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**THE YMCA IN CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
AS ONE OF THE WAYS OF AMERICANISING CENTRAL
EUROPE AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR
(BASE OF INFORMATION AND METHODOLOGICAL
APPROACHES TO RESEARCHING THE ISSUE)**

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SUMMARY

The YMCA is essentially an organisation uniting people of Christian faith. The basis of its work was the so-called “Four-way program”, which included religious (spiritual), educational and physical education activities. This organisation was established in London in 1844, having been formed by sales clerk George Williams. The YMCA began to spread rapidly throughout Great Britain. From here it spread to France and subsequently to Holland and Germany. It particularly flourished in the United States of America and came to Czechoslovakia from there after the First World War. Here, the YMCA began to establish military and later student residences. It played an important role in developing basketball, volleyball and other sports. It significantly contributed to the rise of permanent summer camps. It also brought a new view of the world, emerging from American Protestantism. The basic method we have decided to use is the comparative method. Using this classic method of historical research, it is necessary to compare the extent to which the YMCA organisation contributed to the “Americanisation” of national cultures of observed countries and how much it influenced young people. Due to the anticipated inequality and imbalance of sources, the method of probing will have to be used to assess individual regions. Unpublished archive materials as well as magazines and news reports from the period, which have not been systematically researched as yet, will be used as sources of information.

Key words: activity, trade unions, sports grounds, results, sportsmen, functionaries

INTRODUCTION

The YMCA, the Young Men’s Christian Association is essentially an organisation uniting people of Christian faith. However, its program was not merely restricted to faith but had a wider dimension. The basis of the work of the YMCA organisation was its so-called “Four-way program”, which included religious (spiritual), educational and physical education activities.¹

¹ RIESS, L. W. (1923). Úkoly tělovýchovného odboru Ymky. *YMCA (Časopis sdružení YMCA v Československu)*, 2(3), pp. 65–68.

This organisation was established in London in the mid-19th century, having been formed by sales clerk George Williams. To start with, the YMCA had a mere 12 members and had been established as an amateur missionary organisation, a lay apostolate for young people. George Williams wanted to offer young people the possibility of spending free time whilst focusing on Christian principles. At first, the YMCA organisation was only made up of a group of enthusiasts, but this association began to spread very rapidly around London, England and very soon into other countries around the world. In 1852 Williams spent time on business in Paris. Here he initiated a meeting of local pastors, who, thanks to his subsequent financial aid, established the YMCA in Paris, spreading further from here into Holland and Germany. It particularly flourished in the United States of America, where a number of new sports emerged.²

Through the YMCA, these sports began to penetrate into our country after the First World War. Indeed, during the First World War, there were relatively large numbers of foreign YMCA workers on the battlefields and in the Allies' POW camps. Not only did they set up reading rooms, tearooms and kitchens for soldiers but they also offered them leisure activities, which the soldiers enthusiastically joined in with.³ It was in this way that the association became acquainted with Czechoslovak legionnaires, who they accompanied to Czechoslovakia after the war on the basis of an agreement between the US Ministry of Defence and the Czechoslovak Republic and began to cultivate basically unknown kinds of sports.⁴

Its international character was of great significance for our physical education and sport. The YMCA sent its workers abroad to be trained in various sports and, on returning, these people could pass on their experience gained in many countries of the world, where various kinds of sports had higher standards than in our country.⁵ In addition, it was not long before gyms and sports grounds began to be constructed here. Unlike a number of other organisations, it did not lack money, which it received from its American colleagues. Further money was gained from the state. Credit goes to the YMCA for investing a large sum of money from the subsidies that were granted to it by the Czechoslovak Republic in the form of extensive building warranties in buildings designated for physical education and sport. Inhabitants of Prague got their first sight of an indoor swimming pool in the YMCA palace, or of a banked running track and gymnastics hall. All of this was in one complex, comprising saunas and baths too. No centre or hotel in Czechoslovakia could offer anything like that. Dozens of playgrounds and sports grounds were built throughout our country from subsidies which individual YMCA organisations in the USA contributed to in solidarity. In addition, several civic centres were built for educational purposes as well as swimming pools, student restaurants and hostels.⁶

Sports like volleyball or basketball are extremely widespread in the Central Europe of today. However, few people know anything about their origins, their arrival in Central

² KONEČNÝ, J. (1930). *YMCA její vznik, dějiny a význam*. Praha, pp. 28–30.

