

**Sova A. O.,**

*c.h.s., associate professor of Olympic education department, Ivan Boberskyi Lviv State University of Physical Culture, Lviv*

### IVAN BOBERSKYI'S PUBLISHED WORKS ON OLYMPIC THEMATICS EDUTED IN LVIV BY THE “SOKIL” SOCIETY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XXth CENTURY

**Abstract.** *The article analyzes the publications of Ukrainian pressmen who covered the Olympic subject area on the pages of “Sokil'ski Visty” and “Visty z Zaporozha” Lviv “Sokil” periodicals. Major emphasis is made on the personality of Ivan Bobersky as the first and the main contributor and promoter of the Olympic idea among Ukrainians.*

**Key words:** Olympic Games, Olympic subject area, “Sokil” periodicals, Ivan Bobersky

Ukrainians took a keen interest and participated in the international Olympic movement since the restoration of the modern Olympics and the foundation of the International Olympic Committee, despite the fact that Ukrainian lands then were a part of Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russian Empire. In Galicia, in the first third of the twentieth century, numerous notes, articles, reflections on the Olympic issues and the reports from the Olympic Games were published in Ukrainian periodicals. The names of Professor Ivan Bobersky, Mykola Masiukevych, Stepan Hieduchok, Taras Franko, Edward Zharsky and others were among the most distinguished journalists of that time<sup>1</sup>. Their creative heritage demands a thorough attention and profound analysis from the contemporary researchers. Many of their works are still unknown not only to the public at large, but also to a narrow circle of experts. Taking the above mentioned into consideration, this subject matter is topical. The proposed article seems to be the first attempt made in Ukrainian historiography to elucidate the publications of Ukrainian pressmen on the Olympic subjects placed on the pages of the Lviv “Sokil” editions “Sokil'ski Visty” and “Visty z Zaporizha”. Major accent is on the personality of Ivan Bobersky as the first and the main contributor and promoter of the Olympic idea among Ukrainians.

According to the estimates of Stepan Hieduchok, an expert in physical education and sports, “Sokil” society (renamed to “Sokil-Bat’ko” in 1909) published 70 different editions in the late XIX – early XX century: statutes, calendars, manuals, brochures, scientific and methodological studies on physical education and sports etc<sup>2</sup>. In the context of the topic in question, “Sokil” magazines and “Visty z Zaporozha” calendar for the year 1914 are of special interest, whereas mainly these editions contain publications on the Olympic subjects.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed first editions of “Sokil'sky Visty” and “Visty z Zaporozha” in Lviv due to common endeavor of the members of “Sokil-Bat’ko” society. Significant efforts to push the business were made by Ivan Bobersky, member of the “Sokil” society (from October 3, 1901<sup>3</sup>), Head of “Sokil-Bat’ko” society (from August 26, 1908 till November 21 1918<sup>4</sup>), Professor of the Academic Gymnasium and the Gymnasium of Basilian Sisters in Lviv. With his direct involvement “Sokil'ski Visti” as a supplement to the “political, educational and economic magazine” “Svoboda” were issued during January-July 1909. Twenty nine issues all in all were made public. During 1910 sixty one issues of Sokil magazine under the title of “Visty z Zaporozha” went out of print as a supplement to “popular educational, political and literary” pictorial “Narodne Slovo”. From 1911 till 1914 “Visty z Zaporizha” magazine was published as an independent magazine. It is notable that on January 23, 1911 the 15th ordinary meeting of foremen of “Sokil-Bat’ko” gymnastic society in Lviv discussed the issue of publishing an independent Sokil magazine. There were two suggestions concerning the title of the future magazine: either “Malynovyy Prapor” (such idea was advocated by Semen Demydchuk), or “Visty z Zaporozha”, suggested by Ivan Bobersky, the Head of “Sokil-Bat’ko”. In the course of discussion the title “Visty z Zaporozha” gained the upper hand, being more close to the traditions of the Ukrainian Cossacks<sup>5</sup>. The magazine had its supplement “Plastovyy Tabor” that covered the activities of “Plast” scout movement in Lviv and Galicia<sup>6</sup>. The regular columns of “Visty z Zaporozha” were “Review”, “Correspondence”, “The life of our Sokil members”, “Reminiscences”, “Messages”, “What is harmful”, “From Editorials”, “Calls for Ordeals” etc .

The Olympic Games coverage appeared on the pages of Ukrainian Sokil editions due to Ivan Bobersky efforts even a few years before World War I. By that time Ivan Bobersky was well-known in Galicia and beyond as a founder of Ukrainian physical education and sports traditions, as an organizer, initiator, theoretician and practitioner, educator, journalist, public figure, developer of Ukrainian sports and military terminology etc<sup>7</sup>.

