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## Activity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom in the years 1905–1914

### Summary

The Traditions of “Sokół Movement” at the Polish lands come from 1867. At the time the first nest of Gymnastic Society “Sokół” had come into existence. In the Polish Kingdom and in the Polish territories ruled by Russia, first nests of Gymnastic Society “Sokół” emerged in 1905–1906.

In the Polish Kingdom, “Sokół” nests were established among others in Częstochowa, Łódź, Piotrków Trybunalski, Radom, Warsaw and Dąbrowskie Zagłębie. The legalization of “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom began May 30, 1906. The tsarist authorities recognized a “Sokół” status.

The “Sokół” members in the Polish Kingdom strive for foundation of unitary “Sokół” organization according to the “Sokół” during Austrian nad Prussian partition as a pattern. On July 29, 1906 in Warsaw, the second meeting of the Polish Association of Gymnastic Societies’s founders took place. The association consisted of six districts: District of Czestochowa, Kalisz, Lubelskie, Łódź, Warsaw nad Dąbrowskie Zagłębie.

**Keywords:** Gymnastic Society “Sokół”, Kingdom of Polish, physical education.

The legal activity of “Sokół” in Polish Kingdom did not last long. The tsarist authorities suspended on September 2, 1906 legal activity of “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom. “Sokół” moved to the underground activity till 1914. Gymnastic Society “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom operated in the field of Physical Education, Cultural and Education, Independence and Publishing. In 1913 in the areas of Polish territories Ruled by Russia, 40 “Sokół” nests were operating. These nests were affiliated into 3 districts and concentrated 6 000 members. The aim of this paper is to present the activity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokół” [Polish

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for “Falcon”] in the Polish Kingdom in the years 1905–1914. Traditions of the Sokół movement on Polish territories date back to 1867. It was then that the first nest of the Gymnastic Society (GS) “Sokół” was established in Lviv. Broader and dynamic development of the Sokół organization took place in the 1880s and 1890s. During this period, nests in the Austrian and Prussian partition were established.

The first nests of GS “Sokół” in the Russian partition could be officially established as late as in the years 1905–1906. Then, the tsarist authorities, under the influence of Russia’s defeat in the war with Japan (1904–1905) and revolutionary events, announced on 17/30 October 1905 a “manifesto” promising constitutional government. In the wake of the “manifesto”, in March 1906 they issued “provisional rules of unions and associations”, which allowed the legalization of such organizations on the territory of the former Polish Kingdom (Russian partition)<sup>1</sup>.

In Warsaw, organizational preparations for the establishment of “Sokół” nest began in November 1905. On the initiative of Karol Malczewski, a lawyer, on November 7, 1905 the first organizational meeting attended by 39 people was held<sup>2</sup>. The second organizational meeting took place three days later. The meeting, which was attended by 145 people, was chaired by Konstanty Lubomirski. As a result of these meetings a general meeting was convened for December 5, 1905. There, a resolution on the establishment of Tadeusz Kościuszko GS “Sokół” was adopted. The first (interim) management board members were: Tadeusz Trzciniński – president, Klemens Starzyński and Konstanty Radkiewicz – vice-presidents, Stanisław Popowski – secretary, Henryk Janowski – deputy secretary, Tadeusz Koszutski – treasurer, Karol Malczewski, Max Freulich – head, J. Guirard, M. Straszak, K. Kiersnowski, H. York, S. Smoleński – members<sup>3</sup>.

On the initiative of the Warsaw Figure Skating Society (WFSS) on December 24, 1905, the 2nd nest of “Sokół” was established in Warsaw and named after Gen. Henryk Dąbrowski. The management board of the nest was composed of: Emil Rauer – president, Eugeniusz Twarowski – vice-president, Edward Martens – treasurer, Aleksy Chrzanowski – secretary, Władysław Stpiczyński – ensign, A. Przybylski – host, B. Olszewski – head, H. Chełmicki – deputy head, Feliks-Nowicki – member<sup>4</sup>. The nest had 1,300 members, including 240 women. Members of the nest regularly participated in gymnastic exercises. At “Sokół” a cycling section (of about 70 members), an orchestra and a library were organized.

<sup>1</sup> See S. Kieniewicz, *Historia Polski 1795–1918 [History Of Poland 1795–1918]*, Warsaw 1987, pp. 430–448; L. Bazylow, *Historia Rosji [History Of Russia]*, Wrocław – Warsaw – Cracow – Gdańsk – Łódź 1985, pp. 432–443 [*in Polish*].

<sup>2</sup> Przewodnik Gimnastyczny “Sokół” [Gymnastic Guide “Sokół”] 1931, no. 6, pp. 103–104 [*in Polish*].

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>4</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 2; Przewodnik Gimnastyczny “Sokół” [Gymnastic Guide “Sokół”] 1931 no. 6, pp. 103–104 [*in Polish*].

