

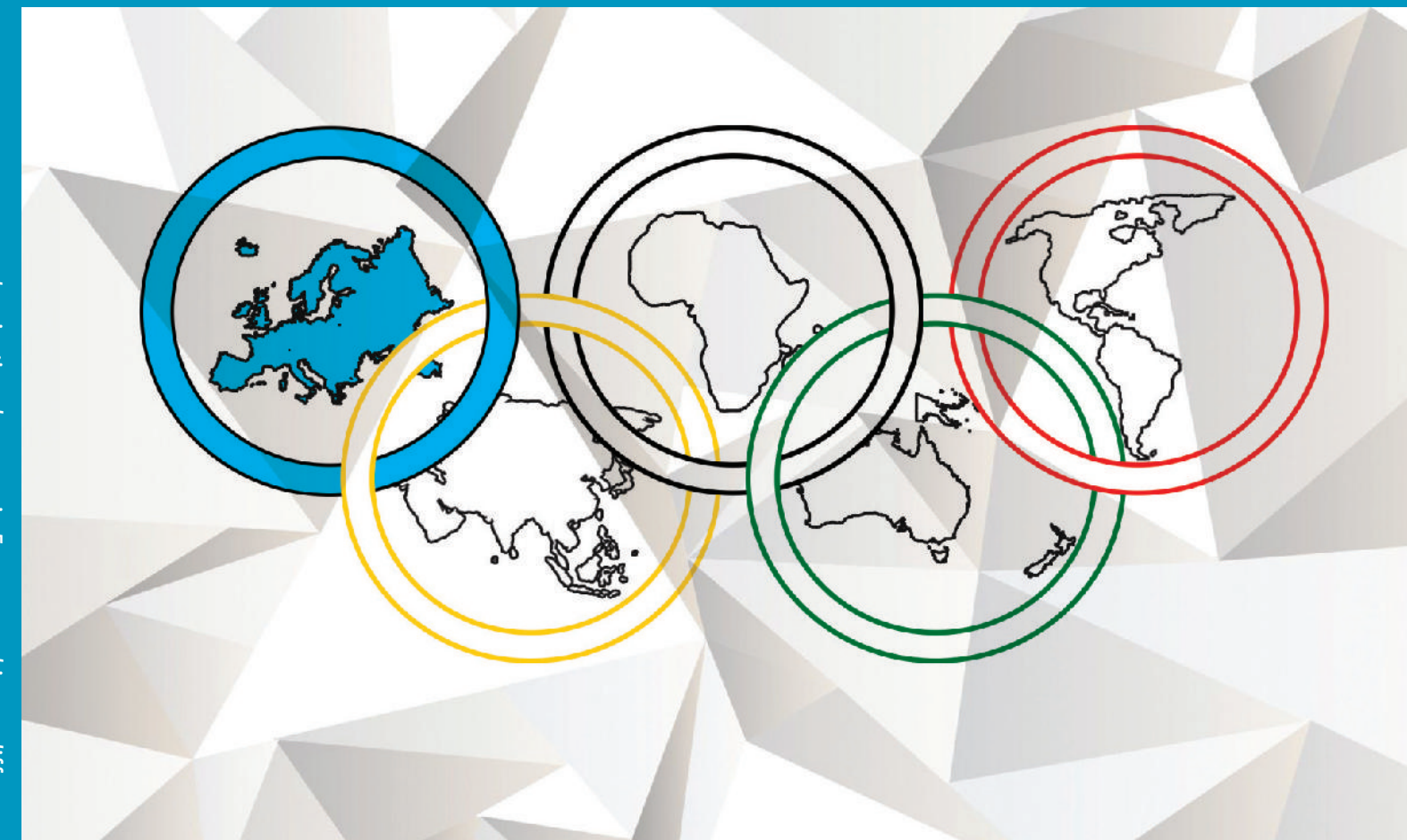
IAPESGW Continent Serie



Rosa Diketmüller

*Inspirational women in Europe: making a difference in physical education, sport and dance*

Rosa Diketmüller  
(Editor)



*Inspirational women in Europe:  
making a difference in physical education,  
sport and dance*

editora  
NGME

Rosa Diketmüller  
(Editor)

**INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN IN EUROPE:  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN PHYSICAL  
EDUCATION, SPORT AND DANCE**

Juiz de Fora  
NGIME/UFJF  
2016

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# FOREWORD

It is a great privilege for the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women (IAPESGW) to have this opportunity to greet current, former and potential members and other readers through this book series. The purpose of the 'five continents series' is to commemorate some of the many inspirational women who have worked in physical education, sport and dance to increase opportunities for girls and women around the world. We thank Eliana Ferreira whose project led to the University of Juiz de Fora (Brazil) partnering IAPESGW on this unique venture.

**Inspirational women: Making a difference in physical education, sport and dance** is a five book series and IAPESGW is proud to say that members of the voluntary Executive Board stepped up to collect, edit and present each of these books for the series. We also thank the members of the Association who were the major contributors and facilitators of contacts that made this ambitious idea a success.

Oceania – Janice Crosswhite OAM (Australia).

Europe – Rosa Diketmüller (Austria).

Americas – Beatriz Ferreira (Brazil).

Africa – Anneliese Goslin (South Africa).

Asia – Canan Koca (Turkey).

The series will increase the visibility of women in the field across the world by profiling women's lives and achievements. It is

by no means an exhaustive collection of outstanding women. There will be many others who have been influential as roles models and leaders. But it offers a contribution in a world where men and male sports still dominate newspapers and television broadcasts alongside the history books of modern sport.

The editor of each book in this series had the autonomy to manage the collation of the volume as she preferred. She was also tasked with contextualising the continent in the introduction, offering a rationale and synopsis of the distinctive content and concluding each volume. The books are published by the research group "Núcleo do Grupo de Pesquisa em Inclusão, Movimento e Ensino a Distância [NGIME]" (Research Group on Inclusion, Movement and Distance Learning) coordinated by Eliana Ferreira – University of Juiz da Fora, it is a major publication project sponsor by the Brazilian government. It is expected that the books will be distributed to the Brazilian Universities and to attendees at ICSEMIS, Brazil 2016.

## **The International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women**

The International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women (IAPESGW) was formed in 1949 and is the longest serving voluntary organization supporting the advancement of girls and women in Physical Education, Sport, Dance and Physical Activity.

Our Aims are:

- 1 To bring together interested scholars and practitioners of many countries working to improve the position of girls and women in the fields of physical education, sport and physical activity.

- 2 To represent the interests of girls and women at all levels and in all areas of physical education, sport and physical activity.
- 3 To strengthen international contacts and networks.
- 4 To afford opportunities for the discussion of mutual challenges and to share good practice.
- 5 To promote exchanges of persons and ideas among countries.
- 6 To promote research on physical education, sport and physical activity for girls and women.
- 7 To co-operate with other associations and agencies working to promote the interests of girls and women in physical education, sport and physical activity.
- 8 To promote leadership development throughout the world.

Our Vision:

Throughout the world, girls and women will benefit from:

- Participation in physical education, sport, physical activity and dance.
- Improved health through physical activity for all.
- Scientifically-based information.
- Quality education.



Ultimately, throughout the world, girls and women will be empowered through physical activity to: enjoy a balanced and healthy lifestyle, achieve a sense of value and well-being and make a positive contribute to society.

Members of the Association share belief in the value of physical activity in the lives of all girls and women, thereby forming a network of voices of, and for, the support of girls and women, improving their position at local, national and global levels. All members supporting IAPESGW at national and international level are volunteers who are driven to make time and space for stronger international support and camaraderie that networks like IAPESGW can bring. Over many years IAPESGW has been the place where young or early career researchers have found a supportive and accessible context alongside experienced colleagues in which to embark on presentation and research projects. The Executive Board is strong by global reach and also range of academic and practical experience and skills. Members of the Board are elected every four years and new volunteers who really want to make a difference by serving such an Association are always welcome. The current Executive Board indicates the extent of our international collaboration and is as follows:

President: **Rosa Lopez de D'Amico** (Professor, Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador, Pedagógico de Maracay, **Venezuela**).

Vice-Presidents: **Janice Crosswhite** (OAM and President of the Australian Women sport and Recreation Association (AWRA), **Australia**).

**Anneliese Goslin** (Professor, University of Pretoria, **South Africa**).

**Karin Lofstrom** (Executive Director – Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women – CAAWS, **Canada**).

**Rosa Diketmüller** (Assistant Professor, University of Vienna, **Austria**).

**Tansin Benn** (Visiting Professor, University of Plymouth, **UK**).

**Darlene Kluka** (Professor, University of Barry, **USA**).

**Gladys Bequer** (National Director of Physical Education and Health Promotion at the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (INDER) and Professor at the Higher Institute of Physical Culture (ISCF), **Cuba**).

**Marianne Meier** (Terre des Hommes International Federation, **Switzerland**).

**Maryam Koushkie Jahromi** (Associate Professor, Shiraz University, **Iran**).

**Canan Koca** (Associate Professor, Hacettepe University, **Turkey**).

**Keh Nyit Chin** (Professor, National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, **Taiwan**).

**Beatriz Ferreira** (Professor, State University of Campinas – UNICAMP and is currently included in the program CAPES Visiting Professor Senior at the Federal University of Grande Dourados – Mato Grosso do Sul, **Brazil**).

**Arisa Yagi** (Professor Japan Women's College of Physical Education, Tokyo, **Japan**).

The full history of **Presidents** who have served IAPESGW is as follows:

1949 - 1961 Dorothy Ainswoth (USA).

1961 - 1965 Marie Thérèse Eyquem (France).

1965 - 1981 Liselott Diem (Germany).

1981 - 1989 Helene Tollich (Austria).

1989 - 1997 Patricia Bowen-West (UK).

1997 - 2005 Margaret Talbot (UK).

2005 - 2009 Darlene Kluka (USA).  
2009 - 2013 Tansin Benn (UK).  
2013 ... Rosa Lopez de D'Amico (Venezuela).

IAPESGW has held quadrennial Scientific Congresses since 1949 around the World:

1949	Copenhagen, Denmark	1985	Warwick, UK
1953	Paris, France	1989	Bali, Indonesia
1957	London, UK	1993	Melbourne, Australia
1961	Washington, USA	1997	Lahti, Finland
1965	Koln, Germany	2001	Alexandria, Egypt
1969	Tokyo, Japan	2005	Edmonton, Canada
1973	Tehran, Iran	2009	Stellenbosch, S. Africa
1977	Cape Town, S. Africa	2013	Havana, Cuba
1981	Buenos Aires, Argentina	2017	Miami, USA

In 1999 a special Conference event was held to commemorate the Association's 50th anniversary in the place of its birth – Smith College USA.

Alongside these Scientific Congresses, the Association contributes to other international scientific programs such as the quadrennial *International Convention on Science, Education and Medicine in Sport* (ICSEMIS). As a members' Association, IAPESGW responds to requests for information, support, research and action.

As a recognised Member Association of the International Council for Sport Sciences and Physical Education (ICSSPE), IAPESGW helps to construct international policy and aid work in sport and physical education. It is one of six bodies that contribute to the *International Committee of Sport Pedagogy (ICSP)*, a working group established by ICSSPE.

In addition to IAPESGW, the working group includes the following international partner associations: FIEP – Federation Internationale D` Education Physique / International Federation for Physical Education; AIESEP – Association Internationale des Ecoles Superieures d'Education Physique / International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education; IFAPA International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity; ISCPES – International Society for Comparative Physical Education and Sport; ICCE – International Council of Coaching Excellence. Representatives of this working group have contributed to collaborative research such as the 'Global Voices project', and, through ICSSPE to the 'Quality Physical Education (QPE) Guidelines for Policy-Makers' and the 'Revised International Charter of Physical Education and Sport' that emerged from MINEPS 2013, Berlin, and were published by UNESCO (2015). The Association also has representation on related bodies such as the International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG) where we work alongside Women Sport International (WSI).

IAPESGW's memberships continuing to grow with representation throughout the world via members on all five continents. The Association supports its members in the fields of sport, physical education, dance and physical activity for women and girls and provides opportunities for professional development and international cooperation. If you are interested in learning more or in joining please see our website at [www.iapesgw.org](http://www.iapesgw.org).

Be part of the future of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women.

Co-authors:

Rosa Lopez de D'Amico (Venezuela) (Current President)

Tansin Benn (UK) President 2009 – 2013

Darlene Kluka (USA) President 2005 – 2009



# FOREWORD

This collection represents a milestone in the history of physical education as it seeks to present the conditions of equality and opportunities for physical activity around the world. This publication brings together experiences from five continents, highlighting elements which allowed to identify the progress and challenges of world policies in physical education.

In recent years, the Center for Inclusion, Movement and Distance Learning at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora – Brazil sought partnerships aiming to build a work disclosure policy that can support studies that consider the experiences of pedagogical practices in the physical activities. This is, undoubtedly a publication that makes us very proud, as it structure a proposal for a diverse and inclusive physical education.

A series of debates, the consolidation of an accessibility policy and the construction of pedagogical practices involving the conditions for a complete access, are the basis of this book.

In this sense, physical education acquires more relevance, establishing a more social understanding, related to accessibility and at the same time, is sensitive to the specific demands defined for education based on diversity.

Based on extensive material reported here, we share the idea that, every day, it becomes more evident that physical activities play an important role in ensuring the exercise of citizenship.

Profa. Dra. Eliana Lucia Ferreira  
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora – UFJF  
Ministério de Educação – MEC/BRASIL

1

# INTRODUCTION

ROSA DIKETMÜLLER





## Europe – diversity in history and policy

The edition of these IAPESGW book series is a great challenge for the different continents. It offers the possibility to increase the visibility of women across the world who have made a difference in the lives of girls and women in physical education, sports and/ or dance. For this European book, authors and scholars from 17 countries collected different stories which visualize and reflect the diversity of the European continent.

The situation of girls in physical education and women in sports varies among the different European countries as comparative studies show (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2014b; HARTMANN; PFISTER, 2003; PÜHSE; GERBER, 2005). While mostly northern countries like Norway, Sweden, Denmark or the Netherlands have high standards in sports policy and the promotion of girls and women in sports in general, other countries lack systematic actions and the number of physically active girls and women is still quite low. Although there are current European policy actions to improve the situation, e.g. *EU proposals for strategic actions for Gender Equality in Sports 2014-2020* (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2014a), there are political changes and realignments still going on which have an impact on the political order in Europe. While several European countries (mostly the northern, western, central and southern countries) have been politically and economically relatively stable since World War II, especially some countries of the former Eastern Bloc and former Yugoslavia had and still have to overcome problems and barriers. These political changes were often accompanied by changes in sports and body politics, policies in physical education as well as in general approaches and views regarding training-methods and top-level and competitive sports. The selection of the stories told in this European book tries to take these different political backgrounds and historical developments into account.

## **Book structure**

Besides these national and political perspectives, the authors were invited to report on different topics of girls' and women's activities, like physical education, dance, sports careers, science, sports policies or projects for girls or women at a local/ national or international level. So the book is structured into the following topic related blocks:

### **Outstanding scholars at national and international level**

It is not by chance that the book starts with the biography of two scholars, who dedicated their lives to research and policy at a national and international level, both of them closely connected to the IAPESGW. Tansin Benn (United Kingdom) wrote a tribute to the former IAPESGW president Margaret Talbot (United Kingdom), who recently passed away in 2014. Her story is a legacy for girls' and women's promotion in physical education and sports. The biography of the outstanding scholar in the field of women's sport, Gertrud Pfister (Germany/ Denmark), is presented by Annette Hofmann (Germany), Rosa Diketmüller (Austria) and Verena Lenneis (Austria / Denmark).

### **Outstanding female scholars or women who dedicated their lives to projects and policies for girls and women**

Vahida Kozić (Bosnia and Herzegovina), presents the important work of Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who is a former athlete, a scientist and lecturer at the university, a member of the board of representatives in the IAPESGW involved in many projects for girls and women and an influential sports leader on a national and international level.

Anita Gębska-Kuczerowska (Poland) introduces two female Polish scientists,

Halina Szwarc and Ewa Kozdroń, who work(ed) in the field of promoting physical activity for elderly people, an issue that is more concerned with elderly women.

## Physical education and school sports and dance – pioneers and teachers

Rosa Diketmüller (Austria) describes the development of physical education for girls in Austria and focuses on influential women like Margarete Streicher, Helene Tollich and Julika Ullmann and the work of the Austrian association *Forum of Women in Physical Education*.

Suzanne Lundvall, Jane Meckbach, Karin Redelius and Torun Mattsson from Sweden portray three Swedish women who influenced physical culture and sports in different time periods through their commitment: Martina Bergman-Österberg, who established a female Physical Education Teaching Training Program (PETE), Ann Elefalk, who paved the way for female coaches in a male dominated sport, and Cecilia Dahlgren, who brought dance into compulsory schools in Sweden.

Ilona Bodnár and Szilvia Perényi (Hungary) present two parallel stories, one about the professionalization process of female physical education teachers and another about the aspirations and emergence of the movement of artists and their respective parallels.

Anna Vilanova and Susanna Soler (Spain) present the stories of the fencer Teresa Castellanos de Mesa, the Club Femení i d'Esports in Barcelona as a prime example of an entity organized by and for women, the all-rounder and first Olympic sportswoman Lili Álvarez, the advocate of roller hockey in Galicia and tireless champion of equality between men and women María Antonina Sanjurjo and finally, the often invisible collective of women who, even under social pressure, developed and promoted women's sports as an everyday activity and broke the rules imposed by the dominant ideology between 1936-1960.

## Outstanding female athletes and coaches

In the first paper of this chapter, Rosa Diketmüller (Austria) and Stefania Cazzoli (Italy) have portrayed those European women, who tried to reach the highest mountains in the world and who fought for their places “on top”: Wanda Rutzkiewich (Poland), Edurne Pasaban (Spain), Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner (Austria) and Nives Meroi (Italy).

Amra Nožinović Mujanović and Edin Mujanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) describe outstanding athletes of their country: Razija Mujanović – repeatedly proclaimed best basketball player of the continent, Svetlana Ceca Kitić – handball player of the world and other stars of the city of Tuzla.

Milada Truksová from *Czech Republic* tells the story about one of the biggest athletes in the Czechoslovakian history, the gymnast Věra Čáslavská and her eventful life in periods of great political tensions and changes.

## Pioneers and outstanding women in national and international sports leadership

The contribution of Didier Chavier from *France* deals with Alice Milliat's fight for the recognition of women's sports in general and their rights to participate in Olympic Games and in international sports. Jorid Hovden from Norway tells the story of Olga Olaussen and the conditions, which have shaped her career as a female pioneer in sports leadership in Norway.

How Tiziana Nasi from Italy became at least President of the IX Paralympic Winter Games of Turin in 2006, one of the biggest international sports events worldwide, is told by Stefania Cazzoli.

The final chapter presented by Irene Kamberidou (Greece) and Stilian Chroni (Greece / Norway) shares the contributions of inspiring and motivating Greek women in sports whose achievements have been excluded from the country's mainstream media, how these pioneers influenced the lives of sporting girls and women by daring to disregard social barriers and spread awareness. As a conclusion for the whole book, they summarize the tips from these successful and inspirational women, who all agree that success requires ethos and taking that leap.

## **Acknowledgments**

Last but not least, I'd like to thank everybody involved in the process of writing and compiling the stories from different countries: Tansin Benn and Rosa Lopez de D'Amico for empowering me to edit this book, Susi Zukrigl, Martin Amstätter and Julia Siart for their support in correcting and proofreading, the many authors for their willingness to write a chapter despite the tight time limits and last but not least the many women for their inspirational stories and their empowerment of girls and women in sports and physical education in Europe. Without their hard work this book would not have been possible.



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# 2

# OUTSTANDING SCHOLARS AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

TANSIN BENN

ANNETTE HOFMANN

VERENA LENNEIS

ROSA DIKETMÜLLER





### **Margaret Talbot 1946 – 2014, United Kingdom**

A national and international leader in the fields of sports policy for equity; governance; physical education and sport development

TANSIN BENN WITH DAVID TALBOT

This book and series, honouring special women in the world who have made a difference in the lives of girls and women in physical education and sport, would be unthinkable without recognising the contribution of Professor Margaret Talbot from England. There are few people in the world who could match this generous woman's knowledge, skills, commitment and dedication to issues of equity and whose legacy can so significantly continue to influence the lives and futures of girls and women in the field of physical education and sport. Throughout a long career both in the United Kingdom and internationally, Margaret's passion to improve the lives of others permeated her teaching, research, policy and advocacy work.

Margaret was a very special long-term supporter and leader for the *International Association of Physical Education and Sport (IAPESGW)*. She was President from 1997 until 2005 leading the Association through important years of addressing and reaching communities with particular challenges for girls and women in sport. For example, following requests from Muslim women to help remove stereotypes and increase their visibility in the sporting world, the 2001 IAPESGW World Congress was held at Alexandria University, Egypt, shortly after the 9-11 New York bombings. Half of those participants who had intended to fly to Egypt were unable to come, yet through all the turmoil, Margaret's leadership, alongside her colleagues at Alexandria University, enabled a successful and memorable Congress to be held for those who could attend. The 2005 quadrennial Congress, also under her Presidency, was held at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada and was a great success. Margaret was honoured as a Life Member of IAPESGW at that time.

Margaret's professional life encompassed teaching physical education in schools, leadership and research in Higher Education, Chief Executive positions in the sport and physical education bodies, sport politics, numerous voluntary and non-governmental body roles and consultancy, all of which contributed to her ability to influence wide-reaching policy and practice internationally. Although publishing was not her main task once she moved out of academia, she published more than 200 books, chapters and papers, mainly focusing on physical education and sports governance, policy processes and dynamics, with particular emphasis on equity. Margaret presented as a keynote or plenary speaker at more than 120 conferences and seminars, with a further 100 seminars and workshops. Presentations were made in more than 30 countries. Of her many awards perhaps the earliest farsighted recognition of her contribution was in 1993 when she was appointed *Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)* in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to Physical Education and Sport. To date, posthumous awards have included the launch of the *Margaret Talbot Memorial Scholarship* at the Institute of Technology, Tralee, in February 2015 and a *Lifetime Achievement Award* at the Leeds Sports Awards, March 2015.

Margaret's breadth of understanding and compassion grew with her drive and courage to assume varied and challenging roles throughout her life. The list would fill this book but it is important to mention some key positions to provide insight into the ways in which she became able to lead and manage the most challenging dimensions of international diplomacy and progress for equity issues in Physical Education and Sport. The following overview is drawn from the text her husband David Talbot wrote to commemorate her life's work.

Early in her higher education career Margaret was selected to represent Great Britain as a "Young Participant" at the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia, Greece. She immediately fell in love with Greece and its sporting history, myths and culture but listening to people's experiences of the Colonels' Junta helped shape Margaret's life-time commitment from then on to work for international peace and understanding.

Margaret was appointed Head of the Carnegie Department at Leeds Polytechnic which later changed to Assistant Dean and Faculty Research Manager. In this role research contracts enabled her to extend and enhance her international networks and learn much about sport in developing countries. Margaret was a member of the small committee appointed by The Secretary of State for Education to lead the development of the new National Curriculum for England and Wales where she excelled in the acclaimed equity sections she wrote. Margaret was proud to have contributed to Physical Education's curriculum standing and protected its position and status throughout her career.

At the same time, Margaret's civic appointments continued, with the Presidency of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women, Board Membership of the Football Licensing Authority in the wake of the Hillsborough Disaster, Vice Chair of the Sports Council's Young People and Sport Group, and Chair of the European Sport Conference Women and Sport Group. This European Group generated an alliance with Commonwealth countries and this led eventually to the 1994 Brighton Conference on Women and Sport, and the Brighton Declaration which continues to impact around the world.

As Leeds Polytechnic became Leeds Metropolitan University, Margaret took on the role of Head of Sport but only after negotiating the retention of her research work and PhD supervision, creating a unique hybrid role.

Through maximising access to the new National Lottery building funding, Margaret led on what became acclaimed as the development of "stellar" sports facilities at Leeds Metropolitan University. This was down to her vision for the Beckett Park Campus.

In 2001 she became Chief Executive of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (now rebranded the Sport and Recreation Alliance), the umbrella organisation for national governing bodies of sport and recreation – a brave step which catapulted Margaret into the unforgiving world of sport politics.

In 2005 she moved to another Chief Executive position of a newly unified professional subject association for Physical Education in the UK– the Association for Physical Education (afPE). Concurrently, Margaret was also appointed a Board Member of Capacity Builders, a quasi-governmental body whose purpose was to coordinate investment and support for voluntary organisations.

The political and advocacy skills that Margaret had developed through the years enriched and supported her work at international level, especially with international Non-Governmental Organisations and UNESCO. In 2004, she led the writing for the women and sport strand of the Athens Declaration of the UNESCO Ministers of Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS IV), another international means of promoting women's and girls' opportunities in and through sport and physical education.

Margaret was voted in as President of the International Council of Sports Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE) at its 2008 General Assembly. She followed in the footsteps of previous ICSSPE Presidents such as Nobel Peace Prize winner Lord Philip Noel-Baker, Sir Roger Bannister and her predecessor Gudrun Doll-Tepper. She was re-elected for a second term in 2012. Margaret embraced working with the wonderful ICSSPE staff at the Berlin office and other elected officers. Her presidency included raising the profile of the organisation, especially in physical education, and representing it at diverse conferences and meetings, which enhanced ICSSPE's long-standing commitment to equity and fairness in sport, and the promotion of equality and international understanding.

Margaret Talbot Consulting was set up in 2010. Her consultancy contracts between then and 2012 were rich and varied, including projects for the United Nations and UNESCO. Margaret juggled these with her ongoing voluntary work and when breast cancer was diagnosed in November 2011, you will not be surprised to hear that Margaret completed projects to which she was committed, whilst undergoing chemotherapy, enabling her to be well enough to attend the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. All these aims were achieved. Margaret also took on the role of Chairing the Education Committee of the International

Paralympic Committee, which gave another strand to her work in sport equity. In July 2012, she returned to public speaking.

In early 2014, high-profile recognition of Margaret's work in linking education, equity and values included the invitation from the International Olympic Committee to become a Member of its Education Commission and an appointment to a new UNESCO Chair at the Institute of Technology, Tralee.

When secondary breast cancer was diagnosed in June 2014, it was with great regret that Margaret withdrew from these positions. She regarded them as excellent opportunities to continue the work she believed in, and to steer towards more collaboration between the organisations which had valued her leadership and contributions.

Having learnt of Margaret's illness the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, wrote a personal letter to Margaret stating "the IOC needs your remarkable academic and scientific knowledge more than ever". He continued that he wished "to express my sincere gratitude for your great contribution to the Olympic Movement".

After Margaret's death, Sir Philip Craven, President of the International Paralympic Committee, wrote, "There is no doubting Margaret's unique intellectual powers but it is Margaret the woman that we will always remember. Her jocular delivery particularly to audiences dominated by the male sex, belied the fact that her heartfelt messages were normally delivered by Exocet with the recipients not realising its presence and explosive impact until it had hit home".

It made Margaret unutterably sad that the further years she had planned to spend together with the husband she loved so much in Aegina "living the dream", would be denied by the return of breast cancer.



The above text captures some of Margaret's professional and personal journey and because of their significance a summary of her key posts, through which she influenced so many, is offered:

**President, International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE)** since January 2009, re-elected 2012.

**Chair, Education Committee of the International Paralympic Committee** from 2011. This has involved collaboration with other IPC Committees, notably Science, Women and Development Committees.

**Member, Committee on Culture and Education, International Olympic Committee** from April 2014.

**UNESCO Professor at the Institute of Technology, Tralee, Ireland: UNESCO Chair "Transforming the Lives of People with Disabilities. Their Families and Communities, Through Physical Education, Sport, Recreation and Fitness"** from April 2014.

ICSSPE Vice President (Education, Physical Education and Sport) 1999-2009: **leadership of 1<sup>st</sup> World Summit on Physical Education, Berlin 1999; and 2<sup>nd</sup> World Summit 2005, Magglingen (under aegis of UN International Year of Sport and Physical Education).**

**Chair, European Sports Conference Working Group on Women and Sport** 1991-1993 – outcomes led directly to 1<sup>st</sup> World Conference on Women and Sport, Brighton 1994; and to Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport.

**International Vice President, International Foundation for Olympic and Sport Education (based in Greece) 2000 - 2013.** Presided over world seminars on Olympic Education, press and media conferences, strategic planning events.

**Facilitator - IAPESGW International Study Week on Physical Education and Sport for Muslim Women**, Feb. 2008, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman: outcome the “Accept and Respect” Declaration.

**Chief Executive, Association for Physical Education (afPE) National Subject Association for Physical Education** (Oct. 2005 – Dec. 2009).

**Chief Executive of the Central Council of Physical Recreation** (2001 - 2005).

**President – International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women (IAPESGW) 1997 – 2005, Honorary Life Member from 2005.**

**Vice Chair, DES Working Group Physical Education National Curriculum for England and Wales 1990-1991**: author of sections on guidance on equal opportunities (special needs, disability, gender, culture), which were commended by equity activists as being the only subject report which had adequately addressed equity issues.

Important work that Margaret enjoyed in her final years included her contribution to collating and analysing expert responses for the theme: *Universal Access to Physical Education and Sport*, for the draft Resolution for the UNESCO Conference MINEPS V, Berlin May 2013. Through this the outcome achieved significant commitment to action on equity and universal access for people with disabilities, women & girls and a rationale for provision of curriculum physical education in all schools. Margaret was also employed in 2012-2013 as an expert adviser for “Designed To Move” (Nike/ACSM/ICSSPE) and policy strategies. In 2012 she was invited to provide independent advice to Lord Sebastian Coe on the London Olympics 2012 Legacy. Margaret also led on the key ICSSPE *International Position Statement on Physical Education*, with support statements and endorsements from UNESCO, UNOSDP, IOC and IPC. All of these examples reflect the high esteem in which Margaret was held, earned through her qualities of dedication, commitment, passion and persistence alongside an incredible accumulation of knowledge, skills and vision in her

field. Perhaps most importantly she was a people person. Margaret cared deeply about the situation of others. She never failed to impress the world with her capacity to remember names and faces, to follow-up on promises made, and to follow-through on commitments assumed within and for the international family of physical education and sport.

In 1999 Margaret wrote a Presidential address in the IAPESGW book "Honouring the Legacy" which was produced for the Association's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In this she laid out the global challenges facing all of us and the role the Association could play, alongside others, for a better world. Her incisive vision of a changing world in which there remained challenging divides in wealth, resources and opportunities, is as relevant today as it was then. She also highlighted the need for capacity building in those areas where it was most needed and in IAPESGW itself. The Association is not alone in being dependent on the willingness of volunteers to bring knowledge and skills to recognise and address international challenges. She also wrote about the need to maximise the extent to which the Association can mobilize the collective and individual resources members can bring, while making the work attractive and worthwhile to those who contribute. I think she would be particularly proud of the IAPESGW members' efforts and the outcome evident in this five Continents book series.