A lot of Ivan Bobersky's public statements and publications appeal to the Olympic ideas, the achievements of the Olympians, the Olympic movement. Significant in this regard was his report during the gymnastic-vocal performance of the Ukrainian Sports Club (USC) that carried out its activity on the basis of Academic Gymnasium in Lviv and its branches. The event took place on April 3, 1909 in the "Sokil-Bat'ko" gym at number 20 of Rus'ka street<sup>8</sup>. The program of the event included gymnastic performances, recitations, performance of the choir and playing the violin. Ivan Bobersky, the USC caretaker, took the floor. In his speech, published on May 12, 1909 in "Sokil'ski Visti" Ivan Bobersky stressed in particular: "The latest IV Olympic Games were held in 1908 in London. The largest number of winners were from England and America. It sounds like a fairy tale when we learn that Porter jumped to a height of 1 m 96 cm, Sheridan threw the disk at a distance of 40 m 92 cm, Irons jumped at a length of 7 m 48 cm, Voigt in long distance running covered an eight kilometres' distance in 25 minutes and 12 seconds, Larner walked 3.500 m in 14 min and 55 sec. English and American young people are actively involved in various sports games. No wonder, Englishmen are healthy and vigorous nation. Exercise and games enhance will power, agility and entrepreneurial spirit. These qualities later will bear witness and contribute to the strength of their state, which is nowadays the leading country in the world. We want to take after them. Current performance of the "Sports Club" from the Ukrainian Gymnasium in Lviv is a minor demonstration of our desire to become strong in spirit and body, because our motherland requires not only people who are intelligent but also healthy, persistent and resolute men"<sup>9</sup>.

Another article published in "Visty z Zaporozha" of February 11, 1910 and signed by an unknown author under the krypton "ик" (most probably this krypton is decrypted as "руховик" ("gymnast" Engl.) and was used by Professor Ivan Bobersky) describes the gymnast-vocal performance of USC held on February 6, 1910 in the gym of "Sokil-Bat'ko" at number 20 of Rus'ka street as follows: "In this particular article I would like to touch upon the problems that have to be eliminated in order to achieve paragon of perfection in the Olympic and international contests on equal footing with other national teams. Deportment and gait!! Breast forward, neck straight, forehead forward, eyes look before you, hands move naturally, legs tread easily, everyone start with a left leg at the same time. Spectators witnessed how some participants marched hunchbacked, wobbling from side to side like an old cart. The Swedes were successful in the Olympics due to their handsome gait! From the way one holds up his breast and neck, moves his arms and legs you can easily know whether a person cares about the beauty of his body. You shouldn't aim for performing a stunning or super complicated pommel-horse or horizontal bar exercise. You have instead to strive for healthy and perfect body, handsome posture and movements. Only fancy, a Ukrainian fellow strolling along Paris boulevards, and some passersby would drop a casual remark: what an elegant posture, this must be a Swede or a Ukrainian. [...] On the whole the performance was nice. The program consisted of 9 gymnastic and 5 vocal numbers done promptly, and the speeches were made without boring breaks"<sup>10</sup>.

Ivan Bobersky's special attention was drawn to the V Olympic Games that were held in Stockholm, Sweden, and lasted from May 5 till June 22, 1912. It is worthwhile to recall that 2541 athletes (of these, 2484 males and 57 females) from 28 countries took part, competing for 102 sets of medals in 14 kinds of sport<sup>11</sup>. By means of his publications covering the Olympics Ivan Bobersky wanted to evoke an interest among the members of the Ukrainian gymnastic and sports societies, like "Sokil-Bat'ko" gymnastic society, Ukrainian Sports Club, "Ukraine" sports society, "Zmahovyy Soyuz" ("Competitive Allied Union" Engl.) in Lviv as well as all Ukrainians in Galicia.

"Sokil" magazine "Visty z Zaporizha" published four information reports dating from April 30, 1911<sup>12</sup>, January 30, 1912 p.<sup>13</sup>, May 30, 1912 p.<sup>14</sup> and June 31, 1912 p.<sup>15</sup>. In his first report Ivan Bobersky wrote: "Olympic Games will take place in 1912 in Stockholm. Track-and-field events are scheduled for June 6 – 15. 1. Running for 100 m, 200 m, 400 m, 800 m, 1500 m, 5000 m; relay race for 8000 m, hurdling for 110 m; marathon race for 42 km; team race (five runners) for 3000 m, 400 m race (4 runners for 100 m), 1600 m race (4 runners for 400 m). – 2. 10.000 m walking. – 3. High jumping, long jumping, pole-vaulting, triple jump. – 4. Javelin throwing, discus throwing, hammer throwing, shot-putting. – 5. Pentathlon: long jumping with a running start,

discus throwing, 200 m running, javelin throwing, 1500 m running. – 6. Decathlon: 100 m race, long jumping with a running start, shot-putting, high jumping with a running start, 400 m race, discus throwing, pole-vaulting, javelin throwing, 1500 m race. The competitions are scheduled for all other kinds of sport and ball games. Here we mention only those events, which could be attended by our young people as well, in order to remind Europe once again that we hold our heads high even under these straitened circumstances”<sup>16</sup>.