The third nest of GS "Sokół" named after Jan Kiliński in Warsaw was established on December 27, 1905<sup>5</sup>. The first organizational meeting was held in the seat of Warsaw Rowing Association (WRA). The meeting was attended by 312 people, mainly by students and craftsmen. Classes in gymnastics were conducted by: Rudolf Graff, J. Kosiński and I. Trapszo. In addition to the gymnastic section there was also a swimming section in the nest. Swimming was taught in the swimming school of WRA, with Wincenty Weher as an instructor. On July 27, 1906 the General Meeting of the Society was held, on which the management board was elected. This body was composed of: Stefan Dziewulski (president), Lucjan Kobyłecki and Gustaw Simon (vice-presidents), Zdzisław Freyer (secretary), Karol Kowerski (deputy secretary), Konrad Unruch (treasurer), Ludwik Dziąg, M. Niemira and Stanisław Tymiński (board members)<sup>6</sup>.

The nest Warsaw IV was organized on December 29, 1905<sup>7</sup>. It was established on the initiative of members of the gymnastic circle at the Warsaw Society of Cyclists (WSC). The management board of the nest was composed of: Jan Rudnicki (president), Ignacy Wadowski (deputy president), Apolinary Jabłczyński (secretary), Karol Noskiewicz (head), Viktor Krassowski (deputy head), Edmund Lindemann (host), Czesław Dajkowski (treasurer), Czesław Norek, Józef Sierakowski (board members)<sup>8</sup>. At the first board meeting on 31 December 1905, "the principle of independence in relation to the Society of Cyclists and communication in organizational work with other nests of «Sokół» was established"<sup>9</sup>. In July 1906, the nest had over 600 members, recruited mainly from communities of craftsmen and school youth. Physical education classes (mainly based on gymnastics) with falcons were conducted by: M. Bodalski, K. Noskiewicz, J. Olczak, S. Rzewuski and S. Szczepkowski. Assistance in the development and activity of GS "Sokół" Warsaw IV was rendered by WSC. On 28 January 1906, the nest appointed K. Noskiewicz and J. Rudnicki to the organizing committee, whose aim was to "unify the activities of all nests in the Polish Kingdom"<sup>10</sup>.

In 1906, a female nest "Grażyna" was established in Warsaw. The nest was led by Stillerowa and Helena Prawdzic-Kuczalska with the board composed of: Helena Bironowa, Zofia Hallmanówna, Helena Mieczyńska (heads) and Zofia Olędzka<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 3 [in Polish].

<sup>6</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 3 [in Polish].

<sup>7</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 2 [in Polish].

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem; T. Drozdek-Małołepsza, *Działalność Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego "Sokół" w Królestwie Polskim w świetle czasopisma "Sokół" (1906–1907)* [Activity Of The Gymnastic Society "Sokół" In The Polish Kingdom In The Light of "Sokół" Journal (1906–1907)], "Prace Naukowe Kultura Fizyczna" [Physical Education Research Papers] 2003 issue V, p. 53 [in Polish].

<sup>10</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 2 [in Polish].

<sup>11</sup> Przewodnik Gimnastyczny "Sokół" [Gymnastic Guide "Sokół"] 1931 no. 6, pp. 104–105 [in Polish]; M. Szczerbiński in his work *Zarys działalności Sokolstwa Polskiego na obczyźnie*

Nests of GS “Sokół” were set up in other towns of the Polish Kingdom. In Łódź a “Sokół” nest was set up on December 20, 1905<sup>12</sup>. The intention of joining “Sokół” was declared by 286 people. The president of the society was Włodzimierz Wyganowski and the head Kazimierz Sadoczyński<sup>13</sup>. Apart from them, the management board included: W. Fankowski, P. Małachowski – vice-presidents, W. Morsztynkiewicz – secretary, H. Lipkowski – treasurer, T. Józefiak – deputy treasurer, B. Bendek, L. Bondy, T. Jędrzejczak, F. Jerzykowski, L. Kosiński, W. Lipiński, J. Michalski, L. Tochtermann – members of the board. Gymnastic exercises were held in the building of the School of Crafts in Wodna street. Since September 1906, classes in gymnastics were to be conducted by Surowiecki – a graduate of the teaching course for Sokół gymnastics managers in Lviv.

There were also nests of “Sokół”, among others, in Częstochowa, Lublin, Łowicz, Pabianice, Piotrków Trybunalski, Płock, Pruszków, Radom, Siedlce, Żyrardów and on the territory of Dąbrowa Basin.

