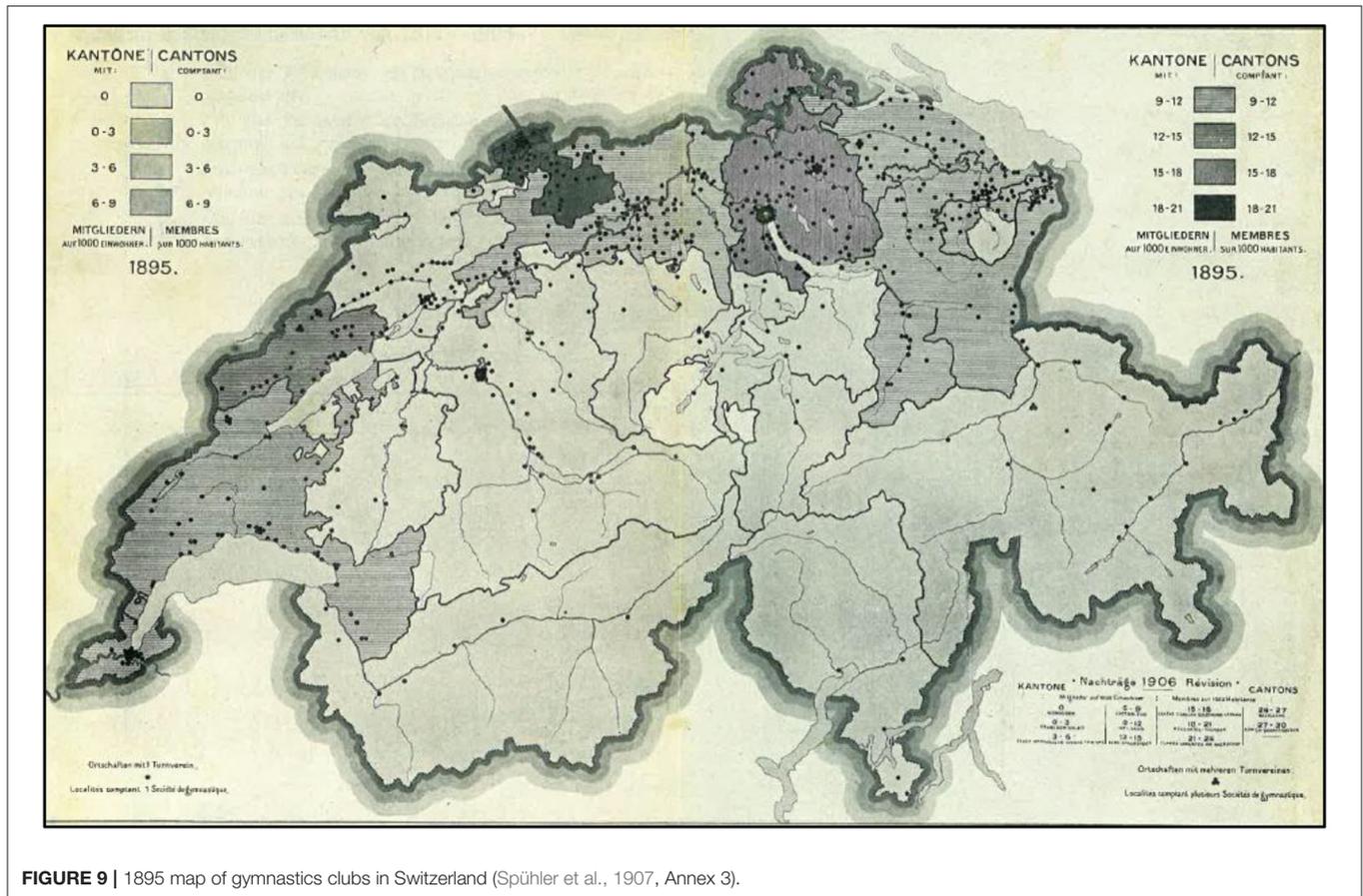


FIGURE 9 | 1895 map of gymnastics clubs in Switzerland (Spühler et al., 1907, Annex 3).

1983) or in contrast with its neighbors' identity (Holenstein, 2018, p. 237). This new regulation aimed to establish the full national dimension of gymnastics ("die Leibesübung nationaler zu machen") (Niggeler, 1859, p. 1), as pointed out in 1859, with a text published in the *Turnzeitung*, the official organ of the SFG. Johannes Niggeler was one of the pioneers of gymnastics in Switzerland, who had already worked to introduce the practice in several cities and who was to become the first long-standing central president of the SFG between 1870 and 1875 (Meier, 1957).

The man who would later be designated as the *Turnvater* of Swiss gymnastics insisted on the federative and liberal virtues of this "national gymnastics practice" for young men from all over the country, which also meant that he was sometimes banned by the authorities, for example in Bern when a new conservative government was elected in the early 1850's (Meier, 1957, p. 10–12), and forced to leave for La Chaux-de-Fonds. A couple of years later, when conservative Catholics were gaining more and more political power in Switzerland and their ultramontane branch asserted itself in the context of the "Kulturkampf" (Altermatt, 1995, p. 55–56) in line with the Vatican's desire to promote traditional values in an industrial society considered as morally gangrenous (Meuwly, 2013, p. 86), Niggeler maintained his vision:

"There is no better opportunity to collect young people and men from all regions of our homeland under the banner of freedom and progress, to unite them and to strengthen them against emerging reactionary and ultramontane aspirations than the Swiss Federal Gymnastics Society and its Festivals." (Niggeler, 1859, p. 3)

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the support for progress and the promotion of patriotism based on youth must be reconsidered in the light of the affirmation of nationalism and of a "conservative overthrow" that took place at the head of the SFG from the late nineteenth century onwards. The phenomenon has to be seen against the general rise of conservatism in Switzerland since the 1870's (Jost, 1992, p. 31), even in Protestant and liberal-radical circles, the traditional breeding ground for gymnasts. This reactionary wave saw the advent of a new political stream, called the "new right," during the last decade of the nineteenth century, that notably has antisocialism in common with the radical current (Meuwly, 2013, p. 125). This "new right", now politically organized, was symbolized by the entry of the first conservative Catholic, Josef Zemp, into the Federal Council in 1891.

The SFG's 1907 anniversary book was thus an opportunity to praise the traditional value of work and to underline the

lightweight nature of the youth of the time, against which gymnastics was presented as a cure:

“Let the Homeland call, the gymnast will do his duty. But the good gymnast won’t wait until the end of the war; everyday life already gives him the opportunity to do so. Our economic independence, to which our political freedom is closely linked, is increasingly called into question every year, and loyalty to the profession and conscientiousness of work are necessary weapons as guns and cannons. [...] In the interior of the country, the danger of indifference to public affairs and the jaded attitude of many young people threatens.” (Spühler et al., 1907, p. 121)

To take up Jacques DeFrance’s idea, subsequently explored in more depth by Grégory Quin, of the dependence of the field of physical activities on other fields (education, politics and religion) in France at the end of the nineteenth century (DeFrance, 1995, p. 18; Quin, 2011), the majority of Swiss local gymnastics clubs incorporated in their objectives the patriotic and youth training goals proclaimed by the SFG, whose active involvement in physical education and preparation for military service as early as 1874 was now established.

It is also worth mentioning that in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Switzerland saw the emergence of workers’ and confessional Catholic gymnastics clubs, along with new “modern sport” organizations, all creating competition for the SFG. From the 1860’s to the 1880’s the foundation of the first mountaineering, rowing, cycling (Jost, 1998, p. 33–34) and football clubs (Berthoud et al., 2016; Koller, 2016; Gogniat, 2018) in the country, combined the apogee of the development of gymnastics clubs with the foundation of the first clubs formed around emerging sports practices, and then their parastatal role can be seen as an advantage toward new organizations.

Gymnastics circles generally took a dim view of the arrival of new sports while trying gradually to integrate them into their traditional panel of activities (Bussard, 2007). The downward trend from 1900 onward in the number of gymnastics clubs founded probably illustrates the new competition within the “field,” around some brand-new physical activities, perhaps seen as more attractive to youth. On the other hand, the process of institutionalization of Swiss gymnastics had probably matured and was stabilizing at the beginning of the twentieth century as it reached almost all the regions, even beyond the biggest cities and especially in new suburban areas.

Thus, the overall analysis in this chapter supports the hypothesis that gymnastics in Switzerland is above all “an essentially urban, industrial and Protestant phenomenon” (Maracchi, 2019, p. 141), which was based on the involvement of young people, and has echoes in the processes of dissemination of modern sports. Thus, those elements also interestingly challenge some classical interpretations about the alleged “ideological opposition” between gymnastics and modern sports, inviting us to deepen our analysis.

CONCLUSION

Beyond evidence relating to the participation of gymnasts and gymnastics leaders in the construction of “modern Switzerland” in the second half of the nineteenth century, the ambition of the gymnastics world might also be understood as deeply political, while it is a clear parallel project to the mandatory gymnastics classes provided in schools from 1874. Having 16 as the age for joining the gymnastics clubs also made sense, when compulsory school gymnastics involved schoolboys aged from 10 to 15 (Burgener, 1952, p. 129). Later on, after the age of 20, young men could move on to other commitments in society, some of them being part of the boom of the *Société Suisse des Carabiniers*, whose numbers exploded, having 1,432 clubs and almost 70,000 members in 1900—from 435 clubs and little more than 20,000 members in 1890—(Gamma, 1924, p. 133), then joining other kinds of associations and social organizations, but also increasingly being able to stay in the “Männerturnverein” in a life-long commitment.

In some ways, the elements we have presented concerning the “youth” of gymnastics club members should be put in perspective by the fact that the turnover is also significant throughout the period we have studied. It is thus possible to consider the SFG clubs as the primary places for young people to pursue their physical and “national” training after leaving school and before entering military service. The growing number of clubs and members also allowed the emergence of a more proper patriotic project, while the numbers (690 clubs and 56,661 members) in 1907 rose to new heights (1,030 clubs and 89,222 members) in 1920 (SFG, Census for 1920). If this should also lead to a deeper analysis of the changing views of the leaders—the members of the Central Committee of the SFG (Vonnard et al., 2019)—the numbers are also to be understood as pre-conditions for the “autonomization” of the SFG within a field of sporting activities and they call into question the socio-political processes which defined Switzerland throughout the period of the First World War.

Interestingly, the book published for the 100th anniversary of the SFG ended with a table showing the creation of gymnastics clubs year by year, canton by canton, making clear the rise over the two decades from 1880 to 1900, especially between Bern, Aargau, Zurich, and St. Gallen. It also showed very accurately how the period from 1910 onwards corresponds to what can then be described as a second wave for gymnastics (*Société Fédérale de Gymnastique*, 1932, Annex 3). If the decision to promote youth under the age of 16 had to wait until 1917, several local gymnastics clubs—especially in towns—were already accepting gymnasts under 16 from the end of the 1880’s onwards (Bussard, 2007, p. 153). As shown in the 1932 commemorative book, the geography of the new “Jungturnen” is slightly different from what we have observed, having Bern and Zurich as main cantons (with respectively 79 and 59 groups of young gymnasts), but Vaud or Neuchâtel also being part of this process (47 and 25 groups), while Aargau or Solothurn seemed to remain apart (11 and 17 groups) (*Société Fédérale de Gymnastique*, 1932, p. 214–215), making bigger cities probably even more important then. Thus data for this period should be analyzed more attentively and also

replaced in a European history of the development of physical practices (Brühwiler, 2017), leaving the door open for further research on the interwar period, but also on the role of the First World War in this so-called second wave, between an emerging competition with modern sports (Bussard, 2007, p. 187–217) or new forms of physical activities, contemporary interrogations around the internationalization of sport (Quin et al., 2019) and around the early role played by the women's sub-organization for the national extension of gymnastics in Switzerland (Quin, 2015).