³ HLAVÁČ, P. (2010). YMCA v Československé armádě na začátku 20. stol. In: *YMCA v proměnách času*. Praha: YMCA v ČR, pp. 5–8.

⁴ BUREŠ, P. & PLICHTA, J. (1931). *Sport a tělesná kultura v Čsl. republice a cizině*. Praha: Almanach sportu, p. 383.

⁵ National Archives in Prague, fund YMCA, pasteboard 4, sign. 8.

⁶ CHLÁPEK, P. (2004). *YMCA a její význam pro českou společnost*. Diplomová práce. Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, pp. 91–94.

European countries, about their initial popularity and propagation through the organisation that initially brought them here and equally about physical education and sport in the YMCA in general. However, in Central European countries the physical education and sporting activity of this organisation could have developed quite differently. One clear benefit for Central European historiography would be to attempt to compare the development in individual Central European countries. The submitted paper attempts to describe a way of researching this issue. It also provides a summary of sources of information, which will have to be studied in order to deal with the issue in full. It also presents a summary of what has already been carried out while dealing with the issue.

Central Europe

A special zone or region is often included in the division of Europe: Central Europe. This term was presumably used for the first time by the Vienna Peace Congress in 1815. It marked the area of today's Germany and Benelux (Europe intermédiaire). This special standing was first reflected in the German environment, where Germany was characterised by its central position.

In history, the Central European region has been interpreted in various ways and given various names. For example, the Central European trio (Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary) were joined with the Balkans to become Eastern Europe.⁷

The Central European region was further defined not only by industrial differences, which separate it from both Western and Eastern industrial zones, but Central Europe was also specific in terms of agriculture.

In history, there have also been several attempts to define Central Europe as a specific cultural area. One of the oldest cultural concepts defines Central Europe as the region of the "second wave" of universities, founded in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Central Europe also gets identified with the former Habsburg Monarchy, but many authors limit it to the triangle of Poland, Bohemia/Czechoslovakia and Hungary, others to the six nations: Austrians, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenians, Hungarians and Poles. However, these nations had relatively strong, close and long-lasting bonds with Germans living as a minority in the Czech lands, Poland and Hungary. Some German states or lands (Saxony, Brandenburg – Prussia, Silesia, the German Democratic Republic) shared a lengthy common existence with Central European nations. German influence has been very strong and is still apparent today.⁸

In 1950 Central Europe was defined as a crossing zone between the West and the East and it was even proposed to internally distinguish Western and Eastern Central Europe. However, during the Cold War these terms fell into oblivion, only to reappear in the eighties.⁹

⁷ BENEŠ, Z. (2010). Jinakost našich společných (nejen?) středoevropských dějin. *Historie – Otázky – Problémy: Jinakost našich společných dějin*, 3(2), pp. 11–19.

⁸ WANDYDZ, P. S. (1998). *Střední Evropa v dějinách: od středověku do současnosti: cena svobody* 1. Praha: Academia.

⁹ KŘEN, J. (2005). *Dvě století střední Evropy*. Praha: Argo, pp. 22–27.

American influence in Europe

From the very beginning of its existence, the United States of America has always appealed to Europeans. Over time, American democracy, its ideals, wealth and the vastness of the United States have become the subject of fascination and aspiration for millions of people around the world. In the second half of the 19th century, crowds of emigrants from Western, Northern and later from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe began to arrive in the United States of America. Millions of them were to make their dreams come true. They had reached the country offering the chance of a lifetime. For millions of other people around the world, the United States of America remain the land of plenty, land of countless possibilities and potential success or making a career “from shoe shiner to millionaire”. This image has been strengthened to a large extent by its inhabitants themselves, the recent emigrants and current citizens of the United States of America.

With American participation in the First World War and Woodrow Wilson’s politics, Americans and America began to influence the European continent at an unprecedented rate. After the United States of America’s entry into the war, “The Gospel of Americanism” and the widespread activity of the Committee on Public Information, led by George Creel to inform and educate, left permanent traces here. The Committee played an important role in popularising America and its priorities in Europe and the world. It effectively promoted and “sold” the United States of America as an example of democracy and freedom as well as its superb system ensuring prosperity and its technological and civilizational progress.