The nest of “Sokół” in Lublin was established in May 1906<sup>14</sup>. The first management board of the nest was composed of: Adam Majewski (president), Jan Markowicz (vice-president), Antoni Radzikowski (treasurer), Stanisław Kalicki, Henryk Koterwas, Józef Lambert, Julian Lisowski, Jan Łysakowski, Adolf Wolny and Aleksander Zawadzki. The head of the Lublin “Sokół” was Stanisław Kowarzyk, who organized the male and female exercising group.

GS “Sokół” in Częstochowa was set up on June 29, 1906<sup>15</sup>. Preparations for the establishment of the nest started earlier. In “Dziennik Częstochowski” [Częstochowa Daily] in its issue of 28 June 1906 the following piece of information was published: “The establishment of a Sokół nest in our city is on the right track. A circle of persons from among Lutenists are involved in the organization of this institution”<sup>16</sup>. The official ceremony of the establishment of “Sokół” nest in Częstochowa was held in the Municipality Hall of the city of

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*w latach 1887–1918 [Outline Activity Of The Polish Sokół Movement In Exile In The Years 1887–1918] [in Polish]* writes that “[...] In autumn 1905, a gymnastic team was established at the School of Therapeutic and Health Gymnastics and Massage, led by Helena Prawdzic-Kuczalska. It was women who exercised in this team that assumed the name «Grażyna». It was then transformed into the Sokół nest [...]”; The transformation most likely took place as late as in 1906; See Z. Pawluczuk, *Kobiety w ruchu sokolskim [Women In The “Sokół” Movement]*, [in:] Z. Pawluczuk (ed.), *Z dziejów Towarzystw Gimnastycznych „Sokół” [The History Of Gymnastic Societies “Sokół”]*, Gdańsk 1996, p. 92 [in Polish].

<sup>12</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 3 [in Polish].

<sup>13</sup> “Sokół” 1991, no. 6 [in Polish].

<sup>14</sup> Z. Pawluczuk, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” okręgu lubelskiego w latach 1905–1939, [Gymnastic Society “Sokół” Of The Lublin Area In The Years 1905–1939]*, “Prace Naukowe Akademii im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie Kultura Fizyczna” [Physical Education Research Papers Of Jan Długosz University In Częstochowa] 2005 issue VI, p. 24 [in Polish].

<sup>15</sup> “Dziennik Częstochowski” [Częstochowa Daily] 1906 no. 116 [in Polish].

<sup>16</sup> “Dziennik Częstochowski” [Częstochowa Daily] 1906 no. 114 [in Polish].

Częstochowa. Members of the Society were recruited mainly from the intelligentsia and bourgeoisie. The first, really important effect of the nest activity was to create an exercising area in Humbertowska street<sup>17</sup>.

Unfavourable stance towards the established nest was presented by some left-wing Polish political groups. Częstochowa District Workers' Committee of the Polish Socialist Party (PSP), in its appeal of July 15, 1906, described the character of GS "Sokół" as follows: "there is no place in these nests of Sokół for us, male and female workers, because under a veneer of gymnastic societies with a slogan of a healthy mind in a healthy body, a hideous nightmare of the counter-revolution hides [...] arisen on the basis of bondage and fall"<sup>18</sup>. "Sokół" did not preach the "class struggle" and as a social organization it was open to all circles of Polish society.

On the initiative of Lucjan Kobyłecki, on August 5, 1906, a founding meeting of "Sokół" in Siedlce was held. Marian Kielczewski was elected the president of the nest<sup>19</sup>.

In Dąbrowa Basin "Sokół" had 2 thousand members, operating in 15 nests, among others in Będzin, Czeladź, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Grodziec, Klimontów, Łazy, Modrzejów, Myszków, Niwka, Porąbka, Poręba, Psary, Sosnowiec, Wojkowice Komorne, Wojkowice Kościelne and Zawiercie. After the dissolution of "Sokół" by the tsarist government, on the territory of the basin Gymnastic Association "Piechur" [Polish for "walker"] operated, which referred to the Sokół tradition<sup>20</sup>. The positions of the presidents of Sokół nests in Dąbrowa Basin were held by: Będzin – Stanisław Wierzbowski, Czeladź – Stefan Falkowski, in Dąbrowa – Józef Gielg, in Dobieszowice – Jan Fronik, in Grodziec – Marcei Turski, in Myszków – Antoni Hornowski, in Niemce – Edward Dąbrowski, in Niwka – Emil Winter, in Sielce – Tadeusz Waśniewski, in Sosnowiec – Stefan Mrokowski, in Strzemieszyce – Adam Chmielarz, in Zagórz – Aleksander Bonikowski, in Zawiercie – Jan Mecner, in Ząbkowice – Stanisław Gajewski.