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

REFERENCES

- Altermatt, U. (1994). *Le Catholicisme au défi de la modernité*. L'histoire sociale des catholiques suisses au XIXe et XXe siècles. Lausanne: Payot.
- Altermatt, U. (1995). *Der Weg der Schweizer Katholiken ins Ghetto. Die Entstehungsgeschichte der nationalen Volksorganisationen im schweizer Katholizismus, 1848-1919*. Zürich: NZZ Verlag.
- Annual Reports (1853–1854). Aarau: Société fédérale de gymnastique.
- Arnaud, P. (1987). *Les athlètes de la République. Gymnastique, sport et idéologie républicaine (1870–1914)*. Toulouse: Privat.
- Bantigny, L., and Jablonka, I. (2009). "Le mot 'jeune', un mot de vieux? La jeunesse du mythe à l'histoire," in *Jeunesse Oblige. Histoire des jeunes en France XIXe–XXIe siècle*, eds L. Bantigny, and I. Jablonka (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France), 5–18.
- Berthoud, J., Quin, G., and Vonnard P. (2016). *Le football suisse*. Des pionniers aux professionnels. Lausanne: PPUR.
- Brühwiler, I. (2017). In-between "Swedish Gymnastics" and "Deutsche Turnkunst": educating "National" citizens through physical education in Switzerland in the last decades of the nineteenth century. *Nordic J. Educ. History* 4/2, 71–84. doi: 10.36368/njedh.v4i2.96
- Bühler, R. (2019). *Jugend beobachten. Debatten in Öffentlichkeit, Politik und Wissenschaft in der Schweiz, 1945–1979*. Zürich: Chronos. doi: 10.33057/chronos.1496
- Burgener, L. (1952). *La Confédération suisse et l'éducation physique de la jeunesse*. La Chaux-de-Fonds: The author.
- Bussard, J.-C. (2007). *L'éducation physique suisse en quête d'identité (1800–1930)*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Busset, T., and Le Dinh, D. (2001). Les enquêtes sociales et l'émergence de l'expertise statistique au 19^{ème} siècle en Suisse. *Traverse* 8, 57–70.
- Census of 1873, 1895, 1907 and 1920. Aarau: Société fédérale de gymnastique.
- Central Committee Minutes (1854–1917). Aarau: Société fédérale de gymnastique.
- Czaka, V. (2008). Société de gymnastique, éducation physique et politique: Contribution aux débuts de l'histoire de la gymnastique dans le Canton de Vaud. *Revue Historique Vaudoise* 117, 24–40.
- Defrance, J. (1987). *L'Excellence corporelle*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.
- Defrance, J. (1995). L'autonomisation du champ sportif. 1890–1970. *Sociologie et sociétés* 27/1, 15–31. doi: 10.7202/001174ar
- Desrosière, A. (1993). *La politique des grands nombres*. Histoire de la raison statistique. Paris: La Découverte & Syros.
- Eichenberger, L. (2001). "Mise en place et développement des institutions du sport suisse (19^{ème} et 20^{ème} siècles)," in *Sport en formes. Acteurs, contextes et dynamiques d'institutionnalisation*, eds C. Jaccoud, T. Busset (Lausanne: Antipodes), 79–92.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors were equally involved in the research, analysis, and interpretation around the topic of the article.

FUNDING

This research has been written as part of the research project La Fabrique des sports nationaux, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (project number: 182399).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank ETTY Payne for her amazing copy-editing work on this contribution and Sébastien Cala and Philippe Vonnard for their comments.

- Flatt, R. (1915). Vorträge und Referate in den eidg. Zentralkursen zur Einführung in die neue Schweizerische Turnschule für den obligatorischen Turnunterricht, 1912. *Monatblättern für die physische Erziehung der Jugend 1913–1914*. Zürich: Orell Füssli.
- Flatt, R. (1945). *Geschichte der Eidgenössischen Turn- und Sportkommission 1874–1945*. Bern: Eidgenössischen Turn- und Sportkommission.
- Floris, J., Höpflinger, F., Stohr, C., Studer, R., and Staub, K. (2019). Wealthier – older – taller: Measuring the standard of living in Switzerland since the 19th century. *Revue Suisse d'Histoire* 69/2, 207–232. doi: 10.24894/2296-6013.00037
- Fritzsche, B., Frey, T., Rey, U., and Romer, S. (2001). *Historischer StrukturAtlas der Schweiz*. Die Entstehung der modernen Schweiz. Baden: Hier und Jetzt Verlag.
- Gamma, M. (1924). *Société Suisse des Carabiniers 1824–1924*. Zurich: Coradi-Maag.
- Gardey, D. (2008). *Ecrire, calculer, classer. Comment une révolution de papier a transformé les sociétés contemporaines (1800–1940)*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Gavard, A. (1896). *Exposition nationale suisse, Genève – 1er mai au 15 octobre 1896: Guide officiel*. Genève: Rey & Malavallon.
- Giuliani, M. (2001). "Starke Jugend – Freies Volk". *Bundesstaatliche Körpererziehung und Gesellschaftliche Funktion von Sport in der Schweiz (1918–1947)*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Gogniat, J. (2018). "L'éducation des corps dans les pensionnats et l'émergence du sport en Suisse au tournant du XIX^e siècle," in *Faire corps. Temps, lieux et gens*, eds M. Aceti, C. Jaccoud, and L. Tissot (Neuchâtel: Alphil), 45–58.
- Herzog, E. (1995). *Frisch, frank, fröhlich, Frau: Frauenturnen im Kanton Basel-Landschaft: ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte des Breitensports*. Liestal: Verlag des Kanton Basel-Landschaft.
- Hobsbawm, E., and Ranger, T. (1983). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holenstein, A. (2018). *Au coeur de l'Europe*. Une histoire de la Suisse entre ouverture et repli. Lausanne: Antipodes.
- Horlacher, R. (2017). The emergence of physical education as a subject for compulsory schooling in the first half of the nineteenth century: the case of phokion heinrich clias and adolf spieß. *Nordic J. Educ. History* 4/2, 13–30. doi: 10.36368/njedh.v4i2.93
- Humair, C. (2004). *Développement économique et état central (1815–1914). Un siècle de politique douanière suisse au service des élites*. Bern: Peter Lang. doi: 10.3726/978-3-0352-0287-8
- Humair, C. (2009). *1848. Naissance de la Suisse moderne*. Lausanne: Antipodes.
- Im Hof, U., and Bernard, N. (1983). "Les relations des communautés linguistiques au sein des associations nationales suisses avant la création de la nouvelle Confédération de 1848," in *Union et division des Suisses: les relations entre Alémaniques, Romands et Tessinois aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles*, ed. P. Dubois (Lausanne: Edition de l'Aire), 9–24.
- Jaun, R. (1999). *Preussen vor Augen*. Das Schweizerische Offizierkorps im militärischen und gesellschaftlichen Wandel des Fin de Siècle. Zurich: Chronos.

- Jaun, R. (2019). *Geschichte der Schweizer Armee. Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart*. Zurich: Orell Fussli.
- Jost, H.-U. (1986). Critique historique du parti politique. *Annuaire de l'Association Suisse de Sciences Politiques* 26, 317–332.
- Jost, H.-U. (1991). "Sociabilité, faits associatifs et vie politique en Suisse au XIX^e siècle," in *Geselligkeit, Sozietäten und Vereine - Sociabilité et faits associatifs*, ed. A. Tanner (Zürich: Chronos), 7–29.
- Jost, H.-U. (1992). *Les avant-gardes réactionnaires: la naissance de la nouvelle droite en Suisse 1890–1914*. Lausanne: Edition d'en bas.
- Jost, H.-U. (1995). Des chiffres et du pouvoir: statisticiens, statistique et autorités politiques en Suisse du XVIII^e au XX^e siècle. *Forum Statisticum* 35/10, 10–56.
- Jost, H.-U. (1998). Leibeserziehung und Sport im Rahmen des Vereinswesens der Schweiz. *Traverse: Zeitschrift für Geschichte*, 5, 33–44.
- Klotter, C., and Beckenbach, N. (2012) *Die Romantisierung von Volk und Nation: Die Wandervogel. Romantik und Gewalt* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften). doi: 10.1007/978-3-531-93457-0
- Koller, C. (2016). Sport transfer over the channel: elitist migration and the advent of football and ice hockey in Switzerland. *Sport Soc.* 20/1, 1390–1404. doi: 10.1080/17430437.2016.1221067
- Krüger, M. (1996). Body culture and nation building: the history of gymnastics in Germany in the period of its foundation as a nation-state. *Int. J. History Sport* 13/3, 409–417. doi: 10.1080/09523369608713957
- La Chaux-de-Fonds (1900). *Report of the Jury and the Central Committee on the federal gymnastics festival of La Chaux-de-Fonds 1900*.
- Le Gymnaste (1860). Aarau: Société fédérale de gymnastique.
- Marcacci, M. (2000). "La paix entre sport et gymnastique pour mieux préparer la jeunesse à la guerre?," in *Guerres et paix. Mélanges offerts à Jean-Claude Favez*, ed. M. Porret, J.-F. Fayet, and C. Fluckiger (Genève: Georg), 549–560.
- Marcacci, M. (2019). "Modernité et essor du sport au Tessin," in *Histoire du sport en Suisse: État des lieux et perspectives*, ed. C. Koller (Neuchâtel: CIES), 138–155.
- Marwick, A. (1998). *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United-States, c. 1958 – c. 1974*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Meier, H. (1957). Johann Niggeler 1816–1887. *Turngeschichtliche Schriftenreihe der schweizerische Turnzeitung* 1, 3–56.
- Meuwly, O. (2013). *19 avril 1874: l'audace de la démocratie directe*. Lausanne: Antipodes.
- Mosse, G. L. (1980). "La nationalisation des masses. Gymnastique, tir et constitution du sentiment national en Allemagne," in *Aimez-vous les stades?*, ed. A. Ehrenberg (Paris: Recherches), 59–74.
- Müller, J.-J. (1910). *Geschichte des Schweiz. Turnlehrervereins (1858–1908)*. Zurich: Orell Füssli.
- Niggeler, J. (1859). Über die neue Organisation der schweizerischen Turnfeste. *Die Turnzeitung* 2, 1–2.
- Niggeler, J. (1882). *Histoire de la Société Fédérale de Gymnastique. Éditée par le Comité central à l'occasion du 50^{ème} anniversaire de la fondation de la Société*. Bern: Dalp.
- Oger, C. (2005). L'analyse du discours institutionnel entre formations discursives et problématiques socio-anthropologiques. *Langage et Société* 11/4, 113–28. doi: 10.3917/ls.114.0113
- Quin, G. (2011). Genèse et structure d'un interchamp orthopédique (première moitié du 19^{ème} siècle): contribution à l'histoire de l'institutionnalisation d'un champ scientifique. *Revue d'histoire des Sci.* 64/2, 323–347. doi: 10.3917/rhs.642.0323
- Quin, G. (2015). Le 'tournant sportif' de la gymnastique féminine helvétique (1960–1985). L'Association Suisse de Gymnastique Féminine entre spécialisation et professionnalisation. *Revue Suisse D'histoire* 65/3, 428–448.
- Quin, G., and Mayencourt, G. (2020). "Devenir olympique et sportive : l'essor de la gymnastique rythmique et sportive en Suisse autour des années 1970," in *Recherches et Etudes Olympiques*, ed. N. Chanavat (Paris: INSEP), 52–65.
- Quin, G., Vonnard, P., and Jaccoud, C. (2019). *Des réseaux et des hommes. Participation et contribution de la Suisse à l'internationalisation du sport*. Neuchâtel: Alphil. doi: 10.33055/ALPHIL.03115
- Schader, B. (1992). "Les Fêtes fédérales," in *Les Suisses. Modes de vie, traditions, mentalités. Tome 2*, ed. P. Hugger (Lausanne: Payot), 809–831.
- Schader, B., and Leimgruber, W. (1993). *Festgenossen. Über Wesen und Funktion eidgenössischer Verbandfeste*. Basel: Helbling und Lichtenhahn.
- Schweizerische Turnzeitung (1858–1909). Aarau: Société fédérale de gymnastique.
- Société Fédérale de Gymnastique (1932). *Jubiläumsschrift. Eine Rückschau auf die Jahre 1907–1932*. Zurich: Müller, Werder and Co.
- Spühler, J., Ritter, M., and Schaechtelin, A. (1907). *Festschrift zum 75 jährigen Jubiläum des Eidgenössischen Turnvereins (1832–1907)*. Zurich: Juchli & Beck.
- Statistique historique de la Suisse HSSO (2012a). *Average life expectancy, by sex, from 1876 to 1995 (average of several years): choice of 12 years of age*. Available online at: <https://hso.ch/fr/2012/d/1a> (accessed 27 March, 2020).
- Statistique historique de la Suisse HSSO (2012b). *Present population, by canton, from 1860 to 1930*. Available online at: <https://hso.ch/fr/2012/b/4> (accessed 6 April, 2020).
- Statistique historique de la Suisse HSSO (2012c). *Resident population of the cantons by confession (religion) 1850–1990*. Available online at: <https://hso.ch/fr/2012/b/27> (accessed 6 April, 2020).
- Statutes of the SFG (1848–1873). Aarau: Société fédérale de gymnastique.
- Thiercé, A. (1999). *Histoire de l'adolescence: 1850–1914*. Paris: Belin.
- Tissot, L. (2017). *Histoire du tourisme en Suisse au 19^{ème} siècle*. Les Anglais à la conquête de la Suisse. Neuchâtel: Alphil.
- Triet, M. and Schildknecht, P. (2002). *Les fêtes fédérales de gymnastique 1832–2002 : coup d'œil sur un événement national*. Olten: Weltbild Verlag.
- Vonnard, P., Mayencourt, G., and Gerber, H.-D. (2019). "La Fabrique des sports nationaux." Etudier l'émergence d'une élite du sport suisse (1860–1930). *STAPS* 125/3, 151–163. doi: 10.3917/sta.125.0151
- Vonnard, P., and Quin, G. (2019). "Les premiers temps de l'institutionnalisation des sports modernes en Suisse. L'exemple du football des années 1870 aux années 1910," in *Histoire du sport en Suisse: État des lieux et perspectives*, ed. C. Koller (Neuchâtel: CIES), 55–78.
- Westberg, J., Boser, L., and Brühwiler, I. (2019). *School Acts and the Rise of Mass Schooling. Education Policy in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-13570-6
- Wimmer, A. (2011). A swiss anomaly? A relational account of national boundarymaking. *Nation Nationalism* 17/4, 718–737. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-8129.2011.00517.x
- Zimmer, O. (2003). *A Contested Nation: History, Memory and Nationalism in Switzerland 1761–1891*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2021 Mayencourt and Quin. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.



