

„SERBIAN SOKO“ IN STEUBENVILLE (OHIO)

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SUMMARY

Serbs who lived in America (more precisely, in the territory of United States) began to accept the very idea of Sokolism in mid-1907. One of first initiators of this idea was Danilo Radjevic, who worked and lived in Butte (Montana). In early 1909 began to appear the first initiatives for the establishment of Serbian Soko societies (SSS) in this territory. During 1909 two SSS were established, first one in Cincinnati (Ohio) and second one in Detroit (Michigan), and in the following year five more. During 1911 three societies were established, and in 1912 more than ten, among which Serbian Soko Society in Steubenville (Ohio). This paper deals with Serbian Sokol Society in Steubenville in order to determine when the Society was formed, who were its initiators, founders and members, which were its main activities and what kind of contribution the society had to development of Sokolism in the territory of America (United States).

Key words: sokolism, society, administration, members.

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INTRODUCTION

The ideas of Serbian Sokolism Serbs settled in America (more precisely - United States) began to accept in mid-1907, and the first initiatives for the establishment of Serbian Soko Societies (SSS) appeared in beginning of 1909. By the end of that year two societies were established, in Cincinnati (Ohio)¹ and Detroit (Michigan)², and in the following 1910, five more societies were established in: Gary (Indiana), Chicago (Illinois), Barberton (Ohio), Akron (Ohio) and Indiana Harbor (Indiana). In 1911 three other societies were founded in: St. Louis (Missouri), Butte (Montana) and New York (New York), and in the following year more than ten societies were established and started working.

In mid-June 1912, there were more than 200 000 male and female sokols in Europe: Bulgarians (6 000), Croats (8 000), Czechs (100 000), Malorusi (50 000), Poles (34 288), Russians (2 000), Serbs (3 100) and Slovaks (7 122).³

In America there were more than 27 000 male and female sokols: Croats (700), Czechs (7 800), Malorusi (800), Poles (10 000), Serbs (600), Slovaks (7 700) and Slovenians (100).⁴

SUBJECT AND GOAL

Main subject of this paper is Serbian Sokolism in America (United States) and our goal is to research and highlight main initiators, establishment and work of Serbian Soko society in Steubenville (Ohio) and its contribution to development of Sokolism in this territory.

METHOD

During writing authors used historical method. Available sources dealing with Serbian Sokolism in America (USA) were reviewed and critically analyzed.

¹ See more: Petar Pavlović, Nenad Živanović, Kristina Pantelić Babić & Danilo Pavlović, Beginnings of Serbian Sokolism in America, *FIEP Bulletin*, Vol. 85, No. 1-2, 2014, pp. 6 – 12.

² See more: Petar Pavlović, Kristina Pantelić Babić, Nenad Živanović & Danilo Pavlović, "Serbian Sokol" in Detroit (Michigan), *9th FIEP European Congress and 7th International Scientific Congress "Sport, stress, adaptation"*, Sophia, Bulgaria, Congress proceedings, 2014, pp. 342 – 347.

³ Кратка статистика славенских сокола, *Српска Ружеч*, год. 8, бр. 90, Сарајево, четвртак 7 (20) јуни 1912, стр. 2.

⁴ Ibid.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First initiatives for establishment of Serbian Soko Society in Steubenville originated from the group of local Serbs in October 1911, after establishment of Serbian Soko Parish in America (SSPA). At the end of October that year Plavša Leskovac from Steubenville addressed a letter to SSPA's Administration where he asked them to send him instructions for establishment of Serbian Soko Society and announced that he will do his best to establish this society as soon as possible. He also asked them to send him few copies of journal "Soko". This letter arrived to SSPA's Administration before their session and was read at the session on November 15th 1911, and Parish secretary-general Milan Muslin, after reading the letter informed attendees that he has already replied and sent all the necessary to Steubenville.⁵