GS "Sokół" in Warsaw was entered in the register of associations and unions of the Warsaw Governorate on 8 June 1906 pursuant to the decision of the War-

<sup>17</sup> T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne "Sokół" w Częstochowie w latach 1906–1918* [*Gymnastic Society "Sokół" In Częstochowa In The Years 1906–1918*], "Prace Naukowe Kultura Fizyczna" [Research Papers in Physical Education] 1999 issue II, pp. 28–29 [*in Polish*].

<sup>18</sup> Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie (AAN) [Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw], Archiwum Lewicy Parlamentarnej [Parliamentary Left Archives], Archiwum Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej [Archives of the Polish Socialist Party], vol. 35, subvol. 3, Odezwa Częstochowskiego Okręgowego Komitetu Robotniczego Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej z 22 lipca 1906 r. [Appeal of Częstochowa District Workers' Committee of the Polish Socialist Party of July 22, 1906], pp. 48–49 [*in Polish*].

<sup>19</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 3 [*in Polish*].

<sup>20</sup> M. Ponczek, *Dzieje Zagłębiowskiego i Olkuskiego "Sokoła" do 1939 roku* [*History Of Zagłębie And Olkusz "Sokół" Until 1939*], Sosnowiec 1994, pp. 5–6 [*in Polish*].

saw Governorate Commission for associations-related matters of 29 May 1906<sup>21</sup>. The objectives of the society were “to develop and cultivate gymnastics in general, and in particular hygiene, rational and educational gymnastics, and thereby to develop the spirit of the men of valour, discipline, and communication in the members of the Society”. The statutes of GS “Sokół” in Warsaw provided for, among others: maintaining exercise facilities and gyms, training teachers of gymnastics, popularizing and cultivating sports movement, organizing gymnastic shows and lectures in the field of physical education, engaging in cultural and educational activities<sup>22</sup>.

The Sokół movement in the Polish Kingdom, following the example of the one of the Austrian and Prussian partitions, sought to establish a uniform Sokół organization. On July 29, 1906, in Warsaw in the building of WRA the second meeting of the founders of The Union of Gymnastic Societies “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom was held<sup>23</sup>. The meeting was attended by 85 delegates from the Polish Kingdom, including a large group of delegates from Warsaw. Works related to preparation of the agenda were undertaken by the Organizational Committee of “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom, formed in January 1906. The works of the committee were supervised by L. Kobyłecki.

During the meeting the management board was elected composed of: Lucjan Kobyłecki – president, Kazimierz Srokowski (delegate of nests in Dąbrowa Basin) – 1st vice-president, Stanisław Popowski – 2nd vice-president, S. Dziewulski – secretary, Jan Rudnicki – deputy secretary, W. Stpiczyński – treasurer, members – Emil Rauer, Klemens Starzyński and Antoni Marylski from Warsaw, Witold Eichler, Paweł Małachowski, Waław Morsztynkiewicz from Łódź, Bronisław Bukowiński from Kalisz, Mieczysław Kokowski from Częstochowa, A. Radzikowski from Lublin, Falkowski, Stanisław Wierzbowski and Maksymilian Walicki from Dąbrowa Basin. The position of the head was held by Karol Noskiewicz<sup>24</sup>. An important conclusion adopted at the convention was to create – in the framework of the Union – autonomous female nests of “Sokół”. The proposal, made by the president of the nest “Grażyna” Warsaw – Helena Kuczalska, was as follows: “due to the difference in women's exercises

<sup>21</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 1 [in Polish].

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem; T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Działalność Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” w Królestwie Polskim w świetle czasopisma “Sokół”...*, p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 3; “Sport Polski” [Polish Sport] 1906, no. 30 [in Polish].

<sup>24</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 3; “Dziennik Częstochowski” [Częstochowa Daily] 1906, no. 147 [in Polish]; K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów “Sokoła” na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947* [Outline History Of “Sokół” On Polish Territories In The Years 1867–1947], [in:] Z. Pawluczuk (ed.), *Z dziejów Towarzystw Gimnastycznych “Sokół”* [The History of Gymnastic Societies “Sokół”], Gdańsk 1996, p. 10 [in Polish]. K. Toporowicz claims in this publication that the Union of “Sokół” Movement in the Russian partition was established in March 1906; With no source materials it is impossible to provide information where and when the 1st meeting of the founders of the Union of Sokół Movement in the Russian partition was held.



and proper talents, self-management and -government, we want to create separate nests with complete autonomy, but we ask for admission to the Society, in order to connect with the spirit and objectives of the Polish Sokół Movement"<sup>25</sup>.

The Union of Polish Sokół Movement in the Polish Kingdom was composed of the following districts: Warsaw – 3,348 members, Dąbrowa Basin – 1,700 members, Łódź – 1,330 members, Kalisz – 600 members, Lublin – 200 members, Częstochowa – 205 members<sup>26</sup>.

