



Andrii SOVA\*, Olha ROMANCHUK\*\*, Rostyslav KOVAL\*\*\*

## IVAN BOBERSKYI – THE FOUNDER OF THE UKRAINIAN SYSTEM OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS

**How to cite [jak cytować]:** Sova A., Romanchuk O., Koval R., *Ivan Boberskyi – the founder of the Ukrainian system of physical education and sports*, "Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe" 2024, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 25–40.

### Iwan Boberski – twórca ukraińskiego systemu wychowania fizycznego i sportu

#### Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest kompleksowa analiza wkładu Iwana Boberskiego (1873–1947) w kształtowanie i rozwój sportu wśród Ukraińców. Aktualność pracy wynika z faktu, że w lutym 2019 r. Lwowski Państwowy Uniwersytet Kultury Fizycznej otrzymał imię Iwana Boberskiego.

Iwan Boberski swoje pierwsze kroki w dziedzinie wychowania fizycznego i sportu stawiał jako nauczyciel w Gimnazjum Akademickim (1901–1918) i jego filii (1908–1910), w prywatnym seminarium żeńskim Ukraińskiego Towarzystwa Pedagogicznego (1903–1905) oraz w Ukraińskim Gimnazjum Żeńskim Sióstr Wasilianok (1906–1914) we Lwowie. Tutaj, opierając się na narodowych tradycjach, zaczął w cielaż w życie zdobytą w Europie wiedzę z zakresu teorii i metod wychowania fizycznego. Dzięki Iwanowi Boberskiemu powstały: Ukraiński Klub Sportowy (1906 r.), Dziewczęcy Klub Sportowy (1910 r.), Towarzystwo Sportowe Ukraina (1911 r.) i Płast (1911 r.). Przebywając w różnych krajach, zapoznawał się z powszechnymi tam rodzajami sportów, a swoje przemyślenia, wrażenia, uwagi, zalecenia naukowe i metodologiczne publikował na łamach prasy ukraińskiej lub w osobnych broszurach. Iwan Boberski wprowadził do szerokiego użytku zarówno obcojęzyczne koncepcje sportowe, jak i – opracowane i przetłumaczone przez siebie – terminy sportowe.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Iwan Boberski, wychowanie fizyczne, Ukraina.

\* <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0548-4975>; Professor, Doctor of Science in History; Department of Olympic Education, Lviv Ivan Boberskyi State University of Physical Culture, Lviv, Ukraine; e-mail: sovaandrij1980@gmail.com

\*\* <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8215-9741>; Professor, Doctor of Science in Pedagogy; Department of Ukrainian and Foreign Languages, Lviv Ivan Boberskyi State University of Physical Culture, Lviv, Ukraine; e-mail: olgabrvska@gmail.com

\*\*\* <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9284-7505>; Associate Professor, PhD in Philology; Department of Ukrainian and Foreign Languages, Lviv Ivan Boberskyi State University of Physical Culture, Lviv, Ukraine; e-mail: kovalrostyslav@gmail.com (Corresponding author)

## Abstract

The purpose of the article is to comprehensively analyze the contribution of Ivan Boberskyi (1873–1947) to the formation and development of sports among the Ukrainians. The work is also relevant due to the fact that in February 2019, the Lviv State University of Physical Culture was named after Ivan Boberskyi. Ivan Boberskyi took his first steps in the field of physical education and sports as a teacher in the Academic Gymnasium (1901–1918) and its branch (1908–1910), in the private women's seminary of the Ukrainian Pedagogical Society (1903–1905) and in the Basilian Sisters Servants Gymnasium (1906–1914) in Lviv. Here, relying on national traditions, he began to put into practice the knowledge acquired in Europe on the theory and methods of physical education. Thanks to Ivan Boberskyi, the Ukrainian Sports Club (1906), the Girls' Sports Club (1910), the sports society "Ukraine" (1911) and "Plast" (1911) were created. When he was in different countries, Ivan Boberskyi familiarized himself with the types of sports common there. He published his thoughts, impressions, remarks, scientific and methodological recommendations. Ivan Boberskyi introduced into wide use both foreign language sports concepts and terms developed and translated by him.

**Keywords:** Ivan Boberskyi, physical education, Ukraine.

## Introduction

The declaration of Ukraine's independence in 1991 provided the national scientists with the opportunity to explore the Soviet-banned pages of Ukrainian history. The advance of national biography studies was extremely rapid. The scholars' research succeeded in resuming scientific discourse on the unique historical data about the personalities who formed our state and hence were hushed in the Ukrainian SSR. Among the prominent individualities of the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, one of the leading positions belongs to Ivan Boberskyi (1873–1947) – a devoted promoter of the Ukrainian national idea. He was an educator, public and military-political figure, statesman, founder of Ukrainian physical education and sports, athlete, journalist, editor, publisher, translator, philanthropist, photographer, archivist, and knew several European languages.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> O. Romanchuk, O. Koval, R. Koval, O. Matvias, L. Chekhovska, *Ivan Boberskyi's life and work*, "Moloda sportywna nauka Ukrainy" 2012, 16 (4), pp. 124–130; A. Sova, Ya. Tymchak, *Ivan Boberskyi – osnovopolozhnyk ukrainskoi tilovykhovnoi i sportovoi tradytsii*, Yevhen Prystup (ed.), LDUFK, Apriori, Lviv 2017; A. Sova, *Ivan Boberskyi: suspilno-kulturna, viiskovo-politychna ta osvitho-vykhovna diialnist: monohrafiia*, Instytut ukrainoznavstva imeni Ivana Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy; Lvivskiy derzhavnyi universytet fizychnoi kultury imeni Ivana Boberskooho; Tsentr nezaleznykh istorychnykh studii, Prostir-M, Lviv 2019; A. Sova, *Suspilno-kulturna, viiskovo-politychna ta osvitho-vykhovna diialnist Ivana Boberskooho (1873–1947)*, Dys. ... d-ra ist. nauk: 07.00.01 "istoriia Ukrainy", Instytut ukrainoznavstva im. I. Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy, Instytut narodoznavstva NAN Ukrainy, Lviv 2020; W. Piotrowski, *Od "Siczy" do "Sianu". Zarys ukraińskiego ruchu sportowego w latach 1868–1944 na terenie Ziemi Przemyskiej*, Przemysł 2010; S. Zaborniak, *Kultura fizyczna ludności ukraińskiej na ziemiach polskich (1868–1939)*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów 2007.