Two million soldiers in the American expeditionary force opened up America to Europeans with their tinned food, uniforms, good equipment, modern technology, etc. For Europeans, America became particularly associated with mechanisation, automation, modernisation, unlimited possibilities, abundance and affluence. However, it was not only various products but also ideals and examples of American democracy that began to penetrate into Europe. This was the beginning of Americanisation of the “Old Continent” in big style.

It was in the twenties that the film boom also took off (first silent then spoken film) for American films began to enter Europe as well. Previously there had been foreign films from Germany, Italy and Denmark. The first American screen stories were brought to Czechoslovakia by theatre and film director Miloš Havel.¹⁰ Not only films began to spread here but also jazz.

After the end of the First World War and the Paris Peace Conference, it seemed and was expected that the United States of America would remain active in Europe. Many American politicians also spoke of the need for American participation in the economic and political reconstruction of the “Old Continent”. That was understood as a special mission to be executed. With Americans having everything a Europe destroyed by war and hopelessness needed at their disposal, expectations were even higher. That particularly applied to Central Eastern Europe and above all to states which had been newly established after the First World War, i.e. Czechoslovakia and Poland, among others.

¹⁰ He brought mute filmed serial stories from the wartime. These were about cowboys or Indians, some of them were thrillers and so on. WAIC, M. & KÖSSL, J. (1992). *Český tramping 1918–1945*. Praha: Práh, p. 16.

Some politicians also played a significant and inseparable role in America's influence, particularly Wilson and Hoover, who typified for many Europeans the best sides of America, i.e. freedom, democracy, humanitarian aid, idealism, altruism, etc. As in Poland, President Wilson was a legendary figure in Czechoslovakia and enjoyed extraordinary popularity. For millions of Czechs and Slovaks, he symbolized American aid in gaining independence and the United States of America's responsibility for the fate of small nations, oppressed for centuries. This "defender of democracy" was a widely renowned personality.¹¹

A significant role in the "Americanisation" of Central Europe was played by the YMCA. During the First World War there were relatively large numbers of foreign YMCA workers on the battlefields and in the Allies' POW camps. Not only did they set up reading rooms, tearooms and kitchens for soldiers but they also offered them leisure activities, which the soldiers enthusiastically joined in with.¹² It was in this way that the association became acquainted with Czechoslovak legionnaires, who they accompanied to Czechoslovakia after the war on the basis of an agreement between the US Ministry of Defence and the Czechoslovak Republic. The YMCA also came to Poland in 1919, with Polish military troops from the west, however. In both countries it began to carry out its humanitarian and social mission. It began to set up social centres, canteens, reading and common rooms for soldiers, it took care of prisoners of war and promoted physical education and sport.

Subject of research

After the end of the First World War, Central Europe was reorganised in Versailles, France. Apart from reparations being required from the defeated states and the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, defeated Germany also lost part of its territory, part of which went to the newly-established states of Poland and Czechoslovakia, the latter gaining only a negligible part.¹³ This led to the overall reorganisation of Central Europe and its division into the victorious states – Czechoslovakia, Poland and the defeated states – Germany and Hungary, which was the successor state of the former Hungarian Empire.

The YMCA had been established in both of the defeated countries in the 1880's. The YMCA had also worked in the territory of the newly-formed Czechoslovakia in the second half of the 19th century, but only through the so-called "Christian Youth Unions", whose activity was significantly hindered by the First World War.¹⁴ It wasn't until after the First World War that it actually became widespread, just as in the territory of the newly-formed Poland.

¹¹ PARAFIANOWICZ, H. (2003). Americký mýtus a amerikanizace Československa po první světové válce. *Lidě města*, 5(9). Available at: <http://lidemesta.cz/index.php?id=661> [2012-12-31].

¹² HLAVÁČ, P. (2010). YMCA v Československé armádě na začátku 20. stol. In: *YMCA v proměnách času*. Praha: YMCA v ČR, pp. 5–8.

¹³ But it was just a really small area – Hlučínsko. Hlučínsko was connected to Czechoslovakia at 4. 2. 1920. Villages Píšť and Hat' stood the part of the Germany. They were connected to Czechoslovakia in 1923. Hlučínsko was the area of 316 km² where lived about 46.000 people. KŘEN, J. (2005). *Dvě století střední Evropy*. Praha: Argo, p. 378.