Margaret concluded her 1999 address as follows:

My dream and future vision is that every girl is able to exercise her entitlement to a full range of opportunities for physical activity and sport; that women's and girls' contributions to physical education and sport are routinely valued; that women are customarily involved in leading educational practice and research in physical education and sport; that research and the development of knowledge includes and is enriched by women's and girls' experiences; that professional organizations are committed to valuing diversity and promoting equity (whether as mixed-sex or single-sex organisations); that the systems of physical education and sport are inclusive, pluralist, and comprehensive in countries all over the world; and that equity and social justice are guiding principles for

the practice of sport and physical education. IAPESGW has the opportunity to contribute towards that dream.

The Presidents who followed Margaret Talbot were Professor Darlene Kluka 2005 – 2009 (USA), Professor Tansin Benn 2009 – 2013 (UK) and Professor Rosa Lopez de D'Amico 2013 – 2017 (Venezuela) and we have all shared this dream and worked alongside the membership and its partner organisations such as the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, its working group the International Committee of Sport Pedagogy, WomenSport International and the International Working Group for Women and Sport, to make an ongoing contribution to a more equitable world.

I (Tansin Benn, lead author of this chapter) was privileged to be asked to take major responsibility, alongside Margaret's close friends Anita White and Pauline Wetton, for collating a Book of Memoirs<sup>1</sup> through which her husband David Talbot, her family and others would be able to reflect on the immense contribution Margaret made to the lives of so many people. I was constantly moved by the range of tributes that flooded in. They came from students she had supported decades ago to senior politicians, from women and men in many countries of the world, from all sectors of the physical education and sports world. Every reflection came from the heart with wonderful memories and deepest appreciation for having had Margaret in their lives. The following poem was chosen by Margaret to be read at her funeral and in many ways it sums up the challenging life she chose and her courage to keep moving forward:

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<sup>1</sup> The "Book of Memoirs" for Margaret Talbot can be viewed in pdf form on-line through the members section of ICSSPE at [www.icsspe.org](http://www.icsspe.org). There is a hard copy in the Anita White Foundation Archive at the University of Chichester, UK. Enquiries can be made through the following website <http://www.chi.ac.uk/departmentsport-development-management/anita-white-foundation/archive> Accessed 17th June 2015.

## “STAGES” by Hermann Hesse

Like ev'ry flower wilts, like youth is fading  
and turns to age, so also one's achieving:  
Each virtue and each wisdom needs parading  
in one's own time, and must not last forever.  
The heart must be, at each new call for leaving,  
prepared to part and start without the tragic,  
without the grief - with courage to endeavor  
a novel bond, a disparate connection:  
for each beginning bears a special magic  
that nurtures living and bestows protection.  
We'll walk from space to space in glad progression  
and should not cling to one as homestead for us.  
The cosmic spirit will not bind nor bore us;  
it lifts and widens us in ev'ry session:  
for hardly set in one of life's expanses  
we make it home, and apathy commences.  
But only he, who travels and takes chances,  
can break the habits' paralyzing stances.  
It might be, even, that the last of hours  
will make us once again a youthful lover:  
The call of life to us forever flowers...  
Anon, my heart: Say farewell and recover!

As the world of sport and physical education will continue to both mourn Margaret's untimely death and celebrate her life and contribution, her family have set up a memorial in her former village primary school in the West Midlands region of England. The final words pay this tribute: "An inspirational educationalist; A fearless champion of equity; A profound guide in international sports policy".

And for those of us who were privileged enough to know and work with Margaret, a loyal friend.



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HESSE, H. "STAGES": a translation from German. [S. l.], 1943. For the original poem see <http://www.lyrikwelt.de/gedichte/hesseg1.htm> Accessed 17th June 2015. The poem is in Hermann Hess's last novel *The Glass Bead Game* which won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1946.





## Gertrud Pfister – the International Scholar of Sport and Gender Studies

Annette R. Hofmann

Verena Lenneis

Rosa Diketmüller



Any student or academic in the field of physical education, sport science or sport studies from a German-speaking country comes across the name Gertrud Pfister at one point in his or her studies or research. We might even extend that statement to apply to the entire Western hemisphere.

Prof. Dr. Dr. Dr. Dr. Gertrud Pfister has not only been a pioneer in many respects relating to the topic "women and sport"; in the last 40 years; she also paved the way for many others in gender studies, has struck out in new directions and is still doing so. Gertrud, an extraordinary scholar has two academic PhDs (one in history and one in sociology) and two honorary doctorate titles. She initially began to study for a medical degree; but decided to major in physical education and Latin to teach in a German secondary school in Bavaria. Little did she know at that time that she would become one of the leading female European scholars in the field of sport history and sport sociology.

But Gertrud is not only known and respected for her academic achievements; she also held a number of influential positions on editorial and executive boards of sport-scientific organizations. She was the president of the International Society of the History of Physical Education and Sport (ISHPES) and of the International Sport Sociology Association (ISSA). For ISSA and ISHPES she initiated an annual summer school for graduate and PhD students of various disciplines of sport and humanities. Each summer up to 30 young scholars from all around the world attend this one-week seminar with international experts of the field, i.e. Raewyn Connell, Judith Lorber, Chris Shilling, Joseph Maguire, Patricia Vertinsky, Kari Fasting, Thierry Terret, Gerald Gems, Elizabeth Pike,

Susanna Hedenborg, and many others. The summer school provides an excellent venue to exchange ideas and knowledge about research topics and provides a forum which enables communication, networks and cooperation among the participants, students as well as lecturers. Many friendships have been established here on an international level. Gertrud's engagement for a period of 10 years as a vice president of the Deutsche Turner-Bund (German Gymnastics Federation), the biggest sport organization in the world, should also be mentioned.

All the offices that Gertrud has held and still holds on committees and organizations show that Gertrud tries, besides her research, to be actively involved in sports politics. Thanks to her organizational talents and ideas, she has been able to lead these organizations in new directions.

Gertrud not only proves through her research, her positions in academic institutions and her engagement in organizing congresses, seminars and the annual summer school, that she has an international approach; this is also mirrored in the universities where she has taught. She started her career in Bochum and Berlin (Germany) and then moved further north to Denmark. From 2001 until 2015 she held a professorship at Copenhagen University. Being an emerita by no means suggests that she will give up her academic research. On the contrary, now with no more teaching assignments, she can continue her current research projects with even more enthusiasm, and support her PhD students.

Besides Germany and Denmark Gertrud taught as a guest professor at various universities around the world (Universidad de Playa Ancha, Valparaiso, Chile, University Gama Filho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and received uncountable invitations as a keynote speaker. She has been recognized as the person who has done the most for women in sport in Europe and has been awarded the Darlene Kluka Research Award by the Women's Sports Foundation in the United States.

When she started her academic career her research focused more or less on sport historical issues. In time, and with her second PhD in sport sociology, she managed in a wonderful way to combine both fields, explaining history by sociological theories. Vice versa, her knowledge of history helped explain sociological issues. But no matter whether she did research on an historical or sociological topic, girls and women were mostly the main focus of her studies. Gertrud herself mentions as her area of expertise: "Sport history and sportification; Gender and sport; Gender, sport and leadership; Muslim women and sport; Migrations and transnationalism, Sport engagement of the population; Body cultures; Body enhancement and doping; Media sport; Sport and aging; Cross-cultural comparisons".

And no matter how much Gertrud was academically involved, she always was fond of physical activities and exercise: in her youth as a gymnast, later as a tennis player and skier. She even had the highest level ski instructor's license. Gertrud ran various marathons, tried parachuting, and hiked Mount Kilimanjaro. Today she still is an active runner, bikes regularly to the university and sometimes, although rarely, she even can be seen on a golf course. One should know that this is a sport that she despises. These athletic achievements show that she admires challenges in her private as well as professional life.

As this introduction suggests, it is not possible to cover the academic career of Gertrud in one article. It shows the challenge that we are facing in trying to give a small glimpse into the academic work of Gertrud, something that is simply impossible. For this reason we give a broad overview on her studies in sport history and sociology and present research projects with the interdisciplinary research group of the Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports at the University of Copenhagen. Last but not least, since this publication is about important and influential women in sports in different continents, we want to show Gertrud's affiliation with the IAPESGW group.

## From Sport History to Sport Sociology: A Selection

If someone is looking for information on the history of women's gymnastics, skiing, soccer, boxing, handball, women in the Olympic movement, you name it, one only has to google the name Gertrud Pfister and success is guaranteed<sup>1</sup>. Gertrud started out her career as a sports historian who focused mainly on the history of sporting women in Germany. Her articles, together with the German sport historian Hans Langenfeld, published in Horst Ueberhorst's 5 Volume *Geschichte der Leibesübungen*, were ground breaking in the 1980s. No-one else until today has given such a detailed overview on women's involvement in German sports and turnen. "Biology as faith" is a common quote by Gertrud in her various works, most of them based on theories of "doing gender", primarily relating to the sociological background of West and Zimmermann, Lorber or Connell.

Gertrud also is fond of biographical approaches and especially women that resemble the so-called "New Woman" of the 1920s. She always finds outstanding women athletes who challenged the contemporary gender order of their times. Examples are her late research about female boxers in North America in the mid-nineteenth century or about the Austrian writer Bertha Eckstein-Diener (1874-1948), also known under her publishing pseudonym Sir Galahad, who strived to live an adventurous life and took up, for example, ski jumping and mountaineering. And it should also be stated that Gertrud is eager to do more research on Amelia Earhart (1897-1937), the famous American pilot who disappeared in 1937 when she tried to fly around the world. But she is saving this for her retirement, as she always says. In other words, we might never see Gertrud's version of Earhart's life.

Together with Karen Christensen and Allen Guttman she took on the immense challenge to publish a three-volume *Encyclopedia of Women and Sport* in 2001. This is a basic reference book to which authors from around the world contributed. It would be great if Gertrud now, as an emerita, would consider a second, revised edition of this work.

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<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to list all of Gertrud Pfister's publications in these fields. In the bibliography a selection can be found.

Nowadays she dedicates her rare spare time to her “hobby”, as she calls her sport historical research. Nevertheless, the articles she produces are by no means unprofessionally written.

Lately American sports have become one of her fields of expertise. Not only did she publish papers together with Annette Hofmann on women within the German-American turner movement, but together with Gerald R. Gems and Linda Borish she published *Sports in American History: From Colonization to Globalization* (2008), probably because of all the discussions that she – as a European scholar – had with her American co-editors about American sports. Another book together with Gerald R. Gems appeared on the market one year later: *Understanding American Sports*, a valuable work for Europeans to learn more about American society and their love of sports. Reading through this book one can clearly see Gertrud’s handwriting; she added many aspects that are important for non-American readers. The book starts with a number of questions on American sports and tells you that if you can answer them, you do not have to continue reading.

Gertrud not only shows interest in American sports, but tries to find differences to sports in Denmark or Germany. She also was involved in a couple of intercultural comparative projects. One of them dealt with the experience of top-level European women footballers, in which countries such as Norway, Germany, the United Kingdom and Spain were compared. Another study of this kind looked at the topic “Women taking the lead”. This was a huge German project she worked on together with her colleagues Gudrun Doll-Temper and Sabine Radtke in the late 1990s and early 2000. They looked at all the German sport federations for gender relations which clearly showed the underrepresentation of women on board positions, but also as coaches.

## Current Projects

During her time at the University of Copenhagen Gertrud primarily specialized in the field of sport sociology. At the moment she is connected to three major interdisciplinary research initiatives and institutions: the Copenhagen Centre for Team Sport and Health<sup>2</sup>, the Copenhagen Women Study<sup>3</sup> and the "Teachout"<sup>4</sup> project.

### The Copenhagen Centre for Team Sport and Health

In October 2012 the Copenhagen Centre for Team Sport and Health was established as a research centre at the Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports at the University of Copenhagen with the aim to gain insights into the physiological, psychological and social benefits of playing team games. Gertrud is currently involved in a number of different sociological projects under the auspices of the centre which focus on different team games, target groups and settings.

The first project Gertrud was involved in within this multidisciplinary centre targeted on previously physically inactive women between 45-55 years who took part in an intervention where they played a game similar to indoor hockey called floorball for three months. Gertrud herself participated in the intervention and wrote an auto-ethnographic article about her own experiences, i.e. feeling the joy, the flow element of playing and the exhaustion after training, feeling exhilaration and team spirit as well as engaging in conversations with the other women in the locker room (PFISTER; LENNEIS, 2015). Other research questions focused on the participants' sporting biographies and their reasons for taking part in a research project.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.holdspil.ku.dk/english/>

<sup>3</sup> See <http://cws.ku.dk/>

<sup>4</sup> See <http://teachout.ku.dk>

In another project worksite fitness programmes with female cleaners as a target group were initiated. Here different aspects of intersectionality come into play: most women are immigrants from non-Western countries, have very low levels of education and worked in low- paid menial jobs. This project explored the opportunities and challenges of fitness programmes at the workplace and investigated if play, games and dance could provide an alternative to “conventional” fitness training. In addition, a particular focus was placed on the women’s previous experiences with sport and exercise, their physically exhausting job, their everyday lives and family situation and their struggles if they want to engage in leisure time physical activity. Some of the interviews even had to be conducted in Turkish to get unique insights into the lived experiences of this marginalized group whose voices are often unheard.

Two of Gertrud’s projects deal within this multidisciplinary research group with ageing and playing team games – not only as a way to prevent diseases, but as a way to create well-being, fun and enjoyment and to foster social networks and friendships. One of the groups was men (65-75 years old) who (like the group of middle-aged women described above) participated in an intervention and played floorball. The first results showed that in particular the social relations the participants developed during the intervention period – on and off the floorball field – seemed to be the main reason for them to feel committed to the team and regularly participate in the trainings. After the research period the men continued to engage in floorball outside the university setting and joined an established floorball club.

The other project, also targeting elderly people, took place in the setting of so-called “activity centres” which, as part of a comprehensive policy for the elderly, were established in 2008 by the Danish municipalities. All senior citizens aged 65 years or older can join a local centre and engage in a variety of activities, including gymnastics and fitness exercises (but no team games). As part of the project, new team games have been developed and tailored to the needs of the target group. From September 2015 on the seniors can join three weekly training sessions with team activities.



Besides adults, Gertrud's research also includes children and youth. One example is a project that looks at Danish primary and lower secondary schools. The primary aim is to develop, conduct and evaluate team games and activities which promote social inclusion, improve social relations and increase physical activity rates among children aged between 8 and 12 years. These new, inclusive activities will not be part of Physical Education classes in school, but will be offered during hours of "assisted learning" which can include a range of activities, amongst others physical activity and exercise. According to the Danish Public School reform of 2014, students have to participate in at least 45 minutes of physical activities per day.

## **Copenhagen Women Study**

The second major interdisciplinary research unit Gertrud is involved in is the Copenhagen Women Study which was established in 2013. The overall objective of this group is to explore lifestyle changes caused by physical activity interventions, targeting population groups at risk of impaired health, well-being and overall quality of life. The identified "risk groups" are women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), women in the menopausal transition, female stroke survivors and obese women.

The aim of the human and social sciences work package, which is headed by Gertrud, is to gain information about the background of the participants, their perspectives and lived experiences, e.g. the changes they experience throughout and after the end of the interventions. As such, Gertrud is, for example, conducting a qualitative interview study with women with PCOS which investigates how the symptoms of PCOS affect the women's everyday life and their gender identity.

In another qualitative interview study Gertrud aims to gain insights into the individual life histories and the everyday lives of obese women, in particular into their often life-long struggles not only to lose weight, but also to maintain weight loss.

## “Teachout” project

The broad range of topics that Gertrud is interested in can also be seen in the “Teachout” project that focuses on the Danish “udeskole” (outdoor teaching). In Denmark, outdoor education is a widely spread form of teaching, where once a week all educational activities move outside the school buildings and take place in either cultural or natural settings, in particular in the forests or other green areas. Despite the fact that “udeskole” is not a new phenomenon, there has been very little research about this form of teaching. The aim of this project is therefore to study physical activity patterns of children taking part in outdoor teaching and to study effects of this teaching method on academic learning, social relations and inclusion.

## Soccer and the FREE (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe) Project

Especially in Germany Gertrud Pfister is known for her research on women’s soccer. She has written elaborately on the history of women’s soccer in Germany (PFISTER, 2012). But female soccer players were also included in her 1999 study *Sport im Lebenszusammenhang von Frauen* or in her works on female athletes in the media, where she could show how male hegemony dominates the sports media, no matter whether it is the print media or TV. The “Kournikova Syndrome” was one preferred topic to which Gertrud related in a number of papers.

More recently she – the absolute non-sports-spectator, especially when it comes to soccer – found interest in researching female fans of men’s football. As part of the FREE (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe) project, Gertrud and her colleagues – a European interdisciplinary research group from nine universities in eight different countries – aimed to gain an in-depth understanding for football (soccer) as a social and cultural phenomenon in contemporary Europe. Gertrud’s role in the project was to focus

on the gender aspects of football, i.e. in particular on female fans, who are a still a minority in European football stadia. Via qualitative interviews and participant observations in the fan stands Gertrud explored how dedicated female fans negotiate gender in a fan culture created and dominated by men.

## **Gertrud Pfister and the IAPESGW**

Gertrud looks back on a long tradition of cooperation with IAPESGW. In 1985, the second Dorothy Sears Ainsworth Honor Award, an IAPESGW-contest, was given to her for her scholarly treatise on the theme of co-education in physical education and sport and its influence on girls and women.

IAPESGW's appreciation of Gertrud can be seen by its extending invitations for her to give keynote speeches held at the IAPESGW congresses in Melbourne/Australia in 1993 and at Smith College in Northampton/USA in 1999.

But Gertrud is not merely a member of IAPESGW; she has supported the organization in many ways. Since 1993 she has chaired the Association's Committee of Consultants, and she invested a tremendous amount of work in co-authoring the 50 years commemorative book for IAPESGW 1949 – 1999, together with Ann Hall (HALL; PFISTER, 1999). Her involvement can also be seen in connecting with women from the Far East and Arabic countries: Gertrud was a vital member of the Oman Symposium in 2008, which led to the 'Accept and Respect' declaration, and was co-editor of the Routledge book that emerged from that event: "Muslim Women and Sport" (BENN; PFISTER; JAWAD, 2011). She was also keynote speaker at the Alexandria University Symposium in 2010, and has represented the IAPESGW in many ways, for example, in a group workshop event in Tehran, Iran. In 2011 she helped to organize the first History of Women's Sport Conference in Qatar.

Because of her outstanding record in international research, leadership, scientific publications, keynotes and guest lectures on every continent, Gertrud met the criteria for the Dorothy Ainsworth Research Award, which she received in 2013 at the IAPESGW congress in Havana, Cuba. This award was also dedicated to her for her life work, supporting interested scholars internationally and international networking, never forgetting to strive to improve life chances and opportunities for girls and women in physical education and sport.

## CONCLUSION

This short insight shows the versatility and professional as well as personal engagement of someone who has dedicated her life to research. Gertrud does not consider her research as part of her work, but it reflects Gertrud as a person. Gertrud is her research! At the 2013 IAPESGW award ceremony Gertrud was praised for her ability to build bridges among international associations in many ways. "Her [Gertrud's] long association with IAPESGW and ongoing support makes this recognition of her outstanding contribution particularly rewarding for all of us in the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women"<sup>5</sup>. This quote shall close this contribution to a truly admirable woman, colleague and friend who, despite her success, has always stayed down to earth and never forgot to support younger researchers.

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.iapesgw.org> – "Our awards" – Dorothy Ainsworth Award for Research – Gertrud Pfister (Germany/Denmark).



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## Curriculum Vitae

1945 Born in Eichstätt, Germany

## Education/qualifications

- 1986 Post-doctoral thesis (Habilitation), Ruhr-University Bochum
- 1980 PhD in Social Sciences, Ruhr-University, Bochum
- 1976 PhD in History, University of Regensburg
- 1971 Staatsexamen (Master) Physical Education, Latin and History, Ludwigs-Maximilian-Universität, Munich

## Employment

- Since 2001 Full Professor at the University of Copenhagen
- 1981-2000 Full Professor at the Institut für Sportwissenschaft, Freie Universität Berlin
- 1987-1989 Head of the Institute of Sport Sciences, Freie Universität Berlin
- 1976-1981 Assistant Professor at the Institut für Sportwissenschaft, Ruhr-Universität Bochum

## Several Guest professorships (among others)

at the Universidad de Playa Ancha, Valparaiso, Chile (2001), at the University Gama Filho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1998), Guest professor at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada (1989), at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland (1983)

## Honorary positions

- 2014 Organiser of the Annual Congress of the Commission "Gender Studies" of the "German Association for Sport Science" in Copenhagen
- 2010 Organiser of the congress "Body enhancements and (il)legal drugs in sport and exercise – human and social perspectives" in Copenhagen
- 2010 Co-organiser of the International congress "Women and Girls – Let's Move" in Teheran, Iran
- 2008-2011 Vice-President of the International Association of Sport Sociology
- 2007 Organizer of the World Congress of Sport Sociology in Copenhagen
- 2006-2011 Member of the Scientific Board of the European College of Sport Sciences
- 2003-2008 President of the International Association of Sport Sociology
- 2000-2009 Member of the evaluation committee of the German Research Society
- 2000 Member of the committee "Sport Science Award of the IOC"
- 1996-2006 Vice-president of the German Gymnastic Federation
- 1993 Organiser of the World Congress of Sport History
- 1993-2000 President of the International Society of the History of Sport (ISHPES)
- 1991-1996 Member of the Executive Board of the dvs [German Association for Sport Science]
- 2010-2012 Member of the Scientific Committee of the Pre-Olympic Congress 2012

## Current honorary positions

- 2010- Member of the evaluation board of the Bundesinstitut für Sportwissenschaft
- 2009- Member of the Executive Board of Women Sport International
- 2002- Organiser of the annual Copenhagen Summer School for Young Researchers
- 2000- Member of the Board of the International Society of the History of Sport (ISHPES)
- 1993- Member of the Committee of Consultants of IAPESGW (International Association for Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women)

## Recognition

2013	Dr. h.c. Malmö University
2013	IAPESGW - Dorothy Ainsworth Award for Research
2009	Award of the European Working Group of Women and Sport
2007	Honorary doctorate at the Sport University, Budapest
2006	Darlene Kluka Award of the Women's Sport Foundation
2005	ISHPES-Award for scientific excellence in sport history
2003–2008	President of the International Association of Sport Sociology,
2002	Howell and Howell Distinguished Lecturer Award for NASSH 2002
2000	Bundesverdienstkreuz (one of the highest award of the Federal Republic of Germany)
1996–2006	Vice-President of the Deutscher Turnerbund
1994	International Fellow in the National Academy of Kinesiology
1993–2000	President of the International Society of the History of Sport (ISHPES)
1991–1996	Board member of the German Association of Sport Science

## Member of the board of reviewers / of editors of scientific journals

Stadion, Sportwissenschaft, WSPAJ (Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal), International Journal of the History of Sport, Sport History Review, International Review of the Sociology of Sport, European Review of Sport History, OLYMPIKA, STAPS, Fitness & Performance, Annales Kinesiologiae

## Keynote speaker at around 50 congresses (among others)

### Major projects

Sport in Berlin (funded by the German Research Society)

Sport in Women's Lives. A Cross-Cultural Comparison in Four European Countries (funded by the Bundesinstitut für Sportwissenschaft)

Fitness of Berlin School Children (funded by the Freie Universität Berlin)

Sport in Women's Lives – a Cross Cultural Comparison (together with colleagues from Norway, Spain and UK) (funded by the Bundesinstitut für Sportwissenschaft and the International Olympic Committee)

Women Taking the Lead – Women in Leadership Positions of German Sport Organizations (funded by the Federal Ministry of Youth, Women and Seniors)

Kvinder på Toppen – Women and Leadership in Danish Sport Organisations (funded by the Danish Ministry for Sport and Culture)

Leaders in Sport Organisations who "Dropped Out" (funded by the Danish Ministry for Sport and Culture)

(Un)healthy Bodies – Health and Physical (in)activity in Denmark – qualitative approaches (funded by the Danish Ministry for Sport and Culture)

Patterns of Physical Activity and Inactivity among Various Groups of the Danish Population (UNIK project; funded by the Ministry of Science)

Doping in Sport - an Issue of Gender and Society (with 2 PhD and 1 Post doc scholar)  
(funded by the Program Committee for Food and Health)

Muslim Women and Sport (funded by the IAPESGW)

Gender Equality in European Sport (funded by the Sport Union of the European Commission)

Gender Equality in Elite Sport (funded by EPAS/Council of Europe)

FREE [Football Research in an Enlarged Europe]. Sub-Project "Feminization of Football"  
(Funded by the EU in the context of the 7th European Framework Programme)

**Author / Co-author or editor** of about 30 books and more than 250 articles in books and peer reviewed journals.



# 3

## **OUTSTANDING FEMALE SCHOLARS OR WOMEN WHO DEDICATED THEIR LIVES TO PROJECTS AND POLICIES FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN**

VAHIDA KOZIĆ

ANITA GĘBSKA-KUCZEROWSKA





## **Half a century of commitment - Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić (Bosnia and Herzegovina)**

**Vahida Kozić**

To be a sports official and educator means dedication, sacrifice to the calling you have chosen, and the awareness that the fruits of your labour can only be picked in contact and work with young people. One of the privileges of athletes and sports officials is the opportunity to travel and learn about different cities and countries as well as meeting people, athletes, coaches, judges and other participants of sporting activities. There are women in athletics who have influenced not only myself but also a number of other women, leading to an involvement in athletics. But one woman stands out because of her dedication and involvement not only in athletics but in many other sports and activities.

Professor Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić, whom I met in 1996 as a team leader for the Women Solidarity Games, and later as my professor at the University in Sarajevo, influenced me and many other generations of women a great deal to get involved in sport. At the time, when I was thinking about my future career, this energetic, competent woman was an inspiration and motivation for me to choose one career path that is not at all easy for women.

When I accepted the assignment to write about the personality and the work of my teacher I knew that it will not be an easy task, primarily because of the rich career and plenty of experience professor Fadila has had.

Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić was born in central Bosnia in the town of Travnik in 1940 where she finished her primary school. She spent her childhood and primary school years in her hometown in a happy family, with parents who had six children. She always emphasized with love her privileges of a happy middle child and that hardly anyone had all that she had: an older brother, an older sister, a younger brother and two younger sisters.

When she started doing sports, gymnastics, no one in the family took it seriously. Later, when she started to play handball, her older brother, who was also a sports journalist, was supporting her and her sports results.

After finishing primary school Fadila decided to make sport and physical education her job. That meant that she had to move to Sarajevo and go to the School of Physical Education in Sarajevo. At that time it was a brave decision, as it was unusual for women to choose sport, but Fadila had the support of her family.

In Sarajevo, Fadila had the opportunity to practice and compete in athletics, and was very successful. In 1958 she became a member of the Athletic Club "Bosna". She was very prolific in cross country running, but her favourite discipline was the 400m, in which she established several national records as a junior.



Athletics competition – AC-"Bosna" at stadium Koševo 1958 /400m junior national record

She finished her education in Sarajevo in 1961 and became the first female physical education teacher in her hometown of Travnik. She worked in Travnik from 1961 to 1963 as an expert teacher of physical education in elementary and secondary schools.

She enrolled in the Faculty of Physical Education and graduated in 1967 as the valedictorian of her class. During her studies (1963-1967) she was a student assistant at the Faculty of Physical Education supporting the areas sports games and aesthetic gymnastics. After graduation in 1967, she continued working in these fields as an assistant for further three years. In ski courses for students at Sarajevo University, she trained a large number of students and pupils in primary and secondary schools, as part of swimming classes at the university she taught a large number of students how to swim.

She was admitted to the Faculty of Medicine, University of Sarajevo, as a teaching lecturer in 1973, for the subject of Physical Education and Sports and performed studies for students of medical faculties.

She enrolled at the Faculty of Physical Education in Belgrade, for her master's degree and graduated in 1985, with the title of Master of Science of Physical Culture her master thesis was titled: "The relations between anthropometric characteristics and indicators of flexibility of students". Fadila acquired the title of Doctor of Science of Physical Education with her PhD thesis in 1995 at the Faculty of Physical Education, University of Sarajevo, titled "The relationship between morphological characteristics, motor abilities and the level of movement adoption".

She was elected as assistant professor in 1996, and worked at the Medical School, besides her teaching position at the Faculty of Physical Education, subject Rhythmic gymnastics and Dance.

At the University of Bihac – Department of Physical Education she was engaged in teaching the subject Rhythmic Gymnastics and Dance. At the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, University of Tuzla, she occasionally gives lectures at postgraduate studies.

As a mentor and member of the commission she tutored several graduate theses and mentored master's theses at the Faculty of Physical Education, University of Sarajevo, as well as doctoral theses at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, University of Tuzla.

Professor Fadila's career is accompanied by rich scientific and professional work. Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić has published 37 scientific papers (33 works as an author co-authoring 4). Most of the papers were presented at international conferences and meetings in Finland, the USA, Norway, Egypt, Austria, France, Turkey, Slovenia, and Canada.

She is the author of two books: the manual "Rules of rhythmic gymnastics" from 1999 and the university textbook "Fundamentals of rhythmic gymnastics - exercises without apparatus" from 2003. "Svjetlost" and the book "Rhythmic Gymnastics for primary to secondary school" are in print.

As part of an inter-state university exchange programme she stayed in Bulgaria, at Sofia University. As a scholar of the international program "Camp America" she stayed in the United States for five months, in the state of Michigan. At the invitation of the University of Alexandria - Egypt, in 1999, she participated as a speaker at the international discussion "Women in Sport".



18<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference for the Colleges and Departments of Physical Education in Iraq & the 2nd International Scientific Conference in Mosul (Iraq) in 2012.

She has collaborated with the Gymnastics Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fadila was also the first person in Bosnia and Herzegovina to become an international judge, with the certification "Breve I" in rhythmic gymnastics and still is the only one.

Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić formed the Women and Sport Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina and as the first president she organized several actions in the area of women in sport. She was a leader of the national team at the Women Games of Solidarity in Pakistan (1996) and Iran (1997).

Fadila was and still is active in several professional institutions: she is a member of the Association of educators, of several editorial boards, of the Commission for the selection of athletes, of the Olympic Committee - Sports for All, of the Association of sitting volleyball, of the Gymnastics Club "Bosna" and others.