At the session of SSPA on January 15th 1912, among other things, they decided to thank Plavsa Leskovac from Steubenville "... for his activities regarding Sokolism."⁶ A letter from Plavsa Leskovac was also read in which he sent "... three clichés for sokol paper together with one sokol poem."⁷ They decided "... to give it to S. Printing office of D. Popović in Chicago, to issue this paper for his trade and from the same give 5% in favor of S.S.Parish, He thanked brother Leskovac."⁸

Those initiatives were realized in the beginning of March 1912. Provisional Administration Board was elected with task to prepare the Constitutional Assembly of SSS and Rules for this Society. On May 10th 1912 in Steubenville (Ohio) Constitutional Assembly of Serbian Soko Society in this place was held. The work of the Assembly, which included 22 members, was chaired by brother Plavša Leskovac. The Assembly was held by the following agenda:

1. Selection of the verifier of the record.
2. Report of the Provisional Management Board.
3. Dismissal of the Provisional Management Board.
4. Selection of the Management and Supervisory Board.
5. The election of the Leader of the Serbian Soko.
6. Selection of an envoy for SSPA.

⁵ Сједница Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 1, бр. 2, Њујорк, 1. децембар 1911.

⁶ Записник сједнице С. Соколске Жупе у Америци, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 2, Њујорк, 1. фебруар 1912, стр. 30.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

7. Establishment of reading room and a library.
8. Organization of Alphabetical courses.

Dmitar Jarić and Mića Momčilović were elected as verifiers.

The Provisional Administration Board submitted its report and the proposal of the Rules, which was unanimously accepted. At that time, 38 members were added to the Society: 24 regular, 5 assistants and 9 members of the Sokoyouth. At that time, there were a total of 60 members in the Society.

Subsequently, the Provisional Administration Board was relieved of its obligations and Management of SSS was elected by secret ballot.

The following sokols were elected to the Administration Board: Plavša Leskovac, Senior; Djuro Eremic, Deputy Senior; Mihailo Breljac, Secretary general; Dmitar Jarić, treasurer; Mile Momčilović, economist; Mića Momčilović and Uroš Čavić, deputies.

Supervisory Board: Dane Vukelić, President; Stanko Kljukovnica and Dragić Ralić, members.

Branko Mudrinić, who was previously a member of the SSS in Karlovci and Ogulin, was elected as Leader of Serbian Sokols.

Society's Senior, Plavša Leskovac, was also elected as an envoy for the SSPA.

They decided to set up a reading room and a library and write to Matica Srpska, Matica Hrvatska, the Literary Cooperative in Belgrade and to readers to help them acquire books.

At the end was decided "... to begin with (free) alphabetical course, and to be a compulsory subject for all illiterate executive members"⁹ of their Society and to send this proposal to the SSPA Administration.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Constituent Assembly, the Administration Board of the newly formed Society wrote and sent a letter to the SSPA in which they informed them that they had established the SSS, that they elected the Management and asked them to send them the conditions for their admission to SSPA, as well as ceremonial and suits for exercise. The letter was

⁹ Српски Соко у Стубенвилу, Охајо, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 4, Њујорк, 1. април 1912, стр. 61.

read at the SSPA meeting on March 15th 1912 in Gary, and it was decided to reply to them and send the requested materials.¹⁰

The letter to SSPA was also sent by the Leader of Serbian sokols from Steubenville, Branko Mudrinić, in which he asked them to send him a text (transcript) of simple exercises that will be performed at the First Serbian Soko Slet in June 1912 in Chicago. The letter was read at the SSPA session on March 15th 1912, and it was decided that Milan Meandzija, the Leader of SSPA, will send all the requested.

At the next session of SSPA, held on April 15th 1912, in Gary, among other things, it was decided to send the required suits to SSS from Steubenville, ceremonial and suits for exercise.¹¹ At that session, SSS from Steubenville paid \$ 30.25 to the SSPA for the membership fee.