¹⁴ These were religious associations which were founded thanks to G. Williams. He visited Prague in 1884. That was the short time after the conference in Berlin. Historie – YMCA [online] [2013-01-23]. Available at: <http://www.ymca.cz/info-o-ymca/historie/>.

In Central Europe, the physical education and sports activities of the YMCA have not yet been systematically researched. In order to synthesise this, it is necessary to use yet unpublished archive materials, primary and secondary sources which haven't yet been systematically researched. Gathering and successively recording them would become a significant contribution to the historiography of inter-war Central Europe.

However, to start with, what will have to be outlined is the arrival and origin of the YMCA in these particular countries as well as their political and religious situation. Furthermore, this problem requires an analysis of the activity of the YMCA in the inter-war period, which was the time when this organisation perhaps flourished most. This period was also extremely important for the fact that it was not until the end of the First World War that the YMCA began to spread among the masses in Czechoslovakia and Poland and, in addition, began to develop in the field of physical education and sport. The YMCA in Czechoslovakia was first dissolved in 1943, but it had already significantly restricted its activity with the approach of the Second World War. To introduce the issue, however, several important circumstances from the history of this organisation and the reasons for establishing it will also have to be outlined.

Along with the above-mentioned countries, it would be worth briefly mentioning other countries. It will definitely be necessary to describe the beginning of the YMCA in England, where this organisation was born and spread from. The rise of the YMCA in the United States of America can also be outlined, as it was here that this union grew significantly and significantly supported, in material and funding, the YMCA organisations which emerged in other countries around the world.

Methodological approach

The methodological approach will be based on researching documents in archives, period press and literature.

The basic method which will have to be used is the comparative method. With the help of this classic method of historical research, it will first be necessary to compare the acceptance of the YMCA as a Christian organisation in Catholic Poland and Hungary, Catholic – Protestant Germany and religiously-lacking Czechoslovakia. Another subject of comparison has to be how this originally English organisation, strongly supported by the United States of America, was accepted by the Central European states on the winning side on the one hand and the defeated on the other.

For the given comparison, it is also worthwhile observing the YMCA's share on the "Americanization" of the national cultures of the researched countries, to what extent young people were influenced and, not least, the credit the Christian organisation in question deserves for developing sport in Central European countries.

No less important will be to focus on the success, popularity and size of the member base of individual sports cultivated in the YMCA. Furthermore, it will be necessary to compare numbers and types of sports grounds built by the YMCA in Central European countries in relation to their economic policy.

The main question to pose is whether physical education and sport was developed by this organisation in the same way in the Central European countries or whether the YMCA, for example, developed in a completely different way in each Central European country.

This problem also requires defining and describing which of the observed factors differed and which corresponded. No less important will be to carry out an analysis of matches and differences between the objects of comparison.

Due to the fact that this is a comparison of territories which vary in size, such as Germany and Hungary, it will be necessary to take into consideration differences in the populations of these macro-regions. Some objects which are to be compared with each other will have to have their quantitative side investigated (e.g. the number of inhabitants per sports ground, etc.).

No less important will be to apply the comparative method in relation to a time axis. This is where two elements have to be confronted – what happened in a certain place sooner and what happened later (e.g. when the YMCA first started to build sports grounds in Central European countries). Some historical processes took place in different places at the same time (e.g. sport in summer camps). Furthermore, some of these researched objects are sure to have gone through a similar historical development, each of which having proceeded at a different pace, however. All of these processes should be taken into consideration.

Due to the anticipated inequality and imbalance of sources, the method of probing will have to be used to assess individual regions. A representative local organisation will have to be chosen in each state. However, certain choice criteria have to be considered in its selection (population of the town it operated in, etc.). After selecting representative organisations, it will be necessary to compare the observed criteria, which should lead to gaining a basic overview of the development of the YMCA in particular Central European states.

Furthermore, this problem requires a description of the development of physical education and sport in the YMCA in various Central European states in the inter-war period, including the arrival of the YMCA in these states, an outline of the political situation and a description of the events in given places dependent on time. Facing the task of observing the development of a relatively large territory, it will be necessary to take into consideration the fact that our researched events were taking place in this territory simultaneously at several levels. Therefore, events which were taking place in many places at the same time will have to be researched. This calls for using a synchronised approach to historical development. However, it is appropriate to combine this approach with a diachronic approach, which enables the description of the development of events which took place in one place dependent on time. The synthesis of the history of a larger unit should be based on a combination of both of these approaches. These two approaches to historical background principally correspond with the progressive method, because it comes to observing and recording of past events as they progressed chronologically.