During her long career as a professional in sport she has won several awards: The memorial plaque of the city of Sarajevo; the Gold Medal by the Gymnastics Award; awards by the Gymnastics Federation of Ex-Yugoslavia, the Gymnastics Club "Bosna"; the Gratitude plaque from different international gymnastic clubs and by the Athletic Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Plaques of the Olympic Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the contribution to the organization of the XIV Olympic Winter Games in 1984; the Gratitude plaque of the International Olympic Committee (signed by Juan Antonio Samaranch); awards by the Croatian Olympic Committee and the Association of the Organizations of Physical Education; the Golden Badge of the University Sports Association "Bosna" of the University of Sarajevo and many others.

Summarising this article we can say that Professor Dr Fadila Ibrahimbegović-Gafić will be known as the first woman to be an expert teacher in her native town of Travnik that taught Physical Education. She was also the first in her class to graduate from the Faculty of Physical Education, and the first female Professor of Physical Education, the first female Master and PhD in Physical Education in her home town and she was the first

woman to defend a doctoral degree in physical education in the “new” country Bosnia and Herzegovina.

She has been a positive example to the women in athletics to continue with their development and contribution to sport. As a woman involved in sports for half a century she is more than an inspiration to all the young women she mentored during her career.

## Famous women in Polish sport sciences

### Anita Gębska-Kuczerowska (Poland)

**Prof. Halina Szwarz MD (1923-2002)** was a famous Polish andragogist and sport's physiologist. In 1968, as an academic in the University of Physical Education in Warsaw, she was nominated as a professor. Her main area of interests concerned gerontology and medical aspects of physical activities (sport's physiology). She participated in many international and local conferences on gerontological issues, as well she was board member of AJUTA. In the University of Physical Education in Warsaw she was Deputy Dean and in the years 1969-1971 the vice rector. She was well-liked by her students and colleagues. She conducted numerous doctoral dissertations and reviews for postdoctoral and applications for professorship. She was awarded the Commander's Cross with Star of the Order of Polish Restitute and Cavalier's and Officer of the Order. In 1975 she established in Warsaw the first University of the Third Age in Poland in cooperation with the Centre of Postgraduate Medical Education. Her conception on health promotion for elderly people through physical, mental and social activities has been very well adopted. Since that time more than 300 Universities of the Third Age have been founded in Poland and the need for this holistic approach in healthy and active aging is still increasing.

**Prof. Ewa Kozdroń** was born June 25, 1951 in Warsaw. In 1974 she graduated the University of Physical Education in Warsaw under the patronage of Józef Piłsudski, PhD. in 1986 and habilitation thesis in 2007 (in the field of physical culture – theory of physical education). She is a coach in artistic gymnastics (2nd class) and a certified instructor for motor recreation. In 1975 she became an associate professor (in science and didactics) at the Warsaw University of Physical Education. Currently she is the Head of the Methodic in the Department of Recreation at the Faculty of Tourism and Recreation. She has led many research and recreation projects (e.g. the Program of Recreation for Older Adults) and is co-investigator in international projects (e.g. THENAPA II – Thematic Network on Adapted Physical Activity II). She is co-founder and President of the European Association for the Promotion of Physical Activity 50+. Since 2015 she is the President of the Warsaw's



Department of the Polish Society of Gerontology. She is a member of the Warsaw Senior's Council and of different ministerial committees. Prof Ewa Kozdroń is author of more than 120 scientific papers in the field of motor recreation – in the last 20 years dedicated mostly to the target group of elderly people. Her papers were presented at about 80 academic conferences concerning theory and methodology of sports for all ages. She is the advisor of more than 200 Bachelor's, Master's and PhD students.

# 4

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SPORT AND DANCE – PIONEERS AND TEACHERS

ROSA DIKETMÜLLER

SUZANNE LUNDVALL

JANE MECKBACH

KARIN REDELIUS

TORUN MATTSSON

ILONA BODNÁR

SZILVIA PERÉNYI

ANNA VILANOVA

SUSANNA SOLER



## **Important leaders in physical education for girls in Austria - Margarete Streicher, Helene Tollich, Julika Ullmann and the Austrian "Women's Forum Physical Education"**

Rosa Diketmüller

### **Physical education for girls in Austria – the beginnings**

Women's participation in physical education and sports dates to the early nineteenth century, a time when Austrian women, like other women in Europe, had limited political and economic rights and limited opportunities for achievement in education and employment. Physical activity and education were open to women after physicians suggested that physical activity would make girls and young women healthier. Accordingly, the first (private) Turnanstalt [gym organization] was founded in Vienna in 1839 by Albert von Stephani. At the same time, courses in gymnastics and physical movement were developed explicitly for girls.

The movement towards physical education for girls seemed to move forward in 1869 when new education rules stipulated that all Austrian students have to participate in physical education (PE). However, there were few female teachers, so programs for girls were much slower to develop than those for boys. In 1883 the education law was amended, and physical education – especially for girls– was no longer required, mostly because of new societal standards of morality that again restricted the physical activity of women.

In 1912 physical education was again made mandatory in schools as a result of the commitment of Cornelia Much-Benndorf (1880-1963), who tried to reform PE for girls and initiated the first one-year-long training course for female PE-teachers based on her elaborated principles for PE for girls in 1913 (ZERZAWY, 1991). But mostly due to the efforts of her student Margarete Streicher (1891 – 1985) that physical education for girls (and boys) became an important component of education in Austrian schools (DIKETMÜLLER, 2001).



## Margarete Streicher – a life dedicated to physical education for girls (1891 – 1985)<sup>1</sup>

Streicher was born on April 9, 1891 in Graz. She studied Biology (PhD in 1916) and she finished the one-year-long course at the teacher's training college to teach physical education in 1914 with the comment: „It will be necessary to pay particular attention to physical education teacher's education“ (BIDSCHOF, 1996, p. 1), what seemed to become the main motto of her life. Between 1914– 1918 she taught Natural Sciences and Physical Education at a Viennese Grammar School for girls. Between 1919 and 1961 she was a lecturer at the University of Vienna for physical education. Between 1924– 1938 she was Inspector of Physical Education for Girls for Viennese Grammar Schools and for the teachers' training colleges. In 1940, she was appointed deputy director of the teachers' training college at the University in Vienna, mainly to fulfill administrative chores, which were not her favorite tasks. During the Nazi regime, Streicher was naively blind regarding the activities of the Nazi regime and superficially saw the importance of physical education of that time and the chance of its promotion (GRÖSSINGER, 1990). After realizing the harsh reality of the Nazi system and being temporarily decommissioned from her teaching activities between 1945– 1946 (but rehabilitated by a special commission), she continued her comprehensive publishing and lecturing activities in 1948. In 1965, for example, she presented a speech titled “The esthetic experience in movement” at the congress of the International Association of Physical Education and Sports for Girls and Women (IAPESGW) in Cologne (GRÖSSING, 1991).

In 1969, the Gaulhofer-Streicher-foundation was established at the University of Vienna. In 1973 she was awarded with the Golden Medal for her merits for the city of Vienna. On February 2, 1985 Margarete Streicher died.

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<sup>1</sup> Margarete Streicher © Historian Archive / Centre for Sport Science of the University of Vienna.

Margarete Streicher was a famous pedagogue and especially noted for her work in reforming physical education in Austria (DIKETMÜLLER, 2002; HALL; PFISTER, 1999). At the beginning of her career in 1914, she was very much interested in the most common gymnastic concepts and visited Stockholm and Lund to get to know Loheland-, Dalcroze- and Mensendieck-gymnastic as well as German and Swedish „Turnen“. But her interest was not just to assume these mostly dance-oriented forms of gymnastic, but to establish basic gymnastic principles of human movements and to implement them into physical education and the training of all types of exercises (GROLL, 1951 apud DIKETMÜLLER, 2002, p. 715). In her opinion also climbing, lifting things, carrying things, etc. were as natural as running and jumping and as well in need of physical forming (STREICHER, 1951). As a result of these analyses, Streicher and her colleague Karl Gaulhofer developed the concept of "Natürliches Turnen" (natural gymnastics), which was the basis for the reform in the 1920s (GAULHOFER; STREICHER, 1922). Furthermore, Streicher expanded the theoretical basis for a reform of physical education especially for girls (1920, 1924, 1925) and in 1925 she founded the *Women's working group for physical education*, which was quite unusual and revolutionary for those days (and terminated by the Nazis in 1938).

In the 1930s Gaulhofer and Streicher deepened the concept of „Natürliches Turnen“ and published five volumes on this issue (Vol I and I: Gaulhofer & Streicher, 1930, 1931; Vol III – V: Streicher, 1942, 1956, 1959). This concept and the aims of physical education with focus on personality development fit in perfectly with the holistic pedagogical approach of those days (BIDSCHOF, 1971; SEYMANN, 1971).

In summary, Streicher has considerably designed the Austrian Physical Education and it was her example in research and teaching in physical education teacher education (PETE) which formed generations of physical educators in Austria. In addition, she was internationally recognized for her contribution to the theory of physical education. She gained national and international awards (e.g. Assoc. of German Teachers in Physical Education at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Congress for Physical Education in 1961), she was member of several scientific associations (e.g. member of the "South African Association

for Physical Education and Recreation“, one out of 20 honorary members of the “Scientific Society of Physical Education“). She is recognized internationally as one of the most distinctive personalities in the field of physical education in Austria.

Margarete Streicher's lifework is collected in the Dr. Margarete Streicher-Archive at the University of Salzburg and documented in a famous documentary film: *Margarete Streicher und das Natürliche Turnen* (1978) by Professor Stefan Grössing.

It was also the work of Margarete Streicher's students, who continued her legacy and brought PE for girls to next generations. It is no coincidence that most of those women were closely linked in the work of IAPESGW, like Helma Pribitzer, the first Austrian in the Council of Representative members, followed by Helene Tollich, Hedwig Moser, Hannelore Achorner, Julika Ullmann, and in later decades Renate Macher-Meyenburg, Margaret Weixlederer, Maria Dinold and Rosa Diketmüller.



### **Helene Tollich (born 1916) – first Austrian President of IAPESGW**

Helene Tollich was born in Vienna in 1916 into a family of teachers (HALL, PFISTER, 1999; ULLMANN, 1999)<sup>2</sup>. She was keen on all sorts of physical activities ranging from gymnastics to skiing and mountain climbing. She studied at the teachers' training college and started her professional career as a teacher in elementary and secondary schools in Vienna. At the same time she enrolled at the University of Vienna where she started her studies in law, but soon switched to psychology, pedagogy, and history. With her interest in teaching sports and physical education, she went on to the

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<sup>2</sup> Additional information about Helene Tollich retrieved from two interviews with Helene Tollich by Doris Ingrisch 2005, and Rosa Diketmüller and Alexandra Wiesinger-Russ in 2008.

Institute of Physical Education in the University of Vienna. In 1941, she received a doctoral degree from the University of Vienna and at the same time she took her final examinations in history and physical education.

In 1957, Tollich was appointed Inspector of Physical Education for Girls in Austria (excluding Vienna). Later this position was restructured and she was responsible for two provinces in the eastern part of Austria. Influenced by Margarete Streicher, Tollich's interest and field of expertise were always focused on the aims, content, and methods of girls' physical education, reflected in the teaching manuals and curricular studies she wrote for students and teachers. She published numerous articles in various journals.

After her retirement from active teaching in 1981, "she by no means gave up her interest in and commitment to physical education. She was now open for new challenges, and willing to increase her involvement with IAPESGW" (HALL; PFISTER, 1999, p. 68).

Tollich attended her first IAPESGW congress in 1957 in London, where she participated as the Austrian representative. 1969 she was elected to the Executive Board and in 1973 she became vice-president. In her function she was responsible for the constitutional reform, and helped drafting the new statutes approved in 1980. In 1981, at the age of 65 after retiring, Tollich was elected president of the IAPESGW and re-elected in 1985 for a second term. The increasing democratization was Tollich's special merit for the IAPESGW.

Tollich received several awards, e.g. the Hans Groll Medal, conferred by the Scientific Society of Sport Science of the University of Vienna for her many contributions to physical education and to IAPESGW. In 1993, she was given the honorary membership in IAPESGW.

In 2015, Helene Tollich is still alive, living in Vienna and looking forward to celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2016!





**Julika Ullmann (born 1941)**  
**Vice President of IAPESGW and President of ICSP**

Helene Tollich invited Julika Ullmann, a former student of hers, to give a demonstration at the IAPESGW congress in 1981 in Buenos Aires. After the congress (where Tollich was elected president of IAPESGW) Ullmann assisted Tollich at some of the Executive Board Meetings and she became a member of the Board of Representatives. In 1982, she organized the IAPESGW "Snow Seminar" in the Austrian mountains. From 1989-1997 she served two terms on the Executive Board of IAPESGW and from 1997-2006 she was vice-president of the IAPESGW. The importance of physical education in Austria was also reflected in the election of Ullmann as the chair of the International Committee of Sports-Pedagogy (ICSP) in the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education and Sports (ICSSPE) 1999– 2003.

Ullmann was born in 1941. After some years of working abroad, she finished her studies in English and Physical Education at the University of Vienna in 1977. From 1963 to 1981 she worked as a teacher in schools and as a lecturer at the teachers' training college and from 1987- 2002 as a lecturer at the Academy of Sports in Vienna. In 1983 she was appointed Inspector of Physical Education for Girls in Lower Austria and Burgenland. She was also engaged in club sports activities: she served as a president of a local sports club from 2001- 2010, and after her retirement in 2003 she was elected president of the Sportunion, a big federal sports association in Austria (2004- 2010).

As a side effect of their many international contacts, Julika Ullmann and Helene Tollich founded secondary and grammar schools with an emphasis on sports in Austria.

## Forum of Women in Physical Education (FrauenForum Bewegung und Sport)

And it was also Julika Ullmann, inspired by her work in the IAPESGW, who promoted the establishment of a national working group on this topic. In 1994, female PE teachers, university teachers and inspectors of Physical Education for girls founded the association *Forum of Women in Physical Education* ([www.ffl.at](http://www.ffl.at)). The aim of this country-wide association is to promote physical education for girls through empowering the girls and female PE- teachers.

Given that a great number of girls and women had negative experiences in PE, the question was raised of how to achieve a high quality in PE for girls which addresses their diverse needs and which creates positive attitudes and emotions. The fact that in Austria girls and boys are educated in PE separately from the age of ten onwards, is in general positively perceived. To sensitize teachers, coaches and the public for girls' needs and high quality standards in PE and sports, the association offers courses on a regular basis. Since 2002, once a year the journal *Girls in PE* (in German language) is published. Each issue of this journal focuses on a special topic like "Girls' empowerment in and through PE", "Self-awareness- self-defense", "Wild games", "Menstruation", "Borderline experiences through PE and sports", "Eating disorders in PE and sports", "Educational standards in PE", "Skills-/competence orientation in PE for girls", "What it means to be a girl", "Trends in sports and in PE for girls", "Body image and body awareness", "The exploration extension and usage of spaces", "Girl-specific approaches in sports", "Diversity in PE". Based on a theoretical introduction of the issue, several elaborated and evaluated good practice examples for PE in school are presented.

As Physical Education in Austria is taught for girls and boys separately at secondary level, (female) teachers highly value this publication and implement this "comprehensive material" in their daily work in schools.

Nowadays, physical education for girls is taken for granted in Austria. Girls (as well as boys) spend two to four hours per week in physical education classes. Physical education is taught for girls and boys separately from the age of ten onwards, a practice at odds with that of most other western (European) nations. This separation was once criticized as too conservative but got accepted because it offered opportunities to empower girls in PE and sports, it provided jobs for female physical education teachers, and it offers circumstances in PE to integrate girls with a migration background or different religious beliefs more easily. Streicher's full commitment to physical education for girls and the contribution of famous teachers and inspectors like Tollich and Ullmann were the foundation for physical education for girls in Austria. It is the responsibility of women in PE like those working in the Austrian Forum of Women in PE to secure the high quality standards in PE to empower girls in PE and in sports in the future too.

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# Some early and later female pioneers in physical education, dance and sports in Sweden: three different portraits

Suzanne Lundvall

Jane Meckbach

Karin Redelius

Torun Mattsson

## Introduction

According to the latest *Gender Gap Report* by the World Economic Forum, Sweden is one of the most equal countries in the world ([www.weforum.org](http://www.weforum.org)). The equality is described by for example the proportion of women working outside the home and their economical distribution. The Swedish parliament has also one of the world's highest representation numbers of women parliament members. To be able to understand this development of equality, factors like a long period with a social democracy government and a strong popular movement are often put forward as explanations for the Swedish gender policy development. But an unproven hypothesis is also that the early education of both men and women in bodily exercise and physical activity played a role in this development.

The purpose of this chapter is to pay attention to three Swedish women who, through their engagement in physical culture and sports in different time periods, made difference to the lives of girls and women. The first pioneer, Martina Bergman-Österberg, established a female Physical Education Teaching Training Program (PETE), the second, Ann Elefalk, broke the way for female coaches in a male dominated sport and the third Cecilia Dahlgren brought dance into compulsory schools in Sweden. The three portraits differ, but together they illustrate how education, passion and strategies can move mountains.



## Martina Bergman-Österberg – an entrepreneur of physical education for girls and women

In many ways the early establishment of female participation in the field of physical culture broadened the cultural space of what could be of legitimate value in relation to existent gender order and division. The first pioneer to be described is Martina Bergman (married Österberg) (1849-1915). In the late 1800s she graduated as a physical educator from the former Royal Central Gymnastic Institute (GCI), today named the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences (GIH). The institute, founded in 1813, was and is still one of the first physical education teacher training institutes in the world. The studying program at the institute rested on the ideas of Per Henrik Ling, who had developed a bodily exercise system called the Ling gymnastics (the Swedish gymnastics), where bodily exercise for military, medical, and pedagogical and aesthetical aims could be studied. Though the fourth branch, the aesthetical gymnastics, whereby feelings and emotions could be expressed, was never developed by Ling himself. Instead women's later engagement in dance and rhythmic developed aesthetical and rhythmic gymnastics (see for example LUNDVALL; MECKBACH, 2003).

From the very beginning the female body was included in Ling's theory of bodily exercise (LING, 1840). His thinking was based on certain ideas about practicing movements and training the body, tightly linked to ethical and aesthetic ideals and to perspectives of health regarded as wholeness, expressed through balance and symmetry. The civic virtues, strongly present in intellectual circles at that point of time, could, according to Ling, be enhanced by practicing gymnastics (LJUNGGREN, 2013).

Female students were officially admitted as students from 1864 onwards, and the number of female students rose gradually from a handful to class size. In 1891 there were 132 applications and 27 were accepted. The early female students studied medical (remedial) and pedagogical gymnastics.





Course at GCI, 1891-1893

In 1887 female students were officially allowed to take on jobs as remedial gymnasts and also got the right to use the official title of an accredited professional PE educator; "director of gymnastics"<sup>3</sup>.

Hence, in the late 1800s Bergman-Österberg was surrounded by a growing culture that supported women's engagement in public life. What makes Bergman-Österberg interesting to highlight, is her commitment to use bodily exercise (Ling gymnastics) as a way of developing identity, health and physicality, but also as way of preparing for a life outside the private sphere. Bergman-Österberg seems to have been strongly convinced from the start that a thorough education and preparation for professional life could make a difference and was essential if women were to succeed outside the home. For Bergman-Österberg and her later counterparts in Sweden, there was only one alternative to choose and that was to strategically build an educational platform to secure women's possibilities to be in charge of their own lives<sup>4</sup>. Bergman-Österberg, and several other leading ladies within the field of physical culture did not rely on male colleagues to get their reformation

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<sup>3</sup> The title 'director of gymnastics' was common in Sweden until 1977, then changed to 'teacher of gymnastics' between 1978-1982, and changed again to 'teacher in sports' (idrottslärare) between 1983-2011. Today the title for a graduate in physical education is 'teacher in sport and health'. Often this person has at least one more school subject in his or her teaching exam.

<sup>4</sup> In Sweden female PE educators did not break out from the existing institutions which educated PE educators, instead they founded an association on their own in 1902, the Association of GCI. The purpose of the association was to secure jobs and working conditions, as well as the level of knowledge through courses and seminars (FÖRENINGEN, 1902; see also Lundvall forthcoming).

ideas implemented – on the contrary they chose to take on the "leading quarter" themselves. But, what inspired the early female PE educators to act the way they did?

Two important sources for the understanding of the 'footprints' of the early pioneers' in the field of physical culture in Sweden are the dissertation *The making and breaking of a female PE culture: the her story* by Barbro Carli and the book, *Vandringsboken*, a collection of letters between early examined female PE educators by Olle Halldén. For the understanding of how Bergman-Österberg established the first college for female PE educators, Sheila Fletcher's book *Women First*, has been important, along with publications from other sports historian (see for example HARGREAVES, 1994; PFISTER, 1998, 2003; TRÆENGBÆK, 1998; VERTINSKY, 1999). What these sources reveal are women dedicated to make a difference in the field of bodily exercise for girls and women. For Bergman-Österberg, to make a difference also included to have a solid and strategic base to act from, which could enable her commitment in public life and, as was shown later, also meant involvement in the early women's liberation movement.

### **A farmer's daughter becoming an entrepreneur**

Matilda Bergman (married Österberg) was born in to a farmer family with four daughters and two sons. Her father is said to have encouraged education. She got a high school degree as a private student, and left Sweden to study language and gymnastics abroad. At the age of 30 (!) she applied for studies in remedial and pedagogical gymnastics and got accepted as a student at the GCI in 1879. After her PETE examination she got the appointment as school inspector in London, with the mission to introduce Swedish Ling gymnastics. For six years she worked as a school inspector and educated over 700 female teachers in gymnastics for elementary schools. The development of gymnastics for girls in London schools was impressive compared to schools in Sweden at that time. During her inspection visits, it is told that she was keen on paying attention to deficits in the school environment, health and ergonomics (WICKSELL, 1915). But Bergman-Österberg was not satisfied with only introducing school gymnastics. Quite early she realized that to

be able to make a difference she also had to include an establishment of a professional education for female PE educators. This was also an important step to take in order to reach the English middle and upper class. The excerpt below illustrates that she was troubled over how to reach these layers of society.

Is it not rather funny that you here in England think what is good for the poor cannot be good for the rich? By that time I found that I had completed my task; the teachers I had trained would train others, and my work received many flattering remarks of approval. But the system had been identified with that of the poor; that was difficulty. Because it was good education for the poor it could not possibly be the same for the rich. However this argument did not impede me for long. I built the College and Gymnasium in 1885, and since then have been steadily working to improve the physical development of women in the middle and upper classes (FEHN, 2000, p. 130).

Her strategy from the beginning regarding the acceptance of her idea to establish an educational field for women from the middle and upper class was to introduce and display the Swedish Ling gymnastics together with outdoor plays at international congresses. By this she could communicate the detrimental influence of long studying hours on posture and bodily strength, and the need for invigoration through physical exercise. Included in her communication was that there was a need for a "specialist", an educated, trained person that could take care of the training of the body of girls. And this had to be done by educated and trained female teachers. In Bergman-Österberg's view, the unscientific training of calisthenics had to be replaced by Ling gymnastics.

In 1885 she started the first English physical teacher training college for women, *The Hampstead Physical Teaching Training College and Gymnasium*, northwest of London. The educational courses went on for two years and the content resembled that of the GCI institute, and included both remedial and pedagogical gymnastics. To create an air of distinction and status, she kept the number of students low and had certain admission

tests to secure that the students who entered had the qualities Bergman-Österberg was looking for. Her students had to give England what it needed: healthy and capable girls and women (HARGREAVES, 1994; WICKSELL, 1915). In written obituaries about Bergman-Österberg's life her capacity is praised and her personality described as formed by power of action and great commitment (WICKSELL, 1915; WIDEBECK, 1915; ).

After a decade in Hampstead, Bergman-Österberg bought a mansion in Kingsfield, Dartford Heath in Kent, south of London. Here she had space to further develop her teacher training college with the practice of remedial gymnastics.



Students from GCI playing cricket at Dartford College in 1954 (photographer unknown)

In the park she constructed biking lanes, play grounds for lawn tennis, lacrosse and cricket, everything in the spirit of merging Swedish gymnastics and English outdoor plays. Dance and swimming were regularly part of the education.

The institute took on the name *Bergman-Österberg Physical Training College*, and became an important part of everyday life in Dartford, where children could learn to swim, practice gymnastics and games, but also where people could get remedial gymnastics as part of rehabilitation training.

Bergman-Österberg was an entrepreneur, who in the light of today emerged in several ways. She had a good eye for the English class system and made use of this in order to reach her goal of educating middle and upper class women and prepare them for a professional role in society. But she was also receptive to current changes and knew instinctively that novelty was an important trait to use to be in front. According to several references after a studying trip to the United States she brought basketball to England and transformed it in a creative way into net ball, a new ball game for girls and women (JOBBLIN; BARHAM, 1991). Furthermore she engaged in the dressing of women when practicing bodily exercise, and encouraged the development of the gym slip ([www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk)).

### **A character of demand**

Bergman-Österberg is often described as bossy and demanding. She could criticize brutally and harshly, but still seems to have been loved and respected. The nick name Napoleon is used in some texts about Bergman-Österberg (WIDEBECK, 1915). She called her students "my English flowers". When Bergman-Österberg spoke about capability, she thought about character, self-confidence and self-awareness:

No student of mine ever says "I cannot" The day will come when you feel nervous. Remember you are one of Madame Österberg's students and it will be enough to carry you through any situation (FEHN, 2000, p. 132).

After Dartford College other educational institutes were founded and several of them were established by Bergman-Österberg's former students, within England and abroad (CARLI, 2004; FEHN, 2000; FLETCHER, 1984). Some of her former students also started a labor union (1899). They named the association *The Ling Physical Education Association* and invited Bergman-Österberg to become its chairmen. This initiative upsets Bergman-Österberg. Instead she established her own association in the following year (1900); *The Bergman-Österberg Union*. And it was not until after her death that both associations melted together and became at first *The Ling Association and Affiliated Gymnastics*

*Societies* – and later the *Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom* ([www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martina\\_Bergman](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martina_Bergman)).

After Bergman-Österberg withdrew as head of the college in 1913, she started to plan for how her lifework could be continued. In letters sent back home she expressed hopes that the English state in some way would accept her college as a gift and carry on with the management of the college. This was the case. From mid 1970s the institute was taken over by the *Thames Polytechnic, and later by the University of Greenwich* ([www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk)).

The life work of Bergman-Österberg needs to be seen both in the light of her time and in the light of actually being implemented in a country which often is labeled as "the cradle of sports". Bergman-Österberg was in her time seen as the: "the morning star of reformation" and as an agent for a new understanding of health (FLETCHER, 1984). That Bergman-Österberg has played a decisive role in the spread of the Swedish gymnastics system abroad and school PE is without doubt, but that she also seems to have been close to the women's liberation movement is less known in the field of PE and sports.

### **Women's liberation movement**

Bergman-Österberg was active in a time when women started to gather in gender separate associations to improve and strengthen human rights and legal causes like the right for women to vote, to work outside the home and make a living. In England suffragettes like the sisters Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, were active, and in Sweden Bergman-Österberg's cousin Signe Bergman was active within the Swedish suffragette movement. Facts around how and in which way Bergman-Österberg herself participated still needs to be explored. What is known is that Signe stayed in England with Bergman-Österberg for a couple of years.

In line with this, it is perhaps not surprising that Bergman-Österberg just before she passed away in 1915, bought a big mansion called *Apelryd* in Båstad, in the south of

Sweden and converted this place to a school for the education of gardening and home economics for girls and women (the first gardener school in the Nordic countries to be established). This was all in line with her wish to secure educational possibilities for women and her approach of how to best contribute to women's preparedness for public life. Last year this school, *the Apelrydska* celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, still holding courses, if not in gardening but in economics of today, design, leader- and entrepreneurships. At her deathbed Bergman-Österberg donated an impressive amount of money to the Fredrika-Bremer-Association. The Apelryd school is under the management of the Fredrika-Bremer-Association (see <http://www.apelryd.se/hem.html> and <http://www.fredrikabremer.se>).

The more personal parts of Bergman-Österberg's life are quite unknown. She married Edvin Österberg in 1885, a school principal working in Stockholm. Throughout life they kept on living separately but married. Edvin was a regular visitor to the Hampstead and Dartford colleges though. A cause for his visits was also that he served as a private teacher for the British born crown princess Margareta of Sweden. Accordingly, Bergman-Österberg seems to have been able to both keep up her marriage and continue to be committed to her working life. In that sense she was "ahead" of her time.

### **Official tributes**

Martina Bergman-Österberg was the first to become honorary member in the *National Association for the Political Right of Female Voting* (Landsföreningen för Kvinnors politiska rösträtt (L.K.P.R.) (FEHN, 2000), and the sign London Remembers can be found at the address NW6, Broadhurst Gardens 1, South Hampstead in London. The wordings are: Martina Bergman-Österberg, 1849-1915, Pioneer of Physical Education for Women lived and worked here (see <http://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/martina-osterberg>). Bergman-Österberg was given the medal *Litteris et Artibus* in 1906, a decoration given to persons that have made Sweden known and honored in the world (See [www.kungahuset.se](http://www.kungahuset.se)).

This part of the article has focused on one of the early Swedish pioneers in the field of physical culture leaving her footprints in both Sweden and England. Bergman-Österberg should be paid attention to and remembered not only for what she established, but perhaps even more so for the strategic and discerning way in which she was able to implement her ideas.

## **Ann Elefalk – a pioneer who paved the way for women's sport in Sweden**

**Karin Redelius**

This is a personal story about Ann Elefalk, a woman who paved the way for thousands of girls and women who, like me, loved the game of bandy. Ann was one of the first administrators ever who was employed by a sport federation to promote women's sport in Sweden. Today almost as many girls as boys are participating in organized sports in Sweden, but that was certainly not the case in the late 1960s when Ann became engaged in bandy. She did a fantastic job spreading the sport and she worked hard to improve the conditions for women playing. Ann also played bandy herself and for many years she was coaching the best team in Sweden at the time. I know, because I was on the team and her love for the game of bandy was contagious, just as her passionate work for the right of girls and women to do any sport they want (especially bandy).

You probably do not know much, if anything, about bandy, the sport she was promoting. So let me start by telling you that bandy is sometimes called “football of the winter”. The reason for that is of course that the game has many similarities with football (soccer): the size of the field, the number of players and many of the rules are the same, but it also has many differences. Bandy is played on ice, the players have skates and a stick (almost like the ones used in field hockey) and the ball has the size of a tennis ball but it is much harder. The game is not as tough as ice-hockey since the players are not allowed to tackle and therefore they do not need as much protection as in ice hockey.



Bandy is mainly played in Russia and the Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Finland) but lately it has spread to North America and to Asia. It is a fantastic game to play. There is such a large ice area to skate and develop speed, so it is very fast. Sometimes those on the side watching bandy find it hard to see the ball because everything happens so fast, especially on TV when one cannot see the whole rink.