It justifies the task of a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the activity of Ivan Boberskyi and his contribution to the development of various Ukrainian organizations, establishments, and institutions; his role and significance in the history of Ukraine in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Notwithstanding many surveys directly or indirectly concerning the life and work of Ivan Boberskyi, his personality has not been thoroughly investigated. The analysis of the proposed issues would also replenish the knowledge on the complicated processes taking place in Ukraine in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, considering the important role of Ivan Boberskyi. Through the prism of his activity, it is possible to study and generalize the invaluable experience of the Ukrainians in that period, being vital for the current stage of state formation.

Scientific study and comprehension of Ivan Boberskyi's life and work is an actual and important task of modern Ukrainian historical science.<sup>2</sup> The Lviv Regional Council declared 2023 the Year of Ivan Bobersky in the Lviv region. The survey is also relevant due to the fact that in February 2019, Lviv State University of Physical Culture was named after Ivan Boberskyi. In September 2020, the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Slovenia with the state Slovenian authorities erected a memorial plaque devoted to Ivan Boberskyi, in Tržič, at the house where he lived in the years 1932–1947. In view of this, the University's attention to the figure of Ivan Boberskyi has increased, particularly to his activity as the founder of Ukrainian physical education and sports.

The purpose of the article is an analysis of Ivan Boberskyi's (1873–1947) contribution to the formation and development of sports among the Ukrainians in Galicia. Realization of the purpose outlines the subject matters to investigate: pedagogical activity of Ivan Boberskyi in the gymnasiums of Galicia; Ivan Boberskyi's activity in sports societies "Ukrainskyi sportovyi kruzhok" (Ukrainian sports club) and "Sokil" (Falcon); Ivan Boberskyi's heritage.

For a comprehensive coverage of the life and work of Ivan Boberskyi, the authors used a complex method that made it possible to establish a connection between facts, events, and phenomena against the background of the historical events of that era. The scientific principle of objectivity was used to analyze the activities of Ivan Boberskyi in the context of educational and socio-political processes on the territory of Galicia. The historical method was used to assess the role of Professor Boberskyi in the modern history of Ukraine. Methods of periodization and classification were used to highlight certain aspects of his activity in different periods of his life. The applied methodological tools made it possible to achieve the declared goal.

---

<sup>2</sup> A. Sova, M. Romaniuk, *Ivan Boberskyi's pedagogical activity at Brazilian Sisters Servants Gymnasium in Lviv (1906–1914)*, "East European Historical Bulletin" 2019, 4, pp. 71–80; S. Hirniak, Yu. Talalay, *Ivan Boberskyi – teacher, athlete, public and political activist (review of the monograph: Sova A. Ivan Boberskyi: socio-cultural, military political and educational activities. Lviv, 2019. 512 p.)*, "East European Historical Bulletin" 2021, 18, pp. 252–259.

## Results

Ivan Boberskyi received his higher education at the universities of Lviv (1891–1895) and Graz (1895–1899). As a student, he took an active part in public life, was a member of the Ukrainian student society “Rus” in Graz. During the Graz period, he acquired advanced, innovative knowledge and skills in the field of physical education and sports (1897), and returned to Galicia as a qualified specialist in German philology and one of the few Ukrainian specialists in the little-known profession – gymnastics. He began his teaching career in the IV Imperial-Royal Gymnasium in Lviv (1899–1900), teaching German, and the Imperial-Royal Gymnasium in Drohobych (1900–1901), where he started to implement the knowledge acquired in Europe in the German language teaching and the theory and methods of physical education. During his pedagogical activity in the Academic Gymnasium (1901–1918) and its branch (1908–1910) he taught German, headed the German-language students’ library, introduced gymnastics classes (physical education lessons) into the educational process, joined the society “Ruslan” as a patronage member, and founded the “Ukrainskyi sportovyi kruzhok” (USK).<sup>3</sup>

In 1903–1904, 180 students of the third to eighth grades enrolled for gymnastics. Among these, Ivan Boberskyi formed six departments. Each of the departments was divided into three subdivisions, headed by a leader chosen from the students. There were six classes a week. A gymnastics class lasted an hour for each department<sup>4</sup>. Thanks to the teaching skills and innovations of Ivan Boberskyi, the students’ interest in gymnastics was constantly growing. From 1906–1907 on, an increasing number of students attended gymnastics classes every year: in 1906–1907 – 328 students, in 1907–1908 – 432 students, and in 1909–1910 – 658 students.<sup>5</sup> Other professors of Ukrainian gymnasiums in Galicia followed his example at that time. The opening of sports hall by the Ukrainian gymnastic society “Sokil” in the building of “Dniester” society at 20 Ruska Street, Lviv, in November 1906, influenced significantly the gymnastics involvement of Academic Gymnasium students.<sup>6</sup> The personal example of Ivan Boberskyi inspired the Ukrainian gymnasium environment to undertake PE (*rukhanka*) classes. He could be often seen with the students at PE classes, sometimes held in “Kaiserwald” (The Kaiser’s Woods) or “Vulka”, running, playing football, tennis, hockey, and hiking around Lviv, towns and villages of Galicia, or the Carpathians.