The use of further methods which could be used while working on this issue is dependent on what materials and information are gained for this topic.

Sources of information

Facing a task that is of a research (theoretical) and documentary nature, it will be necessary to devote much attention to working through archive collections, regional periodicals, printed sources and literature. A big problem to be anticipated in this case will evidently be the inequality and imbalance of the occurrence of individual topic areas in archive collections, periodicals, sources, literature and on the internet, both from the point of view of

time and subject matter. However, it would be worthwhile trying to confront more sources from the period and subject them to a thorough internal review (an external one is unlikely to be relevant).

The YMCA was established in 1844 and still exists today. However, this association was not aimed solely at physical education and sport. This constituted only one part of the activities of the organisation as a whole. Consequently, it can be assumed that most information will concern another topic area. Researching Czech and Slovakian literature concerning this issue should not present too many obstacles. However, difficulties will set in during the heuristic research of foreign archive collections and the study of foreign press and literature from the period. This part will be both time-consuming and costly. Some of the foreign sources and literature have already been looked up. This literature is cited in the chapter Selected Bibliography. Its specific content and significance in dealing with this issue is not fully known.

It could be assumed that there are relatively large numbers of materials to be gained on this topic in the National Archive in Prague, but quite the opposite is true. The YMCA collection in the National Archive in Prague contains information of a very diverse nature, but little of it concerns physical education and sport. Although the whole collection is sorted into areas of subject matter, it is rather difficult to find one's way around it. In addition, very little information concerns the period of the First Republic. On the contrary, most materials deal with the fifties, which this topic is not actually focused on. One of the main reasons is the fact that a large proportion of materials from this period were destroyed by the Gestapo. Therefore, the archive can supply only a few reports on the activity of the YMCA in certain towns in a given year, several requests to obtain subsidies for physical education, several reports from summer camps (these were filed in a separate unit) and reports on sending YMCA workers to foreign vocational schools. After exploiting this information, the problem needs to be focused on another available archive in the Czech Republic, which is the YMCA Archive in the Czech Republic.¹⁵

The YMCA Archive in the Czech Republic likewise contains information of a diverse nature. A large number of annuals, reports or almanacs from YMCA summer camps are to be found in the archive. Correspondence between individual members of this organisation and state offices is also not negligible. However, finding one's way around this archive is relatively complicated. The archive is not sorted in a very systematic way. Despite this, however, it contains a large amount of information important for this issue.¹⁶

There are YMCA archives in other Central European countries too. However, their content and significance for a potential study is so far unknown. As well as gaining information from these archives, it will be necessary to visit other archives and libraries in the countries where this part of the history of the YMCA is to be researched. To mention some of them: Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie, Archiwum Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Zentralbibliothek der Sportwissenschaften der Deutschen Sporthochschule Köln, Magyar Országos Levéltár or Országos Széchényi Könyvtár.

Period press is likely to be one of the biggest sources of information. However, its fragmentation around archives and libraries will be a big drawback. Information about sports

¹⁵ National Archives in Prague, fund YMCA.

¹⁶ Archives YMCA in Czech Republic.

matches and their results can be easily found in sports periodicals which were issued in the inter-war period. The weekly *STAR*¹⁷ and *Sport*¹⁸ contain a relatively large number of match reports and the organisation of individual matches, championships and competitions. Articles on the history of individual sports and their introduction in this country can also be found in them. They also contain a wide range of photographs. There are, of course, similar types of period press in other Central European countries and they will have to be studied in depth in order to successfully research this problem. A similar weekly can be found in Poland under the name of *Przegląd Sportowy*.¹⁹

Táborový zpravodaj YMCA, a magazine issued regularly by the YMCA, is of great significance for discovering facts. As its name suggests, its content mostly concerns the camp environment. Summer camps were very popular among YMCA members. It could even be claimed that the YMCA was the impulse behind the organisation of permanent summer camps in Czechoslovakia. This magazine contains a large number of articles and photographs from the camp life of YMCA members. The camps, of course, also ran sports activities. The magazine also contains a range of instruction manuals on how to make sports equipment (e.g. longbows, canoes, etc.).²⁰