The second news report contains information about Olympic sports and gives the cost of traveling from Lviv to Stockholm, which was then 80 crowns. The third news story enumerates the number of the Olympiad participants, namely 325 contestants from England, 225 – from the Russian Empire, 210 – from Germany, 95 – from Austria, 20 – from Greece, 4 – from Turkey, 10 – from Serbia, 8 – from Switzerland. According to the news author “All parts of the world are sending a large number of participants to the Olympic competitions”<sup>17</sup>. In his fourth news report Ivan Bobersky presented the results of the athletes in different kinds of sport, and said in passing that “the foreigners complained about the Swedish judges partiality”<sup>18</sup>.

Already in 1913 “Visty z Zaporizha” calendar (the circulation of which was 5 thousand copies), published Ivan Bobersky’s article entitled “Olympic competitions”<sup>19</sup>, where he mentioned Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the initiator of the revival of modern Olympic Games, informed about the activities of the International Olympic Committee (founded in 1894) and the results achieved by athletes in various events during I – V modern Olympic Games (I Olympiad held in Athens, Greece; II – in Paris, France; III – in Saint Louis, the USA; IV – in London, Great Britain, V – in Stockholm, Sweden). His contemplations were aroused by the results of the Olympics in Stockholm held in 1912. Ivan Bobersky voiced the hope about the participation of athletes of independent Ukraine in these prestigious international competitions: “Who knows whether and when Ukrainians take part in the Olympics? The Finns, being oppressed by Russia managed to send a large number of contestants to Stockholm. We also have nothing or nobody to prevent us from taking a dare and demonstrate to this world that we are existing and working. We could challenge for medals and remind of ourselves to Europe in the Olympic fields, those fields of European conscience. Industrious workman will always find the field for achievements and victories. Industrious workman is always kept in high respect”<sup>20</sup>.

Unfortunately, Professor Ivan Bobersky’s dream never succeeded in his life. Nevertheless, in 1936, he was able to visit the IV winter Olympics held in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in February and in August of the same year he went to Berlin to witness the Games of the XI Olympiad. These trips resulted in a number of relevant publications in the Ukrainian magazines of Galicia and Ukrainian diaspora.

It is worthwhile to mention that in “Sokil” periodicals of the early XX century one can find the notion “Olympiad” used sporadically in respect to various sports meetings or contests held in Europe by “Sokil” societies. For instance, in one of his reports, Stepan Hieduchok, member of the “Sokil-Bat’ko” society, Ivan Bobersky’s charge, denominated the VI all-Sokil jamboree in Prague held from June 28 till July 1, 1912 “the VI Olympiad in Prague”<sup>21</sup>. It is noteworthy that the VI all-Sokil meeting in Prague was organized by the Union of Slavic Sokil. At that time the following national unions were a part of the Union of Slavic Sokil: Czech with 95 300 members, Polish (24.688 members), Croatian (13.000 members), Slovenian (7.916 members), Bulgarian (6.000 members), Serbian (3.812 members). Delegations from Russia (numbering 700 persons), Great Britain, France, the United States and Ukraine visited the VI all-Sokil meeting in Prague. On June 30, 1912 Prague became a witness of a festive cortège where 17 712 Sokil members marched in uniforms, 159 Sokil members were riding on horsebacks, 314 Sokil members were carrying flags to the music of 8 orchestras. Ukrainian delegation under the Sokil-Bat’ko flag marched in one platoon headed by Ivan Bobersky, Doctor L Tshelsky, Doctor M.Voloshyn and superior C.Hieduchok.