---

<sup>3</sup> A. Sova, 2019, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> I. Boberskyi, *Gimnastyka*, Zvit dyrektsyi ts. k. akademichnoi gimnazyi u Lvovi za shkilnyi rik 1903/1904, Lviv 1904, pp. 43–44.

<sup>5</sup> I. Boberskyi, *Gimnastyka*, Zvit dyrektsyi ts. k. akademichnoi gimnazyi u Lvovi za shkilnyi rik 1907/1908, Lviv 1908, pp. 38–39.

<sup>6</sup> *Plian nauky*, Zvit dyrektsyi ts. k. akademichnoi gimnazyi u Lvovi za shkilnyi rik 1906/1907, Lviv 1907, pp. 34–39.

Inspired by the European trend of gymnastics proliferation in educational and public institutions, the Ministry of Religion and Public Education of Austria-Hungary made a decision to introduce gymnastics as a compulsory subject in gymnasiums in the academic year 1909–1910. Regarding this, Ivan Boberskyi mentioned,

The ministry regulation of March 20, 1909 defined *rukhanaka* to be obligatory in secondary schools. Although there is an insufficient number of *rukhanaka* teachers to implement the subject all over this academic year, it is to be introduced where the teachers are available. This is a great advance in education. The youngsters had only to study so far. Sedentary learning affected badly their posture, walking, and arm movement. Active exercises could partially eliminate the issues and contribute to the health of the youth.<sup>7</sup>

Since the status of a “compulsory” subject provided for significant changes in organization of the educational process and time distribution, Ivan Boberskyi decided to focus on teaching German. He passed the baton of the sports management with all his achievements: educational and methodical literature, the developed structure of “Ukrainskyi sportovyi kruzhok”, etc. to Yurii Semotiuk, a certified specialist in gymnastics. Later on, Ivan Boberskyi wrote,

I conducted *rukhanaka* and *rukhovi hry* (active games) in gymnasium for seven years, until it became a compulsory subject. Then I preferred the teaching activity, while Yurii Semotiuk, a member of “Sokil” society, taught *rukhanaka*. Later he moved to his brother to America. The students attended *rukhanaka* in “Sokil” sports hall, thus contributing to the society’s development. At that time, the youth familiarized themselves with *rukhanaka* and competition, the ways it was organised in the societies and schools of other European countries. The games with and without a ball as well as common exercises were introduced. These are the so-called track and field games: walking, running, jumping and throwing. Numerous non-statute societies and clubs emerged.<sup>8</sup>

As a professor at the Academic Gymnasium in Lviv, Ivan Boberskyi had qualifications corresponding to the university level, and was an experimental innovator. At gymnastics classes, he combined the elements of European gymnastics systems with Ukrainian traditional folk forms, introduced sports terminology and prepared the first professional Ukrainian-language publications on physical education and sports. He managed to make the most of the opportunities that the Ukrainian community of Lviv had at that time to develop and popularize *rukhanaka*, in particular as far as the facilities of the gymnasium and the society “Sokil-Batko” (Falcon-Father) were concerned. His educational and methodical works *Zabavy i hry rukhovi* (*Playing and active games*) (1904), *Zabavy i hry rukhovi, chast druha* (*Playing and active games, part two*) (1905), *Zabavy i hry rukhovi, chast treta. Kopanyi miach* (*Playing and active games, part three. Foot-*

<sup>7</sup> I. Boberskyi, *Rukhanaka v shkolakh*, Svoboda, Politychna, prosvitna i hospodarska chasopys, Lviv, 6 maia 1909, Chys. 18, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> I. Boberskyi, *Ukrainske sokilstvo (1894–1939)*, Lviv 1939, pp. 9–10.

ball) (1906), *Riadovi vpravy (Common exercises)* (1909) were applied at gymnastics classes and in the USK activity.

During his pedagogical work in the private female seminary of the Ukrainian Pedagogical Society (1903–1905) and the Basilian Sisters Servants Gymnasium in Lviv (1906–1914), Ivan Boberskyi greatly supported the education development of Ukrainian women. In particular, he introduced gymnastics classes into the educational process, taught German, headed the German-language library and encouraged the formation of the “Divochyi sportovy kruzhoz” (DSK) (Girls’ sports club). During 1910–1914, the DSK founded by Ivan Boberskyi in the gymnasium developed dynamically, grew in quantity and quality, cultivating and popularising various sports among Ukrainian women. Ivan Boberskyi also wrote educational and methodical works such as *Sytkivka (Tennis)* (1909), *Lavchyna i shcheblivka (Bench and ladder exercises)* (1910), *Prorukh (Workout)* (1912), used by other teachers of gymnastics and members of the DSK, as well as all the interested in Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora.<sup>9</sup>

Ivan Boberskyi had the idea of founding a sports club in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in 1903, when he started his gymnastics classes in six departments at the Academic Gymnasium in Lviv. He decided to implement the idea of organizing a sports centre with his apprentices, i.e. the *rukhanika* gymnasium students. His deliberate intention was to have the gymnasium students organize the sports club, for them to gain relevant experience to further develop physical education both in Lviv and far beyond. Given that, the USK was officially run by the gymnasium students.