Other important materials include, above all, almanacs from YMCA summer camps, which contain a wide range of information and photographs from seasonal summer sports activities. Besides these, there were, for example, *YMCA* magazines containing (along with photographs) information on the history of the YMCA in various places in the Czech Republic, reports from summer camps, reports on the work of the physical education department of the YMCA and reports on the activity of the YMCA in certain years during the First Republic.²¹

Summer camp activity was also described by J. First in his book *Cesty a cíle našich táborníků: Účel a cíle letních táborů YMCA*. The book described camp regularities, everything a camp resident has to know and be able to demonstrate, what kind of tests of physical fitness there are in camps, what games were popular in summer camps and what achievements are necessary for various commendations.²²

In the interwar period, the so-called *Nová tělesná výchova* was also issued. This was a journal devoted to physical education and sport. It contained, for example, information about the YMCA's physical education colleges in the United States of America or the results and courses of matches played in a particular year. This journal always contained a large number of photographs.²³

The history concerning the establishment of the YMCA is relatively short but very accurately described in the book by J. Konečný called *YMCA její vznik, dějiny a význam*. This is one of the main publications from which information could be drawn for the part dealing with stating the YMCA to the whole issue.²⁴

¹⁷ *STAR*, vol. 1926–1938.

¹⁸ *Sport*, vol. 1923–1929.

¹⁹ *Przegląd Sportowy*, vol. 1 (1921) – 19 (1939).

²⁰ *Táborový zpravodaj YMCA*, vol. 2 (1926), 3 (1927), 4 (1928).

²¹ *YMCA (Časopis sdružení YMCA v Československu)*, vol. 1 (1922) – 5 (1926).

²² *FIRST, J. (1935). Cesty a cíle našich táborníků*. Praha.

²³ *Nová tělesná výchova*, vol. 1 (1927/1928) – 11 (1938).

²⁴ *KONEČNÝ, J. (1930). YMCA její vznik, dějiny a význam*. Praha.

In 1926, Kroměříž YMCA published the journal *Službou k cíli (řetěz služby vykonané YMCOU v Kroměříži pro mládež a občanstvo města i okolí za rok 1925)*. It describes, for example, the history of the worldwide YMCA or all the activities it carried out in 1925. Even numbers of competitors and matches in particular fields of sport are stated.²⁵

An interesting publication, where a large amount of information can also be found is the book by J. A. Pipal called *Co je to tělesná výchova?*, in which the author describes his opinions on physical exercise and its importance. In this book, J. A. Pipal outlines the system of physical education and sport in the United States of America and suggests the modernisation of physical education and sport in Czechoslovakia according to this model.²⁶

Several dissertations concerning the YMCA have been published in the Czech Republic. Some worth mentioning are: *YMCA a její význam pro českou společnost* by Mr Petr Chlápek²⁷ and *YMCA jako středisko výchovy mládeže v Československu 1919–1951* by Helga Černá.²⁸ However, both of the dissertations only deal marginally with physical education and sport in the YMCA. Mr Chlápek captures this organisation in great detail and focuses on whether the educational work of the YMCA had any specific impact on the lives of individuals in Czechoslovakia, who influenced their immediate vicinity with their attitudes. This work also relatively extensively captures the development of the YMCA in Czechoslovakia, including the arrival of the American YMCA in the Czechoslovak Republic.

YMCA jako středisko výchovy mládeže v Československu 1919–1951 documents the activities and influence of this Christian social-educational organisation on young people in Czechoslovakia in the first half of the 20th century. Its content deals more with physical education and sport in this association. However, it is by far not as comprehensive.

Perhaps the only self-contained work in the Czech Republic concerning the history of physical education and sport in the YMCA is the dissertation by Tomáš Tlustý – *Tělesná výchova a sport v organizacích YMCA a YWCA v meziválečném Československu*. However, this is almost exclusively devoted to the development of individual sports which were propagated in Czechoslovakia by the YMCA.²⁹

In order to find out information about the activity of the YMCA and its work in specific parts of Central Europe, we can also make use of works which do not only concern this association but include the physical education and sports activities of a number of other organisations. One of them includes the “habilitation” work by J. Štumbauer – *Dějiny spolkové tělesné výchovy a sportu v Č. Budějovicích od poloviny 19. století do roku 1938*.³⁰

For an outline of the political situation in individual countries where information on the history of the YMCA has to be sought in order to research this issue, the book by Jan Křen

²⁵ *Službou k cíli (řetěz služby vykonané YMCOU v Kroměříži pro mládež a občanstvo města i okolí za rok 1925)* (1926). Kroměříž: YMCA.

