

**Sociohistorical analysis of sport and physical education in Romania:  
from communism to post-communism**

**Habilitation thesis**

**Abstract**

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## **Abstract**

Divided into four parts, this thesis contains in the first part all my published articles, in the second part we have future publications, in the third part the projects where I was involved as well as all the bibliographical sources from which I have started my research for the fourth part.

As announced in the preface, the central idea of my studies is to analyze the current situation of sport and physical education as a consequence of the historical legacy of 45 years of communism. Trying to make a connection between past and present my analysis has three main categories: performance sport, sport for all and physical education and sports, all viewed from a socio-historical perspective.

Regarding sports performance, I have analyzed the way the sport system, sports institutions and the various actors were shaped during the communist period. Another issue that concerned me was the athlete as a social actor and his integration in a post-competition society and how sports results were produced in terms of religious representations. Football as a performance sports has an incredible effect among its supporters ranging from supporters the crazed supporters (“ultras”) and hooligans. We analyzed how this phenomenon manifested for the supporters of the football team of Politehnica Timișoara. Romanian culture has created Oina as a traditional sport and I have analyzed several cultural aspects of the game compared to glyma, the traditional Icelandic sport.

Sport for all has been analyzed both from a conceptual standpoint, analyzing the evolution from mass sport, a concept specific for the communist era, which was dominated by the mass of people and its contribution to the development of the communist state (with the basics such as defending the country and increasing labor) to sport for all, where the individual and his personal fulfilment prevails. We analyzed the contribution sport and physical activity have had on leisure time to improve the quality of life of individuals who practice different sports branches (fitness, aerobics, outdoor sports, swimming, etc.). Regarding the age of the athletes, the sport for veterans turned into a new masters’ sport and thus we analyzed different aspects of practicing sports such as the concept of competition or socialization through sport. Furthermore, regarding

the age of practitioners, we analyzed the need for young people to seek new identity marks that are no longer within the institutional template (classic sports with federations, sports clubs, coaches etc.) by analyzing street dance as a type of sport practiced in special environments; the prison environment was analyzed both from the male and female prisoners' perspective.

Physical education and sport practiced in universities was analyzed in terms of discrimination based on gender, physical appearance (overweight) and disability (intellectual). The concept of discipline and punishment was analyzed in terms of military education and discipline as a communist legacy that is still reflected in the structure of the physical education class and which no longer corresponds to the new teaching methods. This has direct consequences on the quality of teaching, on the teacher-student relationship and on the perception of the importance of this subject as part of the educational curriculum.

We also analyzed the extracurricular activities and the accomplishment of school objectives through tourism activities and in higher education we also approached the topic of addictions.

In the second part of the thesis I presented the topics that will be published in the next period continuing with the historical analysis of sports during communism by tackling female artistic gymnastics, a branch of sport which created a valid system recognized worldwide, stay fit gymnastics practiced by women before 1989 and women's motivation to practice various branches of fitness in the current period.

Tackling ethnicity is part of my future endeavors. I will try to analyze the phenomenon of ethnic Hebrew and German athletes' emigration during the communist period from the perspective of the athlete. The phenomenon of defecting, a term which belongs to the same period, is also taken into consideration and analyzed as well as its consequences. Hungarians and winter sports as a form of expressing ethnic identity is one of the themes I also want to study.

Continuing to improve the teaching method will be achieved by publishing two books, one for the course of *Communication and Social Integration through Specific Activities* and the second will be a reprinting of the book *Introduction to Sociology of Sport* which will complete the first edition.

In the third part of the thesis I presented all the projects where I was involved and in the fourth part we have the bibliographic sources that I mentioned during habilitation thesis.