Ivan Boberskyi described the first stages of the USK in his work *Ukrainske Sokilstvo (Ukrainian Sokil Movement)* (1939) as follows:

Eventually, in 1906, “Ukrainskyi sportovy kruzhoz” (Ukrainian sports club) emerged in the Academic Gymnasium. The club members wore an enamel, yellow and blue insignia with golden letters “U. S. K.”. These were the first sports insignia in Ukraine. The name “Ukrainian” worried the gymnasium officials, but the students realised that they were Ukrainians, not ‘Russians’.<sup>10</sup>

The formation of “Ukrainskyi sportovy kruzhoz” (1906) in the Academic Gymnasium aimed at two objectives: 1) spreading and popularization of *rukhanika* (physical education) and *zmah* (sports) in the gymnasiums of Galicia; 2) training for the centres of Sokil Movement. The USK members guided by Ivan Boberskyi became skilled at football, hockey, skiing, skating, downhill sledding, tennis, swimming, rowing, cycling, etc. There were several sports sections in the structure of the USK, in particular *kopanyi miach* (football) – 11 football teams

<sup>9</sup> A. Sova, M. Romaniuk, *Ivan Boberskyi’s pedagogical activity at Basilian Sisters Servants Gymnasium in Lviv (1906–1914)*, “East European Historical Bulletin” 2019, 4, pp. 71–80.

<sup>10</sup> I. Boberskyi, 1939, op. cit.

played matches with Ukrainian, Polish, Czech and Jewish teams (“Hasmonea”, “Dnipro”, “Pogon”, “Tim”, “Charni”, etc.) in the academic year 1909–1910.

In the summer, the USK members exercised in the open air, particularly on suitable park glades in Lviv. In the winter, the athletic classes were mainly held in the sports hall of “Sokil-Batko” society at 20 Ruska Street, skiing and downhill sledging – in Stryiskyi Park or Zalizna Voda Park, and ice skating – at Pelchynskiyi Pond.

The number of USK football teams was constantly growing. They readily accepted invitations to play football with another Ukrainian, Polish, Czech and Jewish teams. After the matches, Ivan Boberskyi talked over the advantages and drawbacks with the USK members. In order to improve the players’ skills in the USK teams, Ivan Boberskyi invited a football specialist from Prague in 1909. It was Václav Lomoz, a member of the Czech football club “Slavia”. Václav Lomoz trained the USK football teams from 5 to 27 September 1909. Ivan Boberskyi and USK members had collected and saved money for several months to pay the coach’s salary.

The USK athletes took part in competitions in other cities of Galicia, particularly in Ternopil, Stryi, Przemyśl. At that time, II Zaporozhski Ihryshcha (the Second Zaporozhia Games) were among the brightest events in the sporting activity of the USK and other Ukrainian sporting societies. They took place on June 29, 1914 on Sokil-Batko Square in Lviv, on the occasion of the Shevchenko Zdyv (Shevchenko Congress). Ivan Boberskyi covered the activity of the USK in the Galician press. During 1901–1918, Ivan Boberskyi was actively engaged in the activity of the gymnastics society “Sokil”. On November 17, 1901, the general meeting of the society elected Alfred Budzynovskiyi (head of the organization from November 17, 1901 to August 26, 1908) as the chairman of “Sokil” society in Lviv, and Ivan Boberskyi as his second deputy. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the newly elected chairmen and their hard work contributed to the emergence of many new “Sokil” centres. The new centres were formed in the following towns and villages of Galicia: Stanislaviv (now Ivano-Frankivsk, 1902), Kolomyia (1902), Sambir (1903), Ternopil (1903), Buchach (1904), Yavoriv (1904), Komarno (1904), Zolochiv (1905), Stryi (1906).

Due to Ivan Boberskyi’s active participation in the “Sokil” society, many significant events took place in Lviv. The first music and *rukhanka* evening performance of the Ukrainian “Sokil” society was organised in Lviv on April 6, 1902, on the premises of the Polish “Sokół” at Zimorovicha Street (today – 8 Dudaieva Street, the educational building of Lviv Ivan Boberskyi State University of Physical Culture).<sup>11</sup> Another *rukhanka* evening performance took place in the Lviv Philharmonic on April 5, 1903. A convention of fire-fighting “Sokil” representatives of the Lviv district was held on February 25, 1906.

<sup>11</sup> *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi*, F. 312, Op. 1, Spr. 67, Ark. 15.

A new sports hall of the Ukrainian “Sokil” society was opened in Lviv on November 5, 1906. The first printed report on the activity of “Sokil” society in Lviv was published in 1906 (since then “Sokil” reports were published in the press and separate brochures regularly). On October 12, 1905, the “Sokil” chairmen discussed and approved a new uniform: the coffee colour was replaced by grey, and other elements were changed. One of the most important events was opening of the sports hall of the Ukrainian gymnastic society “Sokil” in Lviv, while the funds raising for its equipment had begun arduously long before. The “Sokil” sports hall became the centre of the Sokil Movement until the beginning of World War II. Ivan Boberskyi worked here from 1906 to 1918, except for the period of World War I, and was its chairman from 1908.