While searching for background information about Ann Elefalk I browsed through a book with the title "Bandy for 100 years" (ARGUS, 2002) The book has 304 pages and 298 of those are devoted to men's bandy, and that gives a hint about the situation Ann had to face. The book was published in 2002, the year that mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of organized bandy competitions in Sweden. A hundred final games have been played to appoint a Swedish champion of the men's teams. But bandy for women has a long history as well, and the headline on the first of the six pages that deal with women's bandy in the book reads: "Women's bandy for a hundred years as well".



Women playing bandy at the Olympic stadium in Stockholm 1912. Photo: A. Swinhufvud

Already around the turn of the century in the late 1800s there were all ladies teams that played on the frozen lakes around the Stockholm area. In 1915 the organization improved and there were teams in several cities around Sweden.

However, it was not until Ann Elefalk was employed by the Swedish Bandy Federation some fifty years later and started working in a systematic way to organize women's bandy, that the first bandy league for women was formed. The first and much awaited Swedish championship came about in 1973. I turned 12 the same year and I loved to skate and playing ice hockey was my greatest passion. I played on a boys' team and I had number nine on my team shirt just like Bobby Hull, my favorite player and an NHL-star in the 1970s. I was the only girl on the team and once when we played a tournament that fact made the news. "Woman participated in ice hockey tournament" was what the headline said and that 'woman' was a ten year old girl. One day when I came home after a game I was very sad. My parents got worried. This was at a time when children went to practices and matches by themselves (I rode my bike everywhere) and parents normally did not watch more than perhaps a game or two during the whole season. "How was it today, didn't you have fun?" my mom asked when she saw the sorrow on my face. "It was fun", I said, "we won and I scored twice, but I am not allowed to play anymore". For some reason that I still do not know, my coach told me that I (a girl) could not be on the team any longer. I was devastated. Later on my mom told me that was the moment when I became a feminist (although I did not know it at the time). So what should I do now?

A couple of years earlier I had a PE teacher, a young woman in her twenties who substituted for my ordinary teacher. I know she had played bandy and I thought that if she, who was almost a grown up woman was allowed to play, maybe I could as well. I did not recall the name of her club so I called Stockholm Bandy Federation and asked if they knew a club where girls were allowed to play bandy. They did, and I started to play bandy as a thirteen year old girl and I got Ann as a coach. Bandy soon became my favorite sport and I continued playing for more than twenty years. I also became a leader in bandy and for a long time I was the chairman for the board of my bandy club. Later on I was the chair for the ladies bandy committee of the Swedish Bandy Federation, and finally I was a member of the board of the Swedish Sports Confederation. But my journey was much easier than the one Ann had. In many respects she paved the way for me and many other girls and women. What did she accomplish?

As already mentioned she worked hard to establish a championship for women. Once that was up and running she set a new goal: to form a national team and eventually ensure that women were given the chance to play international matches against other nations. Her dream was that one day a world championship in bandy for women would be arranged. The most difficult thing for Ann was not to get girls and women interested in the game, but to make men in bandy federations and clubs understand that women should also have the chance to play. She worked for the national federation for over twenty years and she had to fight for a long time and in many different ways against stubbornness, inequalities and prejudice. She was extraordinarily persistent and she never gave up. In 1980 the first international game was played and today women have their own world championship in bandy.

In the first doctoral thesis ever about women's sport in Sweden Eva Olofsson describes how different sports for women were eventually accepted in their respective federations (OLOFSSON, 1989). The modern Swedish sports movement was dominated by men throughout its development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Olofsson states that sport is an activity created for men by men. The establishment of soccer and bandy happened during the same time period in the 1960s and 1970s and Olofsson points out that the conditions of women in sport are closely connected with the development of society as a whole as well as with women's general conditions in society. In comparison with women's history in general, women's history in sports has undergone a similar development but with an obvious time lag. The time was ripe when Ann Elefalk started working to improve the chances for girls and woman to play bandy. This does not mean that the work was easy; it was tremendously difficult. Thanks to her effort and her love and passion for the game she was successful in making people (men) understand that bandy should be more inclusive and to let girls and women just as boys and men discover the thrill of bandy. All the women and girls that take their participation in sports for granted have a lot to be grateful for. Thank you Ann for making a difference for women who want to play bandy!

## Dance at schools for all Cecilia Björklund Dahlgren – an enthusiast and inspirer



Björklund Dahlgren

It took an enthusiast and an inspirer to spread dance in the Swedish compulsory school. Cecilia Björklund Dahlgren (born in 1954) has worked to promote dance for all children in compulsory schools for the last 30 years. The Swedish curriculum states that the school has a responsibility for aesthetic learning processes. This also includes letting pupils encounter dance in an educational context.

Pupils should have the opportunity of experiencing knowledge in different ways. They should also be encouraged to try out and develop different modes of expression and experience feelings and moods. Drama, rhythm, dance, music and creativity in art, writing and design should all form part of the school's activity. Harmonious development and educational activity provide opportunities for exploring, researching, acquiring and communicating different forms of knowledge and experiences. A creative ability is a part of what pupils should acquire (NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION, 2011, p. 12).

The question is how to make this happen and who should teach dance? Cecilia's mother, Eva Dahlgren, was a kind of role model for Cecilia as she worked with the idea of spreading dance early on. She was convinced that all children should be entitled to

dance. Eva Dahlgren developed dance in the 1960s and 1970s in Västerbotten in the northern parts of Sweden. Furthermore, she founded *Boliden Children Ballet*, which had a major impact on the spreading of dance in Sweden (Dahlgren, 2006). This resulted in opportunities for many children to learn and experience dance. Cecilia participated in the children's ballet, then she taught dance and later continued to build on the lifework of her mother. This text is about her pioneer work and her wish to spread dance as a field of knowledge in schools and society.

## Dance as a means of expression

Cecilia has worked to strengthen dance as a means of expression in a variety of ways. The focus has been on artistic dance and Cecilia sees dance as a language and a sensual way of being creative with the body. It is essential that children can experience the perceptual knowledge which exists within dance, that is the ability to perceive and experience reality with the mind and be able to say something - shape with their movements and even dare to enjoy their body (BJÖRKLUND DAHLGREN, 2012, p. 162).

To Cecilia, dance is something special that is genuine and playful. She believes that dance can contribute to children's development, and this belief has pushed her to continue the fight for dance over the years. Indeed there has been resistance. Music and art have long existed as mandatory subjects in the Swedish elementary school. Theater and music have a nationwide spreading through institutions like the national theater and music schools. However, dance has never been granted that kind of position, neither at school nor in society. According to Cecilia, dance has historically been regarded as an urban phenomenon and something exclusive. Hence, this is something she has been dedicated to counteract and change. Her goal is that all children should be granted the possibility to dance at school and that also people in the countryside should be able to watch different dance performances.

## Structures to succeed

Cecilia worked as a dance teacher in the middle of the 1980s in the county of Enköping, outside of Stockholm. She had a low position in the school system, a consequence of the lack of regulative agreements for dance teachers at that time. She was young, had a lot of energy and managed to get 21 schools in the county to start teaching dance. Suddenly she got more attention, and many municipalities showed interest in teaching and learning dance. She realized that a personal interest in dance is not enough, and that there must be state funding and investments if the wide spread of dance should become a reality. Because of this, she contacted the former cultural – and educational minister in Sweden, Bengt Göransson, who paid her cause attention and gave her an employment at the Swedish Arts Council. However, it would take another ten years before dance was introduced as an independent area of art within the national cultural politics. Some years earlier in 1992, Cecilia had been the initiator of a model in spreading dance based on hired dance consultants with herself as a state dance consultant. This structure with regional dance consultants became a success in terms of the spread of dance and dance could be promoted in different geographical regions. This structure still exists in Sweden.

Cecilia Björklund Dahlgren is of the opinion that dance must be promoted all over the nation to reach the goal to entitle all children the right to dance. Due to her position within the Swedish Arts Council an organizational frame for dance developed. And by this she could approach municipalities, politicians, sponsors, associations and parents in order to promote dance.

## Create meeting places for dance

One important task for Cecilia Björklund Dahlgren has been to create meeting places for dance. In 2006 she also started the program *Dance in school*. Cecilia had constructed a door opener, an entrance for dance at school, with the help of a school

reform stating that every child should have the opportunity for daily physical activity at school. The specific goal with *Dance in school* was to make dance accessible to all children as an educational subject and to promote learning through dance. A national survey was conducted and different networks for dance were formed in teacher training programs at university level. *Dance in school* further enabled various dance projects and appointments for dance educators in schools. In 2007 the first *Dansbiennalen* took place at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. The purpose was to create a forum for dance teachers, dance artists, scientists, teachers, principals, businesses and policy-makers. Since then the *Dansbiennalen* has been held in different places every second year.

In 2003 Cecilia started the first education in Sweden for dance teachers at Luleå Technology University. The placement in the north of Sweden was strategic. The dance profile is still operative and the future dance teachers are doing their teaching training in different municipalities, which enables them to meet children in several schools nationwide.

## **Kiruna municipality – dance at school for all**



Dancing children in traditional Lapp clothes Photo by Hans-Olof Utsi

Cecilia constantly repeats the importance of getting all children to experience dance at school. A school is the institution in which dance should be strengthened, both through development of methods and science. Several municipalities have made certain efforts to provide dance at school. However, Kiruna at the very north of Sweden is particularly dear to Cecilia. In Kiruna, a great geographical distance separates schools and the School board decided to offer dance to all children. Cecilia was to assist in this task in 2010. She wrote applications and was granted financial means from the Cultural counsel, LKAB (a mining company) and Kiruna municipality. By decisively establishing the idea in all schools a common will to succeed was created.

Cecilia also started further educational courses in dance for teachers and other personnel at all schools in Kiruna municipality. Cecilia stresses that the knowledge of dance among ordinary teachers is important, but that this can never replace a dance teacher with several years of education. According to Cecilia, the best solution would be a cooperation e.g. between PE teachers and dance teachers at school.

It takes an enthusiast and an inspirer to spread dance at school the way Cecilia Björklund Dahlgren has done and still is doing. Her passion for dance and her conviction that all children have the right to try dancing pushes her to continue. Dance education is important and there is a need for educated cultural dance teachers who can give children an entrance to cultural values in society.

Long time passed before dance was introduced as an art form in the Swedish educational system but now the interest is growing for dance. It takes an extensive cooperation between all actors in order to reach the goal of DANCE IN SCHOOL FOR ALL! The experiences that are given in dance are essential and cannot be reached in any other way than by dancing (BJÖRKLUND DAHLGREN, 2012, p. 176).



Cecilia Björklund Dahlgren has done extensive pioneer work in order to strengthen the position of artistic dance at school. She will not give up but continues the work of getting all children at school to dance.

## **Concluding thoughts**

As was written in the introduction each of the three portraits of Bergman-Österberg, Elefalk and Björklund Dahlgren is different, but together they illustrate how education, passion and strategic thinking can move mountains. Embedded in their ideas is the belief that bodily exercise could make a difference, make children and the youth capable and competent through the training and schooling in movement education and training. Bergman-Österberg engaged in the building and institutionalization of a female PETE. As many of the early pioneers the departure point was a gender separate stance of others. This was - perhaps the only visible path for her and many other early pioneers to choose in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Elefalk worked within the field of sports and paid attention to the importance of equal ways of doing sports. Björklund Dahlgren entered the gendered field of physical culture from another angle; she seeks to broaden aspects of what movement education at school can contribute – for both girls and boys. Today, gender viewed as a social construction gives new and other possibilities to counteract inequity and hidden power orders. What the early pioneers would have thought about present conditions for women in the field of physical culture, one can only assume.

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# **Movement artists and female teachers of physical education: Women's body culture at the beginning of the last century in Hungary**

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In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mutually reinforcing changes in economic, political, scientific and also in artistic life resulted in changes in the perceptions of women in Hungary. After the turn of the century, due to the unfolding movements the seemingly unified and stable social perception transformed: new female concepts and roles emerged. The corresponding ideas, skills, competencies and activities connected to "femininity" and "masculinity" started a process of redefinition, also among women. This social transformation which reached all spheres of society was supported or opposed by several conscious, subconscious and rather instinctively acting social groups.

In this paper we present two parallel stories: the professionalization of the female physical education teachers and the aspirations and emergence of the movement of artists. Parallelism between the two is not only caused by the selected historical time, but also by the increasing representation of female dance and exercise; a common space for maneuver in both physical and symbolic meanings.

## **Female physical education teacher profession**

When Baron József Eötvös in 1868 made physical exercise a mandatory subject in schools, the biggest obstacle of the implementation was the shortage of appropriate exercise teachers. In order to eliminate this obstacle the National Gymnastics Club

(hereinafter referred to as NGC)<sup>5</sup> started gymnastics teachers' training.<sup>6</sup> The first female student was enrolled in 1880. From the subsequent "breakthrough" year of 1881 onwards, training of women became regular, however, their participation rate was low; but a steady increase can be seen. In 1904 out of all together 1,268 gymnastics teacher certificates issued, 241 were awarded to women (BODNÁR, 2007). This rate of certificates of women increased due to the increased demand for female teachers in private and public educational institutions as a consequence to the regulation of Kuno Klebelsberg, minister of culture and education, also acting as 'sports minister' that time. The 1921 LIII.-act had outstanding importance as it made physical education a compulsory subject in the reformed high schools also for girls.

From the historical viewpoint of the professionalization of the occupation it is important to note that the NGC was operating as a civil organization and was entitled to issue state-recognized diplomas to the graduates. Practicing teachers however, did not receive their well-deserved appreciation either financially or morally. Therefore, the Hungarian Gymnastics Teachers' Association proposed to establish a national institute for the training of gymnastics teachers as early as 1883. In this training program, exercise teachers were supposed to receive training in a similar quality and duration like teachers of other subjects. The lack of such training was perceived as an obstacle by exercise teachers regarding the emancipation of their profession. This endeavor was realized in November 1925, when the College of Physical Education (hereinafter referred to as TF)<sup>7</sup> was established. Kuno Klebelsberg advocated the establishment of the new institution and also the change in its name in order to put emphasis on the transition of focus also in the training content instead of gymnastics teachers' training awarding diplomas in higher education institution to multi-sport trained sports professionals.

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<sup>5</sup> In Hungarian: Nemzeti Torna Egylet (a továbbiakban: NTE).

<sup>6</sup> Gymnastics teacher" is referred to as "tornatanító" in Hungarian at the end of the 19th century.

<sup>7</sup> College of Physical Education (hereinafter referred to as TF): Testnevelési Főiskola established in 1925.

With this reorganization of “sports teachers” the training sector was able to satisfy both employers’ and employees’ expectations. Schools received staff with more professional knowledge regarding sports; and the new sports teachers as opposed to the previous private training of NGC received a government-certified diploma. There was great significance regarding the representation of an equivalent qualification to other teacher education diplomas. The latter circumstance is an important step toward the social recognition of the sports teacher profession in Hungary.

The training continued the tradition to include female students: among the first students of TF enrolled students, there were 44 females. It must be emphasized however, that as there was a difference in the curriculum of physical education at the time for males and females, there also was a difference in the content of study programs for female and male teachers’ training. The curriculum for women and girls was based on movements of gymnastics, dance and certain branches of athletics. They lacked ball games for example and as a consequence the training of female sports teachers also lacked the impact of modern ball games related to personality development such as team thinking, cooperation and coordination between the competitive ability and creation of solutions within the sport specific rules. The limitations created an effect on female teachers’ conceptions on their own professional and occupational identity, which was detectable also in future-developments on women’s roles in sports and physical education. The Women’s Committee of the National Association for Physical Education Teachers (TTOE)<sup>8</sup> highlighted the mentioned process. This was the organization that provided the otherwise isolated female teachers with a functioning professional network and with an opportunity to join platforms for the formulation of their opinions, and also to construct their collective identity as female physical educators. This formal network also allowed a transfer of experiences and discussions on different issues. This assisted female sports professionals to build and understand their differentiation as female teachers from their

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<sup>8</sup> The Hungarian Association of Gymnastic Teachers (Magyar Tornatanítók Egylete) was established in December 1881; its first president was Elek Matolay. Its work was continued by the National Association for Physical Educators (Testnevelőtanárok Országos Egyesülete-TTOE) which is still existing.



male colleagues simply because of gender-based differences in the approaches and contents of physical education and sports for males and females and boys and girls also in the everyday practice of the subject. The network also served the purpose to gain knowledge and competencies on how to represent themselves in a strongly male dominated, highly hierarchical and structured environment.

The essential question was how and to what extent their committee can contribute to the discussion of issues, and to make or influence decisions. This procedure could be tracked by analyzing the contents of articles published by the women's committee in the *Journal of Physical Education Teachers*.

Their professional competencies are limited to addressing "femininity": the name and gender of the writers were determining; they wrote about and for girls and women. They did not take a stand on the big issues of the profession, for example no input can be found in the long struggle of dispute with the Ministry about the advocacy for acceptance of the PE subject in different types of schools.

The association's leadership was seeking the official opinion of the women's committee only on issues related merely to the girls' type of exercise such as teaching dance, gymnastics or physical therapy. The latter area remained an inherently feminine area of competence within the profession. Following physical education's implementation into schools in 1914 two female professionals, Anna Laszló and Marietta Kecskeméthy, were entrusted with the training of female teachers. In 1921 physical therapy workshops were organized only and especially for women. In 1929 there was a post-training program in physical therapy documented in which also seven men were registered among the 49 participants. The reason for having the program as post-training was that despite of the growing social demand, only eight years after the initial physical therapy workshop (1921) physical therapy was announced to be accepted in the "TF" curriculum. The implementation of teachers' physical therapy education as a subject was justified by the fact that a year before the physical therapy classes became mandatory in school education also for male

students. In addition to physical therapy, the previously in Hungary introduced Swedish gymnastics system also created a supportive element for the professional development of female teachers.

In the 1920s, more and more attention was given to new pedagogical methods to be used in connection with physical education such as games and joyful play. This also articulated a change that gave female teachers an advantage and increased levels of opportunities. The inflow of new trends and their domestic dissemination was supported by state financed study visits of female teachers to Germany, Sweden and England. In addition to the acquisition of new teaching methods, the enhanced level of professional experiences also contributed to women's professional physical education teacher's identity. During these study trips women were exposed to a more elaborated collective professional identity among foreign women, which strengthened their feeling for professional competencies and cohesion of group identity.

The government's role was essential in the development of occupational practices of female sports professionals: their training, employment and also their professional development was largely dependent on the official education and sports policy represented by the acting government of the era. This support was a major advantage for the women, but also limited their activities to some extent. The state facilitated a safety net regarding training and also regarding employment, but at the same time this narrowed their social relations, development of professional networks and their connections. Social platforms exceeding the subsystem of education and sports were rather unknown; the use of outside resources could not be utilized. These, however, would have been necessary to develop their assigned organizational frameworks, and to deliberately increase their assigned and authorized dimensions of actions designated by mainstream sports policy and their own association. The sole leading and decision making role continued to remain in the hands of men, they were credited for building the foundations of the physical educator profession; no female physical educator personalities emerged or were allowed to emerge who would exhibit wide impact in this industry.

Despite the continuous development two typical problems remained in connection to school physical education: 1) the lack of facility and equipment; 2) the struggle for professional recognition and emancipation of physical education teachers. Both factors substantially affected the relationship between the physical education profession and the new civil initiative emerging from “movement artists”. The limited resources in physical education also meant that the schools were unable to provide enough variety in exercises and modern facilities, the offered options in educational institutions were not tempting enough for most of the girls and young women. It is to emphasize that only 10 percent of the 12-18 year-old girls were enrolled in formal school education at that time, therefore formal physical exercise in public education was anyway available only to the minority of girls. Thus, formal school physical education was neither relevant to provide all young girls with exercise opportunities, nor to cover the distribution of the new artistic movements associated with new lifestyle habits, or to assist women in different life stages e.g. mothers, with health and social benefits associated with exercise (SZEMESSNÉ, 1933; WONKE, 1937).

## **Movement artist trends**

The female teachers in physical education, as for the previously mentioned reasons, were moving on a government-guaranteed secure route which articulated responsibilities for them as a consequence. In comparison the “movement artists” came from the civil world, they unfolded from individual initiatives where creativity, informality and the spirit of experimentation got more space. The diversity and the strength of this movement came from the diversity of capabilities, competencies and motives of those involved. These characteristics were well demonstrated by the story of development of the three best-known schools of movement artists.

Valeria Dienes (1879-1978) opened her school in Budapest in 1915; her endeavor was embedded in her promising scientist’s career. First, she received a diploma as a math

teacher, followed by educations in physics, philosophy and aesthetics. In addition to her university studies she played the piano at the Academy of Music, and has undergone a music composer training. Her multifarious talent was shown by the fact that she obtained doctoral degrees in three different areas of science: philosophy, mathematics and aesthetics. Between 1908 and 1912 she lived in Paris with her husband, where she got acquainted with the movement psychological theory of Henri Bergson, also with Raymund Duncan's Greek dance-reconstructions and furthermore with Isadora Duncan's free dance compositions. On her return from Paris she progressed with the development of her own movement style and system, which was referred to as artistic sport and named "orkesztika" in other words as movement science. Her composition of movement, "orkesztika", wanted to serve human perfection physically and psychologically (DIENES, 1995). The basic element of her system was movement, which articulated the entire interior and exterior expression of human lives. Therefore, learning to discipline movements was theorized in her system as a first step in forming the human character. The increase of motion-awareness also meant the increase of self-consciousness. Awareness was represented in a pre-constructed plan for the use of space because movement was nothing but a form of domination over the space— a space-conscious possession of the individual. Her movement system was based on the combination of gymnastics, dance and mimic, and it aimed at designing three dimensions in the movements of girls and women: harmony, quality and versatility.

Józsefné Jászi Alice Madzsar (1877-1935) opened her institute, the Functional Gymnastics Teacher Training Institute in May, 1912. She got acquainted to the Bess Mensendieck's system on one of her trips abroad. She further developed the mentioned method in order to increase self-consciousness and self-awareness of women through bodily exercises (BORGOS, 2013). In her methodology she approached women in a unity in which the female social role and the biological system contributed on equal levels; she saw the female life course and life style in a harmonic interaction of body and soul. Today, we could easily define this kind of approach as one the pioneers of psychosomatic thinking. The new approach developed by Jászi was reflected in the title of her book:

The new ways of female body culture (1926, 1929). In her methodology she developed nearly 6,000 exercise combinations, which laid the foundation for home physical exercise therapy and exercises for pregnant women. Besides her movement methodology creating efforts she also functioned as a director, a choreographer and an expert in graphology. Due to her leftish political belief she was sensitive to social problems: she conducted exercise classes also for women in factories and women in nursing homes. Her political views however, also resulted in temporal but repeated closure of her school. After her death her students took over the leadership of her school, but in 1939 the authorities shut the doors of the institute for good.

The central figure of the third training institute was Olga Szentpál (1895-1968) who was also a piano student at the Academy of Music. She entered the movement from the area of rhythmic. Her school, established in 1925, implemented the method developed by Émile Jaques-Dalcroze. The most important element in this teaching method was conceptualization resulting in the contribution of body movement not only to serve the body but also to liberate the soul. In this concept this contribution again manifested through musical inspirations (LENKEI, 1993).

Despite different roots there were several common characteristics in movement artists and their schools. Due to their similarities in pre-training and common elements in career paths they maintained close contact with key figures in scientific and artistic professional circles. These contacts were more frequent with professionals having a background or practice in areas of new knowledge of the epoch such as psychology, psychoanalysis, photography and film. The emerging avant-garde tendencies seeking their role in culture and society themselves showcased more openness for exchange and networking with each other; their cooperating support meant valuable resources for all parties. These informal, personal relationships allowed an overall design of the presentations and artistic performances showcasing their work and their appearance in the media.

In terms of their teaching methodology they showed similarities despite the various theories and practices they used for their foundation. In today's terms they all used experiential methods contemplated in thrill-education, a method which created joy for the students. Considering the mainstream teaching methodology of their time, this approach could be considered as a very unusual, innovative method in education at the beginning of the last century. The efficiency of teaching was increased by the created community space for women. The process of developing, adopting and strengthening a new female identity was supported by an open, vital and trusting, but at the same time protecting environment. The key and starting point to this development process were the suggestive personalities of the heads of the schools, for example: flesh-and-blood role models, masters worth to follow, ask questions, and live up to and be close to them. The strong personal commitment and the master-student relationship reaching beyond the professional dimensions created the foundation for the spread of the movement and also for its survival in the upcoming times.

Schools were not only aiming to expand on leisure activities for women, but they also wanted to support employment and careers in the profession by their trainings. In 1922 Alice Madzsar launched a two-year training because of her strong belief as follows: "[...] the most valuable and important career path for me is to work with the female bodily culture, only females are entitled to do this creative work [...] in my experience this is a career path that could open up new opportunities for women" (as cited in BORGOS, 2013, p. 148). For ensuring professional standards in the trainings, the Movement Culture Society in 1928 issued the condition that those professionals can open an independent art movement school which presents their own teaching methodology to the board of the association. The knowledge accumulated by these women played a systematic and creative role inside their schools but also provided the evidence of creditability for "movement artists" to both the external sports professional environment and the society as a whole.

In spite of the effort for social embedding, movement artists' efforts were supported mainly by well-off middle-class women: in 1936 there were 34 operating schools in Budapest. In addition to the supporting and the participating network of

women in schools with their stable financial potential and also the growing need for the activities of these schools, the labor market status of qualified “movement artists” could have largely benefited from several additional factors. State-recognized qualification, broadening the age-range of potential teachers and the possibility for entry into some form of organization or institution could have assisted the stabilization of the formulating profession. Movement artists could join girls’ school education and general upbringing, because the girls’ curriculum based arts education traditionally also included dance. The involvement of movement artists in this institutional procedure caused tension between two groups of professionals: the dance instructors teaching traditional ballroom dancing, and the physical educators operating in schools. When the movement artist teachers aimed to gain state recognition for their profession for the sake of their own survival they took up the battle with the mentioned opposing front. It was the characteristics of the Hungarian way of occupational professionalization that the regulative support of the state played an extremely crucial role in such procedures (KELLER, 2010).

## **Movement – art – sports**

Valeria Dienes gave the “artistic sport” name to the movement system created by her, reflecting on the areas which she referred to and indicating that her methodology showed analogies with both sporting and artistic elements. So, inevitably she was eager to seek contact with professionals representing these areas and also her activities were affecting the appearances of these groups. In the beginning movement artists came into contact with sports and physical education under duress. In 1925, in connection to the foundation of the TF, the physical education teacher profession (initially gymnastics teachers) made important steps towards the recognition of their occupation. Physical educators continued to struggle for their social recognition both within the teaching profession and in society, but they were able to stabilize their status. This procedure was regulated by governmental policies and supported by increasing importance given to sports within society and in politics.

One of these supportive regulations was enacted in 1925, when the Ministry of Home Affairs made the dance-masters certificate or license in public dance teaching practices mandatory. In 1928, the movement artists became aware of plans for further regulations and as a response they formed an interest advocacy organization under the name of "Movement Artist Society". The decree published in summer 1928 has affected movement artists to a larger degree as teaching of rhythmic gymnastics or any gymnastics related movement taught publicly in any gyms were required to have a state recognized physical education teachers' diploma. Both of the areas addressed in the regulation were owned and actively practiced by both physical educators and movement artists. Despite of this governmental decree the "unionization" of various movement artist schools into the mentioned association was proved to be useful as due to their efforts made in 1929 the Minister of Home Affairs expanded the Hungarian National Dance-master training courses with the training of movement artists. Through this process movement artists succeeded to qualify their branch of profession to be state-approved, but their movement was separated from gymnastics or rhythmic gymnastics and it was recognized and certified as a form of dance. Movement artists struggled for recognition: they experienced fear for employment opportunities and general professional jealousy from all sides of practitioners in sport and exercise.

In addition to the above, changes in the external environment latently but fundamentally influenced their work. Hungarian sports science awoke in that period, which further fueled rationalization already characterizing sports and reinforced visibility of relevant issues. The fundamentals of training and teaching methods of each sport were established and documented that time: forms of movement prescribed, efficient methods of movement construction developed and control mechanisms formulated (BODNÁR; PERÉNYI, 2012). With this rationalization, conformity to protocols of sports and the paradox of the uniqueness, creativity, complexity and immeasurability of dance and artistic movements became evident. In the hierarchically structured system of sports regulations and expected directions were set out, while the artistic movement projected a more horizontal organization of openness and flexibility. It is also important to highlight



that while in the 1920s the unfolding women's sports only latently addressed their right to the female body, while movement artists represented a more complex manifestation of this right, women were entitled to ownership over their own bodies (BODNÁR, 2005). The world of women's artistic movement, their way of thinking and social sensitivity was difficult to adapt to the rational and masculine culture of sports.

The question may arise where the boundaries and the breaking points were that shaped the future. Homola Adel Szemessné (1933b, p. 184) stated the following in the journal of Physical Education and Artistic Movement: "And after all, why do we promote with our prideful ignorance the overgrowth of small, dark and simplified movement arts schools, since these schools solely live from their creation of an incorrect impression in people: movement as a sort of German-kind of parallel bar exercise left here from 30 years ago that leads to huge arm muscles and wide palms, which is not suitable for women. In comparison artistic movement is able to shape the female body, to control weight and teach nice movements". Thus, Szemessné referred to movement artists with condescension, but in the meantime she acknowledged the social need for their practices. Also, she called attention to the fact that physical education teachers were not sufficiently trained in the movements of dance. The Women's Committee of TTOE<sup>9</sup> held a meeting at the end of the year 1937 and addressed issues in connection to physical education for girls and with female teachers of physical education. Magda Gardos (1937), the number one specialist at the College of Physical Education (TF) in therapeutic exercise<sup>10</sup> following World War II – stated that the biggest conflict of interest between movement artists and female physical education teachers was in connection to private education. Gardos also suggested that the condition of movement artists' qualification should be the attainment of a high school degree and their training should be incorporated into the programs of TF. During the final year of the three-year course they should be taught in pedagogy. Because of the lack of this kind of knowledge movement artists were often criticized.

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<sup>9</sup> TTOE -- Testnevelőtanárok Országos Egyesülete (National Association for Physical Educators).

<sup>10</sup> Therapeutical exercise around the 1950s would be covered by the term „adapted physical education” today.

Klára Marik also agreed to the notion of incorporating artistic movements, dance masters' qualifications and therapeutic exercises into teachers training: "this kind of knowledge [...] would open new dimensions for methods and practices used by physical educators" (MARIK, 1937, p. 24). The common interests and areas of operation did create conflicts, but willingness for cooperation. The development and recognition of "feminine" areas of physical education were more important for them than maintaining the boundaries and to strengthen the distinction between movements, thus, professionals of both sides demonstrated openness and were receptive also to new societal needs.