In the years 1906–1907 "Sokół" was published, which was originally a press organ of the Polish "Sokół" Gymnastic Societies in the Polish Kingdom, and from issue no. 4, a magazine devoted to "the «Sokół» movement, gymnastics, physical education"<sup>27</sup>. It was a biweekly, published in Warsaw. The first issue was published on 1 August 1906, and the last one on May 15, 1907. The total number of the magazine issues published was 20 (in 1906 10 issues were published, and in 1907 10 issues as well). The editor of the magazine was S. Popowski, while the publishers were: Jan Guirard, S. Dziewulski and S. Popowski. The volume of the magazine was 16 pages.

The editors of "Sokół", in the 3rd issue of the magazine of September 1, 1906, in the article entitled "Details of legalization", provided information regarding the composition of the management boards of the existing nests. The board of GS "Sokół" in Pabianice included: Witold Eichler – president, Jan Niedzielski, Jan Procnier – vice-presidents, Bronisław Gajewicz – secretary<sup>28</sup>.

In Warsaw, the first "sokolnia", i.e. an exercise facility, was officially opened on July 1, 1906. The ceremony was attended by falcons of the four nests of Warsaw, the society of Warsaw and delegates of "Sokół" from Dąbrowa Górnicza, Grodzisk, Kiev, St. Petersburg, Piotrków Trybunalski, Puławy, Skierniewice and Vilnius. During the ceremony, Stanisław Popowski uttered the following words, reflecting the nature of "Sokół": "Behold, here are the hospitable gates of Sokół that we have opened and we call on every Pole, regardless of religion and belief, to enter through them. Nobody will ask you for political passports here. And having entered in the circle of friends, you will remain brothers to us, in one common line, shoulder to shoulder, united and in this unity powerful, regardless of class divide"<sup>29</sup>. As K. Starzyński writes it was in Warsaw, "[...] the only and unique Sokół manifestation, which moved not only Warsaw but also the entire Polish Kingdom [...]"<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 3 [in Polish].

<sup>26</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 3 [in Polish].

<sup>27</sup> T. Drozdek-Małołepsza, *Działalność Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego "Sokół" w Królestwie Polskim w świetle czasopisma "Sokół" ...*, p. 50.

<sup>28</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 3 [in Polish].

<sup>29</sup> "Sokół" 1906, no. 4 [in Polish].

<sup>30</sup> K. Starzyński, *Geneza i dzieje "Sokola" w Kongresówce 1905–1930 [Origin and History of "Sokół" in Congress Poland 1905–1930]*. Przewodnik Gimnastyczny „Sokół” [Gymnastic Guide "Sokół"] 1931, no. 6, p. 105 [in Polish].

A very important element in the activities of the newly formed union was properly trained staff. For this purpose, in the period from July 20 to September 1 1906, “a summer teacher training course” of “Sokół” was held in Warsaw. The head of the course was Szczęsny Ruciński – head of GS “Sokół” in Cracow. Apart from him, the classes were conducted by: Karol Noskiewicz and dr Pieńkowski. The course was attended by 43 members of “Sokół” from Warsaw and 19 from Skierniewice, Włocławek, Sieradz, Ciechanów, Płock, Kalisz, Mińsk Mazowiecki, Sierpc, Zduńska Wola, Lublin and Łowicz<sup>31</sup>.

Falcons from Dąbrowa Basin on 19 August 1906, took part in the rally of district VI (the Silesian one) of the Union of Polish Sokół Movement in the German State<sup>32</sup>. Among the Basin delegates the representatives of nests from Dąbrowa Górnicza, Sielce and Sosnowiec were the most numerous ones. The president of the Basin district was then Kazimierz Srokowski, whereas the heads were: Fudasiewicz and Radzikowski. Falcons from the Basin performed a gymnastic show during the rally, in which 112 people participated.