²⁶ PIPAL, J. A. (1920). *Co je to tělesná výchova?* Brno: YMCA.

²⁷ CHLÁPEK, P. (2004). *YMCA a její význam pro českou společnost*. (Diploma thesis). Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze.

²⁸ ČERNÁ, H. (2009). *YMCA jako středisko výchovy mládeže v Československu 1919–1951*. (Diploma thesis). České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích.

²⁹ TLUSTÝ, T. (2012). *Tělesná výchova a sport v organizacích YMCA a YWCA v meziválečném Československu*. (Diploma thesis). České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích.

³⁰ ŠTUMBAUER, J. (1992). *Dějiny spolkové tělesné výchovy a sportu v Č. Budějovicích od poloviny 19. století do roku 1938*. (Habilitation thesis). Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze.

called *Dvě století střední Evropy* can be used. This book offers a comparatively interpreted history of Central European nations (Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Poles, Germans, Austrians and Jews) in the modern era from the turn of the 18th century to present.³¹

In Poland, the issue of the history of sport in the YMCA has been dealt with by Ewa Kałamacka³² and Bernard Woltmann.³³ In Germany, Rolf Müller³⁴ focused on physical education and sport in the YMCA and András Koczogh³⁵ in Hungary. However, these are probably cases of partial studies or works which concern a different period. Despite this, however, it is necessary to look up these studies as well and try to gain some important information from them.³⁶

CONCLUSION

Despite physical education and sport being only one of the activities of the YMCA, it had a very serious approach to this part of its program. In inter-war Czechoslovakia, it was responsible for the “Americanisation” and modernisation of Czechoslovak physical education and sport, through which it introduced new sports and training methods or contributed to the introduction of the tradition of permanent summer camps. There are currently works describing physical education and sport in the YMCA in inter-war Czechoslovakia. However, the question remains whether the YMCA did the same in other Central European countries or whether it developed in a very different way. This question remains yet unanswered since there are currently no extensive publications describing this issue in a systematic and comprehensive way. For such works to be created, it will, above all, be necessary to visit designated archives and study period and current sports literature from Central European countries. The subsequent complex researching of the history of physical education and sport in the YMCA in Central European countries would undoubtedly become a significant contribution to Central European historiography.

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YMCA VE STŘEDOEVROPSKÝCH ZEMÍCH JAKO JEDNA Z CEST AMERIKANIZACE STŘEDNÍ EVROPY PO 1. SVĚTOVÉ VÁLCE (INFORMAČNÍ BÁZE A METODOLOGICKÉ PŘÍSTUPY K ŘEŠENÍ PROBLÉMU)

TOMÁŠ TLUSTÝ

SOUHRN

YMCA je v první řadě organizace sdružující lidi křesťanského vyznání. Základem její práce byl takzvaný „Čtyřstranný program“, do kterého patřila činnost náboženská (duchovní), vzdělávací a tělovýchovná. Tato organizace vznikla v roce 1844 v Londýně, kde ji založil obchodní příručí George Williams. Organizace se začala rychle šířit po Velké Británii. Odtud se rozšířila do Francie, následně do Holandska a Německa. K jejímu velkému rozkvětu došlo především ve Spojených státech amerických, odkud se dostala po 1. světové válce do Československa. YMCA zde začala zřizovat vojenské a později studentské domovy. Zasloužila se o rozvoj basketbalu, volejbalu a dalších sportů. Výrazně zde přispěla ke vzniku trvalých letních táborů. Rovněž přinesla nový názor na svět vycházející z amerického protestantismu. Základní metoda, kterou budeme užívat, je metoda komparativní. Pomocí této klasické metody historického výzkumu je nutno porovnat podíl organizace YMCA na „amerikanizaci“ národních kultur sledovaných zemích a míru ovlivnění mládeže. Vzhledem k předpokládané nerovnoměrnosti a nevyváženosti pramenů bude nutno využít metodu sondy k posouzení jednotlivých regionů. Při zpracovávání informací bude využíváno nepublikovaných archivních materiálů, dobových časopisů a noviny- nových zpráv, které dosud nebyly systematicky zpracovány.

Klíčová slova: činnost, odbory, sportoviště, výsledky, sportovci, funkcionáři

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