The above mentioned gained importance as dance masters' trainings were launched at the TF in autumn 1947. The initiative gained ministerial approval, thus the political will repeatedly showed its reflection on occupational development in sports professionals. The program for dance masters' training was drafted by Olga Szentpál and her colleagues; the developing training was designed together with that of physical education teachers and also supported by the Movement Artist Society (LENKEI, 2007a, b). In 1949 however, the training program weakened, it became only an optional six-hours a week course. The students, originally enrolled as dance masters, received their diploma in 1951 as physical education teachers only; no qualification for dance was included. Opportunities and practices shrank. Not only artistic movements, but also folk dance enjoyed more political support at this time and the professional representatives of both left the College (TF).

## Underground survival

The political changes leading to state socialism following World War II left the artistic movements being viewed as undesirable. These movements representing creativity and individualization were against the desirable main core of the collective value system. Since neither the affluent middle class, nor the avant-garde art movements and scientific disciplines such as psychology were politically correct any longer, they slowly approached non-existence. Thus, this process was applicable to the unfolding

movement artist practices; they also gradually faded. It must be stated, however, that its movement did not disappear without a trace. The survival of most of the schools was in the hands of suggestive and committed leaders who served as role models to their students. Due to this personal and intimate master-student relationship the tremendous knowledge which was accumulated during the first half of the 20th century survived as an underground movement. Practices, methods, and informal communities continued to function informally. Artistic and rhythmic gymnastics imported from the Soviet Union became a lifesaver: a re-opening of the knowledge of masters could be realized by students who revitalized practices and methods in those sports and also in upcoming physical education curricula.

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# Inspiring women in sport in Spain

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## Introduction

The social and cultural history of sport in Spain had recently revealed to us the important role played by women in this area. Since the beginnings of modern sport in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the course of each historical period there have been many women who, despite the obstacles they had to overcome in order to participate in the world of sport, managed to build up a history full of sporting and social achievements. Their contributions in both the more visible public sphere and the less known private sphere, whether winning medals in international competitions, organizing entities and events to encourage women's participation in sport and the democratization of clubs, or promoting physical education for women while ignoring the traditional norms that predominated in each period, have played a part in how sport has developed in Spain.

Here we present the stories of various women who, individually or collectively, made use of their sporting talent, their organizational and leadership abilities, their defiance, imagination, ground-breaking ideas and teaching skills, to write an important part of the history of sport in Spain. Each period of sport's social history sees the emergence of certain figures to play leading roles. The period from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1920 had the fencer Teresa Castellanos de Mesa. From the thriving period between 1920 and 1936 we look at the case of the Club Femení i d'Esports in Barcelona as a prime example of an entity organized by and for women, and also at the different trajectories of two of the most important figures involved in promoting sport at the time: all-rounder and first Olympic sportswoman Lilí Álvarez, and María Antonina Sanjurjo, advocate of hockey in Galicia and tireless champion of equality between men and women. Finally, from the period between 1936 and 1960 we focus on the often invisible collective of women who, even under social

pressure, developed and promoted women's sport as an everyday activity and broke the rules imposed by the dominant ideology.

## **A pioneer: Teresa Castellanos de Mesa**

In 19th-century Spain, women's education was completely oriented towards traditional roles. Their place was in the home, where they were expected to display a submissive, servile attitude, while in public they had to be unassuming and, most importantly, look feminine and delicate. The corset best exemplifies the aesthetic ideal of the time and gives an idea of the movements considered appropriate for women (GARCÍA BONAFÉ, 1986, 1992).

The moral, pedagogical and medical discourse of the period, especially during the first half of the century, ignored or even restricted the practice of physical exercise by women. It is therefore no surprise that it was very rare for physical education or sport for women to be introduced at any time in the 19th century (PAJARÓN, 1987; PUJADAS, 2010; TORREBADELLA, 2011).

In public schools, providing physical education for girls was unthinkable. Only from around 1860 in a few of the most elite finishing schools in Barcelona and Madrid did they start to include gymnastic exercises as part of the group of activities known as "adornment". In these cases gymnastics was only seen as a way of improving the girls' health (TORREBADELLA, 2013).

This was the cultural and social context in which the figure of Teresa Castellanos de Mesa challenged the established rules. Born in Madrid on 15 October 1817, she was a fencing and gymnastics teacher. Indeed the historian Xavier Torrebadella (2013) defines her as the first female physical education teacher in Spain.

According to what is assumed to be her autobiography, *Biografía de Doña Teresa Castellanos de Mesa, profesora de esgrima* (1860) [Biography of Doña Teresa Castellanos de Mesa, Fencing Mistress], and press reports from the time, when she was 18 she had already participated in a number of fencing bouts before an audience attracted by the highly unusual idea of a woman wielding weapons. Her skill and achievements led to her appearance in various publications which, although they considered her an “oddity”, acknowledged her ability with arms.

After being taught by her father, a well-respected military fencing teacher, and her brother, her interest in fencing took her to Paris in 1835, in the middle of the First Carlist War. During her stay in France, apart from fencing she also specialized in the gymnastics method devised by Phokion-Heinrich Clias especially for women (CARRETERO, 2014; TORREBADELLA, 2013).

In 1846 when she was 30, she returned to Spain where her arrival was reported in the press (the reports that appeared can be found on [Esgrimistas.net](http://Esgrimistas.net), 2009). Like she had done in France, she took part in a number of exhibitions as a fencer and also as a dancer in various parts of the country and even before Queen Isabel II. In 1847 she also became involved in the physical exercise provided in the “Real Colegio de Nuestra Señora de Loreto” girls' school in Madrid. At the same time she opened her own gymnasium and fencing school in the Salón de las Diligencias Peninsulares, where she devoted herself particularly to treating girls and boys with physical problems, but probably also to teaching the art of fencing.

Despite the prejudices of the time, Castellanos set up her own fully-independent business in a field till then dominated by men.

In 1860, when she was already 43, she wrote the *Biografía de Doña Teresa Castellanos de Mesa, profesora de esgrima* (1860). Dedicated to and written for Queen Isabel II, this not only leaves an account of her achievements to posterity, but according to



Torreadella (2013, p. 34) it is also “a memoir in defence of women” directed to the young queen. In it Castellanos explained the importance of including physical education for girls in schools and claimed that women should have the right to make themselves stronger.

Her initiative, which was pioneering at the time, was taken up again some years later when the discourse on hygiene put ever greater emphasis on the importance of physical education for girls and women. 1861 saw the appearance of other gymnasiums for women, such as those run by Señora Vignolles in Madrid and Francisca Valls in Barcelona. And a number of girls' schools, though few and far between, also started to include physical education in the syllabus (TORREBADELLA, 2013).

Miriam Carretero (2014) makes the point that, after Castellanos, there would be no further evidence of women's fencing in Spain until the 1880s. This was when fencing master Adelardo Sanz was the first to admit women into his weapons room along with the rest of his followers, thereby enabling the Miró sisters to shine. However, this would not become common practice until the 1920s when the idea of women's fencing was even accepted by the Royal Conservatory of Music and Acting in Madrid, which included it as a subject from 1918 to 1939.

Teresa Castellanos de Mesa's long career as a fencer at a time when it was considered inappropriate for women, her work as a physical education teacher in a girls' school when there were no role models to follow, her initiative in opening a gymnasium and her activism in disseminating women's rights in the field of physical exercise and sport lead us to see her as a pioneer in the history of women and sport in Spain.

## **A classic case: El Club Femení i d'Esports**

Between 1925 and 1936 there was a significant increase in the number of people doing sports in Spain. The proclamation of the Second Republic in 1931 gave a strong

boost to the development of the people's social and sports movement. In the 1930s the greater freedom of association and the increase in sports facilities and competitions led to the creation of a wide network of all kinds of sports entities. In these new entities and in some of those that already existed, the democratizing atmosphere of the new political regime transformed the way sports associations, previously characterized by being elitist and male-dominated, was constituted.

In this context the gradual incorporation of women in sports gave a big boost to the popular sporting movement and vice versa (GARCÍA BONAFÉ, 1992; PUJADAS, 2011). Many clubs and entities like the Club Natació Barcelona [Barcelona Swimming Club], with outstanding swimmers including Mercè Bassols, Aurora Trigo, Maria Aumacellas, Lucrecia Muñoz, Maria Lluïsa Vigo, Carme Soriano and many more, or the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya [Catalan Hikers' Club], which had already been organizing women's competitions since the 1910s, saw a significant increase in the participation of women (PUJADAS, 2008). However, the prime example of this period was undoubtedly the Club Femení i d'Esports [Women's and Sports Club] (initially without the "i" meaning "and" in Catalan) in Barcelona.

Designed by and for women, the Club Femení i d'Esports was founded by teachers Teresa Torrens, Josefina Torrens and Enriqueta Sèculi. These women were later joined by other young sportswomen and intellectuals such as Trinitat Altaba, Emília Trepal, Anna Murià and Maria Teresa Vernet. This was the first exclusively female sports club in Spain, and in just 8 years of activity between 1928 and 1936 it played an influential and significant role in sporting, social and cultural terms (GARCÍA BONAFÉ, 1992; PUJADAS, 2008; REAL, 1998).

The Club Femení i d'Esports would contribute greatly to making women's sports normal and popular in Catalonia, although they were still limited to certain areas (like golf, fencing, sailing and swimming) and to the more elite sectors in the country. By offering affordable prices to make sport accessible to working class women too, organizing

numerous talks, articles in the press, arts and sports festivals, supporting women's collectives and advising other sporting entities, the women who ran the club played an important role in promoting sport for women (REAL, 1998).

Their efforts had a great impact when we consider that just over 6 months after it started, in May 1929, the club had a thousand members. Overall the membership reached somewhere between 1,500 and 2,000 women, and a great number of talented sportswomen were part of the club (PUJADAS, 2008). These included figures such as athletes Mercè Castelltort and Maria Morros (JUSTRIBÓ, 2015). The club encouraged different sporting disciplines including fencing, tennis, swimming, skating, hockey, hiking, gymnastics, athletics, rhythmic gymnastics and basketball, which had several teams (with Aminda Valls playing an important role as manager and the driving force behind women's basketball).

As Neus Real (1998) explains, culture was very present in the club's activity from the outset. In 1930, just over a year after it was founded, Enriqueta Sèculi proposed to the management board that the name should be changed by adding "and" ("i" in Catalan) to highlight the entity's cultural and social sides. The ideology and objectives of the "Femení", as it was known, aimed at the integrated training and education of its members right from the beginning, as summed up in the slogan 'Femininity, Sport, Culture'. As Sèculi says, the club claimed "to make the growth of body and mind inseparable, thereby showing that sports were not the entity's only purpose" (REAL, 1998, p. 34). Among other cultural activities it therefore also provided its members with their own library and reading room, it organized literature competitions and published its own magazine (the "Portantveu del Club Femení i d'Esports").

The Femení also involved itself in the political and social life of Catalonia, playing an active role in the 1930 pro-amnesty campaign and the Autonomy Statute plebiscite of 1932. In the field of sports, the club played an important part in organizing the Barcelona

People's Olympiad of 1936 in opposition to the Berlin Olympics. On the subject of this People's Olympiad, Pujadas (2008, 2011) describes the important role played by women in organizing this event and promoting the people's movement. From its creation in 1936, Aminda Valls and Mercè Castelltort of the Femení were members of the executive committee of the Organizing Committee of the People's Olympiad (COOP). Entities supporting the People's Olympiad in other parts of Spain also included a number of outstanding female figures. Isabelita Martínez, director of the women's athletics section of the Federación Universitaria Escolar [Federation of University Scholars], was elected to the executive committee of the Spanish Committee for the People's Olympiad. Skier María de Letre also had an active role in the Spanish committee that was organizing participation in the games from Madrid.

From a feminist point of view, the club combined the traditional view of women – one that saw sport as an activity to promote healthy, strong mothers – with innovative, bold ideas. As doing sport was associated with “modern women”, with more comfortable clothes and their own places for socializing, who were much more active and occupied the public space, the “Femení” was revolutionary. It considered sport as another tool, along with culture and education, for empowering women. As Sánchez García and Rivero (2013) suggest, women's participation in sport at the beginning of the century created an ambivalent situation. Selected physical activities in specific conditions strengthened one way of understanding the female body. However, through their participation in sports, women gained a certain degree of autonomy over their bodies and their lives. Therefore, given the ideas of the time, the Femení was “reasonably feminist” as defined then by some of the women who founded it. Nevertheless, this contradictory position (from today's point of view) generated criticisms from both conservative and progressive sectors. Even though they promoted the traditional role of woman as mother, the women of the Femení were accused of “masculinization” and “exhibitionism”. But in spite of the difficulties, the Femení also had loyal followers and received official support from other sports and cultural associations, various publications and a number of important social and cultural figures.

As an entity it was definitely ahead of its time – women’s suffrage was not introduced in Spain until 1933 – and, as Neus Real (1998, p. 27) believes, it “was a pioneering entity in its field and it is no exaggeration to claim that it was extremely progressive and modern in the Catalan context of the time”.

## **Role models and rebels: María Antonina Sanjurjo and Lili Álvarez**

There were many women all over Spain who, by doing sport and getting involved in sports clubs and associations, were the driving forces behind the presence of women in sport, showing by their own actions how many of the taboos and stereotypes that existed before the Civil War could be broken. Of all these women there are two who, despite their very different trajectories, stand out because of a common factor uniting them: their passion for sport and their fight for equality between men and women in sport and society. María Antonina Sanjurjo (1910-1939) and Lili Álvarez (1905-1998) were role models in their time because of their sporting triumphs and activism.

María Antonina Sanjurjo was born in Santiago de Compostela in July 1910. She was a pioneer in the field of sport and it was mainly due to her that hockey was introduced into Galicia. In 1931 she was studying Law and Commerce in Madrid and lived in the ladies’ hall of residence. It was there that she was introduced to the sport of hockey through the Residencia de Señoritas team. Because of this, in summer 1932 she founded the Atlántida Hockey Club in Vigo, being both manager and player (LOPEZ-VILLAR, 2014). Women’s hockey continued to grow in Vigo and in April 1933 another club, the Vértice, which had links with the School of Commerce, was founded. It had a mixed Board of Directors, although men predominated. The teams started to play against each other, passing on their enthusiasm for the sport to many other young Galician women.

In 1934 she won a grant to study at Smith College in the United States. Nevertheless, María Antonina kept up with news of the club via correspondence with her sister, who was running it while her sister was away.

María Antonia held strongly feminist views. She believed in women's rights and had a democratic conception of sport. Proof of this can be seen in the initiatives and campaigns in which she participated, including campaigning with a group of women for equal rights via a Statute of Autonomy for Galicia in support of women's suffrage (LOPEZ-VILLAR, 2014).

Another example is her participation as a speaker at a conference organized by the Amigos del Arte association in 1933. She defended the role of democracy in the sporting world, declaring that "Many social prejudices disappear through participation in sport. Aristocrats and plebeians, the elegant and the common no longer exist, giving way to simple manners and good or bad athletes" (LOPEZ-VILLAR, 2014).

María Antonina has been defined as a "woman ahead of her time" and was a staunch defender of female autonomy (LOPEZ-VILLAR, 2014). Tragically she died of tuberculosis, aged 29, on 31 October 1939.

The career of Elia María González-Álvarez y López-Chicheri, known as Lili Álvarez, followed a very different path. This sportswoman, writer and journalist was born in Rome in May 1905. The early years of her life were spent in Switzerland, where she took up numerous sports thanks to her father. After 1917 they spent their winters in the mountain region of Grisons, enjoying the chance to ski and go ice-skating. They would spend autumn and spring in the most southerly part of Switzerland, filling their time with cycling, horse-riding and tennis (RIAÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2004).

Thanks to her many writings, letters and diaries, a great deal is known about Lili Álvarez (RIAÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2014). As well as the sports mentioned above, she was also involved in equestrianism, fencing, dance, hiking and motor racing, a passion that led her to enter and win the Catalonia Circuit for cars in 1924.

She spent her childhood and youth travelling around Europe. Her family home was whichever hotel the family was staying in. It was in this way that her open and cosmopolitan personality took shape. Lili spoke French, English, German and Italian as well as Spanish as her mother tongue. She had a passion for reading and writing. She was a columnist for the Daily Mail and author of a number of books including *Modern Lawn Tennis* (1927), *Fullness* (1946) and *In a Strange Land* (1947).

In Spain Lili Álvarez is famous for being the first international-level Spanish tennis player. From 1926 to 1928 she reached three consecutive finals at Wimbledon, where she was known as "La Señorita". Her trophies include two Roland Garros doubles titles, one women's and one mixed. Along with Rosa Torras, she was the first woman to represent Spain in the summer Olympics. Her favourite sport was skiing, and the other sport in which she competed at international level was ice-skating.

In 1939 she settled in Madrid, in 1940 she won the Spanish Tennis Championship and in 1941 the Spanish Skiing Championship. However, these were difficult years. The loss of her only child and separation from her husband brought a turning point in her life. To these can be added the sanction imposed on her by the National Sports Delegation of the Falange when, due to an act of rebellion against unfairness and machismo during the Spanish Skiing Championship in 1941, she was banned from taking part in official competitions, both skiing and tennis. It was then that Álvarez gave up all the various sports she used to participate in and began to focus on her writing and her interior life (RIAÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2004).

She remained committed to achieving a fairer, more modern, balanced society and was involved in promoting the rights of Spanish women. She took part in various conferences, the most significant being the 1951 Hispano-American Feminist Congress, at which she gave a speech entitled "The Feminist Struggle" (RIAÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2004). In 1987 Álvarez decided to set up a cultural-type foundation that would bear her name. In 1998, at her request, it was merged with the Fundación "Deporte Joven" ["Young Sport" Foundation] to promote sports activities as a vehicle for integrating all social collectives, especially women (RIAÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2004). She died in Madrid in July 1998.

## **Not delicate and not submissive: sportswomen under the Franco regime**

The development of sports and physical activities for girls and women that had taken place during the Second Republic was thrown into reverse with the advent of Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975) (PUJADAS et al., 2014). Most of the clubs and associations created before the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), along with any women's associations and sports clubs with women's sections, were dissolved or ideologically controlled.

The fascist regime used sport and physical education to convey its social and moral values for women in line with fundamentalist Catholicism and traditional family roles. Several papers such as Puig (1987), García Bonafé (1992), Manrique and others (2009), Gil and Cabeza (2012), Ramirez-Macías (2012) and Pujadas et al. (2014) describe the ideal women that sports practice and physical education were meant to produce: delicate ladies, good mothers and submissive wives.

The ideas for this model came from different fields: scientific-medical, religious and political (MANRIQUE et al., 2009). According to these ideas, women could not do any sports that might pose a threat to their main mission: motherhood. Neither could they take part in activities that required too much physical effort because the fragile female



body was not ready for it and it might lead to masculinization. In line with these “scientific” ideas, athletics was forbidden to women from 1941 to 1961 (ZAGALAZ, 2001). Any women doing physical activity had to follow the conservative moral rules laid down by the Church, with decorous clothing and behaviour. Politically, a woman also had to serve the Nation by taking care of her children and husband and being a good housekeeper.

The *Sección Femenina* (SF) [Women’s Section] was the official organization in charge of women’s sports and physical education. As part of the *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista* (FET y de las JONS) [Traditionalist Spanish Phalanx of the Assemblies of the National Syndicalist Offensive], the SF was an instrument for disseminating Francoist ideology and explaining the role of women. Other institutions also existed, but the SF was predominant. A number of private sports clubs in Barcelona and the Basque Country also promoted women’s sport, but in a very socially controlled environment (PUJADAS et al., 2014).

This was the context in which a generation of women persevered with sports, gymnastics and teaching physical education, maintaining a constant balance between the social and moral repression of the time and the ideal of opening minds to produce active, free women (GARCÍA BONAFÉ, 2008). All over Spain there were women that despite social pressure continued to develop and promote sport for women and girls (PUJADAS et al., 2014). These anonymous figures played an extremely important role in everyday activity by including women in sport and breaking the rules imposed by the dominant ideology.

In recent times various institutions and researchers have been working to recognize and give voice to these invisible women. Oral history gives us several examples of these courageous people (PUJADAS et al., 2014). In Barcelona, for example, we have Adela Piera, Roser Ponsatí and Carme Romeu; in Valencia, Amalia Domenech and Vicenta Berenguer; in Aragon, Pilar Gracia, Asunción Sabater and Carmen Melumbres; in Asturias, Aurora Calvo, María Luz Fernández Monte, Tely Lana and Paquita Castro (CARBAJOSA, 1999); and in the Basque Country, the well-known professional pelota players Eugenia Iriondo

Astarloa (known as la Eibarresa), Txikita de Anoeta, and Agustina Otaola (PEREDA, 2013), together with the countless other women all over Spain who promoted women's sports in spite of the social, moral, economic and political barriers raised against them.

Born in 1910, Adela Piera entered the world of physical activity and sports along with her sister in the Gimnàs Garcia Alsina, one of the first gymnasiums established in Barcelona in the early 20th century. Her friendship with the Garcia Alsina family, with whom she learned to play the piano, led her to take an interest in swimming and gave her a passion for gymnastics. When the Civil War was over, she started to provide piano accompaniment in the gymnastics classes given by María Teresa Garcia in various schools in Barcelona. Gradually she began to take classes as a substitute and gained experience as a teacher. After a while she herself took over the gymnastics classes and continued this work in a number of different schools such until she retired. Her enthusiasm and knowledge of gymnastics and sport enabled her to convey, day after day, her enjoyment and interest in doing sports to a great many girls and young women in a context in which it was difficult to overcome the ideological and moral ideas that the SF wanted to transmit (GARCÍA BONAFÉ, 2008).

Despite the official discourse, some women did in fact find a way of doing sport, getting involved in sports organizations and demanding rights for women in this area. Carme Romeu, for example, who was born in 1920, persisted with mountain sports, on a number of occasions going climbing in the Pyrenees and the Alps and winning various national titles in ski championships. Her involvement in the *Centre Excursionista de Catalunya* (CEC) [Catalan Hikers' Club] led her to become one of the driving forces behind the *Grup d'Alta Muntanya* (GAM) [High Mountain Group] and to found the *Centre Acadèmic d'Escalada* (CADE) [Academic Climbing Centre], also as part of the CEC (SURROCA, 2010). Meanwhile Roser Ponsatí, who was born in 1930, took part in various national swimming championships, although she has done a great many different sports over the years. In the club she has belonged to all her life, the *Club Natació Barcelona* (CNB) [Barcelona Swimming Club], she was one of the main forces behind the referendum the club held to determine whether women could become full members, an objective that was achieved (ROBERT, 2007).



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# 5

# OUTSTANDING FEMALE ATHLETES AND COACHES

ROSA DIKETMÜLLER

STEFANIA CAZZOLI

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## “A woman’s place is on top”<sup>1</sup> – European women on the highest mountains

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Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner on Nuptse

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Runggaldier (2011) describes in her book “Women on the Ascent”, that the story of women as mountaineers is not new: women have clambered up mountains, reached summits and blazed new trails just as men have. For women, though, a step up was first and foremost a step out: a tentative and increasingly intentional step out of rigid, imposed roles. There are a lot of footprints of women who made mountaineering history and Runggaldier describes a mosaic of life stories featuring female mountain climbers, scientists, writers, innkeepers and porters. A tale of female mountaineering emerges in which women who live their lives in the mountains are given the same degree of attention as those doing the actual climbing.

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<sup>1</sup> This slogan “A woman’s place is on top” was printed on T-shirts, which were sold to finance the American Women’s Himalayan Expedition. Organized by Arlene Blum in 1978, thirteen women tried to climb Annapurna (I) which, until then, had been climbed by only eight men. While the first summit team with Vera Komarkova, Irene Miller and Sherpas Mingma Tsering and Chawang Ringjing reached the top on October 15, 1978, the second summit team, Alison Chadwick-Onyszkiewicz and Vera Watson, died during this climb (BLUM, 1980/1998).

The story, which will be told in this paper, is the story about the dreams and the first woman to reach the 14 peaks on earth above 8,000 meters. Before Edurne Pasabán, a Basque Spain mountaineer, 20 men had reached this goal. The first man to climb the 14 mountains above 8,000 meters without oxygen was the Italian climber Reinhold Messner in 1986. 24 years later in 2010, Edurne Pasabán became the first woman to complete these 14 mountains after South-Korean Oh Eun-Sun's last summit was disputed and declared invalid. Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner, an Austrian climber, followed her in 2011 without supplementary oxygen. The story of these and two other women is fascinating and shows different ways of how women deal with competition in sports.

## **Wanda Rutkiewicz (Poland, 1943 – 1992) and her “Caravan of Dreams”**

The story about women's (realistic) dreams to reach the summits of all 14 mountains above 8,000 meters started with Wanda Rutkiewicz, who paid for her dream with her life. She is known as one of the world's best female mountaineers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Polish Institute in Vienna<sup>2</sup>). She was born in 1943 in Plungė, Lithuania, and grew up in Wrocław, Poland. She earned a degree in Electrical Engineering at the Wrocław University of Technology.

She started climbing in the Tatra and summited the most difficult routes in the Alps worldwide, like the North Pillar of the Eiger (1973), the North Face of the Matterhorn in winter (first women-only-ascent, 1978) or the South Face of Aconcagua step by step. Wanda is also known for organizing ladies-only-teams, also for the highest peaks of the world. She was as the unrivaled leader of feminine mountaineering contributing significantly to the development of women climbing tactics and philosophy.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.polnisches-institut.at>

In 1978, she ranked as the third woman ever and the first European woman to climb the Everest. In about 1985 she started her "Caravan of Dreams"-project to be the first woman ever to summit all 14 eight-thousanders. She climbed the Nanga Parbat in 1985 in a women's team, she climbed the K2 in 1986 as the first women, the Shisha Pangma in 1987, the Gasherbrum II in 1989, the Gasherbrum I 1990 and Cho Oyu as well as Annapurna I in 1991. She died on or around May 12 or 13 in 1992 near the summit of Kangchenjunga, on her attempt to conquer her ninth eight-thousander. If Rutkiewicz had summited Kangchenjunga, she would have been the first female to ever summit all three highest mountains in the world. For her immense contributions as pioneer in women's alpinism, she was awarded posthumously the prestigious King Albert I Memorial Foundation Award in 1994.

### **Eduarne Pasabán (Spain, born 1973) – first woman on all eight – thousander peaks**

Eduarne Pasabán<sup>3</sup> was the one who realized Wanda *Rutkiewicz*' dreams. Born in Tolosa/Basque Country in 1973, she started her mountaineering career in the peaks beyond the Basque Country and the Pyrenees, before she climbed Mont Blanc at the age of 16. She went on to the Andes before finally facing her first Himalayan challenge, Dhaulagiri in 1998, where she failed. In 2001 at the age of 28 she joined her first expedition to Mount Everest, which was a unique opportunity for her and the starting point for all eight-thousanders: "Every time that I finished an expedition, I would think about which team I could join the following year. I always wanted to go back to the Himalayas".

In just one year (2003) she conquered Lhotse and both Gasherbrums. That was the moment, when the world of mountaineering started looking at Eduarne in the light of a strong candidate to become the first woman to complete the famous "fourteen". Although she claimed: "I just want to climb".

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<sup>3</sup> Information about/from Eduarne Pasabán see <http://www.edurnepasaban.com> unless otherwise cited.

She climbed the K2 in 2004, one of the world's most dangerous peaks. It is told she was "sad that none of the six women who had set foot on the peak so far was alive to tell the tale." Also her expedition on the mountain became a fight for survival. Due to bad weather conditions during the descent she got exhausted and got frostbitten feet. This summit brought a long and very painful recovery in the hospital, and two toes had to be amputated. And she was thinking about quitting mountaineering. Even when she returned to Pakistan (2005) and reached the summit of Nanga Parbat, she was still not sure about her career. At the end she recovered her lost motivation and faced her greatest challenge: to climb the "fourteen" as the first woman. Although she did not reach Shishapangma in her next expedition, where she was just accompanied by close friends, she had found her motivation again.

She summited Broad Peak on July 2007 together with the Austrian climber Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner, one out of three further combatants for becoming the first woman on all eight-thousanders. Also the Dhaulagiri was summited by Pasabán and Kaltenbrunner on the same day. Both denied the aspect of a race between them. Edurne mentioned that the media are constructing a competition between them, which does not exist. On the contrary, they are friends (MESSNER, 2010, p. 251). On May 18, 2009, Pasabán climbed the Kangchenjunga. With that act she exceeded Kaltenbrunner and Nives Meroi from Italy and she became the first woman to climb 12 of the 14 mountains above 8,000 meters. Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner equalled her two days later when summiting Lhotse. Nives Meroi then tried to climb the summit of Kangchenjunga, but due to health problems of her partner she had to give up. From the summit of Annapurna Pasabán directly proceeded to Shishapangma, where she fulfilled her dream to summit all 14 peaks above 8,000 meters on earth on May 17, 2010.

In the meantime, on April 27, 2010, Korean climber Oh Eun-Sun proclaimed that she had summited the fourteenth peak. But Oh's ascent of the summit of Kangchenjunga was marked as "disputed" in the Himalayan database after a long discussion with Elizabeth Hawley in Kathmandu. At least, on August 29, 2010, the South Korean Hiking Federation refused to acknowledge her Kangchenjunga ascent after examining evidence. Oh Eun-

Sun later admitted that she had to stop a few meters below the Kangchenjunga summit due to bad weather conditions. On December 10, 2010 Edurne Pasabán was officially declared the first woman who had climbed all fourteen peaks and the 21st person who reached this goal (after 20 men).

Edurne Pasabán has received numerous awards, including the Gold Medal for Sporting Merit and the Queen Sofia Prize for Best Sportsperson of the Year in 2011.

After her career as a mountaineer, she graduated in Industrial Engineering from the University of the Basque Country, has a Master in Human Resources Management from ESADE Business School and is currently Associate Professor at the Instituto de Empresa.

## **Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner (Austria, born 1970) – first women on all eight-thousander peaks without supplementary oxygen**

“Never underestimate the power of your dreams!” (Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner)<sup>4</sup>

Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner started mountain climbing at a very young age. It was Reverend Tischler, a youth group leader in her hometown of Spital am Pyhrn, who introduced her to the fascinating world of mountains. Each Sunday after church service he took Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner along on numerous tours to the mountains surrounding her hometown. At the age of 13, she ventured on her first easy climbing tours and during the following years, she took advantage of all opportunities to go climbing, skiing and ice-climbing. In addition, she completed her nurse training. At the age of 23 “her greatest dream – climbing an eight thousand peak – came true”, when she succeeded to climb Broad Peak in Pakistan. During the following years, she tried to combine her job as a nurse with her trekking and climbing expeditions to the Himalaya. After climbing the

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<sup>4</sup> See [www.gerlinde-kaltenbrunner.at](http://www.gerlinde-kaltenbrunner.at)

Nanga Parbat, her fifth eight-thousander, in 2003, she decided to become a professional mountain climber.