Educate Kermit Roosevelt Through Sport Hunting and Train Him for Government Missions. Roosevelt Scientific Mission to English Equatorial Africa in 1909

Romain Chasles*

The Institute of Sports Sciences of the University of Lausanne (ISSUL), Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland

The practice of sport hunting in colonized areas presents a set of knowledge and techniques indispensable to self-control and the domination of territories elsewhere by colonial empires, by their leaders and, more generally, by the political elites of the Northern states. During his scientific mission to English Equatorial Africa in 1909, Theodore Roosevelt responded to a double commission from the Smithsonian Institute and the American Museum in Washington. In this African mission, he brought and trained his youngest son Kermit, aged 20, in an initiatory journey. This article proposes to study this ritual of passage and the practice of sport hunting in the English colonial space as a revelation of the socio-racial hierarchies at work in the territories dominated by the English Empire.

Keywords: sport hunting, military sport, legacy, english empire, Theodore Roosevelt, postcolonial studies, socio-history

INTRODUCTION

Hunting and politics have a deep relationship. The hunting practice is framed, legislated and controlled by politics. At the same time, it is also an activity prized by the socio-political elites when it comes to hunting in faraway places, a privilege that the aristocrats and high bourgeoisie of the North retain in these spatial and temporal frameworks.

For the contemporary period, the European opening to the conquest and colonization of African and non-Western areas generates a displacement of cultural practices in these spaces and certain forms of hybridization of physical practice in contact with the colonized other. Under these conditions, the practice of sport hunting in the colonized areas presents a set of knowledge and techniques essential to the self-control and the domination of the territories by the colonial empires, by their rulers and, more generally, by the political elites of the Northern States.¹

¹See for this point John Mackenzie's seminal work on this subject in his book: Mackenzie J. *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*, Manchester: Manchester University Press (1988). 350 p.; and the work of Steinhard E. I., *Black Poachers, White Hunters. A Social History of Hunting in Colonial Kenya*, Oxford: Ohio University Press (2006). 248 p.; and of Thompsell A. *British Sport, African Knowledge and the Nature of Empire*, London: Palgrave Macmillan (2015). 229 p.

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Mahfoud Amara,
Qatar University, Qatar

Reviewed by:

Xavier Pujadas Marti,
Universitat Ramon Llull, Spain
François Vallotton,
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

*Correspondence:

Romain Chasles
romain.chasles@unil.ch;
romain.chasles@
sciencespo-grenoble.fr

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
*The History, Culture and Sociology of
Sports*,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Sports and Active Living

Received: 07 December 2020

Accepted: 09 September 2021

Published: 18 October 2021

Citation:

Chasles R (2021) Educate Kermit
Roosevelt Through Sport Hunting and
Train Him for Government Missions.
Roosevelt Scientific Mission to English
Equatorial Africa in 1909.
Front. Sports Act. Living 3:638528.
doi: 10.3389/fspor.2021.638528

The practice of sport hunting gathers scattered age categories although its government is most often made up of central personalities, where the presuppositions related to social recognition, field and practice experience, and maturity are mixed².

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Historiography has long dealt with the establishment of monographs on the life and work of Theodore Roosevelt Jr (Morris, 2002, 2010; Pringle, 2003). The 26th President of the United States also appears as a political strategist, an avant-garde environmentalist and an informed explorer while being a recurring and insatiable sportsman (Zachary, 2012; Marquis, 2014). In these monographs, his relationship with his son, Kermit Roosevelt, during the 1909 mission, however, is neglected. Nevertheless, it reveals essential points of his life: a deep training in sport hunting, the torments of the missions and a family transmission of knowledge and government techniques from father to son.

During his scientific mission in Equatorial Africa and under English protectorate in Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Egypt in 1909, Theodore Roosevelt responded to a double commission from the Smithsonian Institute and the American Museum in Washington. He brought and trained his youngest son Kermit, aged 20, in this African mission. Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt share a common pleasure for physical and sports activities in the great outdoors and for explorations (Enders, 1998)³. As he prepares to enter Harvard, Kermit follows his father's journey on his "tour" of European governments and his African mission. However, what does this rite of passage reveal in the training and education of young Kermit by his 50-year-old patriarch Theodore Roosevelt?

The practice of sport hunting in the English colonial space is a revelation of the socio-racial hierarchies at work in the territories dominated by the English empire. How does the young Kermit Roosevelt fit into this process of mission government and hunting practice?

Sport hunting also shows a different relationship to age than other physical and sporting practices. This difference of age and generation is even more marked as the experience and the age of the person in charge of the mission are important. He imposes an initiation to the young practitioner in front of the risks inherent to the practice. In particular, since he trains his sons in extra-national and imperial spaces, which are supposed to be less mastered by Theodore Roosevelt. Also, this practice cannot take place without a tutelary figure and a complete organization—borrowed from the military hierarchy—to guide the young sport hunter in the learning of hunting techniques and the government of the missionary organization. Does Kermit Roosevelt's closeness to his father engage him in the role of

a missionary second, despite his young age and the presence of other experienced sportsmen? How does Kermit Roosevelt position himself in the government and hierarchy of the mission?

The historiography of colonial hunting, from the beginning of the 19th century to the independence of the former colonial territories, has insisted on the role of marking the cultural and sporting practice of hunting in the domination of the colonized territories, in the appropriation of indigenous practices by the colonial elites and in the globalization of sport from the North to the South (Singaravelou, 2011). It has also provided convincing results on the metropolitan culture that stems from these cultural practices around the heroic figures of the first sportsmen and explorers in the colony, a kind of constant mimicry to the reiteration of the colonization of spaces elsewhere (Mackenzie, 1984). The globalization of sport is a phenomenon that takes on its full meaning in the colonial space (Combeau-Marie, 2006). It even accelerates the dynamics of colonization and domination against colonized groups (Bouvier, 2010; Hussain, 2010, 2012).

The historiography of colonial hunting, as a culture proper and inseparable from imperial logics, also reveals logics of reiteration of racial and gender hierarchies in practice. The masculine territory of hunting practices - in this case of colonial origin—creates de facto spaces of exchange between men from which women are excluded (Steinhard, 2006). The masculinist culture of the hunting elites is reinforced by these international sports trips. Within these male hunting cohorts, racial hierarchies are deconstructed and confirm the centrality of this practice in imperial culture (Mackenzie, 1984). In contrast to women, the colonized hold a central place, but one that has always been orchestrated by cosmopolitan elites. The relationship between the military and the sport of hunting in the colony reinforces the logic of domination toward the colonized. It assigns them to subordinate positions in the practice of hunting, excluding them from spaces and practices (Roulet, 2004). Therefore, this sport hunting culture is accompanied by an ethic specific to its practitioners (Michaud, 2010; Malarney, 2020), which contributes to the construction and permanence of this elite "entre-soi" (Bourdieu, 1989).

As a sporting practice of a young hunter in a central scientific mission for the United States, are the honor and experience framing the hunting oriented toward a less intensive and less dangerous quest than that of his father? In other words, does Kermit Roosevelt's young age engender a less sporting inflection of his hunting practice? Is this process sustainable during the mission?

This work therefore proposes to study the travel narrative and the collections collected by Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt for the Smithsonian Institute and the American Museum in Washington to explore these questions⁴.

²See the ages of Th. Roosevelt Jr., P. of Savorgnan de Brazza or of E. Bruneau de Laborie during their government missions.

³Theodore Roosevelt in his 1913 mission to Brazil also left with Kermit Roosevelt: Roosevelt T. *Through the Brazilian Wilderness*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1914). 383 p.

⁴See Roosevelt T., *op cit.*; Smithsonian Institution, "Digital archives", Collections Search Center, <https://collections.si.edu/search/> [accessed March 1, 2019]; American Museum of Natural History, "Digital archives", Digital Special Collections, <http://lbry-web-007.amnh.org/digital/index.php> [accessed March 1, 2019]; Theodore Roosevelt Center, "Digital archives", Digital Library, Dickinson State University, Dickinson, <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library> [accessed March 1, 2019] and the printed sources of the French-language newspapers and magazines: GALLICA, BNF, "Archives digitales",

This article aims to contribute to the research of cultural history and socio-history in the African colonial space. Few studies have been conducted on the colonial field for socio-history even though its research prism directs it toward questions of domination and interdependent networks (Elias, 1981). The digital archives of the Smithsonian Institution, the Theodore Roosevelt Center, and his book allow us to follow the thread of the Roosevelts' mission in the colony according to a classic reading of the historical archive (Venayre, 2006; Delmas, 2017). This book also holds a central place in our study in that it relates the day-to-day peregrinations of the Roosevelts in the English African colony as a sort of logbook from which it results. Furthermore, and despite being a literary object, the analyses conducted in this article take the bet that the writings delivered in this travel document are at least the fruit of effective hybrid representations of Theodore Roosevelt (Roux, 2012). More than that, they are dynamics at work during the Roosevelts' mission. They are embodied in the formation of the young Kermit Roosevelt on mission and after his journey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Train the Young Kermit Roosevelt in the History of Hunting, the Equipment and the Organization of the Hunting Mission in English East Africa

Build a Library and Discover the Hunting Books as an Introduction to Sporting Activities

The hunting practice of the young Kermit Roosevelt in the colony is based on literary knowledge whose acquisition prepares and exceeds the very framework of the sporting experience. Their role is to be understood as an *actant* in the hunting mission that occupies the Roosevelts in that “*the books were stained with blood, sweat, gun-oil, dust, and ashes*”⁵ (Latour, 1990). Thus, the books have a life outside and within the Roosevelt's journey. They act on the mission of the Roosevelts and experience their practices. During his European and African journey, Theodore Roosevelt carried his pigskin library, and several books added for the occasion, which he shared with his son as milestones in his intellectual and athletic training (Chasles, 2015). This literary knowledge guided Kermit Roosevelt's practice in the English African colonies during 1909:

“There was one other bit of impedimenta, less usual for African travel, but perhaps almost as essential for real enjoyment even on a hunting trip, if it is to be of any length. This was the “pigskin library,” so called because most of the books were bound in pigskin. They were carried in a light aluminum and oilcloth case, which, with its contents, weighed a little <60 pounds, making a load for one porter.”⁶

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/services/engine/search/advancedSearch/?lang=fr> [consulted on March 1, 2019].

⁵Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 523.

⁶*Op.cit.* p. 24.

