

WRITING HISTORY

A New World History of Sports (7 VOLUMES)—An Example for Interdisciplinary Cooperation and International Comprehension

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In the conception of the above sports-history it was strived for a connection between a chronological and problem-orientated presentation. In detail the 1st volume deals with theories of origin, physical exercises of autochtonous people and of the early high-cultures. Physical exercises have been an integral part of socialisation in the ancient civilisations of China, India, Mesopotamia, Israel, Egypt and Crete.

Volume 2 is concentrated on the physical exercises of the Greek and Roman Antique. It is introduced by a cultursociological study of ancient horsemen people. Riding is considered as one of the most important innovations in regard to physical education, giving the dynamic power for the rise of large empires based on the use of horse-drawn war-chariots and bow- and lance riding. At last riding became Olympic. Until today a change in social structure is mirrored in the popularization of riding. The development of Greek gymnastics, seen as a process leading from a democratization of feudal sports to professionalism shows a parallel to the development of modern sports, whereas the public games and physical exercises of the Roman people have mass-psychological, social-integrative and system-stabilizing effects. The baths, where all classes were allowed in, served for reason of hygiene, relaxation and education.

The double-volume (3.1 and 3.2) "Physical education and sports in Germany" deals with the time from the German tribes until World War I and from that time until today. It starts with the overlapping chapter "Intention and task of history in connection with modern science of history", which contains a discussion of different theories and historical conceptions and shows the consequences of changes in the science of history in regard to knowledge, methods and theoretic foundations of sports history. Main topics of 3.1 are: physical education of the German tribes, the old age and the philanthrops; there is a special stress upon physical education developed by Jahn and it is shown how gymnastics were used for national movements and an authoritarian education.

Volume 3.2 continues the chapter about Neo-Olympism between nationalism and internationalism. It describes the development of the Olympic movement from 1918 to 1980 as well as the crises of the Olympic idea and Olympism in general. Detailed professional reports deal with: educational reforms before and after the First World War and the influences they had on physical education in schools, sports in the Republic of Weimar and the German Reich; the reorganization of sports in West Germany until the foundation of the German Sports Federation.

Volume 4 has got the headline: "Big sports nations." It deals with those nations which have integrated sports in their everyday life in a special way: USA, USSR, Great Britain and Japan. The energy and impulses coming from those nations were of extreme help by giving sports its world wide expansion and acceptance.

Volume 5 is dedicated to physical exercises and body culture in Europe. The concept of this volume is based on the imagination of a common history of all European People which is also found in the different forms of physical exercises, sports and body culture. The articles show variations in thinking and acting based on the special national culture. Typical for the new sports history in Europe are: the confrontation between physical exercises by Jahn and Swedish gymnastics, respectively the Slavic Sokol exercises, between sports of the working-class and the civil physical exercises of different forms of living and between the definition of physical exercises as a pre-militarian and a pedagogically orientated education.

Volume 6 was completed after four years with more than 65 authors working on it and starts with the central theme: "Physical Exercise in Changing Societies".

The introductory chapter focuses upon a discussion of the profound changes which colonization has brought about in the African, Asian and Latin American countries, and how existing structures were disrupted or transformed.

The different cultural traditions are in accord with the various types of formative athletic systems. Collectively, it is particularly displayed in the six Commonwealth-states as well as in the African, Asian and Latin American countries where one finds a high degree of social differentiation which reaches from archaic forms via pre-industrial societies to highly developed industrial nations.