In 2009, Kaltenbrunner gained fame when she came close to being the first woman to summit all "eight-thousanders". She lost the three-part race in 2010 to South Korea's Eun-Sun Oh, who was followed shortly thereafter by Spain's Edurne Pasabán. But Oh's claim to have ascended Kangchenjunga was disputed. So Edurne Pasabán was the first woman that has officially climbed all fourteen peaks.

Kaltenbrunner lost this "race" on K2. She had to interrupt her attempt to climb the 8,611-metres high K2 six times. Avalanches, bad weather, strokes like the death of a climbing partner stopped her on her way. But she always valued the security of her partners and herself more than any attempt to reach the summit. But finally she succeeded on August 23, 2011, on her seventh expedition to the mountain.

Although Kaltenbrunner is 'just' the second woman to reach all 14 highest summits, she is known for being the first women to climb them without supplementary oxygen, which Edurne Pasabán (and Eun-Sun Oh) used.

Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner's passion, however, is not solely set on the high mountains of the Himalaya Massive. It's just as much the people as well as their foreign culture and religion that touch and enchant her (BACHINGER, 2010; KALTENBRUNNER; STEINBACK, 2009).

## **Nives Meroi (Italy, born 1961)**

The third European woman in the "race" to all peaks above 8,000 meters was the Italian Nives Meroi. She was born in September 17, 1961 in Bonate Sotto in the province of Bergamo (Lombardy region in the north-west of Italy). Later she moved to live in the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (northeast of Italy) with her husband, Roman Benet.

Nives and Romano have become companions for life and climbing. Together they climbed for over 20 years: cliffs, frozen waterfalls and the Alps (first winter Pillar Piussi the north wall of the Small Mangart of Coritenza and the ledges of the Gods, the Jof Fuart) and did ski mountaineering.

Their passion for the mountains like the Andes, Himalayas and Karakorum has led them to explore the horizons of high altitude defined by Nives "where every step becomes an effort of will." Nives' mountaineering was defined "by fair means". It was characterized by a light and clean style: without the use of supplemental oxygen, high altitude porters and fixed fields. It is a clean, honest confrontation with themselves and the mountain.

Their greatest success was in 2003 when they climbed three of the 14 eight-thousanders (Gasherbrum II, Gasherbrum I, Broad Peak) within twenty days. Nives was the first woman ever in undertaking such a mountaineering task. In 2006-2007 Nives reached the peaks of Dhaulagiri, K2 and Everest. After a failed attempt on Kangchenjunga in 2012 she reached the summit with Romano Benet in May 17, 2014<sup>5</sup>. Nives climbed twelve of the highest peaks on earth with her companion and only two - Makalu and the Annapurna - are missing to complete her mountaineering project and lifelong dream.

She and Roman are unique they are the couple in the world with the largest number of eight-thousanders climbed.

In 2010 she received the honor of Commander of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic "For outstanding achievements in mountaineering at high altitudes, an activity that had long been the prerogative of men"<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.montagna.tv/cms/60471/kangchenjunga-sud-in-vetta-anche-nives-meroi-e-romano-benet>

<sup>6</sup> See Rome (March 8, 2010) <http://www.quirinale.it/elementi/Continua.aspx?tipo=Comunicato&key=9796>



Nives is also an expert in the history of women. In "Women and Climbing" she wrote that women lack the representation in the Himalayas. In her view, the history of Himalayan mountaineering was a field of masculinity, from the beginning on with the first attempts of Mummery, till the nationalists' mountaineering expeditions to assert national and racial superiority. She documented with which arguments women were excluded from expeditions, e.g. in 1924, the participation of a French female climber was refused by the Committee due to the accommodation requests for ladies. Nives wrote about those women who started climbing the eight-thousanders in the 1970s like Wanda Rutkiewicz with nine summits (deceased on Kanchenjunga), Allison Hergraves (died on K2), Chantal Mauduit with five summits (but deceased), Liliane Barrad, Maria Stremfelj and the Italian Valentina Lauthier. She documented the story of the Japanese Junko Tabei, who headed the Everest female expedition in 1975. She reported that in the Everest base camps Cho Oyu and Shisha Pangma just about 10% of the climbers are women. And Nives analyzed the different reasons like male-oriented organization (they provide less assurance of physical force), age and financial resources (high expedition costs that require years of preparation), motherhood that hinders women to leave the children for long periods of time, public image and media preferences, which do not promote women in this type of activity (DE LUCA, 2010).

Summarizing these stories of "women on top", Nives points out that women who really like mountaineering, do this with a different attitude and purpose.<sup>7</sup> Therefore it is interesting, which stories were told about the four women besides their success: about the "Iron Woman" and "Squirrel" Eun-Sun Oh, for her climbing accomplishments using helicopters to travel between base camps, employed teams to prepare for her ascents in advance and her failing to help a dying colleague; about Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner being compared with Paris Hilton in the Himalayas just using simple routes instead of creativity and not doing this in a women's team like for example Wanda Rutkiewicz; about Edurne Pasabàn being declared the most beautiful of the four climbers and about all four climbers

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<sup>7</sup> Conference report of Belluno - 28.10.1999 "History of women mountaineering '900"

for being in an ultimate contest and competition. Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner and Edurne Pasabàn convinced by different, maybe typical “female” positions, as they did not join that competition, in contrary they summited together some of the peaks and affirmed their friendship. This is maybe the key strategy for women to reach the top and stay there.



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## Famous athletes in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Amra Nožinović Mujanović

Edin Mujanović

The entry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century has not brought discrimination against women in sports entirely to an end. Women still experience discrimination in their sports activities as amateur and professional athletes due to stereotypes, for example the lack of spare-time, missing support, difficulties in combining work, sports and familylife, problems with reintegration into a job, the inadequate media coverage of women's sports and the limited nature of private funding.

This first part of the article will shed light on the life of famous female athletes from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the challenges they faced.

Razija Mujanović

The most notable icon of women's basketball at the center position:



Raza while playing in the WNBA, for the Detroit Shock team<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Retrieved from: <<http://www.amazon.com/1999-Hoops-WNBA-Razija-Mujanovic/dp/B00FA3Z090>>.

One of the women who participated in competitive sports and showed superior results is Bosnia and Herzegovina's basketball player Razija Mujanović. She was born on April 15, 1967 in the village Ratkovići, municipality of Celic, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She achieved to become a permanent member of the national team and one of the best centers in Europe. As a tall girl she was predisposed to become a basketball player. But in 1981, when she left her village Ratkovići and went to the city of Tuzla, she could not have dreamed about soaring in great heights for almost seven years, visiting the world's cities and continents, experiencing fame and becoming the best and most successful sportswoman of Tuzla of all times.

She was raised as the youngest of six children of Halil and Safija Mujanović. Her great career began at the age of 14 in the basketball club (BC) "Jeadinstvo Aida" in Tuzla. Soon her nickname "Raza" became popular. Razija Mujanović has a strong, modest and unpretending personality, but she herself was never aware of her possibilities to leave an indelible mark in European basketball. But because of her height of 2 meters and 2 centimeters she was always allocated the position of a centre from her peers and her coach. Playing this position made her especially interesting and was a great prospect for her career.

Arriving at the club Raza was introduced to basketball and life in a bigger city in general. Great help in getting used to the new situation was offered by her teammates as well as her coach, who counselled his athletes on topics regarding nutrition, physical development, studying and fashion. When she came to Tuzla in 1981 according to her memories, she did not know basketball and was not even able to catch a ball. For hours her coach taught her the basics of basketball, again and again she practiced so that one day she would be able to move her hand so precisely that at each match she would reach thirty points on average, which seemed completely absurd at this time.

The motto of her coach was comprehensive education. So Raza – among other girls – started to study at the Pedagogical Academy in Tuzla. The idea was that meeting

with athletes from different sports would reveal the close connection between turns in rhythmic gymnastics, basketball elements and in the performance of a hook shot.

### **Razija Mujanović celebrated Bosnian-Herzegovinian basketball**

Razija Mujanović grew up with the young players of the Tuzla basketball team "Jedinstvo Aida", which finally entered the first division of the state. This was the beginning of a 27 year- long professional career of Razija Mujanovic and her team which became one of the finest and most compact women's basketball team of that area.

She became a regular member of the cadet, junior and then senior national team of former Yugoslavia. In her twenties she won the European Champions Cup with BC "Jedinstvo Aida" Tuzla. Her first major title was the European Team gold in Florence 1989. It remains Raza's favorite title and a special one for all times: For her, basketball was pure pleasure and love for the game. No one from former Yugoslavia before BC "Jedinstvo Aida" and no one after this club became European champion.

Playing the center position, Raza was becoming the star of the team , a basketball icon in South-Slavic areas. After winning the European crown with the Tuzla BC, "Jedinstvo Aida" became a four-time European champion and travelled to a foreign country in 1990. She signed a contract with the Italian team "Bari" and added three more European champion titles to her set.

### **She left an indelible mark in Europe**

After winning the European title, the vicious conflict on the Balkan led a unique generation of basketball players of BC "Jedinstvo Aida" take different paths. But wherever Razija Mujanović played in Europe, she left an indelible mark as the legend of European basketball: as being declared as the best basketball player on the continent for four times,



as a silver medal winner for the former Yugoslavian team at the Olympic Games in Seoul in 1988, as a medal winner in the World Cup in 1990 and the European Championship in 1991.

Razija Mujanović played in a lot of different clubs, it is hard to count in how many, in some cases she came back to the same club several times. She played in clubs in Italy, Spain, Hungary, Croatia and even in Brazil, where she won the national championship.

She was known as the best player of former Yugoslavia and in 1991, 1994 as well as 1995 she was named the best player in Europe three times. 1993, during the war, she won gold with the national team of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Mediterranean Games in Montpellier (France).

### **Razija among the top twenty in the WNBA**

Later Razija Mujanović took part in a women's version of the US professional basketball league, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) when she played for the team "Detroit Shock" in 1998. Her statistics in this professional league that year counted 30 games, 26 blocks (12<sup>th</sup> in the league), 154 rebounds (20<sup>th</sup> in the league), 0.520 shooting percentage (7<sup>th</sup> in the league) and playing for a total of 695 minutes (fourth on the team). Finishing in the top 20 in the WNBA, Razija Mujanović reached the peak of her success.

After all of the success she achieved, Razija Mujanović decided to end her career. She finished her career where it had all begun: with a game with the national team of Bosnia and Herzegovina in September 2007. That same year she was declared the Sports Personality of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Former teammates of BC "Jedinstvo Aida" did not meet for more than two decades. However, Raza will never be able to forget or repress the memories that connect them, among others Mara Lakić, Naida Hot, Zorica Dragičević and Milena Đukic are cherished.

## **The attitude of the state towards the top athlete**

However, this woman of the world, the athlete and icon, was indignant about the attitude of her country towards the top athletes, many of whom are now on the edge of existence. It is incomprehensible for Razija Mujanović how a small country such as Bosnia and Herzegovina does not appreciate their greatness. When you finish a career, everybody forgets you as if you never existed.

It is customary that the National Federation initiates a procedure for the best former basketball players of the country and submits the entry candidate to the FIBA Hall of Fame Europe five years after the end of their career. Then the house of basketball is considering the appointment to this prestigious institution. But in the case of Razija Mujanović no one in the country has seen her as a potential candidate for that procedure. This is sad because it means that her success is not visible even 27 years after her career came to an end. All she achieved demanded a lot of her, a lot of sacrifices, hard work and changes in her life. If we consider that it is the same house, the FIBA, which awarded Razija with title of best basketball player in Europe three times, we can assume that the FIBA is not questioning her success. But some people in the country who have changed their attitude towards Razija obviously cannot cope with the success of others, especially of women.

Razija Mujanović, now 48, finally is among the candidates for an entry into the FIBA Hall of Fame in 2015. She was nominated by the Basketball Association of the District of Brcko, which sent a biography of one of the best players of former Yugoslavia to the World Basketball Federation. Her name was alongside 98 former basketball players who have left a deep mark in this sport. If she is selected in July 2015 and admitted to the Hall of Fame, Razija Mujanović will join the legendary players from Bosnia and Herzegovina Mirza Delibasic and Drazen Dalipagic, who have been elected eight years ago.

## Svetlana Ceca Kitić

### The best handball player of the world



Cover of the book about Svetlana Ceca Kitić, 2012<sup>9</sup>.

Svetlana Kitić, called Ceca, a handball player from Bosnia-Herzegovina, was born on June 7, 1960 in Tuzla, where her life and the story of the best female handball player of the world began. She had an incredible talent that has rarely been seen. Born as one of three children of the family Kitić, Ceca was quite restless but always had a smile on her face. Because she was so full of life, school would call her parents quite often about her wrongdoings. Then, accidentally she became engaged in handball. Manifesting her tremendous energy engaging in athletics, she also dreamed of becoming a basketball player. But she realized that she would never perform as a basketball star. While the other girls in her school were starting to look like women, short, skinny and with a short haircut, she looked more like a boy. During that period in elementary school she first appeared in the handball section at the goalkeeper position which gave her restless spirit an opportunity to test herself in this sport. After the first visit to the training and the first interaction with

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<sup>9</sup> Retrieved 10.06.2015. from <https://dijaspora.wordpress.com/2012/12/17/26301/>

the ball and the goal she decided to continue to deal with handball, but she definitely wanted to change the position: from the goalkeeper to the shooter.

She grew up in a patriarchal family where it was unusual for women to become engaged in such sports. Her father was strict but fair, as she says it bothered him that she would run on the field in short shorts. Therefore Ceca hid her handball activities from her parents the first year. She found her happiness in handball. However, when word got out in Tuzla that she is good at handball, a real talent so that people praised her and believed in her, the proud father became a true fan of the sport and he even finished an education to become a member of the team administration. Ceca won with her school team all school, municipal and republican tournaments. These were the beginnings of a brilliant, nearly 50-year-long career for Svetlana Kitić, called Ceca.

Noticed at school by her physical education teachers, her handball activities continued and her unusual career started in the Handball Club (HC) "Jedinstvo" from Tuzla. At the age of 15 she was invited to Belgrade to play for HC "Radnički". The first year was extremely difficult, because of the several training sessions each day, because of the expectation to finally get the release from Tuzla's club and the anticipated start playing for the HC "Radnički", but especially because of the separation from her family.

### **Success of the unseen talent**

At sixteen, her club coach who was also the coach of the former Yugoslav national team recognized Ceca's desire to play and called her into the national team. She played about 200 games for the national team of former Yugoslavia, scoring over 900 goals and winning two Olympic medals, silver in 1980 in Moscow and gold in 1984 in Los Angeles, following bronze in 1982 at the World Championship in Hungary and gold 1979 at the Mediterranean Games in Split.

With the club HC "Radnički" she won the European Champions Cup in 1980, 1984 and in 1986 the Cup Winners' Cup. Playing for clubs in Germany, Italy and Spain, Ceca succeeded in her career. However, in 1995, she returned to former Yugoslavia with the numerous titles she won.

### **Return to former Yugoslavia**

Returning from abroad she led and played in the club HC "Željezničar" from Sarajevo, later she did the same for the club where it all began: HC "Jedinstvo" of Tuzla. She was also director of the women's handball team of Bosnia and Herzegovina. But today she believes that women's handball in former Yugoslavia has limited opportunities.

She has been elected twice as best handball player of the world in 1977 and in 1988 by the International Handball Federation (IHF). 2010 she was named best handball player of all times. The same year she was awarded with the Oscar of popularity for the Personality of the Year in Serbia. Furthermore, she is reputed to be one of the best handball players and the press and media declared her most beautiful woman of handball.

The final game of the 1984 Olympics is etched into her mind for forever. In the match against the Korean women, the counterattack of her team was literally pushed toward the stands but in the last minute Ceca threw the ball behind her back and made an incredible, almost impossible goal.

Her active handball career ended after 49 years on the field. Currently Ceca runs the handball club "Radnički" in the position of director. During her career a unique situation occurred. Ceca played in a team together with her daughter. Even at the end of her career she made the rather significant experience of running a counterattack faster than her daughter and other girls.

When it comes to women's handball, women's sports and of course women in general, from her own experience she knows how difficult it is for a woman, how much effort and energy have to be invested in order to achieve anything in life. How difficult it is not only to be seen as a beautiful but also as a smart and eligible woman.

As a mother of three children she convinced all of her children of her love for sports. And that despite the fact that Ceca - like all the other women in sports - has learned during a lifetime dedicated to handball that you need to fight not to cave in and to defeat the prejudices, challenges and insinuations. But to reach the top is possible if you really want something and you love it. Even if you are an ordinary person you can become one of the best on the planet. How that worked for her is explained in more detail in the book by Svetlana Vujicic entitled "Ceca – the story of Svetlana Kitic the world's best female handball player of all times".

In order to close the circle, the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports at the University of Tuzla has organized the promotion of the book. Svetlana "Ceca" Kitic sends a message to all the handball players that a professional career does not prevent athletes from being a wife and mother. Becoming a mother of three kids and nevertheless successfully returning to the floor, Svetlana Ceca Kitic is an example for making it possible to develop a remarkable career and have a fulfilled private life at the same time.

## **City of Tuzla the cradle of sports talents**

Tuzla, a city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, always encouraged women's sports potential. That is also confirmed by the athletes Kada Delić and Nađija Avdibašić, and many others. The social norms, traditions, different expectations, but also money were standing against these athletes, but especially against female athletes in the country. Still, success is possible if you really want it.

Kada Delić is the proof for that: multiple record holder of former Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina in race walking at 3000, 5000 and 10000 meters. She is also director of the Special Olympics in Bosnia and Herzegovina, nominated by the state in 2013 for the award of European Athletic female leader.

You can also look at Nađija Avdibašić. She was proclaimed Bosnian-Herzegovinian athletic giant (1998): The holder of the gold and bronze medals at the Mediterranean Games in Split in 1979; she won the silver medal at the World Championships of High School Youth in Paris in 1975; at the Balkan Championships she won a total of 18 medals. Several times Nađija Avdibašić has been proclaimed best female athlete of Bosnia and Herzegovina – in 1972, 1973 and 1979. She has received a special award from the IAAF in 1999. She was Assistant Minister for Sports of the Tuzla Canton (TK) from 2001 to 2009, followed by the position of Minister for Education, Science, Culture and Sport of TK. She was also head coach of the athletic club Sloboda and selector of the female athletic team of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Today Nađija Avdibašić is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports at the University of Tuzla.

The road to success is rocky – even more so if you're a woman!

## Věra Čáslavská

Milada Truksová

Věra Čáslavská was born on May 3, 1942 during the Second World War in Prague as the third child of four. Her father was the owner of a small delicatessen shop and Věra's mother helped him from time to time to prepare snacks and salads. Normally, she took full care of the household and her four children. In Věra's memories, her mother was a caring, careful and generous person, and despite her silent, diffident and inconspicuous character, she would even have gone to the president to tell him about injustice having happened to someone. She wanted the best for her children and did everything she could to reach this goal. Average was never enough for her, so when she wanted lessons of ballet, piano or languages for her children, she always went to the best experts in the field. (ČÁSLAVSKÁ-ODLOŽILOVÁ, 1972)

Věra's father was the breadwinner. According to Věra's memories, he was strict and did not give anything to his children for free. Anyway, Věra's natural talent to move was definitely a heritage from her father. There was almost no sport being unfamiliar to him. Also he gave her a strong mind. He was used to telling her: "You can cry, but keep standing straight". He was teaching her that she can do anything she wanted; determination and doggedness were definitely also features she inherited from her father (KOSATÍK, 2012, p. 14).

When Věra was a child her family was affected by the political circumstances of that time. In connection with the revolution in 1948 her father's shop was put under state control. Fortunately, he was strong and did not weep about this unfairness. He accepted his new job, although he was not happy with it, but he would have never complained about it.

This event affected the financial condition of the whole family, but it was not common for her mother to go for a job. She stayed at home raising her children and always kept the flat tidy to the smallest detail. Despite the fact that the kids were children of a self-employed person, which was a great disadvantage in that time, her mother was



very interested in empowering her children to become strong personalities. From early childhood on she enables her children to engage in various activities. Vera's older sisters were attending ballet classes. The question was what to do with the youngest, Věra, as the classes were open for children over six years of age and she was just four. She accompanied her mother and her sisters from time to time but she should wait in the dressing room during the lessons. But she escaped the boring dressing room and joined other girls in the studio trying everything that the others were doing. The teacher, Marta Aubrechtová, noticed that gifted girl and from that time on Věra was attending the lessons with the older girls. Due to her age, she was not yet able to distinguish right and left, so a red ribbon on the left and a blue on the right arm showed her where to move to. She got the nickname "Orange" due to the orange leotard she wore (BLAŽEK, 1968).

Thanks to the Věra's talent and to her teacher's spirit of enterprise, she performed with her sisters in public in many performances. Her mother always prepared her daughters carefully for their performances. They were well dressed and wore ribbons. She did their hair nicely and afterwards she kept all the posters and programs from every single performance. At this point in time she could not have guessed that she will need much more than one scrapbook for her Věra.

After ballet lessons Věra started to attend lessons of figure skating and acrobatics. The breaking point was a meeting with Eva Bosáková during one of the dance performances on television. While waiting backstage, Věra's mum offered homemade pie to Ms. Bosáková. They started to talk and Věra's mum asked Ms. Bosáková, if she could have a look at her daughter. She agreed and fourteen-year-old Věra was invited to the Ms. Bosáková's gym. At this moment, the gymnastic career of Věra Čáslavská began. First it was not a systematic and intensive training, Věra just came once in two weeks to the gym and often even this meeting was cancelled as Eva Bosáková at that time was a successful famous gymnast at the peak of her career herself. Despite these difficulties, Věra found this period as fateful and determining regarding her future endeavors. She started to

develop alongside with the best athlete in artistic gymnastic that Czechoslovakia ever had (ČÁSLAVSKÁ-ODLOŽILOVÁ, 1972).

At fourteen years of age Věra started to work. In the evenings she was attending the economic school for workers (later she also passed an exam in typing and stenography) and in her spare time she trained together with Eva Bosáková – more or less like an imitation course – by doing what she saw. It got obvious that this young girl was really talented, so a new coach for the bars and the vault was assigned to her. Two years later she achieved the second place in the team competition and the eighth place in all-around at the world championship in Moscow. This was a huge success for the sixteen year old girl, because normally competitors start at the age of eighteen and win at the age of 25.

After returning from Moscow, a new coach was assigned to both Věra Čáslavská and Eva Boásková. Vladimír Prorok was tenacious and ambitious and their training volume increased to three hours a day. Věra was also forced to leave her “circling” – habit, going around the whole gym and chatting with everyone there (POLEŠOVSKÝ, s. d.).

For her colleague Eva Bosáková, Věra was an opponent, but not an enemy. She was giving her advice and was sharing her experience willingly. So Věra often felt guilty to win a competition in which Eva Bosáková was also competing. At the end, Věra told herself, that it would be better for Eva to be defeated by her own student than by someone else. From that time she started to put more difficult elements in her exercise in order to be the best (KOSATÍK, 2012).

The star of Věra Čáslavská started rising unstoppably. Due to her talent and strong will she made it to the top of the Czechoslovakian gymnastic scene and started to win competitions at the European and International level. Her first big achievement was the silver medal in the team competition at the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960. Four years later, at the Olympic Games in Tokio, there was a flood of medals, she gained three gold

medals (all-around, vault, balance beam) and one silver medal (team competition). So for the Olympic Games in Mexico in October 1968 the best was expected.

But the year 1968 was a crucial one (not only) for Czechoslovakia, which brought political and social changes, which affected both sports and the personal situation of the athletes.

After the Second World War, Europe was divided into a Western Block (with influence of the United States of America) and an Eastern Block (influenced by the Soviet Union). The democracy of post-war years was brought to a halt in Czechoslovakia in 1948 by the so called "February Revolution", when the power was taken by the Communist Party being fully responsible of the Soviet Union. The fifties were dominated by political trials and oppression. Except from contacts between the Soviet Union and countries of the so called "Eastern Block", all other international connections were restricted. Culture and science were paralyzed. Sports became a field where excellence of this small Central European country could be presented. There was a huge number of Czechoslovakian Olympic gold medalist at that time like Emil Zátopek (athletics – racing), his wife Dana Zátopková (athletics – javelin throw), Josef Holeček (canoe), Ján Zachara (boxing), Olga Fikotová (athletics – discus throw), Bohumil Němeček (boxing), Eva Bosáková (artistic gymnastic), Hans Zdražila (weight lifting), Jiří Daler (cycling) and at the Olympic Games in Tokio also Věra Čáslavská, who gained three gold medals (and one silver medal). This was a great success for this small country and there were also many women standing on the highest possible podium finish at the Olympic Games.

1968 was a turning point in many aspects. A crisis arose in the political experiment of "creating a socialistic society". The country was not self-sufficient in food production due to the orientation on the production of weapons and heavy industry, work efficiency was low, labor shortage occurred and there was a loss of competitive ability at external markets etc. At the end of 1967 first attempts of economic reform were taken and students and other groups started meetings and demonstrations. In the beginning of 1968 a new

First Secretary of the Communist Party, Alexander Dubček, was called up and he led Czechoslovakia during the so called Prague Spring of 1968. Reformative movements occurred and daily press started to reveal crimes of the Communist Party since 1948. Some newspapers published the "Declaration 2000 words" focusing on the need of continuing the reform process<sup>10</sup> without any consideration of the Communist Party, and even, if necessary, to go against the party. It was signed by 120,000 citizens and important persons of societal interest, also Věra Čáslavská signed this document. The Soviet Union was against this process of democratization and liberalization. Together with the other countries of the Eastern Block they formulated the Brežněv's doctrine, declaring the duty of socialist countries to defend socialism and the international position of socialistic societies. From this doctrine the right to interfere in internal affairs of socialistic states was deduced. During the night from 20th to 21st of August 1968, military forces from five countries of the so called Warsaw Pact occupied Czechoslovakia<sup>11</sup>. All the previous efforts for democratization were violently suppressed. A huge wave of repressions against everyone who was in opposition to the Communist Party followed. Before closing the borders, a massive wave of emigration took place. For those scientists, cultural staff, educators etc. who stayed, the consequences were enormous, the censoring was strong again and everything was subordinated to the only one permitted politics of the Communist Party steered by the Soviet Union (BĚLINA et al., 2003).

Training for the Olympic Games in Mexico in October fell during this critical time. Věra Čáslavská was the favorite for these Games after her success at the previous Olympics in Tokio. Věra was no politician, but nevertheless interested in politics. At night, when troops of the Warsaw Pact entered Czechoslovakia, she was at the pre-Olympic training camp in Šumperk. She was shocked when she saw the arriving armies and forgot to go to her training. Her colleagues knew about her assignment of the "2000 words" and

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<sup>10</sup> The reformative process included the suppression of censorship, the promise of federalization of Czechoslovakia, the establishment of democratic principles as well as the restoration of formerly prohibited associations (Scout organization, Sokol) (KVAČEK, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> The countries of the Warsaw Pact were the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria. The invading armies left Czechoslovakia until the end of 1968, only the army of the Soviet Union stayed there for the next 40 years until the Velvet Revolution in 1989 to secure by its presence the internal politics of the Communist Party according to the requirements of the Soviet Union.

got worried about her<sup>12</sup> So she decided to accept the help of her Mountain Rescue Service chief to hide her for five days in a chalet in the Jeseníky Mountains. At this moment she had no idea, whether she would be allowed to continue with her career and represent Czechoslovakia at the Olympic Games (KOSATÍK, 2012).

Although in the beginning it looked like that no Czechoslovakian athlete would join the Olympic Games, but officials in Moscow decided to make great athletes like Věra Čáslavská a visible sign of a normalized situation in Czechoslovakia. Věra Čáslavská was nominated for the Olympic team for Mexico. Věra Čáslavská became a symbol in the battle between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. The expectations of the great majority of the nation, which was still not able to accept the events of August, were enormous.

The Olympic Games in Mexico are known as one of the most dramatic Games. The whole world was in turmoil. The war in Vietnam culminated and there were many unrests worldwide (American, French, German and Mexican universities) which resulted in over 300 deaths after demonstrations in Mexico just before the Olympic Games began. The games became a stage for political statements. For example, the American sprinters raised the black gloved fist as a symbol of protest against racial discrimination in the United States on the winners' podium.

The Czechoslovakian Olympic team definitely fulfilled the expectations. Gold medals went to Jan Kůrka (rifle prone), Milena Duchková (platform diving), Miloslava Rezková (athletics – high jump) and – of course – Věra Čáslavská who gained four gold medals and one silver medal. And she was also in charge of other political demonstrations during Games. With her floor exercise she won a gold medal in a tie with the Soviet gymnast Larisa Petrik. During playing the Soviet anthem, she turned her head to the side and down

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<sup>12</sup> Leading members of the Dubček's party were arrested immediately in the morning and it was expectable that others with the same opinion (which means people having signed the 2,000 words) would follow (KOSATÍK, 2012).

to manifest the same feeling that thousands of people at home shared with her – defiance of the Soviets and the “August ‘68 events”.

Mexico was for Věra not only a sports event, she also brought a beautiful wedding dress in her suitcase. The agreement was to end her career in case of successful Games.

The wedding with the successful Czech athlete Josef Odložil<sup>13</sup>, was supposed to be secretly held in a small church, eventually in the Olympic Village, but journalists revealed the event, so the couple was advised to change the place. The new place was the Mexico City Metropolitan Cathedral of Assumption at the historical Zocalo Square. After a ceremony at the Czechoslovakian embassy there was a church marriage at the Cathedral where about 50,000 people came to see the wedding of “La Reina del Mexico” as they called her. During the ceremony the Cathedral was so full that it was not possible to hear the wedding priest or to leave the church in a normal way. At least they escaped by an underground corridor to get out of the Cathedral and to go back to the Olympic Village for the banquet. Věra was absolutely devastated from the mass hysteria and was not able to enjoy “her day” until the evening banquet. Anyway, in her personal history a new chapter started. The period of Věra – the athlete – was over and a new period of Věra – the wife and expecting mother started (KOSATÍK, 2012).

Her return from the successful Olympic Games was magnificent. She was welcomed at the Prague Castle by President Ludvík Svoboda and the other important politicians. They gave her the Medal of the Republic and wedding gifts. She became a celebrity and got many various offers like a role in a Hollywood movie or a Japanese offer to perform in an advertisement. But, as the glory of the Mexican victory was wearing off, her success was not as important as the question about her signature on the “2000 words”-document,

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<sup>13</sup> Josef Odložil (1938–1993) was a successful Czech athlete – runner. At the Olympic Games in Tokio 1964 he managed to get the silver medal at the 1,500 meters race, he was the holder of several Czech records and in 1965 he broke the world record for the 2,000 meter race with a time of 5:01,2.

which was indigestible for most leading political personalities<sup>14</sup>. At the end this was reason why she was not allowed to travel abroad and why she was not allowed to realize neither the movie nor the advertisement, despite the fact that also Czechoslovakia would have benefitted greatly from it (MARKOVÁ, 1996).