This literary travel experience, in which the burden of transportation is given to a colonized bearer, is innovative in the register of works relating to colonial hunts. In fact, it goes beyond the references that colonial hunters develop in their retrospective essays. Indeed, they linger, most often, on the essays that guided them empirically in their travels⁷.

However, even if the only tangible and verifiable trace is the transport of this pigskin library in Africa, we can assume that these books are anchored in long-term knowledge and that their transport should form Kermit Roosevelt in the long term. They are also a reminder of the importance of their understanding for the present mission. This training takes place in a quartet of literary choices made by his father: “the Bible, Shakespeare, Homer, and Dante” in which international classical literature is mixed with Christian biblical texts⁸.

More than any other sporting and physical practice, hunting in a colony is part of an obligation to master a theoretical and naturalist knowledge because it obliges the hunter to determine and think: the organization of his trip, the space in which the hunts take place, the animals hunted (Ford et al., 2016). The acquisition of knowledge specific to hunting also raises the question of the use of the results of the hunts, which can be of several kinds. These may be hunting trophies, hunting records or colonial circulations which are still, at the beginning of the 20th century, a source of central interest for Geographical societies. Obviously, these results are a central source for states with regard to geopolitical and imperial issues. As for them, hunting trophies and records respond in our case study to orders from public institutions and to more personal needs of the Roosevelt family. Thus, Kermit Roosevelt's knowledge, acquired and in the process of being acquired, guides his colonial hunts through a game of back and forth between theoretical and practical learning. As the title of Theodore Roosevelt's book confers, the theoretical knowledge at stake in this mission largely concerns naturalist science and hunting in a constant relationship. Finally, literature and its learning are at the center of Theodore Roosevelt's training as reported in the various articles and questions on the pigskin library⁹.

The Roosevelt readings create a space of instruction, representations and a field of possibilities for the practice of hunting in the colonial space studied¹⁰. As such, they guide the practice and determine its framework. In this regard, Theodore Roosevelt stipulates that:

“It represents in part Kermit's taste, in part mine; and, I need hardly say, it also represents in no way all the books we most care

⁷See, for example, Bruneau de Laborie E. *Guide de la chasse et du tourisme en Afrique centrale*. Paris: Société d'éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales (1931). p. 9-18.

⁸Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 527.

⁹See Stanton T., “Lettres américaines,” *Mercure de France* (February 1, 1911). p.654-659 and the excerpts “Sur la piste du gibier africain” from *African Game Trail*, published in *Le Journal* (September 28, 1909).

¹⁰Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 522.

for, but merely those which, for one reason or another, we thought we should like to take on this particular trip.”¹¹

The pigskin library and the Roosevelt’s additional works are the result of a deliberate choice undertaken by Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt on the occasion of their mission, without being exhaustive. Theodore Roosevelt admits, however, that it could evolve if the mission were to be reiterated or changed. Sharing the travel library with his father allows us to think about the different exchanges between the two Roosevelt’s and their entourage¹². The Roosevelt’s library was enriched during the trip with some reading tips from guests and meetings held in Africa during the mission. Former President and agent of the first world power, the Roosevelt’s arrival in Europe and during this imperial African mission represents, in 1909, a real knot of sociability during which more personal and cultural issues are addressed. The weight of literary issues is central here and also testifies to the inclination of American elite culture for European literature. It also strongly affirms the connections between the world’s cosmopolitan elites (Cotesta, 2011; Frank, 2014).

The books kept in the Roosevelt’s travel library provide general references to the hunting experience and to the elite literature, known as classical. For example, Goethe’s initiation novel *Faust* is addressed to Kermit Roosevelt¹³. Its presence reveals the prerogatives of the young Roosevelt’s training to be perfected. It provides information on the learning to be developed during his journey. Finally, *Faust* could help Kermit Roosevelt’s self-construction, his passage to adulthood. *Faust* actually confirms Theodore Roosevelt’s ambition toward his son regarding the African mission, showing the rite of passage to be carried out during their epic. His reading also participates in the permanence of the elitist self-segregation in which the young Roosevelt must maintain himself. The collection of international poetry, present in the corpus, confirms this desire for continuity in the formation of Kermit Roosevelt. They also serve as a support for romantic reveries and travel fantasies. Theodore Roosevelt states as follows:

“Often my reading would be done while resting under a tree at noon, perhaps beside the carcass of a beast I had killed, or else while waiting for camp to be pitched; and in either case it might be impossible to get water for washing.”¹⁴

The body of books also shows a considerable literary appetite for European history, be it prehistoric, ancient or more modern. It also includes books of the Enlightenment and biographies of royalty as well as historical essays on the history of European states¹⁵. As confirmed by the titles of the books, they also denote the ability of the Roosevelt family to read books in French, further proof of the insertion of this family in international and especially imperial matters.

The choice of certain texts reveals a precise hunting experience and a finer choice, relating to the particularity of the mission

and the needs generated by it¹⁶. The references directly related to hunting take place in a corpus of scientific, travel and political books ranging from Darwin’s *Origin of Species* to Gobineau’s *Inégalité des Races Humaines*. We could even add that these works are part of the imperial and cosmopolitan hunting culture. We propose to focus on a central example. *Tartarin de Tarascon* seems indeed to reflect this symbiosis between the training of the young Kermit and the sharing of an international hunting culture¹⁷. This pedagogical corollary tends to confirm the interdependent relationship between youth training and hunting in this elite cosmopolitan world.

““Tartarin de Tarascon ” (not until after I had shot my lions !).”¹⁸

With these few words, the temporal veracity of which cannot be proven - the travel narrative reconstructs the times of the mission—Theodore Roosevelt affirms the centrality of the novel within his mission while delivering some humorous notes to his readers on the hunting universe and its excesses. That said, the presence of Alphone Daudet’s book sets out the cultural framework specific to hunting, which itself refers to a white African hunter of the 19th century: Jules Gérard (*Venayre*, 2002). This quotation also allows the author to re-establish the supremacy of one type of African hunting over the others, namely the hunting of lions. By taking advantage of the scientific mission that institutionally occupies the Roosevelts, lion hunting presents an obligatory step to enter the cosmopolitan circle of elite hunters, and this is what the two Roosevelts are dealing with on their travels¹⁹. It is no coincidence that this hunt is presented first. Indeed, it takes a special place in the Roosevelt’s hunting story. This literary operation makes explicit the use of the scientific mission with more individualized purposes for the Roosevelts.

This set of volumes is one of the theoretical and cultural foundations of the practice of international sport hunting, a sort of cement and shared references as to the prestige and seniority of the hunters. Moreover, Kermit Roosevelt’s literary and theoretical training in colonial hunting is also based, in a symbiotic way, on a theoretical and practical knowledge of the weapons and equipment inherent to the practice of hunting. Kermit Roosevelt’s father considered literature and weapons to be of equal importance. As such, if there were no choice with regard to these two needs, it would become impedimenta for the mission²⁰.

Build Up an Arsenal of Rifles and Equipment to Prepare for the Hunting Ground

Kermit Roosevelt’s arsenal of firearms and equipment reveals both his learning of the practice of sport hunting and his dense integration into the cosmopolitan hunting environment. Indeed, the act of hunting seems intimately linked to the transport of hunting equipment by the Roosevelt family. More than the

¹¹ *Op.cit.* p. 24.

¹² *Op.cit.* p. 160.

¹³ *Op.cit.* p. 362.

¹⁴ *Op.cit.* 522-523.

¹⁵ *Op.cit.* p. 523.

¹⁶ *Op.cit.* p. 24.

¹⁷ *Op.cit.* p. 522.

¹⁸ *Ibidem.*

¹⁹ *Op.cit.* p. 57-79.

²⁰ *Op.cit.* p. 24.

transport of this equipment, which constitutes an ordeal in itself and which can lead to a scientific study in its own way, we will try to understand what the material traces are conveyed by Kermit Roosevelt and his father. These have a noticeable influence on the establishment of cultural models in the new spaces being practiced. Thus, it is easier to understand this history by its visible character that responds directly to the different senses in action of the hunters. We will use Theodore Roosevelt's pointed explanations of rifles, shotguns and hunting equipment to unravel the concepts which emerge from the use of these key hunting objects.

The artillery on the Roosevelt mission camps is representative of the central role of this equipment in hunting trips. Like the Roosevelt library, their charge is entrusted to a designated carrier. The arsenal of weapons refers first of all to knightly representations. In the same way, it corresponds to the question of the choice of weapons which individualizes the sportsmen as much as it incorporates them into the colonial hunting culture. The writing of the book allows us to imagine the weight of the *pater familias* in the choice made by Kermit Roosevelt. It also reveals differences linked to the hunting experience and the weight of the individualization of the young Kermit in his practice. The description of these weapons then makes it possible to differentiate the levels of insertion of the two Roosevelt's in international hunting. Their comparison shows the level of training and integration of Kermit Roosevelt in the hunting environment.

From a literary point of view, the arsenal of rifles is most often brought to light in the beginnings of books on hunting trips, which reiterates its centrality. This also accentuates the narrative on the romantic and dangerous quest that hunters lead (Hahn and Bouquet, 2014)²¹. The travel narrative, whose publications were central during the 19th century, thus responds to codes of writing aimed at a defined public. It also tends to present to the most knowledgeable the level of organization and choices developed by the Roosevelt family, which is part of a double game between the collective tradition of the self and individual innovation of differentiation. Theodore Roosevelt respects this historical framework for the presentation of travel narratives, which reiterated his family's insertion into the group of international hunters.

Like the library and the literary issues mentioned above, the Roosevelt arsenal is first and foremost a place of sharing where the transmission of knowledge and empires from Theodore Roosevelt to Kermit Roosevelt takes place. But what is this sum of arms? What does it tell us?

"My rifles were an army Springfield, 30-caliber, stocked and sighted to suit myself; a Winchester-405; and a double-barreled 500-450 Holland, a beautiful weapon presented to me by some

English friends. {...} In addition, I had a Fox No. 12 shotgun; no better gun was ever made"²².

This sum of arms shows their role as actants in the Roosevelt's mission in colonial Africa. It is even more so because these guns come from the military world. The choice of Roosevelt rifles thus confirms the proximity of the practice of sport hunting with the military, especially since this mission took place in imperial Africa. Does Theodore Roosevelt see in this trip the possibility of perfecting his son's military education or even of giving him an essential part in his training? In any case, this mission represents an opening up of the field of possibilities in terms of complementary instruction in the choice of arms, their handling and their use by the young Kermit Roosevelt. The general arsenal of the Roosevelt family reveals the predominance of the *Winchester-405*. Also, the Roosevelt used American rifles—the *Winchester 405* from New Haven (CT) and the *Springfield 30* caliber from Madison (NC)—more than usual to ensure the dominance that the American arms industry could obtain from the political and hunting elites in the African space. On this point, only the Holland 500-450 rifle seems to stand comparison in terms of the capacities it gives to hunters in the *big game*.

"The Winchester and the Springfield were the weapons one of which I always carried in my own hand, and for any ordinary game I much preferred them to any other rifles. The Winchester did admirably with lions, giraffes, elands, and smaller game, and, as will be seen, with hippos."²³

During the Roosevelt's mission, these firearms were therefore used and thought of as generalist rifles that proved their adaptability, their generalist aspect and their potential predominance in the practice of sport hunting. As for them, the *Fox n° 12* rifles, from the Baltimore military industry, are used for birds and waterfowl. The generalization of American armed equipment during the last conflicts of the 19th century contributed to the diffusion of these weapons on the international market. Thus, this spread has also allowed a dissemination of these guns in international elite circles and, in this case, in the practice of hunting in Africa.

The general arsenal of the Roosevelt family also suggests an individualization of the practice of the firearms by Kermit Roosevelt.

"Kermit's battery was of the same type, except that instead of a Springfield he had another Winchester, shooting the army ammunition, and his double-barrel was a Rigby. In addition, I had a Fox No. 12 shotgun; no better gun was ever made."²⁴

Therefore, he borrows the choice of guns from his father. He also added the *Rigby double barrel*, an elite weapon from the Irish military industry that became a distributor of Mauser rifles for the British Empire. This manufacturer targets both

²¹ See also: Chasles R. (2015) *Politique de trois chasseurs en voyage, Philippe d'Orléans, Henri d'Orléans et Ferdinand D'Orléans - 1879-1912* [Master's thesis] 200 p.; and see, in a non-exhaustive manner, the works of Foa E., Selous F. C., Rawdon M. and Bruneau de Laborie E. on the question of the presentation of weapons on hunting trips.

²² Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 22-23.

²³ *Op.cit.* p. 118.

²⁴ *Op.cit.* p. 23.

military and civilian circles so that we can understand its use by Kermit Roosevelt.

“Kermit on this occasion was using the double-barrelled rifle which had been most kindly lent him for the trip by Mr. John Jay White, of New York.”²⁵

The latter uses here the double Rigby gun against a rhinoceros of which he loses the trace before finding it again about 10 days later. Apart from this weapon, Kermit Roosevelt is equipped with the Winchester, a simpler and more generalist rifle unlike the Holland-Holland and the Springfield rifle. The whole arsenal of weapons entrusted to Kermit shows his difference from the hunting community he is trying to fit into. It shows the experience necessary to fully integrate the hunting culture.

Finally, the set of hunting objects present in the hunting camp and used by the Roosevelt reveals the predominance of the military model in their peregrinations in Africa²⁶. In addition to this, there is also equipment entrusted by big-game hunters to the Roosevelt. This omnipresence reinforces our hypothesis as to the simultaneous transmission to the young Kermit Roosevelt of a hunting and military culture.

To the group of actants present during the Roosevelt's African mission, a sum of human actors is added, forming a network around Kermit Roosevelt.

Coach Kermit and Build a Group Around Themselves to Hunt in the English Colonial Empire

During his colonial journey, Kermit Roosevelt received training in government and hunting (Dimier, 2004). To do so, he is surrounded by a group of colonials and hunters who transmit to him the knowledge indispensable to his physical and intellectual education. Three groups of men seem to stand out among the cohort of Westerners. The first one comes from the high social and political cosmopolitan spheres, way to the learning of international politics and diplomacy. These groups help the Roosevelt in their circulations, mostly in the English colony. He participated in the military and imperial training of Kermit Roosevelt. The second brings together scientists who are supposed to accompany Kermit Roosevelt in his naturalist apprenticeship and in the different approaches to African ecosystems. The third brings together experienced hunters who are close to the hunting practice, advising and supervising Kermit Roosevelt's hunting practice.

In a way, the aim is to set up the Prince's court in order to participate in his training on the African field. Halfway between the aristocratic European Great Towers and the Renaissance education advocated by Erasmus, Kermit is framed in his African journey by a sum of networked actors (Bertrand, 1999; Boutier, 2004). Like a Prince of Italy of the cities of the modern era, it is important to give the necessary and remaining instruction to his cosmopolitan elite education, especially since his age corresponds to this rite of passage into adult life. This pedagogical process may show, without this being expressly stated by Theodore

Roosevelt, a choice made by his father in the training of the young Kermit in imperial and diplomatic matters. Perhaps, more or less consciously, he had made Kermit Roosevelt his second in order to train him in politics? It is moreover central to note that Kermit Roosevelt had joined the prestigious Harvard University a few months earlier²⁷. In exchange for participating in his father's mission, Kermit Roosevelt was promised the opportunity to take a two-year crash course at Harvard to complete his degree. The actors present around Theodore Roosevelt's son during the scientific mission are to be understood as a network (Bloor, 1991). Kermit Roosevelt could be considered as the second atom of the African mission where the different actants are of interest. They create their own singular configuration (Elias, 1993).

The first category with which Kermit Roosevelt has ties that build his education could be conceptualized as the international socio-political high spheres. Although the latter is restricted by the journey itself, this international horizon - note the absence of connections with French colonial elites and administrators—the position of the English empire in the world sets some of the imperatives for the Roosevelts to travel there. Moreover, the imperial development of English territories combined with the structuring of the practice of hunting sports in these spaces constitute one of the two fundamental reasons for the establishment of this mission in English colonial Africa. The high spheres, at the center of the Roosevelt mission, are catalysts for the supervision of Kermit Roosevelt during his mission. Sir Edward Gray and Lord Crewe, respectively English Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Lords, facilitated the smooth progress of the Roosevelt's trip and ensured that he learned about imperial affairs in the same way as the Belgian Minister for the Colonies, Mr. Renkin²⁸. The same goes for philanthropist and industrialist Andrew Carnegie, former Secretary of State for Commerce Oscar Straus, and entrepreneur Leigh S. J. Hunt, who are closely involved, as donors to the mission, in the organization and success of the Roosevelt expedition to Africa. We do not focus here on the interactions generated by the Roosevelt's European tour and in the preparation of the mission where Kermit Roosevelt was present with his father. In the field, Sir Alfred Pease played a preponderant role in this transmission of imperial and political powers. Formerly elected to the House of Commons by the Liberal Party, he influenced Kermit Roosevelt's movements in the colony. Author of several scientific articles, Alfred Pease is best known for the second part of his career when he became one of the main pioneers of English East Africa²⁹ (Storey, 1991).

“Sir Alfred and Kermit were tearing along in front and to the right, with Miss Pease close behind, while Tranquility carried me as fast as he could on the left, with Medlicott near me.”³⁰

Second Baronet to Hutton Lowcross and Pinchinthorpe, he was the son of Sir Joseph Whittall Pease, a Quaker entrepreneur

²⁷ *Op.cit.* p. 3.

²⁸ *Op.cit.* p. 483.

²⁹ Pease A. “A Volcanic Crater in Northern Somaliland”. *The Geographical Journal* (1898) 11:2:138-142; and Pease A. *The Book of the Lion*, London: St. Martin's Press (1987). 291 p.

³⁰ Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 72.

²⁵ *Op.cit.* p. 396.

²⁶ *Op.cit.* p. 24.

and was educated at Trinity College in Cambridge. He is also a past member and President of the Cleveland Bay Horse Society. The second part of his life was occupied with the imperial question in Africa, residing in South Africa where he was a trustee and then moving from North of the Sahara to English East Africa where he chose to settle a short distance from Nairobi to set up an ostrich ranch and practice hunting. During the Roosevelt's mission in Africa, Sir Alfred Pease will be an initiator for Kermit Roosevelt to the imperial object. During the course of the mission, they usually form an immovable couple as to better transmit to the young Kermit the experiences necessary for his training, especially since Sir Alfred Pease represents the cumulative figure of experience, the established settler and the seasoned hunter³¹. Moreover, this man resembles Theodore Roosevelt while allowing him to disengage himself from him.

The second category with which Kermit Roosevelt maintains strong relationships during its mission is the scientists who belong to the Smithsonian Institute's mission. Among them, Dr. Edgard A. Mearns, Andrew Carnegie, Oscar Straus, and Leigh Hunt are the most prominent.

"That night Kermit and Dr. Mearns went out with lanterns and shot guns, and each killed one of the springhaases, the jumping hares, which abounded in the neighborhood. These big, burrowing animals, which progress by jumping like kangaroos, are strictly nocturnal, and their eyes shine in the glare of the lanterns."³²

An American military surgeon and ornithologist, Dr. Mearns leads the scientific part of the Roosevelt mission in English colonial Africa³³. Initially engaged for 25 years in the U.S. Army until 1909, he chose to continue the work of ornithologist and herbalist that he had begun 10 years earlier on Mexican territory collecting plants and species for the United States National Museum. Dr. Mearns is therefore a truly experienced guide for Kermit Roosevelt although the African territory is new to him³⁴. He was the group's best trigger man, and together with Alden Loring, he formed a formidable team of collectors helped by the young Kermit³⁵. Meanwhile, Alden Loring is a naturalist scientist, specializing in the study of mammals. He has already participated in collecting expeditions in Europe and Scandinavia. He was able to collect a small thousand mammals before his departure for Africa (Appetiti, 2009). He is well-versed in scientific practice and in international expeditions, and his proximity represents an aid and a man of knowledge for Kermit Roosevelt. In addition, these two men are assisted by the American zoologist and naturalist Edmund Heller. The latter is a seasoned adventurer, having already participated in expeditions to the Galapagos Islands, Mexico, Guatemala and

Alaska³⁶. This triptych of three American scientists is part of the Roosevelt's African mission, as it is a response to a commission from two institutions. This group participates very largely in a heavy trend of exhaustive collections in the African field in which Kermit Roosevelt is largely involved. It is indeed a question of participating in the greatness of the nation while collecting all the forms of knowledge relating to the naturalist science lavished by these men of the field.

The third category that Kermit interacts with during his African journey is colonials and seasoned hunters. This group of colonial hunters exhibits the dense links between understanding the hunting terrain and experienced mastery of his hunting practice. Within this group of colonial hunters, Frederick Courtney Selous and E. N. Buxton whom the Roosevelt's found on their boat leaving Naples for East Africa.

"Selous; and, so far as I now recall, no hunter of anything like his experience has ever also possessed his gift of penetrating observation joined to his power of vivid and accurate narration. He has killed scores of lion and rhinoceros and hundreds of elephant and buffalo; and these four animals are the most dangerous of the world's big game, when hunted as they are hunted in Africa. To hear him tell of what he has seen and done is no less interesting to a naturalist than to a hunter. There were on the ship many men who loved wild nature, and who were keen hunters of big game."³⁷

Although absent from the Roosevelt's African field mission, their empirical experience and their books sharpen the Roosevelt's peregrinations and hunts. We understand here that the weight of narration and orality is important within the hunting culture. The presence on the Roosevelt cruise ship of these two white hunters is far from being fortuitous (Herne, 2001). On the contrary, they participate in the first training of Kermit Roosevelt in the throes of the colonies and the practice of African sport hunting. Regarding Mr. Richard John Cuninghame, Mr. Harold Hill and Mr. Leslie Jefferies Tarlton, they are all three long time colonial, military and naturalist (Brown, 2004). Their work with Kermit Roosevelt consists of advising and anticipating the Roosevelt procession in Africa by opening the expedition's tracks and responding to all the imponderables of the mission. All three are known to be big-game hunters, their experienced knowledge of the ground via expeditions in English East Africa and/or their service during the Boer War allow the smooth running of the mission³⁸. This supervision by professional hunters benefits the young Kermit and facilitates the collective quest related to the Roosevelt mission. Theodore Roosevelt even considers that Richard John Cuninghame is the manager of the mission³⁹.

³¹ *Op.cit.* p. 77.

³² *Op.cit.* p. 221.

³³ Richmond C.W. "In Memoriam: Edgar Alexander Mearns". *The Auk* (1918) 35:1-18.

³⁴ Dr. Mearns is an experienced man and has been involved in numerous military campaigns. He participated in the U.S. military campaign in the Philippines from 1899 to 1902.

³⁵ Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 137.

³⁶ Heller E. "Obituary Notices". *Journal of Mammalogy* (1939) 4:529.

³⁷ Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 5-6.

³⁸ *Op.cit.* p. 18.

³⁹ Four of these professional hunters organizing the mission participated in the Boer War. The Boer War led to their departure and their reorientation towards the naturalist quest and the professional hunting activity, both of which are difficult to dissociate.

Sharing a Sport Between Father and Son in Colonial Africa: A Practice of Progressive Emancipation?

The Scientific Quest of the Mission: Hunting to Collect

Kermit Roosevelt's practices in the colony corresponded to the first scientific and colonial order his father received. This order defined the framework of the Roosevelt's activity in the colony and was to serve the entire American nation.

The Roosevelt's mission was first to respond to a scientific commission from two American public institutions.

“On March 23, 1909, I sailed thither from New York, in charge of a scientific expedition sent out by the Smithsonian Institute, to collect birds, mammals, reptiles, and plants, but especially specimens of big game, for the National Museum at Washington.”⁴⁰

This mission demonstrates a desire to assert the power of the American nation on extranational soils. This American purpose responds to a recent inversion of the Monroe Doctrine via the Roosevelt Corollary, of 1904, pronounced by Theodore Roosevelt (Compagnon, 2009). This inflection of foreign policy tends, among other things, to be corroborated by this scientific mission to Africa. Indeed, it is not only a sporting practice innocently chosen and carried out on these territories dominated by the English empire. It is about participating, under the leadership of the former first representative of the American people, in the procession of the imperial nations, and of the first colonial empire in this case. The American extroversion permitted by the Roosevelt mission in English colonial Africa opens, in fact, to the inflection of the USA on the geopolitical, diplomatic, scientific level and on a desire for elsewhere and connections beyond the pre-square of Latin America. We do not focus on studies of the American people's reception and perception of this mission. However, the media do participate in this change in representations of the geopolitical role of the US, at least for the American elites. The mission opens up a new international horizon for the U.S. In contrast, we do not forget either that this mission of the Roosevelt's gave rise to cartoons and caricatures about the Roosevelt's, proof of the weight of the reception of this mission on American soil (Harbaugh, 1975)⁴¹.