Physical education was not obligatory in the educational institutions of Galicia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was optional and extracurricular for students. Hence, not all teachers who worked in the Ukrainian-language gymnasia, being the graduates of seminary for teachers, had an idea of such kinds of activities for the students. The efforts to fill the gap in awareness and acquisition of special knowledge and skills were made by a group of physical educators at the Ukrainian “Sokil”, founded in June 1901 by brothers Alfred and Leonard Budzynovskyi.<sup>12</sup>

The physical education course for “Sokil” members and teachers was organized by a group of physical educators on the premises of the Ukrainian “Sokil” centre in Lviv, located at 20 Ruska Street, from November 1906 to September 1939. The building belonged to the Ukrainian cooperative society “Dniester”, which provided assistance to many Ukrainian public organizations, including the Ukrainian “Sokil”. Ivan Levynskyi’s company, which constructed the “Dniester” building, took into consideration in its design the need of a sports hall for “Sokil”. “Dniester” also provided separate premises on the ground floor on a concessionary basis. On September 1, 1903, the “Sokilsky Bazar” store was opened in order to financially support the organization. The aforementioned building was the residence of “Sokil”, and “Sokil-Batko” since 1909. It was the place where the Ukrainian Sokil Movement started its gymnastics activity. The founders and leaders of the Ukrainian gymnastics movement, including Alfred Budzynovskyi, Sen Horuk, Ivan Boberskyi with his students Stepan Haiduchok, Petro and Taras Franko brothers and many others worked at Ruska Street. It can be fairly considered the cradle of the Ukrainian traditions of physical education and sports.

From the very beginning of his teaching and gymnastic activity in the Lviv “Sokil”, Ivan Boberskyi was an active member of the group of physical educators, and was its leader from September 1901 until the beginning of World War I. Thanks to Ivan Boberskyi, teachers embraced the opportunity to use the special

---

<sup>12</sup> *Dvaitsiat lit «Sokola-Batka»*, Kaliendar “Visty z Zaporozha” na 1914 rik, Lviv 1913, p. 200.



literature on physical education in English, Polish, German and other languages. The “Sokil-Batko” group of physical educators headed by Ivan Boberskyi not only provided “Sokil” members and teachers with *rukhanaka* basics, but also prepared those who wanted to take the gymnastics exam at Lviv University to obtain a diploma in this specialty.

Due to the activity of the *rukhanaka* educators group under the direct leadership of Ivan Boberskyi, a generation of his disciples was formed. Among these were Dariia Navrotska, Stepan Haiduchok, Omelian Huzar, Ivan Krynytskyi, Yevhen Liubovych, Teodor Polikha, Yurii Semotiuk, Savyna Sydorovych, Ivan Sokhatskyi, Oksana Sukhovska, Petro and Taras Franko, etc. They educated many leaders and specialists of the Ukrainian gymnastics and sports movement, who distinguished themselves before World War I, and especially in the interwar period.

On August 26, 1908, Ivan Boberskyi was elected chairman of the society. He held this position until November 21, 1918. A year after his election, the level of communication between the Lviv “Sokil” and the Galicia “Sokil” centres, as well as its importance increased so much that from 1909 it became the “Tsentralia” (Headquarters) and changed its name to “Sokil-Batko”. The change of the society’s name from “Sokil” to “Sokil-Batko” was suggested by Lev Lopatynskyi, a member of the organization.

In 1908, there were 400 “Sokil” centres in Galicia. During the presidency of Ivan Boberskyi, by June 1913, the number of Ukrainian “Sokil” centres in Galicia reached 887 units, including “Sokil-Batko”, 30 *rukhanaka* “Sokil” centres, 550 fire-fighting *rukhanaka* “Sokil” centres, and 305 firefighting *rukhanaka* “Sich” centres. 596 societies, out of 887 ones, which submitted the report, comprised 32,717 members.<sup>13</sup> In comparison, the Czech Gymnastics Union (centred in Prague, founded in 1889) counted 945 societies and about 96 thousand members at that time. The Slovenian Union (Ljubljana, 1905) included 82 societies and about 7 thousand members. The Serbian Union “Dušan Silni” (Dušan the Mighty) (Belgrade, 1910) had 26 societies and about 1,900 members. The Bulgarian Union of “Youth” societies (Sofia) comprised 46 societies and about 6 thousand members. The Polish Union (Lviv, 1892) covered 238 societies and about 29 thousand members.<sup>14</sup> By June 1914, in Galicia, according to Ivan Boberskyi, there were 974 “Sokil” centres with about 70,000 members.<sup>15</sup> These statistics reveal that the Ukrainians managed to catch up with, and even overtake their neighbours, including the Poles, in some activities, despite the fact they founded the “Sokil” society later than other Slavic nations.

---

<sup>13</sup> *Perepys “Sokoliv” i “Sichei” “Sokola-Batka” z 1912/13*, Kaliendar “Visty z Zaporozha” na 1914, I richnyk, Lviv 1913, p. 135.

<sup>14</sup> *Mizhnarodna rukhankova zluka*, Kaliendar «Visty z Zaporozha» na 1914 rik, Lviv 1913, pp. 146–147.

<sup>15</sup> *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi*, F. 312, Op. 1, Spr. 12, Ark. 1.

As the head of the organization and group of physical educators, Ivan Boberskyi also took an active part in several commissions and sections of the society. It was both due to the lack of staff and the personal qualities of Ivan Boberskyi, who settled and solved many problems the Ukrainian “Sokil” encountered.

The hallmark of the national gymnastics movements of that time, in particular the “Sokil Zlet” (Sokil Congress) (in Galicia they used the term “Zdvyh”), were mass, sometimes many-thousand-participants physical exercises. The largest gymnastics events of the Ukrainian “Sokil” took place in Lviv, the cultural and political centre of the Ukrainians in Galicia, since the “Sokil Tsentralia”, i.e. “Sokil-Batko” was situated here. But the gymnastic facilities and squares in the city belonged mainly to the Polish community, and in addition to the financial issues of their rent, the political problems soon arose. The Ukrainian “Sokil” society in Lviv urgently needed its own large *rukhanka* square in the city. Therefore, active searches began in this pursuit.