As stated above, the Mexican Olympics were the crowning of a successful gymnastic career. At the same time it was the start of a new life connected with marriage and starting a family. Vera's first daughter, Radka, was born nine months after Mexico, five years later, son Martin was born. So Věra effortlessly changed her status of athlete to the status of a mother and she was fully enjoying motherhood. It is a fact that in the sports world she proved things that many men just dreamed about, but she had never felt the need to compete with them. She was not a supporter of emancipation.

[...] at least, women have to be mothers. But being a good mother needs conditions and women are often restricted by motherhood. If women don't have or are not able to have children, it would be great if they could engage in other fields in society. Women are acting more affectively and see things in a different way, so sometimes they are more effective than men (MARKOVÁ, 1996, p. 38).

Also, her family was loved by the whole nation. But on the other hand, Věra was still the one who signed "2000 words" and the regime did not forget. After the children grew up, she was interested in a job as a gymnast coach, but as a person who did not endorse the regime she was just allowed to do this if she gave an interview for a newspaper and clearly demonstrated the withdrawing of her signature on the "2000 words". She did not do that and she subsequently was also not allowed to do anything else. The international shame could be too high, if anybody from the West found out that Věra Čáslavská was engaged in some inferior work. She finally took a secret job as a cleaning lady thanks to

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<sup>14</sup> Many names of great athletes were at the "2000 words"-manifesto, but the pressure to withdraw their signature was enormous. It was not aimed only at the athletes, but also at their families or surroundings. For example in case of Jiří Raška: he was able to handle attacks on him, but later came threats that he should withdraw his signature or the whole skiing federation will be destructed.

friends of hers. In 1974 she – also secretly – started to coach young gymnasts (MARKOVÁ, 1996). This isolation caused that she entirely lived for her family and she was also able to successfully finish her studies at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports.

At the end of the 1970s, the situation changed when she was allowed to go to Mexico with her whole family where she was expected to coach young gymnasts. After so many years of isolation and hidden from the public she was warmly welcomed there and the people called her “the Queen of Mexico”. In 1981, Věra and her children returned to Czechoslovakia although they offered her to continue her job. Josef Odložil, who wanted to stay in Mexico, had to return after a while, too. After a complicated divorce accompanied by a fight for the children, a successful time started for her and her children although they were back in the old regime (KOSATÍK, 2012).

The breakdown of the communist regime within the “Velvet Revolution” in 1989 brought the long desired democracy back. The new president, Václav Havel, choose Věra Čáslavská as his advisor for social tasks and sports and after the new Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee was established, she became its president. This period was full of active and creative work as well as continuing her work as a mother trying to raise honest and proper members of this newly shaped democratic society.

These happy and busy years ended abruptly in 1993, when her son Martin hit his father at a dance party on his head unluckily, so that his father died after 35 days of being in a coma. This coincidence started medial hell, when Josef Odložil's family was trying by every means to prove the inability of Věra Čáslavská to raise children and to prove Martin's intention to kill his father. “Repulsive image of young offender, favored brat disfigured during raising by famous mother was made [...]” (KOSATÍK, 2012, p. 189) The media did not take up the conclusions from the expert witness, who confirmed bad coincidence, not patricide. This negative campaign affected not only the just eighteen-year-old Martin, but also his mother. During just one night, the image of one of the most respected women in the Czech history changed into a kind of anti-mother. Nearly daily new “reliable” information



proved how bad she and her son were. At the end, he was condemned for bodily harm with fatal consequences for four years of prison. Several months later he was reprieved by President Václav Havel. Věra Čáslavská did not ask for it. This again was content for the media, telling stories about a special friendship between Věra Čáslavská and Václav Havel, about favored children and obvious connections leading to this reprieving.

During the process Věra broke down and after delivering the verdict her condition got even worse. Although she believed in the rule of law during the whole process, she increasingly lost her power to fight for her children. She suffered from depression, she became totally apathetic and had to be treated in a psychiatric clinic.

Her children took care of her trying "to bring her back". It was not until 2007 that Věra started to leave her isolation occasionally to meet some of her old friends and to give an interview for a newspaper, but she was very careful of what she said about herself. Although she did not plan to return to public life in 2009 she was invited to award the young speed skater Martina Sáblíková as the "Athlete of the Year". From that time on she started working for charity but stayed emotionally dependent on her children. She said: "I would marry Josef Odložil again to have with him two wonderful children. And then I will try to break the record in running away" (KOSATÍK, 2012, p. 225).

Věra Čáslavská's life can be described as like being on a swing – points of success and happiness were replaced by moments of misery and fighting, it was a constant up and down. She gained 11 Olympic medals, seven of them being gold. Together with Emil Zátopek she is considered the biggest athlete in the Czechoslovakian history, not only for her sports achievements, but also for her social engagement. The biggest successes she celebrated in Tokio and Mexico, where she finished her excellent career. In both countries she was loved by the people there. In 1968 she was declared the best athlete of the world, but due to her political attitude she was expelled from sports organizations and a coaching-job and she was not allowed to take any other job. Her marriage with Josef Odložil failed. Nevertheless she finished university and raised two children. After 1989

she became President of the Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee and was a counselor of President Václav Havel, and she became. A family tragedy in 1993 put her to the very bottom and it took many years until she was able to being involved in public life again. (<http://www.olympic.cz/sportovec/1376--vera-caslavska>)

"Věra Čáslavská proved in her life more than the majority of people in her generation, but during the whole time, in the good and bad periods of her life she thought about her children most of all" (KOSATÍK, 2012, p. 228).



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# 6

# PIONEERS AND OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPORTS LEADERSHIP

DIDIER CHAVRIER

JORID HOVDEN

STEFANIA CAZZOLI

IRENE KAMBERIDOU

STILIANI CHRONI



## Alice Milliat or the promotion of the Heraean Games

Didier Chavier

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France, women began to participate in sporting activities. Their participation was often limited, controlled by men and frequently restricted to the private sphere. The first Olympic Games of the modern era in Athens in 1896 were a good reflection of this as there were no female participants. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century sport and above all competitive sports emerged in France as a bastion of masculinity. So Alice Milliat's work consisted in modifying this sport which "*[...] creates a sustainable and mass system of values in which we find the characteristics of the dominant groups that established it, those of a young, white, Christian, liberal and masculine*" (TERRET, 2004). Alice Milliat's challenge was therefore even more difficult as it consisted of modifying the original direction of sports in order for it to reflect the values of the French Republic: liberty, fraternity and above all equality. Alice Milliat fought hard to achieve gender equality in all kinds of sports. She defended women's rights and liberties to participate in competitive sports in order to deconstruct the era's ideology which sought to use femininity to confine women to weakness and inferiority. Her significant commitment also contributed to the recognition of women's sport in France and abroad.

Alice Milliat was born in the French town of Nantes on May 5, 1884. She was a school teacher. Men at that time took part in military gymnastics and sports. Women were generally restricted to sanitary gymnastics. Alice Milliat took a stand against this static form of gymnastics that confined women to highly limited social roles. Alice Milliat sought to destroy this form of straightjacket by fighting for the same sporting practices and rights for women that men had. How can we now not pay tribute to Alice Milliat? She is undoubtedly a pioneer in the development of sports for women as well as the right to access competitive sport. Her work goes far beyond the borders of France. Both in France and abroad she has played a significant role in the recognition of female sport on an international level. The oarswoman from the Nantes region fought tirelessly against the prejudices and reluctance of her era to develop mixed sex participation in all sporting



practices. Even more than on her role as a sportswoman, we would like to comment on her role as a leader in this article.

## 1 **The rise of women's sports, the emergence of a female leader**

The sporting practice for women in France was structured by the action of certain clubs. The Academia club established in April 1915, the En-Avantclub created in 1916 and the Femina-Sport club founded in July 1912 offered physical education lessons which gave women the opportunity to build up progressively to a sporting practice. The objective of these associations was to allow women to take part in sports such as running, throwing a ball, playing basketball, playing tennis and swimming.

It was in this context that Alice Milliat practiced rowing at the Femina-Sport club of which she became president in 1915. Very few women at the time were presidents of sporting associations (and this fact remains true to the present day).

Female sports developed considerably during the First World War. The era was marked by a significant democratization of sporting practice. Female sporting champions emerged such as Suzanne Lenglen who won the Wimbledon and French international tournaments six times.

The press covered the sporting achievements of these women and the number of female clubs subsequently began to increase. We count 10 at the beginning of 1920 and 30 at the end of the same year. Sporting events therefore multiplied and women's sports gained visibility. This visibility was further increased in June 1920 when the Fédération des Sociétés Féminines Sportives de France (FSFSF) organized numerous championships and strengthened women's sport across the whole national territory. Henry Paté, followed by Paul Deschanel, the president of the republic, subsequently became honorary presidents of the FSFSF. The State took an increasing interest in female sports. As such, as of July 1919 the FSFSF was officially recognized by the Ministry of War, responsible at the time

for physical education and grants. The FSFSF thus found support and a certain form of blessing. On July 22, 1920, Alice Milliat stated in the *Miroir des Sports* that

for physical education and women's sport, the prehistoric era appears to have come to an end on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1920, a triumphant day for female French championships, shall go down in history as the official consecration of our victory over routine, prejudices and the monopolistic tendencies of our sporting brothers. (Reference missing)

Above and beyond tennis and golf, women began to participate in collective sports competitions. The first official women's football match took place on April 21, 1918 just before a France-Belgium men's match. The female players were from the *Fémina-Sport* club run by Alice Milliat.

However the sports press, while appreciating the physical performances of the women, insisted on the fact that the efforts of these women have to remain moderate. Many believed that football was too violent for women.

As well as president of the *Femina-Sport* club, Alice Milliat was also elected president of the FSFSF on March 10, 1919. Shortly after that, on February 10, 1920, the FSFSF decided that the club's managerial board should be composed entirely of women.

## 2 **Resistance to the rise of women's sports**

The rise of women's sport during and just after the First World War was slightly halted in the 1920's due a post-war pronatalist policy. No change was achieved and the will to keep women in traditional roles persisted.

In the background there was much resistance to the rise of female sports and, above all, competitive female sports which was beginning to encroach upon the public sphere

that had until then been controlled by men. Numerous physicians attempted to justify and legitimize the prohibition of sport for women. This was the case for Dr. Boigey, who stated in his *Manuel Scientifique de L'Education Physique published in 1922*, that "women will never set athletic records. Women are not built to fight but to procreate".(Reference missing) Dr. Boigey was nothing less than the head doctor at the École Normale Militaire in Joinville in 1918.

Dr. Boigey was not the only one. Pierre de Coubertin, during his speech at the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm expressed a similar point of view: "A female Olympiad would be impractical, uninteresting, unaesthetic and incorrect. The true Olympic hero is, in my eyes, an individual adult male. The Olympic Games should be reserved for men and the women's role should be to crown the winners".

Women participating in sports, and above all competitive sports, were therefore morally condemned for indecency, perverting female nature or exhibitionism for wearing the same clothes as men (shorts, etc).

The dynamic nature of the FSFSF and its approach to sport for women caused discontent. As a result of the FSFSF's success, the Fédération Française Féminine de Gymnastique et de Sport (FFFGS) was created in 1921. The FFFGS advocated moderate physical activity for women whilst respecting their femininity, the quest for aestheticism and additionally excluding violent competitive sports. The FFFGS therefore wished to take control of physical activities for women. Problems between the FSFSF and the FFFGS were imminent.

Faced with this conflict, on October 12, 1922, the state confirmed the FSFSF's responsibility for female sports albeit under the approval of specialized male federations. The FSFSF was subsequently renamed the Fédération Féminine Sportive de France (FFSF).

The FFFGS, confined to gymnastics and physical education, thus becoming the Fédération Française de Gymnastique et de l'Education Physique (FFFGEF). The FFFGEF continued to oppose female sports and therefore to oppose the FFSF.

### 3 **Alice Milliat and the recognition of international female sport**

Alice Milliat also sought to reinforce female sports on an international level. With the FSFSF and then the FFSF, she fought for example for the creation of a French women's football team for international tournaments. In October 1920 the French women's team welcomed the English for a series of four matches. The press covered the event. The political world was present including Minister Presidents Henry Paté, Adolphe Chéron and Etienne Flandrin as well as the Count of Clary who was a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

In light of the development of women's sports on an international level, in 1919 Alice Milliat's FFSF put forward a female athletics program to Pierre de Coubertin for the Olympic Games. There was no reply. Women were only present in ten or so disciplines at the Paris Olympic Games in 1900 and at the London Olympic Games in 1904 and Anvers in 1908. They were confined to competing only in certain disciplines. In the case of the Paris Olympic Games in 1900, women participated in sailing, tennis and golf. We can discern here the IOC's reluctance to open athletic competitions to women even though they were already involved in the sport with the FFSF.

In view of this refusal, Alice Milliat started her quest for recognition for female sports on an international level. Following exchanges with sportswomen from numerous countries, Alice Milliat contributed to the creation of the Women's Olympiad in Monte-Carlo that took place from the 24<sup>th</sup> till the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1921. The event's honorary committee was composed of Henry Paté, the Count of Clary and the Prince of Monaco. The majority of athletes came from French sports clubs such as En-Avant, Fémina-Sport and Academia. This Women's Olympiad focused on team rhythmic gymnastics,

basketball, football and hockey. The athletics program was on a significant scale with shot put and javelin, high jump and long jump, 60m, 250m, 800m, 63 and 74 meter hurdles races and 4 x 75m relays.

The success of the Women's Olympiad in Monte-Carlo paved the way for the creation of the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale (FSFI) on the October 31, 1921 in Paris. The FSFI fought for recognition of female sports on an international scale, the definition of trials and the registration of female records. Alice Milliat was elected president of the FSFI.

As a result of the success of the Monte-Carlo Olympiad and the creation of the FSFI, Alice Milliat renewed her request to Pierre de Coubertin for female athletics competitions within the official Olympics Games. Once again, the request was left unanswered.

Alice Milliat therefore continued developing female sports on an international level by ignoring the IOC. During the second Monte-Carlo Games in April 1922, the FSFI chose the city of Paris to host the first Women's Olympic Games on August 30, 1922. Alice Milliat sent a strong message to Pierre de Coubertin by preempting the Olympic Games that were being organized by the IOC in Paris in 1924.

For the 1922 Women's Olympic Games, delegations of sportswomen from around the world came to Paris and were relished by the press. The crowd was buzzing and the stadium was packed. A female audience began to appear and the female athletic performances were greatly applauded. The Women's Olympic Games led to an increase in the number of women's sporting federations as well as the number of female competitors in France and Europe. The FFSF went from 30 member organizations in 1920 to 300 in 1924.

#### 4 **The desire to reclaim female sports**

In light of the success of the FSFI, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) established in 1912 and chaired by Sigrid Edström, sought to monopolize female sports. The intentions of the IAAF were made very clear at the La Haye congress in 1926:

Despite the principle that there is only one national organization representing each sport, an international federation for women's athletics has been founded apart from the IAAF, which aims to represent the real interests of women's sport (Reference missing).

Unsurprisingly, the IAAF's dictate was rejected by the members of the FSFI. Alice Milliat, however, in order to avoid conflict, suggested official recognition of the FSFI by the IAAF thanks to the acceptance of the autonomy of female sports.

This pressure on the FSFI increased further when Sigrid Edström was named as a member of the IOC in 1920. The FSFI was not succeeding in being recognized by the IAAF and the IOC. This is shown by the fact that at the IOC's 1920 Olympic Games in Paris, women only competed in tennis, swimming and fencing.

The FSFI therefore concentrated on organizing the second Women's Olympics Games in Göteborg in Sweden in August 1926. Due to pressure from the IOC however, the games were named the Women's World Games. With Alice Milliat as honorary member and the games being backed by the Royal Prince Gustav Adolf, they were nevertheless a huge success. Eight countries were represented: Sweden, Belgium, Japan, Latvia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, England and France. The athletic events at the Women's World Games included javelin, discus, long jump, high jump, standing long jump, the 60 meters, 100 yards, 250 meters, 1000 meter walk, 100 yard hurdles and 4 x 110 yard relay.

The 1926 Women's World Games were an opportunity for the FSFI to meet. The members of the FSFI were therefore surprised by an offer from Sigrid Edström to include 5 women's athletic events at the Amsterdam Olympic Games in 1928. Could the IOC finally be considering the development of female sports or was it more a desire to put an end to the FSFI? In any case, the five events proposed for the Olympic Games were still far from the 13 events at the previous Women's World Games in Göteborg. Alice Milliat's words at the FSFI congress made the matter very clear:

Participation in the Olympic Games can only be understood if it's in full. Female sport has proved itself and should not be used as a learning experience for the Olympic Committee. Such a small involvement can only be considered as propaganda for female sport (Reference missing).

In order to decide how to respond to the IAAF, the FSFI consulted its national federations and met in Paris in December 1926. There was a high risk of seeing certain national women's federations leaving the FSFI. Could this have been Sigrid Edström's aim? The FSFI decided to accept the IOC's offer and added the following conditions: Alice Milliat's presence as a member of the jury, the presence of the FSFI's logo, a wider program of athletic events and the addition of basketball. The FSFI also reaffirmed its plans to organize the next Women's World Games in Prague in 1930.

As such, at the Amsterdam Olympic Games, women competed in collective gymnastics, fencing, swimming, sailing and athletics with the 100 meter, 800 meter, 4x100 meter races high jump and discus. Despite the FSFI's demands, there were only 5 athletics events. The FSFI now counted an increasing number of member countries with a total of 22 in 1928. This was not enough however, to change Sigrid Edström's opinion.

The Amsterdam Olympic Games in 1928 led to controversy regarding the women's 800 meter race. At the end of the race one of the athletes fell at the finishing line. This was too good to be true for critics of female athletics. Many saw this fall not as a heroic act but

more as a symbol of female weakness. Arguments began to resurface that the respect for the female nature requires only moderate levels of exertion of women. Every time a woman collapsed through exhaustion at the end of a race this was interpreted as a sign of women's physiological inability. Men on the contrary were considered heroes in the same situation. Members of the IOC therefore requested that female participation should be limited to supposedly "female events" such as gymnastics, swimming, fencing or tennis, or otherwise to remove female events altogether.

As a result, the president of the American Athletics Federation (AFF) took a stand against the IOC's position and threatened to not present its male athletes at the Olympic Games if women were to be excluded. The New York Times covered the dispute. At the congress in Geneva in 1930, the IOC was therefore forced to concede women's rights to compete and confirmed their presence at the next Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Reference

In the meantime, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Women's World Games took place in 1930 in Prague. They lasted 4 days from the 6<sup>th</sup> till the 9<sup>th</sup> of September. It was a great success with 270 athletes, 17 countries and 60,000 spectators. Support for female athletics and the dynamic nature of the FSFI were easily recognizable. Germany, Austria, Canada, Estonia, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and France were present. The events were basketball and handball, shot put, javelin, discus, high jump, long jump, the 60 meter, 100 meter, 800 meter, 80 meter hurdle races and the 4 x 100 meter relay.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Women's World Games then took place in London in 1934 with 250 competitors coming from 18 countries. This was yet more solid evidence of the strength of female sports.

Yet there is a paradox here. Thanks to the FSFI's actions, women's sport was rapidly evolving and developing a more and more necessary structure, although on the other



hand, the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1932 only saw one woman accepted as part of the French delegation. The more the FSFI developed, the more the IAAF and the IOC rejected female sporting sports.

## 5 **Increasing difficulties**

In 1934 Sigrid Edström and Karl Ritter von Halt from the German Athletics Federation being close to Adolf Hitler, increased pressure from the IAAF and the IOC on the FSFI. They rejected the FSFI's direct representation at the Olympic Games whilst confirming their desire to take ownership of female sports within the IAAF.

Their intentions were very clear as Karl Ritter von Halt submitted the following proposal at the IAAF congress in August 1934:

We ask that the IAAF, at their congress in Stockholm, seek full control of female athletics throughout the world. It is requested of members of the IAAF to only authorize female athletics in the context of the IAAF. [...] Female sports will find its place within the IAAF's regular organization (Reference missing).

As such, national federations affiliated with the IAAF would not be able to participate in FSFI events. The IAAF's decision regarding Karl Ritter von Halt's proposal was postponed until the 1936 congress.

Yet the 1936 Olympic Games gave greater importance to Karl Ritter von Halt. Furthermore, the Nazi regime dissolved all of the female associations and directed women's physical practice more towards sanitary practices for procreative purposes. Despite women's presence at the Berlin Olympic Games, we must not forget that they only counted for 8% of competing athletes. The IAAF's attack on the FSFI on an international level was paired with an attack from the Fédération Française d'Athlétisme

(FFA) on the FFSF on a national level. In March 1936, the FFA sought to take control over the management of female athletics by creating a French federation for female athletics.

This pressure was heightened in 1936 by Ernest Laffont, Minister of Health and Physical Education, who cancelled the FFSF's subsidies.

The actions taken by the IAAF, the IOC and the FFA resulted in the FFSF being deprived of its prerogatives in managing female sports in France. The FFSF subsequently faded out in 1936 due to the pure indifference of public powers.

The FSFI's situation was hardly better as there were attempts to cancel the Women's World Games. The 5th Women's World Games in 1938, which should have been held in Austria, were in fact replaced by a European women's athletics championship organized by the IAAF. Sigrid Edström became president of the IOC in 1942 following the death of Baillet-Latour.

The politics of the Vichy regime then buried women's sports altogether by banning women's federations and distancing women from sporting practices in favor of a physical education driven by a pronatalist policy that would create good wives and good mothers in line with the regime's "work, family, homeland" slogan.

## **CONCLUSION**

The action taken by Alice Milliat between 1912 and 1936 as the head of Femina-Sport, the FFSF and the FSFI ensured the development and significant structuring of female sporting practice both in France and on an international level. These actions demonstrated time and time again the legitimacy of the women's involvement in sports by fighting against stereotypes and customs of the era. Women were thus able to compete in sporting events at the Women's Olympic Games (or Women's World Games) in Paris in

1922, in Göteborg in 1926, in Prague in 1930 and in London in 1934. Despite this success, Alice Milliat had to constantly face prejudices. We can only comment on a life dedicated to the defense of women's rights to equality in sports. Defending this equality simultaneously reasserted women's rights to freely decide over one's own body.

This era is far from totally being in the past. The significant work undertaken by Alice Milliat is still far from complete. Must we remind you that women were not allowed to compete in the polevault at the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000? Must we point out that women were still not allowed to take part in the canoe event in the London Olympic Games in 2012? The list of examples is endless. Alice Milliat's fight for equality is a strong reminder that nothing can ever be taken for granted.

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# When women take the lead: Olga Olausen as local trail blazer in sports leadership<sup>1</sup>

Jorid Hovden

## Introduction

In Norway, as in most countries, sports politics and sports leadership are well known as a male enclave. Overall, most women with elected positions and/or coaching in local clubs are responsible for work tasks related to children's sports and social events (HOVDEN, 1989; KARLSEN, 1995). Women holding leading positions, whether male dominated or gender balanced sports clubs, have been few and far between, but are nevertheless important local pioneers. The immensely significant work and efforts of these women is, however, almost ignored in the history books: as far as I know, there are no written biographies of female pioneers in sport leadership in Norway. This means that we have very little knowledge about how female leaders in local sports have formed and practiced their leadership roles. For example, what ideologies and forms of motivation have shaped their modes of involvement? The experiences of such female pioneers represent, from this viewpoint, voices from the margin. Jan Cameron's study (1996) of female pioneers in New Zealand sports emphasizes that such women are exceptional and atypical in relation to standard social and demographic characteristics.

This article will highlight central aspects of the life of a local female pioneer in sport leadership in my hometown Alta, Olga Olausen, who today is 74 years old and mostly "retired" from her leadership tasks. Olga has held different leadership positions in Alta's sporting life in more or less 50 years; from the end of the 1940s to the mid 1990s. I will trace her involvement in sports with a main focus on her efforts and contributions as

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<sup>1</sup> The editor of this book likes to thank Annette Hofmann and Else Trangbaek, who allowed to reprint this adapted version of an article of Jorid Hovden (2005).

a local sports leader. The descriptions and analyses will clarify how and why she has given of her knowledge, experience, time, energy and enthusiasm to local sports. The main source of my outline and reflections is a life history interview with<sup>2</sup> Olga Olaussen.

As an introduction, I will give a contextual backdrop by drawing a few features characterizing the sporting landscape in Alta. This may explain a few of the conditions, which have shaped Olga's career as a female pioneer in sports leadership.

## Sport as a force of modernization

Alta is today a Norwegian town at the top of Europe with about 17,000 inhabitants. Local history books describe a community in which sport has played a significant social and cultural role and particular in the period after the Second World War (Alta IF, 2002; Eikeset, 2000). Alta was as the rest of the northernmost county of Norway, totally burned down by the German in 1944, and the whole population was evacuated southwards<sup>3</sup>. The only buildings left standing in Alta, were the two churches. From this perspective, Alta has developed from a ruin landscape to a highly modern town in only sixty years. I will in the following mention a few characteristics and developmental features of the sporting life in Alta.

Today, Alta boasts a multi-faceted and vital sporting life. The town and its surroundings have about 30 different sports clubs and a variety of modern sport facilities. Alta Sports Club, the club Olga has belonged to all her life, is and has been the biggest

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<sup>2</sup> First of all I'd like to thank Olga Olaussen so much for giving of her time and knowledge to make this contribution possible. The life history interview was conducted in two phases: the first was a 3-hour interview. After the transcriptions, the interview was sent to Olga for supplement and corrections.

A few months after, a follow-up interview was conducted in which I elaborated more extensively some of the former topics and discussed specific meanings of gender in sport politics and leadership at greater depth.

<sup>3</sup> Olga and her family were evacuated to family members in Oslo. During the war, her father was imprisoned in several concentration camps. When she returned to Alta in 1946, aged 15, she found both her home and home town in ruins. So Olga's career as an athlete and her involvement in sports begun in a local community in ruins and without any established infrastructures.

and most dominant local club. Today it has about 1000 members and six different sports sections: ski, soccer, handball, volleyball, track and field and sport for disabled.

To be a good athlete in Alta gives social prestige and provide personal possibilities, particular for male athletes. The best male soccer team is given extensive public attention and funding. Male sports events function as important arenas for celebration of community spirit and local identity. For female athletes as for women's sports in general this happens, however, only rarely (ALTA IDRETTSFORENING, 2002). The biggest organized women's sport is both historically and at present handball. Olga was one of the local founders as well as one of the central players at the end of the 1940's and onwards, and it was in handball she took on her first voluntary posts and leader positions.

Alta's sporting possibilities are of course shaped by its arctic climate as well as its location in a scarcely populated region. The town is surrounded by endless wilderness in most directions. The location on 70 degrees north means 2 months of arctic night, periods of extremely cold temperatures, and 7-8 months of snow. This makes for a long season for ski sports and dog-sledging, but also for poor conditions for outdoor summer sports like football and track and field.

A voluntary umbrella organization, the Norwegian Confederation of Sports and Olympic Committee (NIF/NOK) represents the organized sports system in Norway. Although this is an independent organization, it has always had close links to the state, because of the extensive state funding. The state funds most administrative costs as well as the construction and restoration of sports facilities. This policy is historically as present grounded on the state's belief in the welfare mandate of sports; sport as an arena for promoting values like health and well-being, joy, equity and democracy. Since the end of the 1940s this belief has according to Rune Slagstad (1998) generated a sport policy, which in conjunction with other factors has contributed to a modernization and cultivation of the Norwegian peripheries. The sporting conditions in Alta have benefited extensively from this policy. Among the effects are excellent facilities for most sports. Soccer



players, for example, have access to an indoor arena with artificial grass, standardized for international matches, and the handball players have three sports halls, standardized for international competitions, at their disposal. Because local sports club are officially defined as central for implementing the welfare mandate of sport, the building and running of sports facilities have been a central issue in the local sport politics.

Olga's account suggests that the welfare mandates of sports are in accordance with most of her political visions and beliefs. But before I move on to describe her leadership career, I will draw a rough picture of her childhood and athletic career and indicate how they may have influenced her choices and modes of involvement in local sports.

## **Socio-demographic characteristics**

Olga Olaussen was born in Alta in 1931 as the youngest of three children. She grew up in a very politically active family in a time characterized by class conflicts and a strong worker's movement. Her father Johannes Romsdal, educated as an engineer, was a political activist and dedicated communist all his life, representing the Communist Party in Alta's Municipality Council for many years. Olga's mother Julie was a teacher. She was not member of the communist party, but an activist on many other arenas. She was e.g. strongly engaged in the peace movement all her life, working actively against the dispersion of nuclear weapon and a member of several international peace organizations. Olga commented that she remembered that her mother taught herself Esperanto in order to be able to communicate with her international contacts from all over the world. Julie's involvement also included fighting for women's issues. For example, she was engaged in teaching women family planning and birth control in the 1930s! She was also among the founders of the Norwegian Women' s Association: an organization with a socialist feminist mandate, which among other things started the celebration of the Women's Day, the 8th of March as an international day of solidarity for women in the 1950s.

Olga talked of her mother as a woman ahead of her time and expressed admiration for her courage, engagement and care for others. She emphasized how her mother taught her why individual political efforts, seemingly of little political significance, can be so important:

Once my mother gathered 1500 signatures against nuclear weapon. I commented that I did not understand what this was good for. Then she sat down beside me and said: I believe that people choosing to put their signature on such a list necessarily reflect on their reasons for doing it. This is itself an important political action.

Olga was 9 years when the war began and 14 when it ended. On her return to Alta, she came to a hometown in ruins. In the course of the interview, she frequently stressed how decisively the war had influenced the childhood of her generation and formed her life, giving her perspectives and insights of essential life values and what is worth fighting for.

In 1949 Olga attended the Telegraph school in the neighbour town Hammerfest. The year after she received her first employment at the telegraph station in Alta. Olga married Reidar Olaussen in 1951, and gave birth to two sons. Most of her life, Olga had full-time work outside home, most of the time as a senior clerical officer. Besides her involvement in sports Olga has, like her parents, been a political activist throughout her life. For several years in the seventies and eighties, she represented the Communist Party both in the Municipality Council and the County Council. In this context, however, I will concentrate on Olga's sporting career and voluntary involvement and the underlying ideology and drives, which directed her career.