This triple play between international diplomacy, scientific research and African hunting reinforces the three themes simultaneously. Indeed, we understand that as scientific research develops, the field of possibilities for diplomatic exchanges opens up. In addition, the Roosevelt's are supported during their mission by the Smithsonians who reiterate the link between scientific command and hunting practice in the field.

“On this first five weeks' trip we got over 70 skins, including 22 species, ranging in size from a dikdik to a rhino, and all of these Heller prepared and sent to the Smithsonian.”⁴²

The Roosevelt and their cohort of professional African hunters were entrusted with the most famous scientific hunts. As the hunts of the two Roosevelt's proceed, the naturalists involved in the mission participate in the categorization and preparation of the animals killed by Kermit and Theodore Roosevelt. Given the magnitude of the animals collected, shipments to the U.S. are spread out over the entire mission. We hypothesize here that these shipments allow the American scientists on site to begin the first analyses of the animals and samples of all types received. They also allow their faster museographical presentation within the African collections of the National Museum of Washington⁴³. In fact, the Museums of major international capitals are competing for their collections. The Smithsonian Institute's funding of the Roosevelt's African mission is therefore not philanthropic (Mackenzie, 2010). It is a museum that affirms the place of the United States in this international competition.

“Few laymen have any idea of the expense and pains which must be undergone in order to provide groups of mounted big animals from far-off lands, such as we see in museums like the National Museum in Washington and the American Museum of Natural History in New York.”⁴⁴

The United States joined the imperial, museographical and scientific competition despite its lack of colonial territories in Africa. The Roosevelt's commitment in Africa even supports, in a consequent manner, the present scientific mission, given the rank and fame of Theodore Roosevelt and his family. It is then a question of bringing the United States up to standard by the effect of the Roosevelt's hunting practices. Apart from the animals hunted for the venison that supplies the Roosevelt porters and aides-de-camps, the Roosevelt's are busy participating exclusively in the construction of the African wildlife collection⁴⁵. Faced with an innumerable fauna that corresponds to as many fantasies of the white African hunter as to an empirical reality, the Roosevelt's reduce their shooting in order to realize the collection that was given to them. The objective of the Roosevelt hunts is indeed the completion of this collection with a scientific and imperial aim. It shows a hierarchy of values and potentialities generated by the mission. This goal places even the Roosevelt's in the midst of sports hunters refusing international sporting competition. Theodore Roosevelt even compares them to autograph collectors and philatelists⁴⁶. The Roosevelt hunts reveal the supremacy of scientific purpose over all other forms of hunting. This represents an inalienable character of the African mission.

The activities of Dr. Mearns and Alden Loring confirm the scientific orientation of the Roosevelt quest. The Roosevelt's are

⁴²Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 137.

⁴³*Op.cit.* p. 29.

⁴⁴*Op.cit.* p. 17.

⁴⁵*Op.cit.* p. 53.

⁴⁶*Op.cit.* p. 415.

⁴⁰Roosevelt T. *African Game Trails*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1910). p. 3.

⁴¹Author-free. “TR's arrival in Africa.” Washington D.C.: Library of Congress (1909) 00:20; Shaw A. *A Cartoon History of Roosevelt's Career*. New York: The Review of Reviews Company (1910). 254 p.

at the heart of the mission. Their practices of sampling and collecting small mammals, birds and African flora punctuate the times of the mission. Thus, the naturalist sampling and collection exercises force the rest of the caravan to wait for them so that they are complete.

“Often, while Heller would be off for a few days with Kermit and myself, Mearns and Loring would be camped elsewhere, in a region better suited for the things they were after. While at Juja Farm they went down the Nairobi in a boat to shoot waterbirds and saw many more crocodiles and hippo than I did. Loring is a remarkably successful trapper of small mammals. I do not believe there is a better collector anywhere. Dr. Mearns, in addition to birds and plants, never let pass the opportunity to collect anything else, from reptiles and fishes to land shells. Moreover, he was the best shot in our party.”⁴⁷

Dr. Mearns and Alden Loring are key to understanding how the mission will unfold. In fact, each move and parking on spaces requires them to be exhaustive in their collections. The former is more active in killing and collecting birds, reptiles, fish and mollusks, while the latter sets traps for small mammals. Their roles in the mission correspond to their skills already deployed in the various naturalist missions in which they have been able to participate.

As said, the Roosevelt’s and their escort show a sense of accountability to the nation and to American scientific institutions. Therefore, the commitment of the mission follows this shared goal. In addition, the African mission has received additional support in its funding from U.S. philanthropists willing to participate in this national effort⁴⁸. Within the scientific framework setting the mission’s travel and collection rules, the Roosevelt’s hunting practices can be understood as the foundation of an extroverted, extraterritorial nationalism. They are a support for its expression outside American territory and in the eyes of African imperial issues.

Hunting With the Family to Learn How to Play Sports on the African Field

The Roosevelt hunts in camp are a privileged moment to share a sport practice with the family. They are a moment of transmission through the practice from father to son. These hunts are also spaces of constant demonstration for Kermit Roosevelt in order to signify to his father of his passage in adult life.

The Roosevelt’s hunting practices during the one-year African mission are therefore multiple. They denote an excess in the hunting demonstrations of the two leaders, among others, of the mission. On the one hand, it is a question of killing big game, the noblest for the big-game hunter, the one that also has the most important scientific and museographic value. Unusually, the Roosevelt’s African hunts are mostly conducted on horses, which shows the hybridization of African hunting practices. Small horses that are compared to zebras for their size and whose charge is given to aides-de-camps⁴⁹.

“Our hunt after wildebeest this afternoon was successful; but, though by veldt law each animal was mine because I hit it first, yet in reality the credit was communistic, so to speak, and my share was properly less than that of others. I first tried to get up to a solitary old bull, and after a good deal of maneuvering, and by taking advantage of a second rain squall, I got a standing shot at him at 400 yards, and hit him, but too far back. Although keeping a good distance away, he tacked and veered so, as he ran, that by much running myself I got various other shots at him, at very long range, but missed them all, and he finally galloped over a distant ridge, his long tail switching, seemingly not much the worse. We followed on horseback, for I hate to let any wounded thing escape to suffer. But meanwhile he had run into view of Kermit; and Kermit who is of an age and build which better fit him for successful breakneck galloping over unknown country dotted with holes and bits of rotten ground—took up the chase with enthusiasm”⁵⁰.

The study of the Roosevelt family’s hunting practices reveals their ongoing support for each other. It demonstrates patriarchal relationships that existed in the mission. Here, Kermit Roosevelt is given the responsibility of finishing his father’s hunting job by chasing a wounded Wildebeest. This support is even stronger since the fruit of the hunt is always left to the one who first victoriously shoots the prey. This spirit of hunting camaraderie flows throughout the entire African mission. It is supported by the hierarchy of the mission. Like an army on the move, the established organization of the mission internalizes the precise role of each actor in the mission. In addition, the beginning of the mission shows a strong filiation of Kermit Roosevelt to his father. When the latter chooses to shoot, he is followed by his son for a few seconds. The experience in hunting practices of Theodore Roosevelt tends to show, through example, the practices to be carried out by his son.

Conducted on African lands in English East Africa, the hunting practices increase the variety and learning of hunting techniques of the young Kermit. In contact with his father and experienced hunters, Kermit Roosevelt learns by practice and demonstration from the experienced majority within his missionary cohort. These empirical practices make the link with all the theoretical knowledge-powers previously analyzed (Foucault, 1975). This can be understood as a continuous relationship between hunting theory and practice. On horseback or on the look-out, sometimes accompanied by dogs, the Roosevelt’s hunts target all the big game of the East African English ecosystems. When these hunts are on the look-out, Kermit Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt are positioned by the retrainers at the ends of the shooting range so that, depending on the movements of the animals, their shooting returns to one or the other⁵¹. These techniques of placement and reeling are profitable to the Roosevelts, as if to reiterate their central role in the mission with regard to the most famous animals of the African fauna. The diversity of the Roosevelt hunts also shows the avalanche of fire when it comes to tracking mammals living in groups such as buffalo, various antelopes or wildebeests.

⁴⁷ *Op.cit.* 137.

⁴⁸ *Op.cit.* p. 483.

⁴⁹ *Op.cit.* p. 20.

⁵⁰ *Op.cit.* p. 28.

⁵¹ *Op.cit.* p. 129.

These continuous shootings make it possible to reconsider both the place of sound in these African hunts and the place of individuality in hunting practice (Hemery, 2006). However, we note that this multiplication of shooting is not aimed at the top of the African hunting pyramid for reasons specific to these species. Considered big game, elephants, rhinoceroses and buffaloes are thus hunted in groups by the Roosevelts⁵². On the other hand, the pomp conferred on lions, leopards and cheetahs directs hunters toward more individualized hunting practices. They show more personal objectives specific to the cosmopolitan hunting community. Among the most famous big game species, the lion is obviously the most significant one. It refers to the myths and fantasies of the first African explorations and colonization but also to the tangible dangers on these territories (Thompson, 2015)⁵³. The hunting practices of the Roosevelts participated in the visible inclusion of Americans in African imperial history. They give way to precise considerations and judgments as to the hunting order established by the hunting community, without, however, taking into account the facilitated preparation of these hunts⁵⁴. In any case, the hunting of lions and various carnivores occupies a large part of the Roosevelt hunts in Eastern colonial Africa. It is a crucial stage, an obligatory rite of passage, for Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt, opening the first big game hunts of the story. The orientation of the expedition records from the first weeks, a direction toward this wildlife quest, the lion representing the first animal to be shot for the Roosevelts⁵⁵.

Hunting for Differentiation

The hunting practices of Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt in the colony seem to differ during the colonial mission of 1909. They are the milestones in the emancipation of Kermit Roosevelt⁵⁶. Theodore D. Roosevelt is the first to notice the differentiation of his son in his hunting.

“This left Kermit alone, and he galloped hard on the giraffe’s heels, firing again and again with his Winchester. Finally, his horse became completely done out and fell behind; whereupon Kermit jumped off*, and, being an excellent long-distance runner, ran after the giraffe on foot for more than a mile. But he did not need to shoot again. The great beast had been mortally wounded, and it suddenly slowed down, halted, and fell over dead. As a matter of curiosity, we kept the Winchester bullets both from Kermit’s giraffe and from mine”⁵⁷.

His hunting practices, alone and apart, reveal a progressive distance from his father. They are also permitted by the sustained use of horses in hunting. As such, Kermit Roosevelt exposes an equestrian practice of great experience in spite of his age, so much so that as the mission unfolds, his father gives him his qualities. The equestrian practice of Kermit Roosevelt and his ability also confirm his belonging to the elite culture of the Norths at the beginning of the 20th century (Baratay and Roche, 2015).

⁵² *Op.cit.* p. 61-62.

⁵³ See, for example, the famous stories of lion hunting: *Op.cit.* p. 47-49.

⁵⁴ *Op.cit.* p. 75.

⁵⁵ *Op.cit.* p. 57- 79.

⁵⁶ *Op.cit.* p. 28.

⁵⁷ *Op.cit.* p. 98.

The differentiation of Kermit Roosevelt’s hunts is also realized thanks to his body and his age. These attributes, although considered as brakes by the hunting community—at least for age—prove to be assets in this new African universe.

“But meanwhile he had run into view of Kermit; and Kermit—who is of an age and build which better fit him for successful breakneck galloping over unknown country dotted with holes and bits of rotten ground—took up the chase with enthusiasm. Yet it was sunset, after a run of six or eight miles, when he finally ran into and killed the tough old bull, which had turned to bay, snorting and tossing its horns”⁵⁸.