The nature of “Sokół” was conveyed in the Sokół dress. The Sokół dress was designed by Karolina Svetla (writer) and Josef Manes (painter). As W. Lipoński writes, the Sokół dress consisted of “a jacket worn by Polish insurgents in the years 1846–1848, Russian brown trousers, a round hat from the areas of Montenegro and Serbia, and shirts of the Italians fighting for freedom from Giuseppe Garibaldi’s troops”<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 3 [in Polish]. The course was attended by: from the nest Warsaw I – Zygmunt Dobrowolski, Marian Dubowski, Marian Gurtler, Władysław Kopczewski, Stefan Pieńkowski, Zygmunt Szybalski, Izasław Transzo, Stanisław Zdanowicz; from the nest Warsaw II – Klemens Bieńkowski, Stefan Bronikowski, Henryk Chelmicki, Jan Lewandowski, Leonard Oleszyński, Stanisław Pawluk, Benon Perzyński, Antoni Płonkiewicz, Jan Skotnicki, Edward Świtalla; from the nest Warsaw III – Aleksander Biernacki, Stanisław Cholewiński, Zbigniew Klepiński, Juliusz Kosiński, Kazimierz Kurnatowski, Bronisław Sosiński, Paweł Żmirkowski; from the nest Warsaw IV – Mieczysław Bodalski, Ludwik Karliński, Edmund Lindemann, Karol Noskiewicz, Józef Olczak, Józef Ostrochulski, Konstanty Rogaliński, Stanisław Rzewuski, Eugeniusz Saft, Leonard Sobański, Józef Sommer, Stanisław Stawe, Stanisław Szczepkowski, Tadeusz Zahrt; from the nest Ciechanów – Alojzy Jurczyński; from the nest Kalisz – Józef Dąbrowski; from the nest Lublin – Stefan Radzikowski; from the nest Łomża – Adam Chętnik, Michał Lustański; from the nest Łowicz – Teodor Łagodziński; from the nest Mińsk Mazowiecki – Bronisław Wysiekierski; from the nest Płock – Józef Kulągowski, Czesław Kurowski; from the nest Sieradz – Aleksander Stala; from the nest Sierpc – Józef Kowalewski; from the nest Skierniewice – Michał Kasprzycki, Kazimierz Kulesza; from the nest Włocławek – Justyn Gajewski, Gustaw Moczrski; from the nest Zduńska Wola – Antoni Hille.

<sup>32</sup> “Sokół” 1906, no. 5 [in Polish].

<sup>33</sup> W. Lipoński, *Historia Sportu na tle rozwoju kultury fizycznej*, Warszawa 2012 [*History Of Sport Against A Background Of Physical Culture Development*], Warsaw 2012, pp. 423-424 [in Polish]; T. Drozdek-Małołepsza, E. Małołepszy, *The Genesis and Development of “Sokół” [Falcon] Gymnastic Society in Slavic Countries in the Years 1862–1939*, [in:] J. Oborny, F. Seman (ed.), *Estetika tela, telesnosti a športového pohybu*, Bratislava 2013, p. 50.



The legal activity of "Sokół" in the Polish Kingdom did not last long. As early as on September 4, 1906, tsarist authorities issued a decree suspending the activities of "Sokół" nests throughout the Polish Kingdom<sup>34</sup>. According to the newspaper "Sport Polski" ["Polish Sport"]: "On September 3, 1906, the founder of «Sokół» society Klemens Starzyński was summoned to appear before the chief of police force, where he was told that with the decree by the chief governor of the country for the entire duration of martial law in the Polish Kingdom «Sokół» society, both in Warsaw, as well as in the provinces, is suspended [...]. The nest I from Warsaw was allowed to hold a meeting (on 4 September 1906), and then this nest is to be suspended"<sup>35</sup>.

At the meeting of the nest I in Warsaw held on September 4, 1906 Klemens Starzynski, dr Jan Guirard and Stanisław Popowski issued an appeal about the suspension of GS "Sokół" activity in the Polish Kingdom for the duration of martial law. The meeting "was in a sad mood, in which everybody reassured one another hoping that bad times will pass, and «Sokół» will come back to life"<sup>36</sup>.

The nests of GS "Sokół" operated legally on the territory of the Russian partition (outside the Polish Kingdom) and Russia. "Polish «Sokół» movement – as we read in the magazine "Sokół" – was assigned idleness by the government decree in the Polish Kingdom, and thereby relaxation of the established communication [...]. So much the more joyous feelings are aroused with manifestations of life and open work in the «Sokół» nests set up by our countrymen in Lithuania, Rus', or among the emigrants from both Russian capitals. [...] Poles in Vilnius, Kiev, Odessa, Brest, Kaunas, Moscow and St. Petersburg set up «Sokół» nests, where they do gymnastics and sport without any obstacles and with passion [...]"<sup>37</sup>.

Klemens Starzyński in one of the articles entitled "In the era of forced temporary idleness of «Sokół» in the Polish Kingdom" published in the March issue of "Sokół" in 1907 characterized the then realities of the Society's activities in the following manner: "The enthusiasm and zeal are gone. Our troubled society in excess of the most conflicting feelings, hopes and disappointments – accepted with dignity a piece of news about the suspension of GS «Sokół» activity. This temporary, forced idleness allows us to reflect comprehensively and crystallize tasks and objectives of such a useful institution. [...] «Sokół» develops the body, toughens the spirit and preserves nationality – everyone who wants to remain

<sup>34</sup> "Dziennik Częstochowski" [Częstochowa Daily] 1906, no. 182; E. Małolepszy, *Zarys dziejów TG "Sokół" w Częstochowie i na Ziemi Częstochowskiej w latach 1906–1939* [Outline History Of GS "Sokół" In Częstochowa And In The Częstochowa District In The Years 1906–1939], [in:] J. Ślężyński (ed.), "Zeszyty Metodyczno-Naukowe" [Methodology and Science Journal], Katowice 1993, p. 103 [in Polish].