To solve this problem, in 1911, Ivan Boberskyi initiated the purchase of a large area in the city for organizing the *rukhanka* sports ground. For this purpose, a special union was created, which involved such well-known Ukrainian personalities of the time as Mykola Shukhevych, Tadei Solovii, Kost Pankivskyi, Stepan Fedak, Dmytro Levytskyi, Mykola Zaiachkivskyi, Les Kulchytskyi, Oleksa Seroichkovskyi, Kost Levytskyi, Ivan Spolitatevych and Ivan Boberskyi. A suitable area was found in Stryi Park, between the streets named today as Stryiska Street, Kozelnytska Street and Ivan Franko Street, but the Poles also claimed this territory. Thanks to the efforts of Ivan Boberskyi, the Ukrainians quickly raised the necessary funds and bought it. Some part of that amount was a donation from philanthropists, but the main part was a loan from wealthy Ukrainians. “Sokil-Batko” committed itself to repay the loan as soon as possible. Ukrainians from all over the world, including European countries, the USA and Canada, joined the fundraiser at the appeal of Ivan Boberskyi.<sup>16</sup>

Ivan Boberskyi suggested quite original and effective ways to raise funds. In addition to cultural and educational, gymnastics and sports “Sokil” festivals, he organized the publication of insignia, leaflets, paper signs. The proceeds from these sales were transferred to the fund of “Purchasing Commission of the Ukrainian City in Lviv”, headed by Ivan Boberskyi. Later, for more than two decades, Ivan Boberskyi took charge of returning money to the creditors. He also donated a lot of his own money to this noble pursuit, inspiring many Ukrainians by his example. The *rukhanka* sports ground of “Sokil-Batko” society, i.e. “Ukrainskyi Horod” (Ukrainian City) (the national fort in Lviv, according to the Ukrainian writer Roman Kupchynskyi – the Ukrainian Mecca) became a traditional place for all the most significant sports and public events of the Ukrainian community in Lviv and Galicia from 1911 till 1930s.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi*, F. 312, Op. 1, Spr. 134, Ark. 1–265.

At various seminars and conferences, Ivan Boberskyi popularized the theory and practice of sports little known in Galicia but practised in the “Sokil” and gymnasium settings. In theoretical terms, he managed to do a lot, which aroused simultaneous surprise, interest, and admiration. Being acquainted with the works of his foreign contemporaries, Ivan Boberskyi translated, wrote, compiled and published the first Ukrainian textbooks on physical education and sports. Ivan Boberskyi introduced the gymnastics and sports concepts and terms, coined or translated by him. Thus, the following terms appeared in the Ukrainian vocabulary at that time: *kopanyi miach* (football), *sytkivka* (tennis), *hakivka* (hockey), *duzhannia* (wrestling), *leshchetarstvo* (skiing), *nakolesnystvo* (cycling), *striliannia do vluchi* (shooting), *sankarstvo* (sledding), *sovharstvo* (skating), *vidbyvanka* (volleyball), *plyvatstvo* (swimming), *stusan* (boxing), *koshykivka* (basketball).<sup>17</sup> The terminology proposed by Ivan Boberskyi was a significant experience for the Ukrainians in Galicia. In the interwar period, it was used with certain alterations in western Ukraine. Nowadays, it is still utilized in the centres of Ukrainian emigration.

Ivan Boberskyi personally engaged as an amateur in athletics, tennis, football, skating and skiing, as well as involved his colleagues and students, the fact being testified by recollections of the witnesses, students and numerous photographs. Visiting different countries, Ivan Boberskyi familiarized himself with the sports common there, and then published his thoughts, impressions, scientific and methodological recommendations in the Ukrainian press or in separate brochures.

At the head of “Sokil” (since 1908), Ivan Boberskyi initiated the organizational reinforcement of the society, as well as communicational enhancement between its main centre in Lviv and the “Sokil” centres in Galicia. A decision was made to hold large-scale, nationwide cultural “Sokil” events, i.e. “Zdvyhy” (Congresses) in Galicia, following the Czech model and the example of “Sich” organizations. The initiation of these events and their successful implementation should be attributed to Ivan Boberskyi as the Ukrainian “Sokil” had no experience of such large-scale events before.

The great merit of Ivan Boberskyi was the designing and consecration of the “Sokil-Batko” flag at Pershyi Kraiovyi Zdvyh (the First Regional Congress). Its symbols conveyed the idea of unification of the Ukrainian regions, namely Galicia (Lion) and the Dnieper Region (Archangel Michael). The high level of national awareness, dignity, and unity of the Ukrainians manifested itself at Kraiovi Zdvyhy (Regional Congresses). Pershyi Kraiovyi Zdvyh (the First Regional Congress) was held on September 9–10, 1911, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Taras

---

<sup>17</sup> R. Koval, O. Romanchuk, U. Protsenko, A. Sova, O. Tatarovska, *The peculiarities of elaboration of the French-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-French dictionary of physical education and sport*, “*XLinguae*” 2021, 14 (4), pp. 282–298.

Shevchenko's death. Shevchenko Zdvih, also known as the Second Regional Congress, Great Memorial Shevchenko Congress, Shevchenko Anniversary Congress, etc., took place on June 27–29, 1914 on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Taras Shevchenko's birth. Regional Congresses were an important factor in the development of the Ukrainian Sokil Movement.