As the narrative is written, these adjectives are reinforced in comparison with the adjectives Theodore Roosevelt attributes to himself through writing. Kermit Roosevelt’s hunting which is related to the hunt or chase, is contrasted with his father’s skill and intelligence. The qualities attributed to the juvenile Kermit are accentuated by this comparative game, as an attempt to present the horizon he still has to travel⁵⁹. Kermit Roosevelt’s movement and physical abilities are both praised and criticized. First of all, they are useful for the smooth running of the Roosevelt’s mission hunts in Africa. Indeed, they make it possible to run after the hunted animal more than it is capable of⁶⁰. Conversely, they present a criticism of over-movement and inefficient movement, presenting a hunting sports culture of its own. By observing this glance on the young hunter Kermit Roosevelt, we can consider a certain hierarchy as to the good attributes of the big game hunter. In the first place, the address and the intelligence come before any considerations of robustness or bodily strength. These adjectives are discussed at length in Theodore Roosevelt’s account of the presentation of the “fine triggers” encountered during their journey. However, for Theodore Roosevelt it is also about presenting his son through his best day in the eyes of his readers. So, there is a double game of reminder of the attributes of the big game hunter on the one hand accompanied, on the other hand, by a laudatory and youthful presentation of his son. This presentation of his son even introduces himself into a more glorious history specific to America.

“Finally, just as he was going into his burrow backward, Kermit raced by and shot him, firing his rifle from the saddle after the manner of the old-time Western buffalo runners.”⁶¹

This passage is even more interesting because it puts Roosevelt’s journey into a reiteration of the conquest of the American West. On horseback, the hunting of buffaloes without support confirms this temporal comparison. The character of Kermit is supposed to recall the history shared around this conquest and the colonization of the Indian populations. It also shows a personification of the juvenile Kermit in this story where he is an allegory (Ricard, 1987).

⁵⁸ *Op.cit.* p. 28.

⁵⁹ *Op.cit.* p. 177.

⁶⁰ *Op.cit.* p. 76.

⁶¹ *Op.cit.* p. 202.

Moreover, the presence of colonial African hunters, alongside Kermit Roosevelt, tends to help him acquire those skills considered essential in his rite of passage to adulthood and the rank of great hunter. These groups of professional hunters mentor Kermit Roosevelt. They accompany the young Kermit in his empowerment over time areas that become larger and larger as the mission progresses.

Finally, the differentiation of Kermit Roosevelt's hunts is achieved by a numerical progression in the number of animals killed, a true guiding thread of his development⁶². The accounting of the prey killed, their comparative tables, is finally presented in a hunting table at the end of Theodore Roosevelt's book⁶³. As conferred by the different hunts of Kermit Roosevelt, he also wants to be the discoverer/hunter of certain new species, supporting his importance in the mission⁶⁴. This differentiation of Kermit Roosevelt is also exposed in his learning of the governments of the colonized. His distance in practice from the patriarchal figure and the skills attributed during the story by his father underline this rise in qualification. Surveillance, government of the colonized and participation in the mission discussions are all signs of this increase in experience of the young Kermit during the mission.

The Youth of Kermit Confronted With His Progressive Responsibilities in the Practice of Hunting

Juvenile Sport Emotions Presented by His Father

The representations presented by Theodore Roosevelt about his son Kermit Roosevelt expose the sporting emotions of a young man facing the perils and torments of hunting in the colony. Under his father's supervision, the young Kermit Roosevelt is given a set of attributes and emotions specific to youth.

"Kermit, who was with Tarlton, galloped the big male, and, although it had a mile's start, ran into it in three miles, and shot it as it lay under a bush. He afterwards shot another, a female, who was lying on a stone kopje. Neither made any attempt to charge. The male had been eating a tommy. The lion was with a lioness, which wheeled to one side as the horsemen galloped after her maned mate. He turned to bay after a run of less than a mile and started to charge from a distance of 200 yards. But Kermit's first bullets mortally wounded him and crippled him so that he could not come at any pace and was easily stopped before covering half the distance. Although nearly a foot longer than the biggest of the lions I had already killed, he was so gaunt—whereas they were very fat—that he weighed but little more, only 400 and 12 pounds."⁶⁵

Theodore Roosevelt's juvenile sports emotions about his son show an energetic young man whose hunts are a great support. With an overflowing dynamism, the possibilities of exercising, day after day, fill the young Kermit Roosevelt with happiness⁶⁶. The sporting experience is therefore at the center of the juvenile

emotions of Theodore Roosevelt's son. The equestrian practices of the young Kermit are representative of his enthusiasm, his strength and his determination. Of the entire missionary cohort, the young man is the one who rides the most miles during the mission. He shows extraordinary resistance, changing, for example, his shooting shoulder when his right shoulder is bruised or recovering from the few pains related to the journey. Whether he is on foot or on horseback, his energy is overwhelming and becomes central. Theodore Roosevelt builds the image of his son around a classical and glorious figure of the 19th century adventurer (Venayre, 2002). Kermit Roosevelt is presented as a holder of all the physical attributes of the adventurer. His physicality is even at the center of his father's discourse. His role tends to categorize him around the figure of the inveterate and insatiable hunter, removing his emotional capacity to step back from his practices and his journey. Moreover, the detour of the Roosevelt mission by Nairobi allows Kermit Roosevelt to participate in horse races, proof once again of his overflowing energy⁶⁷.

Driven by his dynamism, he sometimes becomes impatient, as for the naturalist discovery which frames the hunting quest. During his hunts and thanks to his enthusiasm, he knows how to respond to exercises outside of hunting by exploring certain caves and African regions. For this point, the link with the African history is frequent:

"Next day, when Kermit and I were out alone with our gun-bearers, we saw another rhino, a bull, with a stubby horn. This rhino, like the others of the neighborhood, was enjoying his noonday rest in the open, miles from cover. "Look at him," said Kermit, "standing there in the middle of the African plain, deep in prehistoric thought."⁶⁸

Kermit Roosevelt's view of Africa exposes a retrograde thought that is a complete integration of imperialist theses. In agreement with his father and his representations of Africa, this discourse is illustrated in his descriptions and activities on African soil. Do we need to recall the name of the first chapter of Theodore Roosevelt? Finally, his juvenile emotions and his role in the camp is no less original.

"In the evenings the camp-fires blazed in front of the tents, and after supper we gathered round them, talking or sitting silently, or listening to Kermit strumming on his mandolin."⁶⁹

Kermit Roosevelt participates in the mission's nightly meetings, which are to be thought of as essential summaries and preparations. His role is however off-center as a musician, although his presence delights the group of hunters around the fire.

The emotions of the young Kermit Roosevelt are therefore those of a young hunter in search of adventure and whose insatiable energy seems to be satisfied with hunting practices. His adventurous and dynamic behavior allows him to gain responsibility in the mission, especially since he is the bearer of a

⁶² *Op.cit.* p. 319.

⁶³ *Op.cit.* p. 457-458.

⁶⁴ *Op.cit.* p. 215.

⁶⁵ *Op.cit.* p. 159-161.

⁶⁶ *Op.cit.* p. 191.

⁶⁷ *Op.cit.* p. 225-226.

⁶⁸ *Op.cit.*, p. 172.

⁶⁹ *Op.cit.* p. 169.

revolutionary practice that tends to hybridize his characterization as a young hunter. This innovation within the scientific mission of the Roosevelt family tends nevertheless to reintegrate him into the hunting fact.

A New Photographic Passion: the Young Kermit as His Father's Regular Photographer?

Symbol of technical novelty and distancing from hunting, the young Kermit Roosevelt sees himself as the holder of a technical revolution in the mission supervised by his father, also engaging an imperial gaze toward the whole of Africa he has traveled through (Bancel, 2004). A large part of the photographic records of the mission were in fact entrusted to him, as can be seen in the photographs in Theodore Roosevelt's book and in the collections of the National Museum in Washington⁷⁰. This distancing from the practice of hunting is to be understood in the same movement as the hybridization and use of the term safari by his father. In fact, hunting photography and safari are part of the same shift in the colonial practice of the great African hunts and the animals targeted within them. Are they the result of a collapse of the African fauna forcing a shift in practices? Are they, more simply, the result of a shift in practices toward a more developed range in the face of the easy slaughter permitted by the hunting trip?

"At last Kermit succeeded in getting some good white rhino pictures. He was out with his gun-bearers and Grogan. They had hunted steadily for nearly two days without seeing a rhino; then Kermit made out a big cow with a calf lying under a large tree, on a bare plain of short grass. Accompanied by Grogan, and by a gunbearer carrying his rifle, while he himself carried his* naturalist's graphlex "camera, he got up to within 50 or 60 yards of the dull-witted beasts and spent an hour cautiously maneuvering and taking photos. He got several photos of the cow and calf lying under the tree."⁷¹

Because of his younger age and his inferior position of filiation, Kermit Roosevelt is the practitioner chosen to realize the photographic collections. That said, this practice requires more perseverance than hunting practices. It even seems at first to be at the antipodes of the young Kermit's temperament and passion. Moreover, the use of the photographic technique is quite delicate during the hunting practices of the mission since the equipment is rather loud and seems to have a negative impact in the approaches of the hunters. His practice proves to be of central utility for the training of Kermit Roosevelt, in that it allows him to perfect his instruction and to raise his level of placidity and perseverance, dear to his father and to the experienced men of the mission. Sometimes the comparison between his father's double barrel and his camera lasts in the story⁷². It reminds us of the new possibility offered to hunters in their decentering of the hunt. Still, the photographs of the young Kermit give an equal share to the naturalistic photographs compared to those of killed animals.

⁷⁰Theodore Roosevelt takes a few naturalist pictures as well.

⁷¹*Op.cit.* p. 412-413.

⁷²*Op.cit.* p. 192.

It also recalls the insertion of the photographic technique in a set of scientific, naturalist and hunting research. Didn't he hunt clichés like animals?

Photographing his father's animals and exploits are also an invitation to Theodore Roosevelt's more precise staging in Africa. Indeed, this occupation is not insignificant in that the young Kermit participates in it in a total way. He takes advantage, for example, of a few injuries to develop his photographic practice, in which his father plays an important role. His father appears with all the appearances of the victorious military colonialist. It is a reiteration of the English conquest of East and protectoral Africa⁷³. The journey taken by the Roosevelt family, abundantly documented by the pictures of Kermit Roosevelt, is a tangible way of showing this English imperial expansion. Moreover, the use of these roads and forts by the Roosevelts led them, in a way, to participate in this colonial conquest from the southeast of colonial Kenya to the north of protectoral Egypt⁷⁴. The photographic snapshots in which Theodore Roosevelt's son Theodore Roosevelt appears are so many symbiotic relationships created to recall this imperial intermingling between the first American representative in Africa and the English imperial power.

As conferred by the abundance of hunting photographs in which his father sits enthroned in the company of the killed animals, Kermit Roosevelt recovers the task of leaving a visible trace of his father in Africa (Marquis, 2014)⁷⁵. His camera and his photographs are as many possibilities for writing the novel of the United States in colonial Africa. Each photograph participates in this visible writing and opens up the field of possibilities to their media diffusion. Who better than his son to accomplish this task?

Emancipating and Governing the Colonized: Kermit's Central Role in the Colonial Government of the Mission

As the Roosevelt's journey and safaris in the colony progressed, Kermit Roosevelt became autonomous from his father and tended to experiment imperial government through increasing exercises on the colonized.

Kermit Roosevelt's mission in colonial Africa allowed him to experience the colonial government of men and spaces through empires. Kermit Roosevelt places himself as administrator of the colonies and as colonist in his empire. He practiced the "government of races." The young Kermit therefore set about choosing the colonized who should accompany him.

Governing the races and choosing the "savages" who participate in the Roosevelt's mission is of capital importance in the hunting processions on his travels. This training to lead is only revealed in the middle of a missionary campaign. Always accompanied by Leslie Tarlton who finally had to stop his quest

⁷³*Op.cit.* p. XVIII.

⁷⁴*Op.cit.* p. 279.

⁷⁵*Op.cit.* p. I; p. 208; p. 262.

for a few days, Kermit had to choose a new colonized auxiliary in the person of Juma Yohari⁷⁶.

“Kermit’s two gun-bearers were Juma Yohari, a coal-black Swahili Moslem, and Kassitura, a Christian negro from Uganda. Both of them were as eager to do everything for Kermit as mine were to render me any service, great or small, and in addition they were capital men for their special work. Juma was always smiling and happy and was a high favorite among his fellows⁷⁷.”

The empowerment of Kermit Roosevelt passed through the engagement of several colonized people whom he placed under his hunting command. However, these colonized people are intermediate figures of colonization in the sense that they are part of the top of the pyramid of colonized people (Glasman, 2010). Although the Roosevelts label them racializing qualifications, they are not only nameless carriers to whom R. J. Cuninghame would like to give numbers to better know them. They are named by a surname and sometimes a first name. In addition to their salaries, they receive symbolic gifts that show their importance in the Roosevelt mission.