<sup>35</sup> "Sport Polski" [Polish Sport] 1906, no. 35 [in Polish].

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>37</sup> "Sokół" 1907, no. 7/8 [in Polish].

a Falcon must remember about it. Political non-alignment of the Society does not consist in the idea that members be unconditionally politically non-aligned – but in the idea of respect for the beliefs of others, while remaining steadfastly Sons of the Homeland, since the nation does not equal the party, but – the society, living on the juices of Homeland, having their language and their culture, and «Sokół» is the nestling of this society, wishing to circle round over the beloved earth. It must only be emphasized that if any political campaigning at «Sokół» is unacceptable, any form of acting against Polish identity should be stigmatized with immediate exclusion from «Sokół»<sup>38</sup>.

In issue 7/8 of «Sokół» from 1907 in the article entitled ««Sokół» opening ceremony in St. Petersburg», we can find information about a congratulatory message for the nest of St. Petersburg from «Sokół» movement from «Warsaw – «Sokół» board and four Warsaw nests; districts of: Warsaw, Dąbrowa Basin and Łódź; nests of: Lublin, Włocławek, Częstochowa»<sup>39</sup>.

Following the suspension of activities of «Sokół» in the Polish Kingdom, the nests went on to work underground. They assumed other names, such as «Gimnasta» [Gymnast] and «Piechur» [Walker]. The activity within the scope of physical education, sport, touring, as well as educational and patriotic work, was continued. As Z. Pawluczuk writes: «The falcons of Lublin went on to work underground under the name of: Musical Society «Harmonia» [Harmony]. [...] Officially a new management board of «Harmonia» was appointed, while the old one became an organizational committee. [...] Also, a choir and theatre section were set up and a library and reading room opened. The Organizational Committee was transformed into the Committee of Sports Games»<sup>40</sup>. The nest in Lublin in 1912 – as part of underground activity – returned to the name GS «Sokół». The authorities of the Society were elected in the bench composed of: Antoni Radzikowski (president, head), Jan Mączka (deputy president), Edmund Optołowicz (deputy head), Jadwiga Optołowicz, Ptaszyński, Aleksandra Radzikowska, Regina Sroczyńska<sup>41</sup>. The gymnastic section operated actively with its members doing exercises twice a week. At the end of the year gymnastic shows were held in the nest. According to Z. Pawluczuk «after the outbreak of the war the partition police authorities banned further gymnastic and sports activity»<sup>42</sup>.

In December 1906 district II of Dąbrowa Basin was re-established. Kazimierz Srokowski was appointed the president of the district. His duties included, among others contacts between the district and the management of The

<sup>38</sup> «Sokół» 1907, no. 6 [in Polish].

<sup>39</sup> «Sokół» 1907, no. 7/8 [in Polish].

<sup>40</sup> Z. Pawluczuk, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne «Sokół» okręgu lubelskiego w latach 1905–1939...*, p. 26.

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, p. 27.

Union of Polish Sokół Movement in the Polish Kingdom<sup>43</sup>. Three years later, in 1909, the district consisted of the following nests: Będzin, Czeladź, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Grodziec, Klimontów, Łazy, Modrzejów, Niwka, Poręba, Psary, Sosnowiec, Wojkowice and Zawiercie<sup>44</sup>. In the nests of Dąbrowa Basin within the scope of physical activity mainly gymnastics and athletics were done.

"Sokół" activists in the Polish Kingdom, after having been unmasked by the tsarist authorities, faced persecution and repression, among others in 1909, Aleksander Majewski – (Lublin) was arrested, and then sentenced to three years of exile deep into Russia<sup>45</sup>.

"Sokół" activists contributed to the formation and development of scouting on the Polish territories, among others in 1907 in Częstochowa National Youth Organisation (NYO) was established, with the head of GS "Sokół" in Częstochowa Adam Fidziński becoming its leader. In September 1912, at the meeting of NYO the "Sokół" youth group was transformed into the scouting troop<sup>46</sup>.

Representatives of The Union of Polish Gymnastic Societies "Sokół" in the Polish Kingdom participated in the works of Liaison Committee of The Unions of Polish "Sokół" Movement established in 1907<sup>47</sup>. Although the main objective of the Committee's activities, aimed at the establishment of a uniform "Sokół" association, failed to succeed, the works of that Committee were useful. The Liaison Committee coordinated the "most important actions of «Sokół» movement on the territory of all three partitions". Among the members of the Union of Polish "Sokół" Movement in the Polish Kingdom the following activists, among others, participated in the works of the Committee: Cieśliński, Lucjan Kobylecki, Kreczmar, Karol Noskiewicz, Stanisław Popowski, Raźniewski, Jan Rudnicki, Kazimierz Srokowski<sup>48</sup>. The last meeting of the Committee was held on 21 June 1914.