**Conclusions.** Thanks to Ivan Bobersky publications on the pages of the Ukrainian Sokil press “Sokilski Visty”, “Visty z Zaporozha” and “Visty z Zaporozha Calender for 1914” Ukrainians of Austria-Hungary were able to become familiar with the ideas of the International Olympic movement and the Olympics even before the First World War. These materials encouraged the contemporaries to a more profound study of the Olympic movement history and contributed to developing an interest to the Olympic subject area. As a result, competent Ukrainian pressmen Ivan Bobersky and Mykhola Masiukevytch went to give coverage to the IV Winter Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and to the XI Summer Olympics in Berlin. The Olympic subject area became part and parcel of all leading Ukrainian newspapers and magazines of Galicia in 1936, such as “Sokilski Visty” “Dilo”, “Novyi chas”, “Zhyttia i znannia” etc. This, in turn prompted the Ukrainian community of Galicia and

the Ukrainian diaspora to mature its own Olympic aspirations, which were a success after 1991, the year of the declaration of independence of Ukraine.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> 120-річчя заснування Міжнародного олімпійського комітету та 20-річчя першого виступу Національної збірної України на XVII зимових Олімпійських іграх у Ліллекхамері. Листівка / Авт.: Я. Тимчак, А. Сова. – Львів : ЛДУФК, 2014. – Вип. 12. – 2 с.
- <sup>2</sup> Гайдучок С. Пів століття сокільських видань / С. Гайдучок. – Львів, 1937. – С. 3–19.
- <sup>3</sup> Центральний державний історичний архів України у Львові (далі – ЦДІА України у Львові), ф. 312, оп. 1, спр. 38, арк. 4.
- <sup>4</sup> ЦДІА України у Львові, 366, оп. 1, спр. 12, арк. 81.
- <sup>5</sup> ЦДІА України у Львові, 312, оп. 1, спр. 41, арк. 80–80 зв.
- <sup>6</sup> Сова А. Внесок Івана Боберського у становлення організації “Пласт” / А. Сова // Наукові зошити історичного факультету Львівського університету. Збірник наукових праць. – Львів, 2014. – Вип. 15. – С. 85–95.
- <sup>7</sup> Сова А. “Вісти з Запорожа” / А. Сова // Енциклопедія Львова / За ред. А. Козицького та І. Підкови. – Львів : “Літопис”, 2007. – Т. 1. – С. 397–398.
- <sup>8</sup> Гімнастично-вокальний виступ // Соکیلські Вісти. – Львів, 1909. – 17 цвітня. – Чис. 15 // Свобода. Політична, просвітна і господарська часопись. – Львів, 1909. – 17 цвітня. – Чис. 15. – С. 4.
- <sup>9</sup> Боберський І. Вступне слово на руховім виступі “Спортового кружка” у Львові / І. Боберський // Соکیلські Вісти. – Львів, 1909. – 12 мая. – Чис. 19 // Свобода. Політична, просвітна і господарська часопись. – Львів, 1909. – 13 мая. – Чис. 19. – С. 3.
- <sup>10</sup> Руханково-звуковий виступ спортивного кружка акад. гімназії у Львові / ик // Вісти з Запорожа. – Львів, 1910. – 10 січня. – Чис. 6 // Народне Слово. Ілюстрована, популярно-просвітна, політична й літературна часопись. – Львів, 1910. – 11 лютого. – Чис. 323–324. – С. 14.
- <sup>11</sup> Олимпийская энциклопедия / Гл. ред. С. П. Павлов. – Москва: “Советская Энциклопедия”, 1980. – С. 290–293.
- <sup>12</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1911. – 30 цвітня. – Чис. 56. – С. 7.
- <sup>13</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання 1912 р. / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових, змагових, мандрівних і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1912. – 30 січня. – Чис. 65. – С. 7.
- <sup>14</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових, змагових, мандрівних і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1912. – 30 мая. – Чис. 69. Мандрівне число. – С. 7.
- <sup>15</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових, змагових, мандрівних і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1912. – 31 липня. – Чис. 71. – С. 10–11.
- <sup>16</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1911. – 30 цвітня. – Чис. 56. – С. 7.
- <sup>17</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових, змагових, мандрівних і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1912. – 30 мая. – Чис. 69. Мандрівне число. – С. 7.
- <sup>18</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових, змагових, мандрівних і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1912. – 31 липня. – Чис. 71. – С. 11.
- <sup>19</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Календар “Вістий з Запорожа” на 1914 рік. – Львів: Наклад редакції “Вістий з Запорожа”, 1913. – С. 64–68.
- <sup>20</sup> [Боберський І.]. Олімпійські змагання / І. Боберський // Календар “Вістий з Запорожа” на 1914 рік. – Львів: Наклад редакції “Вістий з Запорожа”, 1913. – С. 68.
- <sup>21</sup> Гайдучок С. VI. Олімпіада в Празі / С. Гайдучок // Вісти з Запорожа. Часопись руханкових, змагових, мандрівних і пожарних товариств. – Львів, 1912. – 31 липня. – Чис. 71. – С. 4–5.