At the exceptional assembly of the Society held on June 2nd 1912 in Steubenville, a new Administration was elected.

Following sokols were elected as members of the Administration Board: Mile Momčilović, Senior (in the previous administration was an economist); Rade Dražić, Deputy Senior; Momčilo Breljac, Secretary general; Dragić Ralić, treasurer (in the previous administration he was a member of the Supervisory Board); Mile Opalić, economist; Savo Dražić and Simo Jurjević, deputies.

As members of Supervisory Board: DMITAR Jarić, President; Simo Rebić and Djuro Hrkman, members.

Branko Mudrinić was re-elected as the Leader, and Milovan Grubić as his deputy.

The Assembly decided that the exercises and sessions should be held in the Hall of soko Djuro Jurjevića.

The address of the Society was: 519 Wells Street, Steubenville, O.¹²

On the First Serbian Soko Slet, on June 22nd and 23rd 1912 in Chicago, the Serbian Sokols from Steubenville did not participate in the competition, but only Miloš Duda, a member of the Society, was present.¹³

¹⁰ Записник Сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 4, Њујорк, 1. април 1912.

¹¹ Записник Сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 5, Њујорк, 1. мај 1912.

¹² Српски Соко у Стубенвилу, Охајо, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 7 и 8, Њујорк, 1. август 1912.

By the end of June 1912, they did not receive a reply to the letter about the Society's admission to the SSPA, which was read at the Parish session on March 15th that year, therefore they sent another letter at the end of June in which they again asked Parish to notify them whether their application is accepted and asked to receive: Soko rules, petitions and some equipment for exercise. Furthermore they also wrote "... that they heard that brother Miloš Duda at the Serbian Soko Assembly spoke of them poorly, as also protested regarding their admission to S.S.P. in A." ¹⁴

The content of the letter was discussed at the SSPA's session on July 7th 1912, and the present members of the Parish administration after the debate said: "... that brother Duda did not attack them at all, and therefore any suspicion regarding this matter is gone."¹⁵ They decided that Parish secretary Miloš Jokanović will reply to their letter and ask them to send money for the ordered items, as well as "... to try to settle with brother Duda, by chance if they were in dispute."¹⁶ Upon receipt of a letter from SSPA they immediately sent \$ 75.50 for the requested material (apparatus, suits, "Soko" journal and membership fee) and addressed a letter informing them that they elected Djuro Jurjevic as a benefactor of SSS in Steubenville, and Dana Vojnovic as an assistant member. The Society excluded Simo Rebić and Petar Tepavac, the first one due to change of place of residence and the other one due to non-payment of membership fee. The Parish was informed of this at a session on August 16th 1912 in Chicago. ¹⁷

Some members of SSS, in addition to other tasks, also wrote articles for some Serbian newspapers. Thus, Plavša Leskovac, the first Senior of Serbian sokols in Steubenville, wrote for "Soko" newspaper in 1911 and 1912. ¹⁸

As the Administration Board of SSS, although warned by the SSPA, did not settle its obligations towards the Parish (payment of membership fee, etc.), for

¹³ Први Српски Соколски слет у Чикагу, Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 7 и 8, Њујорк, 1. август 1912.

¹⁴ Душан Б. Поповић и Милош Јокановић: Записник прве сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, одржане 7. јула у „Српској Читаоници“ у Чикагу, Ил., Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 9, Њујорк, 1. септембар 1912, стр. 131.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Душан Б. Поповић и Милош Јокановић: Записник треће сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, одржане 16. августа 1912. у Чикагу, Ил., Соко, лист Српских Сокола у Америци, год. 2, бр. 10, Њујорк, 1. октобар 1912.