## Conclusions

Thus, Ivan Boberskyi's life before the First World War can be divided into two periods with the following time limits: 1) the first period: 1873–1901 – the formation of world-view landmarks, gymnasium studies (1884–1891), obtaining higher education at the universities of Lviv and Graz (1891–1899), the completion of a one-year gymnastics course and the successful passing of an exam at the University of Graz in gymnastics (1897), the first two years of teaching work at the IV Imperial-Royal Gymnasium in Lviv (1899–1900) and the Imperial-Royal Gymnasium in Drohobych (1900–1901); 2) the second period: 1901–1914 – moving to a permanent place of work and life in Lviv, working as a teacher, public, cultural figure, in particular in Lviv and Galicia. This is the time when Ivan Boberskyi managed to fully reveal his potential as a teacher, organizer, and public figure, and to implement many projects of national importance.

During his entire teaching career at the Academic Gymnasium and its branch (1901–1918), the private women's seminary of the Ukrainian Pedagogical Society (1903–1905) and the Basilian Sisters Servants Gymnasium (1906–1914) in Lviv, Ivan Boberskyi managed to do a lot in the field of physical education and sports. He laid the foundations of modern Ukrainian physical education, introducing physical education lessons into the educational system and founding the first Ukrainian sports organizations, i.e. "Ukrainian Sports Club" and "Girls' Sports Club". In gymnastics lessons, thanks to experimentation and innovation, he skilfully combined elements of European gymnastics systems with Ukrainian traditional folk forms – games, fun, and entertainment. Ivan Boberskyi coined and introduced his own, Ukrainian national equivalents to denote the foreign language concepts used to denote physical education and sports. Physical education lessons were provided by Ivan Boberskyi with appropriate educational and methodological developments, which were also used in the activities of many Ukrainian athletics and sports societies on Ukrainian lands being part of Austria-Hungary, the Russian Empire and the diaspora.

Among the Ukrainians, Ivan Boberskyi promoted various sports that were already known in Europe. During 1901–1914, he and his followers managed to train many later well-known athletes and specialists in the field of physical education and sports. As an organizer, Ivan Boberskyi managed to make maximum

use of the opportunities available to the Ukrainians in Lviv at that time for the development and popularization of physical education and sports.

Ivan Boberskyi selflessly worked in various public associations. In the organization “Sokil” (from 1909 “Sokil-Batko”) during 1901–1918, he started as an ordinary member to become the head of “Sokil-Batko” (1908–1918). The “Sokil-Batko” society should remember Ivan Boberskyi for the following merits: 1) creation of a teacher’s circle for training specialists in physical education; 2) publication of “Sokil News” and “News from Zaporozha” magazines, which served as a support for other Ukrainian athletics and sports associations of Galicia, and the publication of Sokil literature taking into account national traditions and world practice, in particular scientific and methodological works on physical education and sports; 3) arrangement of the sports complex in Lviv; 4) regional Congresses in Lviv, which became a manifestation of the national and civil progress of several generations of the Ukrainians in Galicia; 5) participation in all-Sokil rallies in Prague and other similar events of such a level of importance on the eve of the First World War that offered the opportunity to the Ukrainians – at that time a nation without a state – not only to present the Ukrainian Sokil, but also to politically manifest themselves to Europe and the world.

As a leading Sokil activist, Ivan Boberskyi contributed to the development and growth of Sokil’s authority both in Galicia and far beyond its borders. Taking into account its several features such as its organizational structure, quantitative and qualitative composition, availability of its own gymnastics and sports infrastructure, the establishment of publication of specialized literature and magazines, holding of movement shows, sports competitions, participation in international Sokil competitions, availability of its own symbols and paraphernalia, Ukrainian physical education terminology, etc., on the eve of the First World War, Ukrainian Sokil was one of the best Sokil organizations in Europe.

Thus, the merits and results of Ivan Boberskyi’s activities give grounds to claim that he is the founder of the system of physical education and sports in Ukraine. On the grounds of the above research findings, Ivan Boberskyi is recognized as the founder of the Ukrainian system of physical education and sports.

---

#### DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Ivan Boberskyi – the founder of the Ukrainian system of physical education and sports*.

#### FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Ivan Boberskyi – the founder of the Ukrainian system of physical education and sports*.

---

## Primary sources

### A. Sources

#### I. Archival sources

Центральний державний історичний архів України у Львові. Ф. 312, Оп. 1, Спр. 12, Арк. 1.

Центральний державний історичний архів України у Львові. Ф. 312, Оп. 1, Спр. 67, Арк. 15.

Центральний державний історичний архів України у Львові. Ф. 312, Оп. 1, Спр. 134, Арк. 1–265.

#### II. Printed sources

Боберський І., *Гімнастика*. Звіт дирекції ц. к. академічної гімназії у Львові за шкільний рік 1903/1904, Львів 1904, С. 43–44.

Боберський І., *Гімнастика*. Звіт дирекції ц. к. академічної гімназії у Львові за шкільний рік 1907/1908, Львів 1908, С. 38–39.

Боберський І., *Руханка в школах*. Свобода. Політична, просвітна і господарська часопись, Львів 1909, 6 мая, Чис. 18, С. 4.

Боберський І., *Українське сокільство (1894–1939)*, Львів 1939, С. 9–10.

*Двадцять літ “Сокола-Батька”*. Календар “Вістий з Запорожа” на 1914 рік, Львів 1913, С. 200.