“Kassitura, quite as efficient and hard-working, was a huge, solemn black man, as faithful and uncomplaining a soul as I ever met. Kermit had picked him out from among the porters to carry his camera and had then promoted him to be gun-bearer. In his place he had taken as camera-bearer an equally powerful porter, a heathen “Mnuwezi named Mali”. His tent-boy had gone crooked, and one evening, some months later, after a long and trying march, he found Mali, whose performance of his new duties he had been closely watching, the only man up; and Mali, always willing, turned in of his own accord to help get Kermit’s tent in shape, so Kermit suddenly told him he would promote him to be tent-boy.”⁷⁸

These intermediate figures seem to be of central importance in learning about Kermit Roosevelt’s government. The “Bwana Medogo”—Young Master—participates in post advancements for the colonized under his tutelage, going here from bearer of the Graphlex to auxiliary to his person⁷⁹. These recruitments on the various African territories crossed by Kermit Roosevelt reveals his emancipation by the colonial government. The young Kermit is surrounded by a colonial rearguard at his service. These recruitments of privileged intermediaries linked to Kermit Roosevelt expose more precisely a pyramid of advancements from the tent boy to the Saïs, passing through the various inalienable individualized carrier posts of the long hunting caravans on their travels⁸⁰. The Saïs remain the cornerstone of the Roosevelt’s hunting practices in that they guide the white hunters to their prey (Ramaswamy, 2009).

⁷⁶ *Op.cit.* p. 315.

⁷⁷ *Op.cit.* p. 332.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁹ *Op.cit.* p. 99.

⁸⁰ *Op.cit.* p. 332.

CONCLUSION

This paper is intended to be a first contribution to the history of elite filiations in sport, a lineage between Theodore Roosevelt and his son Kermit Roosevelt in English East Africa. The framework of the scientific mission for which the former president of the United States is in charge, engages the young Kermit in a striking training in African hunting and an initiation to colonial government. The education of Theodore Roosevelt’s son takes place in a theoretical teaching of literary studies, in the framework of his own personal development, and in the military matter framed by networked actors who support him throughout his quest. The scientific commission entrusted to the Roosevelts remains a central influence in the course of their African journey and safaris. However, it allows their filiation to be built up throughout the mission while allowing the young Kermit Roosevelt to gradually emancipate himself. Central for Kermit Roosevelt, sport hunting allows him to develop different skills around a photographic and governmental diptych to match his growing experience.

In a more general way, this paper could propose the opening of more important research on the fields of filiation and emancipation in sport. It could include longitudinal studies on different social classes of origin and different spaces of practice, and the moments of induction into sport by filiation could be compared.

The article proposes an analysis of the elite knowledge and techniques transmitted by lineage on the English African colonial territory and not of the effects of the voyage organized by Theodore Roosevelt for his son Kermit Roosevelt. This evaluation of training for exploration and international peregrinations could, as such, give rise to new research. In this logic, the access to archives of the intimate would certainly bring new questionings as for this research. These archives could also make it possible to broaden the subject of analysis to the entire Roosevelt family.

This article opens the way to a global comparative study on the filial relations between cosmopolitan elites. More precisely, it is the analysis of the modalities of learning knowledge and techniques in different colonial or postcolonial spaces that arouses the most interest. More precisely, our interest would turn to the analysis of the role of sport - including hunting—in the social and intellectual construction of cosmopolitan elite lineages. The permanence of the socio-political status of the elites could thus be assessed through the prism of these research criteria and their groups of belonging or their international movements. We could also—which an article of this size does not allow—dwell on the effects of this longitudinal training in the medium and long term in the lives of the heirs of these elites. Thus, it will be necessary to establish a comparable and comparative grid according to criteria that can be accepted by all the territories from which these groups or individuals are extracted. We could draw inspiration from the prosopographical analysis of the group of researchers led by Patrick Clastres in order to set up a global comparative study between different areas of origin of

these elites, where hunting could be the anchor point of this future international research⁸¹. Finally, and as a mirror to this introductory statement, this article proposes an opening onto the strategies of social classes struggles, such as the bourgeoisie with international elites that could mimic this formation, and eventually integrate and penetrate the positions of these same elites.

⁸¹CLASTRES P., CARPENTIER F., KLIMA H., *Les membres du Comité international olympique de 1894 à 1972, Prosopographie d'une élite transnationale*, FNS Project, 2018-2022.

REFERENCES

- Appetiti, E. (2009). Smithsonian Institution and the US exploring Expeditions, or. How the Nation's Attic was Created. *J. Washington Acad. Sci.* 95, 35–45.
- Bancel, N. (2004). Les sens des mots dans les usages de la photographie anthropologique (1860-1900): le corps objectif. *Hommes Migr.* 1252, 82–90. doi: 10.3406/homig.2004.4270
- Baratay, E., and Roche, D. (2015). *La culture équestre de l'Occident, xvie-xixe siècle: l'ombre du cheval. Connaissances et passions*. Paris: Fayard.
- Bertrand, G. (1999). *La culture du voyage - Pratiques et discours de la Renaissance à l'aube du XXe siècle*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Bloor, D. (1991). *Knowledge and Social Imagery*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1989). *La Noblesse d'État*. Paris: Éditions de minuit.
- Boutier, J. (2004). Le grand tour: une pratique d'éducation des noblesses européennes (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles). *Cahiers Assoc. Hist. Mod. Univ.* 27, 7–21.
- Bouvier, P. (2010). Colonisation et pratiques sportives. *J. Anthropol.* 120, 121. doi: 10.4000/jda.4208
- Brown, M. (2004). *R. J. Richard John Cuninghame 1871-1925: Naturalist, Hunter, Gentleman*. London: MJB.
- Chasles, R. (2015). Politique de trois chasseurs en voyage, Philippe d'Orléans, Henri d'Orléans et Ferdinand D'Orléans - 1879-1912 (Thesis). Grenoble University.
- Combeau-Marie, E. (2006). *Sports et loisirs dans les colonies 19e-20e siècle*. Paris: Le Publieur.
- Compagnon, O. (2009). Introduction. *Relat. Int.* 1, 7–11. doi: 10.3917/ri.137.0007
- Cotesta, V. (2011). *La théorie de la modernité de Max Weber et la voie chinoise à la modernisation*. Firenze: Firenze University Press.
- Delmas, C. (2017). *Passages, ancrage dans la littérature de voyage*. Grenoble: UGA Éditions.
- Dimier, V. (2004). *Le gouvernement des colonies, regards croisés franco-britannique*. Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles.
- Elias, N. (1981). *Qu'est-ce que la sociologie?* Paris: Pandora.
- Elias, N. (1993). *Engagement et distanciation: contribution à la sociologie de la connaissance*. Paris: Fayard.
- Enders, A. (1998). Théodore Roosevelt explorateur. Positivisme et mythe de la Frontière dans l'expédition científica Roosevelt-Rondon au Mato-Grosso et en Amazonie (1913-1914). *Outre-Mers Revue d'histoire*. 318, 83–103.
- Ford, J., Pearce T., Cunsolo Willox A., and Smit B. (2016). Inuit Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), subsistence hunting and adaptation to climate change in the Canadian arctic. *Artic* 68, 233–245.
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Surveiller et punir*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Frank, R. (2014). Conclusions. *Relat. Int.* 4, 111–115.
- Glasman, D. (2010). La réussite éducative dans son contexte sociopolitique. *Dans Cahiers de l'action* 1, 9–20.
- Hahn, H., and Bouquet, O. (2014). Voyages extrêmes: les récits d'aventures en France à la fin du xixe siècle. 2, 53–86.
- Harbaugh, W. H. (1975). *The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt*. Oxford: Oxford Univ Press.
- Hemery, D. (2006). L'avenir du passé. La dépendance charbonnière de la société mondiale. 2, 23–41.
- Herne, B. (2001). *White Hunters: The Golden Age of African Safaris*. Idaho, ID: Griffin Publishing.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

- Hussain, S. Q. (2010). Sports-hunting, fairness and colonial identity: collaboration and subversion in the subversion in the Northwestern Frontier Region of the British Indian Empire. *Conserv. Soc.* 8, 112–126.
- Hussain, S. q. (2012). Forms of predation: Tiger and markhor hunting in colonial governance. *Mod. Asian Stud.* 46, 1212–1238. doi: 10.1017/S0026749X12000054
- Latour, B. (1990). *La Science telle qu'elle se fait, anthologie de la sociologie des sciences de langue anglaise*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Mackenzie, J. (1984). *Propaganda and Empire*. Manchester: Manchester University Press
- Mackenzie, J. (2010). *Museums and Empire: Natural History, Human Cultures and Colonial Identities*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Malarney, S. K. (2020). *Culture, Ritual and Revolution in Vietnam*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Marquis, P. (2014). Les présidents américains et le sport: pouvoirs de l'exercice et exercice du pouvoir, de Theodore Roosevelt à Barack Obama. *Hist. Polit.* 2-23. 10-31. doi: 10.3917/hp.023.0010
- Michaud, M. (2010). Chasser en gentleman: évolutions de l'éthique de la chasse sportive. *J. Anthropol.* 120–121, 1–12. doi: 10.4000/jda.4262
- Morris, E. (2002). "A Matter of Extreme Urgency:" Theodore Roosevelt, Wilhelm II, and the Venezuela Crisis of 1902. *Naval War Coll. Rev.* 55, 73–85.
- Morris, E. (2010). *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*. New-York, NY: Random House Inc.
- Pringle, H. (2003). *Theodore Roosevelt*. Boston, MA: Mariner Books.
- Ramaswamy, S. (2009). *The Goddess and the Nation: Mapping Mother India*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books.
- Ricard, S. (1987). L'histoire mythifiée: Theodore Roosevelt et la conquête de Cuba en 1898. *Rev. Hist. Mod. Contemp.* 34, 660–668.
- Roulet, P.- A. (2004). *Chasseur blanc, coeur noir" ? La chasse sportive en Afrique centrale: une analyse de son rôle dans la conservation de la faune sauvage et le développement rural au travers des programmes de gestion de la chasse communautaire* (Thesis). Université d'Orléans, Orléans, France.
- Roux, S. (2012). L'Etat des origines. Histoires adoptives, conflits biographiques et vérités passées. *Genèses*. 3, 69–88.
- Singaravelou, P. (2011). *Territoires impériaux. Une histoire spatiale du fait colonial*. Paris: Sorbonne.
- Steinhard, E. I. (2006). *Black Poachers, White Hunters. A Social History of Hunting in Colonial Kenya*. Oxford: Ohio University Press.
- Storey, W. (1991). Big Cats and Imperialism: Lion and Tiger Hunting in Kenya and Northern India, 1898-1930. *J. World Hist.* 2, 135–173.
- Thompson, A. (2015). *British Sport, African Knowledge and the Nature of Empire*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Venayre, S. (2002). *La gloire de l'aventure*. Paris: Aubier.
- Venayre, S. (2006). *Rêves d'aventures*. Paris: La Martinière.
- Zachary, M. J. (2012). *The Green Roosevelt: Theodore Roosevelt in Appreciation of Wilderness, Wildlife, and Wild Places*. New York, NY: Cambria.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.

Copyright © 2021 Chasles. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.

Advantages of publishing in Frontiers



OPEN ACCESS

Articles are free to read
for greatest visibility
and readership



FAST PUBLICATION

Around 90 days
from submission
to decision



HIGH QUALITY PEER-REVIEW

Rigorous, collaborative,
and constructive
peer-review



TRANSPARENT PEER-REVIEW

Editors and reviewers
acknowledged by name
on published articles

Frontiers

Avenue du Tribunal-Fédéral 34
1005 Lausanne | Switzerland

Visit us: www.frontiersin.org

Contact us: frontiersin.org/about/contact



REPRODUCIBILITY OF RESEARCH

Support open data
and methods to enhance
research reproducibility



DIGITAL PUBLISHING

Articles designed
for optimal readership
across devices



FOLLOW US

@frontiersin



IMPACT METRICS

Advanced article metrics
track visibility across
digital media



EXTENSIVE PROMOTION

Marketing
and promotion
of impactful research



LOOP RESEARCH NETWORK

Our network
increases your
article's readership