¹⁸ Сарадници Сокола у 1911. и 1912. години, Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање, год. 3, бр. 1 и 2, Њујорк, 1. фебруар 1913.

that reason, at the SSPA meeting on February 28th 1913 in Chicago, was decided that “Serbian Soko” from Steubenville will be excluded from the Parish.¹⁹

According to the annual report of SSPA for the period June 25th 1912 to June 25th 1913, in SSS from Steubenville on June 25th 1912 were in total 19 members, and as on February 28th 1913 “Serbian Soko” from Steubenville was excluded from the Parish, and by June 25th that year was not returned to its membership, for these reasons was not on the Parish list on June 25th 1913.²⁰

In reviewed and available sources we did not find more information about the work of this Society by the end of June 1914.

CONCLUSION

Serbian Soko Society in Steubenville (Ohio) during its existence fulfilled its duties and set Soko goals. During the course of this work, the Society gave a certain contribution to the literacy of the Serbian people (by organizing alphabetical courses), gathering of the Serbian people (with their membership, although not so many), cooperation with the Soko societies of other Slavic nations, as well as the expansion and development of the Sokol idea, not only among Serbs, but also among other Slavic nations.

Unfortunately, on February 28th, 1913, SSS “Serbian Soko” from Steubenville was excluded from the Serbian Soko Parish in America due to the failure to fulfill its financial obligations towards the Parish (non-payment of membership fee), and since then we have no data about it.

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¹⁹ Душан Б. Поповић и Милош Јокановић: Записник девете сједнице Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци, одржате 28. фебруара 1913. год. у Чикагу, Ил., *Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање*, год. 3, бр. 3 и 4, Њујорк, март – април 1913.

²⁰ Душан Б. Поповић и Милош Јокановић: Годишњи Извјештај Српске Соколске Жупе у Америци. – Од 25. јуна 1912. – 25. јуна 1913.-., *Соко, орган Српских Сокола у Америци и лист за народно просвјетивање*, год. 3, бр. 8, Њујорк, август 1913.

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„СРПСКИ СОКО“ У СТУБЕНВИЛУ (ОХАЈО)

САЖЕТАК

Идеје српског соколства Срби настањени у Америци почели су прихватати половином 1907. године, а почетком 1909. су се почеле јављати и прве иницијативе за оснивање српских соколских друштава. До краја 1909. године

основана су два друштва, у 1910. години још пет, током 1911. године основана су још три друштва а поред њих и Српска соколска жупа у Америци (ССЖА), односно Савез српских соколских друштава у Америци. У 1912. години основано је и почело са радом више од десет друштава, међу којима се налазило и друштво у Стубенвилу, држава Охајо. Овај рад бави се српским соколским друштвом у Стубенвилу са циљем да се утврди када је друштво настало, ко су његови иницијатори, оснивачи и чланови, које су му биле главне активности и колики допринос је друштво имало за развој соколства на простору Америке (САД-а). Аутори су користили историјски метод.

Кључне речи: соколство, друштво, управа, чланови.

«СЕРБСКИЙ СОКОЛ» В СТЬЮБЕНВИЛЛЕ (ОГАЙО)

АННОТАЦИЯ

Сербы, проживающие в Америке (на территории Соединенных Штатов) начали осваивать идею Соколизма в середине 1907 года. Один из инициаторов движения был Данило Раджевич, который работал и проживал в Бутте (штат Монтана). В начале 1909 года стали появляться первые инициаторы по организации обществ Сербского Сокола (ОСС). В течение 1909 года было организовано два таких общества, одно в Цинциннати (штат Огайо) и второе в Детройте (штат Мичиган), а в следующем году появилось еще пять обществ. В 1911 году было организовано три общества, а в 1912 – более 10, в число которых вошло и Общество Сербского Сокола в Стьюбенвилле (штат Огайо). В данной работе рассматривается сербское Общество Сокола в Стьюбенвилле с целью определения, когда было сформировано Общество, кто был его инициаторами, основателями и членами, которые осуществляли основную деятельность и какой вклад общество должно было внести в развитие Соколизма на территории Америки (США).

Ключевые слова: соколизм, общество, администрация, члены.

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