*Міжнародна руханкова злука*. Календар “Вістий з Запорожа” на 1914 рік, Львів 1913, С. 146–147.

*Перепись “Соколів” і “Січей” “Сокола-Батька” з 1912/13*. Календар «Вістий з Запорожа» на 1914. І річник, Львів 1913, С. 135.

*Плян науки*. Звіт дирекції ц. к. академічної гімназії у Львові за шкільний рік 1906/1907, Львів 1907, С. 34–39.

### B. Literature

Сова А., *Іван Боберський: суспільно-культурна, військово-політична та освітньо-виховна діяльність: монографія*, Інститут українознавства імені Івана Крип'якевича НАН України; Львівський державний університет фізичної культури імені Івана Боберського; Центр незалежних історичних студій, Простір-М, Львів 2019.

Сова А., *Суспільно-культурна, військово-політична та освітньо-виховна діяльність Івана Боберського (1873–1947)*, Дис. ... д-ра іст. наук: 07.00.01 «історія України», Інститут українознавства ім. І. Крип'якевича НАН України, Інститут народознавства НАН України, Львів 2020.

Сова А., Тимчак Я., *Іван Боберський – основоположник української тіловиховної і спортової традиції*, за наук. ред. Євгена Приступи, ЛДУФК, Апріорі, Львів 2017.

## References

### A. Sources

#### I. Archival sources

*Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi*, F. 312, Op. 1, Spr. 12, Ark. 1.

*Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi*, F. 312, Op. 1, Spr. 67, Ark. 15.

*Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi*, F. 312, Op. 1, Spr. 134, Ark. 1–265.

#### II. Printed sources

Boberskyi I., *Gimnastyka*, Zvit dyrektsyi ts. k. akademichnoi gimnazyi u Lvovi za shkilnyi rik 1903/1904, Lviv 1904, pp. 43–44.

Boberskyi I., *Gimnastyka*, Zvit dyrektsyi ts. k. akademichnoi gimnazyi u Lvovi za shkilnyi rik 1907/1908, Lviv 1908, pp. 38–39.

Boberskyi I., *Rukhanka v shkolakh*, Svoboda, Politychna, prosvitna i hospodarska chasopys, Lviv, 6 maia 1909, Chys. 18, p. 4.

Boberskyi I., *Ukrainske sokilstvo (1894–1939)*, Lviv 1939.

*Dvaitsiat lit "Sokola-Batka"*, Kaliendar "Visty z Zaporozha" na 1914 rik, Lviv 1913, p. 200.

*Mizhnarodna rukhankova zluka*, Kaliendar "Visty z Zaporozha" na 1914 rik, Lviv 1913, pp. 146–147.

*Perepys "Sokoliv" i "Sichei" "Sokola-Batka" z 1912/13*, Kaliendar "Visty z Zaporozha" na 1914, I richnyk, Lviv 1913, p. 135.

*Plian nauky*, Zvit dyrektsyi ts. k. akademichnoi gimnazyi u Lvovi za shkilnyi rik 1906/1907, Lviv 1907, pp. 34–39.

### B. Literature

Hirniak S., Talalay Yu., *Ivan Boberskyi – teacher, athlete, public and political activist (review of the monograph: Sova A. Ivan Boberskyi: socio-cultural, military political and educational activities. Lviv, 2019. 512 p.)*, "East European Historical Bulletin" 2021, 18, pp. 252–259; <https://doi.org/10.24919/2519-058X.18.226541>.

Koval R., Romanchuk O., Protsenko U., Sova A., Tatarovska O., *The peculiarities of elaboration of the French-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-French dictionary of physical education and sport*, "XLinguae" 2021, 14(4), pp. 282–298; <https://doi.org/10.18355/XL.2021.14.04.19>.

Piotrowski W., *Od "Siczy" do "Sianu". Zarys ukraińskiego ruchu sportowego w latach 1868–1944 na terenie Ziemi Przemyskiej*, Przemysł 2010.

- Romanchuk O., Koval O., Koval R., Matvias O., Chekhovska L., *Ivan Boberskyi's life and work*, "Moloda sportyvna nauka Ukrainy" 2012, 16(4), pp. 124–130.
- Sova A., *Ivan Boberskyi: suspilno-kulturna, viiskovo-politychna ta osvithno-vykhovna diialnist: monohrafiia*, Instytut ukrainoznavstva imeni Ivana Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy; Lvivskiy derzhavnyi universytet fizychnoi kul'tury imeni Ivana Boberskoho; Tsentr nezalezhnykh istorychnykh studii, Prostir-M, Lviv 2019.
- Sova A., Romaniuk M., *Ivan Boberskyi's pedagogical activity at Bazilian Sisters Servants Gymnasium in Lviv (1906–1914)*, "East European Historical Bulletin" 2019, 4, pp. 71–80; <https://doi.org/10.24919/2519-058x.0.184411>.
- Sova A., *Suspilno-kulturna, viiskovo-politychna ta osvithno-vykhovna diialnist Ivana Boberskoho (1873–1947)*, Dys. ... d-ra ist. nauk: 07.00.01 "istoriia Ukrainy", Instytut ukrainoznavstva im. I. Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy, Instytut narodoznnavstva NAN Ukrainy, Lviv 2020.
- Sova A., Tymchak Ya., *Ivan Boberskyi – osnovopolozhnyk ukrainskoi tilovykhovnoi i sportovoi tradytsii*, Yevhen Prystupa (ed.), LDUFK, Apriori, Lviv 2017.
- Zaborniak S., *Kultura fizyczna ludności ukraińskiej na ziemiach polskich (1868–1939)*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów 2007.