<sup>43</sup> M. Ponczek, *"Sokół" w Królestwie Polskim i w Rosji (1888–1918)* [*"Sokół" In The Polish Kingdom And Russia (1888–1918)*], [in:] E. Małolepszy, Z. Pawluczuk (ed.), *Zarys dziejów Sokolstwa Polskiego w latach 1867–1997* [*Outline History Of The Polish Sokół Movement In The Years 1867–1997*], Częstochowa 2001, p. 43 [in Polish].

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>45</sup> Z. Pawluczuk, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne "Sokół" okręgu lubelskiego w latach 1905–1939...*, p. 26.

<sup>46</sup> T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne "Sokół" w Częstochowie w latach 1906–1918...*, p. 30.

<sup>47</sup> M. Terech, *Malo znana karta dziejów Sokolstwa Polskiego* [*Little Known Page In The History Of Polish "Sokół" Movement*], Warsaw 1938, pp. 4–5 [in Polish]; The idea of establishing an organ which would regulate the activity of "Sokół" associations was first put forward by members of GS "Sokół" in Zakopane, by sending a letter regarding this matter to the head office of The Union of Polish Gymnastic Societies "Sokół" in the Austrian Empire; Przewodnik Gimnastyczny "Sokół" [Gymnastic Guide "Sokół"] 1938 no. 9 [in Polish].

<sup>48</sup> M. Terech, *Malo znana karta dziejów Sokolstwa Polskiego* [*Little Known Page In The History Of Polish "Sokół" Movement*], Warsaw 1938, pp. 7–11 [in Polish].

Members of GS “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom participated in the Rally of Grunwald, which took place on 14–16 July, 1910 in Cracow. The Rally of Grunwald, showed, apart from the organizational force and physical fitness of “Sokół” ranks, the stance of “Sokół” on the scale of nationwide efforts to resurrect the independence of Poland. Falcons from the Polish Kingdom took part in other “Sokół” rallies, among others in June 1907, a rally was held in Lviv to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the nest establishment, which was attended by Łódź falcons<sup>49</sup>. The Łódź nest was represented by: Piotr Małachowski, Waclaw Morsztynkiewicz and Franciszek Waszkiewicz.

In 1913, on the territory of the Russian partition more than 40 “Sokół” nests were active, affiliated in three districts, which gathered around 6,000 members<sup>50</sup>.

As M. Ponczek writes: “During World War I – particularly from 1915 to 1918 – falcons from the former Polish Kingdom almost entirely filled the vigilance committee (created after exit of the Russians and before the final consolidation of the German occupation) in Warsaw and whole Congress Poland with its members. In 1917, the vigilance committee and «Sokół» were officially dissolved”<sup>51</sup>.

The beginnings of the GS “Sokół” activity in the Polish Kingdom fell on the years 1905-1906. On the territory of the Polish Kingdom nests of “Sokół” were set up, among others, in Częstochowa, Lublin, Łódź, Piotrków Trybunalski, Radom, Warsaw and Dąbrowa Basin. Falcons in the Polish Kingdom founded The Union of Gymnastic Societies “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom.

The legal activity of “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom did not last long. Tsarist authorities suspended on 4 September 1906, the legal activity of “Sokół” on the territory of the Polish Kingdom. “Sokół” went on to the underground activity (in the period until 1914). Gymnastic Society “Sokół” in the Polish Kingdom was active in the field of physical education, and it was also involved in cultural, educational, independence and publishing activities.

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<sup>50</sup> K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów “Sokoła” na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947*..., p. 10.

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## Streszczenie

### Działalność Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół” w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1905–1914

Tradycje ruchu sokolego na ziemiach polskich sięgają roku 1867. Wówczas powstało we Lwowie pierwsze gniazdo Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół”. W Królestwie Polskim i na obszarze ziem polskich zaboru rosyjskiego, pierwsze gniazda Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół” powstały w latach 1905–1906.

Na obszarze Królestwa Polskiego gniazda „Sokoła” założono m.in. w Częstochowie, Łodzi, Piotrkowie Trybunalskim, Radomiu, Warszawie oraz w Zagłębiu Dąbrowskim. Legalna działalność „Sokoła” w Królestwie Polskim nie trwała długo. Władze carskie zawiesiły w dniu 4 września 1906 r. legalną działalność „Sokoła” na obszarze Królestwa Polskiego. „Sokół” przeszedł do działalności konspiracyjnej (w okresie do 1914 r.).

**Słowa kluczowe:** Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne „Sokół”, Królestwo Polskie, edukacja fizyczna.