## Sporting career and handball involvement

### Achievements and involvement as handball player

Olga was one of the initiators of handball activities for girls and women in 1947. At the time, handball was the first and only organized leisure activity for girls/women after the War. From the outset, Olga wanted handball to be a sport organized as a special sports section of Alta Sports Club in the same way as football and skiing were. As handball activities were progressing and new clubs were established in the region, Olga worked to found a District Association for handball in Finnmark, which should, among other tasks, facilitate a regional competition system. The District Association was founded already in 1947, and Olga was elected a board member at the early age of 16.

Handball was the principal team sport for women in both Finnmark and Norway and very soon became the most popular women's sport. Olga's intense involvement both as a player and an organizer included obviously a lot of different tasks and obligations, but also a lot of fun. They had very little money for equipment and travelling, but these things were less important. Lorries were the most used form of transport to matches and tournaments. She showed me many photos from this period and one of them (below) showing the team, when they won their first North Norwegian Championship in 1953, she was commenting:

"Don't we look gorgeous ... you see... at that time we also exposed naked bellies!"

Olga talked at length about how essential the handball activities were for the girls/women involved, providing an important meeting place as well as a social glue. The most significant benefits were a strong sense of community spirit, the joy of playing and being a member of a strong team.

Olga was a very good handball player, and her team won the North Norwegian Championship four times. In 1950, Alta Sport Club's handball team was on its first trip to the southern parts of Norway, to play against the best teams of these regions. Even though Alta won most of their matches, they were not allowed to participate in the Norwegian championship. As things were, Northern Norway was not yet included in the national competition system.

At the beginning of the 1950's the Alta Sports Club initiated the tradition to organize a very big handball tournament every summer, in which the best teams from Northern Norway participated. This tradition lasted until Alta opened their first sport hall for handball in 1969. Olga was the leader of the organizing committee for many years. She characterizes this as a very challenging position, not least because she needed to do a good job both as player and organizer. She reported on her immense work with the tournament in this way:

I remember that, over the years, I worked out lists of all the practical things that had to be done. And, luckily, many others have benefited from this systematic work later. [...]. I can still remember that the last item written on one of the lists was: Remember the corner flag!

Looking back on 36 years of involvement in handball, she maintained that what she remembered the most was not all the work, but the strong community feeling both within the team and within the club: the great pleasure of performing and working together. As a leader, she always felt she was taken seriously and respected. She emphasized that her sports involvement has functioned as a good leader's education for her. Through her involvement she was taught how to address large audiences and to argue and fight for issues she was engaged in. Looking back, she wondered if women's handball had a stronger position in the sixties than today:

Today [...] it seems like it is men who are running everything – and men's handball is given priority [...] In handball [...] we see it is not so that we are progressing towards higher gender equity – the current situation suggests, however, that gender equality does not grow naturally”.

### **From executive board member to president**

From the 1960's Olga was as a member of Alta Sports Club's executive board, where she functioned as a distinct spokeswoman for membership groups like women, children and youth, whose voices were seldom raised. Her objective was to work deliberately to provide broader, more attractive and healthier offers for children and youth and initiated activities in which performance and competition were less important. In view of this approach, Olga was years ahead of her time: not until ten years later the Norwegian Confederation of Sports would develop a policy for children's and youth sports from a similar perspective. In 1964 she was honoured with a diploma from the Norwegian Confederation of Sports for her efforts and contributions in this field.

She was also concerned with the situation of women in general and in particular adult women's opportunities to do sports in the club. She suggested that the club should facilitate appropriate fitness activities for adult women; non-competitive offers adapted to women's wishes, needs and everyday life. Her suggestions were accepted, but there were no willing and competent instructors available. In this situation Olga decided to take the lead. She took courses in gymnastics and other fitness activities to gain sufficient competence. In the interview she underlined how excited and nervous she was the first time. She described the situation like this:

I can remember how excited I was [...] sitting there alone in the gym waiting for somebody to come. I was thinking: maybe I will remain alone!  
[...] But suddenly the door opened - and in a few minutes we were too many. [...]  
The interest was overwhelming [...] So the next time I had to divide them into two

groups. We agreed on dividing after physical shape; one group for those who wanted hard physical exercise and one for those who wanted to progress more slowly.

## President

In 1974 Olga was elected President of the Alta Sports Club and was in the lead for two election periods; until 1978. Olga was the first female leader of a club founded in 1927. In 1981 she was elected President for another two-year period. No other president has led the club longer than her. In her presidential periods Alta Sports Club was among the biggest clubs in the country with about 1200 members<sup>4</sup>.

When asked about her main objectives and challenges as president, she mentioned issues like:

- 1 Working to develop the club as a whole; ensuring that the six special sports sections had sufficient support and resources to fulfil their goals and, in addition, to teach them to take overall responsibility for common tasks.
- 2 To build up a collective club spirit with an emphasis on democracy, solidarity and respect for differences
- 3 To build, run and restore sporting facilities in order to provide better conditions for competitions and practice and thus to stimulate a desire to practice sport for all.

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<sup>4</sup> According to the statistics of the Norwegian Olympic Committee/The Norwegian Confederation of Sports only 2,5 % of Norwegian sports clubs have more than 1000 memberships (NIF/NOK, 2003).

As for the first two issues, she required specifically that the representatives of the special sports sections to attend executive board meetings. In her opinion, a democratic leadership presupposed active participation from all parts and interests groups. Thus, she worked hard to stimulate the sports sections to care for and show responsibility for each other's needs and interests, trying to involve as many members as possible in voluntary work tasks according to their wishes, qualifications and motivations. For Olga, belonging to a sports club should imply a wider engagement than just be an athlete.

A central drive in her work was to provide all the special sports with equal conditions, and to support initiatives from new sports to be included. It seemed less than a coincidence that the club embraced two new sports during her presidential periods: volleyball and sports for disabled. She commented on this contribution as follows:

I am very proud that we were able to establish a section for the disabled... so that wheel-chair users in Alta would also be allowed to practice sport. [...]. The volleyball group represented another widening ...in the way that we recruited new groups of young people to the club. [...] My vision has always been that Alta Sports Club should facilitate sports for all.

From this perspective, Olga also practiced – against a strong resistance from established sports like football and handball – a solidarity principle in the distribution of resources. The principle was based on the thinking that strong and large sports should support smaller sports and newcomers. Thus she tried to facilitate more equal opportunities; more equal opportunities independent of age, gender and physical capacity:

For me it has been the most natural thing [...] so to say [...] that voluntary work should be informed by solidarity, equity and care.

Like many of the preceding presidents Olga found the overall responsibility to provide appropriate facilities for all membership groups to be of great importance and

she dedicated much of her time and energy to this task. She was very concerned to give priority to facilities, which in general could stimulate more activity as well as contribute to the strengthening of local identity. The first she did on being elected president was to start planning for an illuminated track for cross country skiing that would make it possible to ski both during darkness time and evenings. The next winter the "Skoddevarre-skiing track" was a reality.

Another time-consuming project was the building of the track-and-field arena. She stated that this project occupied all her time for half a year – also most of her working hours – and she emphasized how lucky she was to have an employer who accepted this situation. In connection to this process she mentioned one peculiar episode which brought back special memories:

I remember particularly the 14 days when a German firm of Yugoslavian workers was hired to finish the construction work of the new stadium. In addition to watching and coordinating the work, I also had to provide food and housing for the workers. This meant I talked a lot to them. They told me much about of their everyday lives and families in Yugoslavia. I found it so interesting [...] it was really worth all the work.

As the building of the track and field stadium progressed, it became clear that the funding from the public lottery was insufficient to finish the stadium on schedule. About 500.000 NOK (about 60.000 Euros) were lacking. Olga thought very hard about how to raise this money. Finally she decided to go to the very top; she addressed the Minister of Cultural Affairs, responsible for Sports, to ask for the money. In advance, she contacted the president of the Norwegian Confederation of Sports, and discussed her idea with him. The result was that she got hold of the money in time by an extra grant from the State budget.

Olga's success in this was due to her experience as an active local and regional politician, who knew political procedures in detail, and to the fact that, over the years,



she had developed an extensive network within the Norwegian political system. She told me about several other occasions when she used her network and political contacts to procure funding. One episode is worth mentioning. In 1990, when she was the appointed leader of the organizing committee for the Norwegian championship in skiing for junior, she initially had to deal with problems to raise enough sponsor money. In this situation she decided to use her close contacts in the trade union movement, not least since the trade union movement was celebrating their 90 anniversary that same year. Thus, she travelled to Oslo and talked to the general secretary, who promised her 100.000 NOK (about 12.000 €) in exchange for making an announcement of the anniversary in the championship program. This meant that the trade union movement, in addition to the local bank, functioned as the main sponsor of the event. The sports leaders affiliated with right wing politics disliked this profile, but dared not make any protest.

## Framing of drives and motivation

When asking Olga about her drives and motivation to take on leadership positions in sport, she answered thus:

I have always seen sport as a significant social force in the development of local communities ... sports clubs have a unique potential to bring people together, stimulate cooperation, and to create enthusiasm and unity in defiance of social and political differences.

This reveals some central ideological drives which seem to frame and explain her strong motivation to make a political difference. In this sense, her family background obviously played a crucial role in directing her attitudes and engagement in certain ways. She told me for example how she admired the independence, strength, and will of her mother:

My mother was not like other mothers... who spent time knitting and similar activities. She was a woman with a strong political engagement, and in many ways ahead of her time. [...]. So to work for solidarity and fight for women's issues have always been a part of my life.

Olga's voluntary efforts mirror her concern for the socially and economically underprivileged. To her, sports and sports politics constituted an important arena in which she was able to develop her political values and ambitions. As a young girl, her involvement in handball has given her pleasures, a sense of empowerment and great competence in team-building, enabling her to experience fully how sport can be an important force in generating social cohesion, optimism and local identity. In her accounts she often repeated how sports had a double value for her – as simultaneously an arena for fun and friendship and as a way to build democracy, solidarity and peace. She believed in the potentials of sports to create enthusiasm and unite people across cultural and political divides.

Studies indicate that women who make it to the top in sport leadership are most often single women or mothers/ wives, who are involved because of their children or partners involvement as active participants (CAMERON, 1996; MCKAY, 1992). Olga does not fit into this pattern: she had the most intensive sports involvement in the family and combined it with caring for her husband and their two sons. On my asking how she had handled this, she replied:

My sport engagement made necessary an equal share of house work and other work tasks at home. My husband Reidar has never complained. He has always changed diapers and cared for the kids. And remember this was in the 1950s; and you can be sure that he had to deal with plenty of uncomfortable comments about this.

Thus, Olga's engagement in sports suggests a person driven by political values as well as her love for sports. Even though she worked full outside home in addition to the

responsibility for two sons, she was able to maintain her involvement because both her husband and her employer supported her.

## Female leadership in a male culture?

In sports leadership as well as in politics Olga worked in male-dominated environments. However, male dominance, she affirms, has never scared her. On the other hand, she maintained how important it has been to start occupying honorary posts in a female dominated sport like handball. When talking about meanings of gender in sports and sports leadership, she indicated that the most important point for her was to get something done – to try to fulfil her political beliefs and her ambition to make a difference. She commented that in powerful organizational bodies, she looked at male dominance as a part of the given conditions. In these spheres she always kept in mind that:

Among men I am always very focused on what I want to do - more than who I want to be. And I have seldom 'met the wall' [...] so to say. In most occasions I have felt respected. I have tried to be clear on my political values and in general had few difficulties to cooperate from case to case with male colleagues, most of them with quite different political views. [...]. So I will say [...] it has been more difficult to be a communist in politics than in sport

She commented, however, that it was often both stressful and somewhat lonesome to be the only woman. Being a woman, moreover, she often felt the weight of several mandates on her shoulders. Because she was the only woman around, her contributions were also likely to become extremely visible. Nevertheless, she also expressed that she frequently felt more qualified than several of her male colleagues:

I was often not very impressed by the achievements of the male colleagues around me.... Many times they were not well prepared. I have always been very determined to be well prepared, my attitude being to show them that things are possible!

On my question if she had practiced a different style of leadership in comparison with her male colleagues, she hesitated and responded that she had not considered this issue very much, having mostly been concerned with practicing generally accepted democratic procedures and to build working climate with open human relations. In our talks about how she looked at herself as a leader, she underlined, among other factors:

Concerning leadership style I look at myself as an action-oriented leader... in the sense that I always focus on the tasks, which have to be conducted – for me first and foremost something must be done.

Today, influential women at the lead of Norwegian sports like Olga still seem to be a scarcity, both locally and on higher levels (HOVDEN, 2000a). Olga's account of how her leadership role as well as how she has handled and challenged male dominance as the only women, tells us in certain ways a history of a unique woman who has been able to make a political difference. Why was this possible? I will suggest a few reasons why Olga managed to fulfil so many of her ideas and ambitions.

## **The making of difference by a socialist feminist**

Olga defines herself a feminist, but as a communist she will also underline the connections between patriarchy and the capitalist society and how existing gender relations are socially constructed as power relations in certain structural ways. From this point of departure she can be categorized as a socialist feminist (HARTMANN, 1976).

The mutual implications of socialism and feminism have formed Olga's sports involvement in distinct ways, above all in the way in which she has been drawing connections between her ideas and her practices. She has been aware of the fact that wanting and gaining power is necessary for those who seek change and want to make a difference, and in sports power comes from organization (HARGREAVES, 1994). I will discuss a few of her contributions in this perspective.

Olga's career displays a wide-ranging involvement in sports. Some core components seem, however, to run through her accounts; her will, motivation and capacity to take on a total responsibility for the task at hand. Her accounts tell us about how she directed her energy and capacity as a sport leader towards tasks and activities for increased individual and collective well-being. As mentioned, she initiated new and more inclusive sporting activities for children and youth as well as fitness activities more adapted to adult women's wishes and everyday life. Another example of her strong social responsibility and concern for the less privileged, was her use of the solidarity principle in the distribution of financial resources. From my studies of sport politics (HOVDEN, 1989, 1999a, 1999b, 2000a) she is the only one in honorary positions, who has practiced this principle in order to obtain higher fairness and equality. It is obvious that her ideological platform and experiences both as woman and a communist made her aware of the biases and limitations within the existing sports culture in terms of class and gender, as well as the importance of creating a sporting reality more in correspondence with her political visions. By taking such initiatives she also enabled to demonstrate and legitimate her political choices in practice and was thus mostly supported and respected. These ways of thinking and working are what has enabled her to become a trail blazer.

Analysing Olga's approaches we can easily see how and why she was controversial, but nevertheless respected among most of her male colleagues. Because she legitimated her thinking and practices by arguments of realizing central sporting mandates like democracy, equity and fairness, it was difficult to find counterstrategies based on better arguments, to marginalize her. As a leader, Olga was very concerned with following

democratic procedures and strengthening the democratic practices in the club as a whole. These attitudes are in correspondence with later studies (HOVDEN, 1999b, 2000a) of women's political behaviour in sports politics. Olga wanted that all "voices" should be taken seriously and encouraged women to speak up for their interests. Being a socialist feminist meant for her to embody radical ideas in which an emancipator perspective was central.

On the other hand, Olga's comments on her leadership style may suggest a woman who adapted a male leadership style – a woman who co-opted male procedures in a male sphere of activity. Parts of her attitudes can be interpreted in this way. Nevertheless, other aspects do not fit into this categorization. Her accounts tell us of a leading woman, whose major concern was to realize her political objective and visions. In this process she has emphasized possibilities rather than limitations, and has in certain ways negotiated a form of cooperative venture with men, on which qualitative new decision-making models were introduced; democratic models in which the informal power of the male network have had minimal influence. From the viewpoint of my studies (HOVDEN, 1999b, 2000b) of leadership models and significances of gender I think this strategy has been a conscious choice. The result seems to be a mode of leadership which represented an alternative as well as a progressive gender political difference, rather than a form of adaptation to and cooption with a male norm. Olga does not see women as passive recipients of culture, duped by men or impossibly constrained by their male-dominated circumstances.

To conclude, I will connect a few of Olga's reflections and visions to some dominant trends and challenges in local sports today.

## Challenges and visions

Although age was the most important reason why Olga retired from honorary posts in local sport, she also underlined that the influence of the increasing commercialization

of sports and sporting events have weakened her motivation, enthusiasm and belief in sport as social and community based force. She commented on the current situation in this way:

In today's sports, performances become the most important thing because they are mostly seen as products and sources of incomes [...] The grass-root sports based on sports for all values are being pushed back. Most political attention is given to elite athletes. The main agenda in sports politics is to attract sponsors [...].

I felt I had no more mind to engage when the market forces play such a dominant political role. [...] We see a development in which voluntary common work is crumbling.

In the introduction I indicated that the state's welfare visions for sports largely correspond to Olga's political visions. As a communist and feminist she believed in a society, where equity and equal sporting opportunities should exist independent of gender and class and the state should ensure the funding for realizing those opportunities. Referring to the increasing commercialization of sports, she expressed a deep disappointment of the role played by the state in the current situation:

I feel distraught by the current situation in the clubs [...] that they receive so little support from public money that they become highly dependent on sponsoring. I think that the state should take more responsibility for the welfare benefits of sports.

Why shouldn't the running and building of sports facilities be a public responsibility – today this is too demanding a task for most clubs in terms of competence as well as economy? [...] We now also see that the new professional demands lead to a decrease of involvement in voluntary common work – and

this engagement is the most important and invaluable potential of sports in local society – the value of sport as an arena for community and common causes. [...] We also experience that the big money in sport marginalizes women in new ways ... Just look at soccer.

During the interview Olga repeatedly maintained that sport reflects society. She acknowledged that, while believing in its transforming potentials, sports may also contribute to reproducing dominant societal structures. Thus, for her sport is as a deeply contradictory force. She emphasized, however, that for women and other oppressed groups, sport may offer a site for positive, pleasurable and empowering experiences and practices. Olga's political beliefs and attitudes made her focus on the emancipator possibilities rather than on cultural and structural constraints. From this viewpoint, Olga's accounts of her sport involvement, show a local trail blazer, who has given abundantly of her energy, enthusiasm and commitments in order to fulfil her humanist and progressive ideas of sport as a force for transformation.





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## **Tiziana Nasi – a sports leader in Paralympics and a mentor for female athletes with disabilities**

Stefania Cazzoli

### **Sports leadership as a familial heritage**

Tiziana Nasi was born in Turin in 1948 into a very sports-orientated family: her father was the President of the Italian Ski Federation during the Winter Olympic Games in Saint Moritz (Switzerland) in 1948, and he was the Mayor of Sestrière Ski Resort and Village (1950-1980) in the Italian Alps.

Tiziana has been growing up and working continuously in her familial tradition: from 1982 to 2006 she was President of Sestrières SpA (company that manages the skilifts for skiing). In the same years she also held the position of the Chairman of the Sestrières Golf and Sporting Club. She gained experience in organizing national and international sports events.

Under her presidency she organized more than forty races in Alpine Skiing World Cup, some stages of the Giro d'Italia and the Tour de France in cycling when these started from Sestrière as well as important golf competitions.

## Sports leadership in Paralympics and sports for people with disabilities

She started to work in Paralympic winter sports in 1991. She organized the National Skiing Championship in Sestrière with Paralympic athletes from Italy, Austria, and Switzerland. The event marks one of the starting points of Paralympic ski competitions in Italy and the beginning of awareness to Paralympic sports that culminated in the organization of the Paralympic Winter Games in Turin in 2006.

Tiziana continued working to raise awareness towards the Winter Paralympic sports and the inclusion of disabled athletes in Paralympic events. She organized international events like the World Championship Alpine Skiing in Sestrière in 1997, during the event the champion Alberto Tomba and the Paralympic athlete Fabrizio Macchi made a demonstration together. She became President of the regional Italian Paralympic Committee (CIP) from 1997 till 2010.

Following the experience she gained in the management and organization of winter sports' events she was part of the Organizing Committee "Torino 2006" Winter Olympic Games and Paralympics and finally she became President of the IX Paralympic Winter Games of Turin in 2006.

As the Chair of the Paralympics, she added enthusiasm and professionalism within the organization of the Paralympic Games of "Torino 2006". Starting ten days after the regular Winter Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games were conducted at the same location including the staff from the Winter Olympic Games (like a bridge from the "regular sports" versus "special sports"). The success was great, as the general data of the Paralympics showed: 2,300 volunteers, presence of 1,000 media people, 162,000 tickets sold, presence of 100,000 people at the opening and closing ceremonies, 550 newspaper articles, broadcast coverage about 140 hours (130 live), switched social spots on major media etc.

For her outstanding work in the Paralympics in Turin, Tiziana Nasi received an award set up by the Chamber of Commerce "for contributing to the development of tourism in the mountains of the Via Lattea skiing space".

The success of the Paralympics Games 2006 in Turin was a fundamental step for her career, culminating in the success at the Paralympic Games of London in 2012. After her olympic experience, her work continued in organizing events based on the "inclusion of regular and special sport".

Further major sporting events she organized: the World Fencing for Able-Body Athletes and Disabled (2006), the European Championships Ice Sledge Hockey in Pinerolo (2007), the Road Cycling World Championships in Novara (2008), races of the World Cup Alpine Ski in Sestrière, International Tournaments Sledge Hockey as well as countless Italian championships in each discipline, and in July 2011, the World Archery for able-body and disabled athletes in the splendid Royal Castle Stupinigi (declared World Heritage by UNESCO).

Since September 2010 she has been President of the Italian Federation Paralympic Winter Sports (Snowboard, alpine skiing, nordic skiing, and biathlon).

After being nominated as local delegate at the Paralympic Committee of Turin, in 2013 Tiziana was elected President of the Piedmont Regional Committee of the CIP (Committee Italian Paralympics). As a manager she is working at the local level to coordinate and promote sports for disabled people. She is collaborating with several federations and sports clubs, the National Olympic Committee (IOC) CONI, and schools of rehabilitation and facilities (INAIL). Since January 2013, she is a member of the Executive Committee of the Regional Olympic Committee (IOC).

## Inclusive approaches – Tiziana as an advocate for women with disabilities

After a long experience in working in Paralympic sports, Tiziana was thinking about challenges for disabled women in sports. There are fewer women than men interested in sports for disabled, and maybe it is much harder for women with disabled bodies in the field of sports. Tiziana meets a challenge to involve more women in the Paralympic programme at all ages and at all levels of disabilities. Another challenge will be the increase of women with disabilities in management tasks and functions, in sports' events, in institutions, and in competitions; as it is stated in the United Nation Convention of People with Disabilities in 2006.

Tiziana has extended the principle of inclusion of "special" sports" into "regular" sports to a broader cultural context and she practices the principle of inclusion continuously in all levels of her work.

She involves people with disabilities in her work:

In Tiziana's haedquarter men and women are equal in numbers as well as combining all types of competences: organizational skills, adaptability, care taking as well as technical skills.

In 2010 Tiziana passed the presidency of the regional Paralympic Committee (IPC) to *Silvia Bruno*, a young disabled woman born in 1975. She holds a Master's degree in Communication Science from the University of Turin- Italy (1994 – 2000), working on a thesis on the issue of Semiotics of Text: "Magazines and ball: semiotic analysis of official football clubs periodic". She became a journalist in 2006, published widely in the field of sports for disabled and was a special reporter on Paralympic Games in Torino 2006, Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010, London 2012, and Sochi 2014.

Tiziana is also well known for her work in empowering disabled women as athletes, e.g. *Silvia De Maria*. Born in 1973, she became Paralympic athlete after a motor disability trauma in 1997. She started her skiing career in 1999 and won several national championships. In 2002 she successfully started playing wheelchair-tennis in individual and doubles plays and participated at Paralympic Games in Beijing 2008. Since 2010 she is engaged in double adaptive rowing and got fifth place in the World Championships in Karapiro in New Zealand, and at the Paralympics Games in London 2012 the sixth place in the final A.

But at least, it is told that her best experience is becoming a mother.

Summarizing, Tiziana Nasi is an example of an outstanding pioneer and leader in sports and Paralympic sports, she is an advocate for inclusive thinking in sports for all with and without disabilities, she is a mentor for disabled women at all levels of sports and she contributed successfully on the idea, that disability is not exceptional or diverse, but a normal part of everybody's life.



# The Greek Experience: Outstanding Women in the Social Space of Sport

Irene Kamberidou

Stiliani Chroni

## Abstract

Many inspirational and outstanding women have made a difference in the lives of girls and women in sport, physical education (PE) and physical activity in Greece, despite their *invisibility* in the mainstream media, the life stories of which would need volumes. They succeeded in making a difference while respecting and celebrating diversity with regard to gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, age and sexual orientation. Beginning with a brief discussion on the underrepresentation of women's sports and the female athlete in the Greek media, this chapter shares the contributions of some inspiring and motivating Greek women in sport whose achievements have been excluded from the country's mainstream media. It is through six in-depth interviews and follow-up meetings that we learn how these pioneers influenced the lives of sporting girls and women by daring to disregard social barriers and spread awareness. We conclude the chapter with tips from these *successful*, namely inspirational women, who all agree that success requires ethos and *taking that leap*.

## Introduction: The Road is No Longer Full of Thorns

Female presence in Greek sports is low not only with regard to positions of power, alike in other countries, but also with regard to the fundamental level of participation. According to data from the Hellenic General Secretariat of Sports collected for the 2003-2006 three-year period, among the 211.473 athlete identification cards (required to enter a formal competition) issued by 40 Olympic and non-Olympic sports federations only 27%

(57.803) were issued for female athletes as opposed to 73% (153.670) issued for male. The data also reveals that in executive boards, ranging between 12 and 15 members for each federation, only 60 women held management positions among 38 sport federation boards. This data highlights the absence of women in all spheres of Greek sports (GRIGORIOU; CHRONI; HATZIGEORGIADIS; ZOURBANOS; THEODORAKIS, 2011).

**Figure 1** – Women's underrepresentation in leadership by Areti<sup>5</sup>



Although the numbers are rather disheartening, many women have been making a difference and creating opportunities for girls and women in Greece. Our aim here is to celebrate and learn from Greek women pioneers who paved the way for this chapter to be written.

While a myriad of *anonymous heroines* of sport in Greece have dedicated their lives to community projects for girls and women at local, national and international levels, Yvonne Harahousou stands out as the founder of the Hellenic Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport (PEPGAS), established in 1995, in addition to initiating its scientific journal *Women & Sport*, published annually to this day.

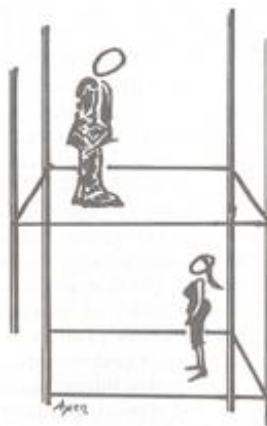
<sup>5</sup> All pictures of this Greek chapter are from the Greek artist Areti Kamperidis. She was born in Toronto, Canada, raised and educated in Boston, USA and has been living in Athens, Greece since 1981 where she also studied at Southeastern University and Deree, the American College of Greece. Email: areti.art@hotmail.com

Figure 2 – Anonymous heroines of sport by Areti



Yvonne is also the first sport scientist to introduce gender issues in physical education and sport in the curriculum of the Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences at the Democritus University of Thrace. As an academic she has conducted research and published on gender issues in sports, but most importantly she supervised and inspired many students to think and to do gender, like Sophia Papadopoulou, her successor since 2010, who is continuing her work as PEPGAS President and editor in chief of its scientific journal. Following in the footsteps of her predecessor, Sophia has been organizing gender and sport seminars, workshops, conferences, round table discussions along with volunteer activities to help underprivileged or distressed social groups: disabled, homeless, abused women and children. Recently appointed to the *Gender Equality Committee* of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Sophia co-organized a seminar and round table discussion on May 26, 2015 entitled "Sexuality and Diversity under Persecution?" at which discussions focused on homophobia, transphobia and bullying.

**Figure 3** – The glass ceiling by Areti



Exceptional female leaders, project initiators, policy makers and advocacy drivers can also be identified in Greece, despite women's underrepresentation in sport governing bodies (SGBs). For example, a woman who never perceived her gender as an obstacle, since as an athlete she learned to believe in herself, work with others and reach for the sky, as she pointed out during her interview, is Dimitra Koutsouki, the founder of the National Anti-Doping Council (ESKAN) and its first President. During her term as President of ESKAN (2001-2005) Dimitra supported the participation of women scientists in the Greek anti-doping council. She was also the first woman to be elected President (2003-2006) of the Faculty of Physical Education & Sport Science of the University of Athens. Moreover, since 1999, as the Director of the Developmental Disabilities and Adapted Physical Activity Laboratory, Dimitra has been involved in a multitude of EU funded research projects.

Kyriaki Yiannakidou, the first woman to be appointed General Secretary of Sport (2012-2015), dynamically promoted women's sport participation during her term at the Secretariat, which is the main sport stakeholder within the state. Most importantly she dared to touch on the topic of safe participation in sport by organizing the first ever seminar for protecting minors from sexual violence. In fact, the first woman General

Secretary of Sport showed impeccable timing by doing this during the Greek EU Presidency (GR2014eu) with representatives from the 28 member states. She initiated the "Gender based violence in Sport: minors' protection" seminar in Athens, March 20, 2014, at which the participants included national and international sport leaders, NGOs, academics and policy makers. In her interview to the authors of this chapter Kyriaki pointed out that the purpose of the seminar was to produce concrete proposals to be adopted by the European Union's Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council. Having begun her sport career in the small town of Naoussa and achieving great distinctions and victories in Europe, Kyriaki has been an inspiration and role model for girls and young women since the 1970's. In her interview she points out that her success is a result of ethos along with hard work, patience and perseverance.

Then of course Xanthi Konstantinidou who broke a huge barrier and entered the most male dominated sport within the country in 1979, becoming the first female coach of the women's 2004 Olympic football team. Xanthi, argues that "The road is no longer full of thorns!" and continues to inspire, educate and empower women as future football coaches. As she so eloquently points out in the interview: "When I teach at coaching schools, being a coach educator of the Hellenic Football Federation (HFF) since 2004, I feel the acceptance and respect of my male counterparts, the male coaches that doubted me during my first steps. I also feel great joy when among them I see young women who no longer have to face the gender barriers I had and can easily go forward".

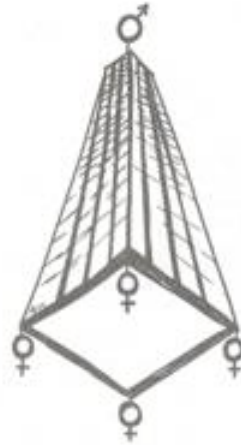
Last but not least, we interviewed the first Greek woman Olympic champion Voula Patoulidou, who made history in women's sport as an outstanding athlete and sport leader, later entering the political arena. Voula has been systematically contributing as a mentor and role model, visiting public schools and speaking to students about sport, its benefits and values. Thinking back to the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, she said: "Many people thought I would fail because I was a woman but I proved them wrong when I knocked down their castle of prejudices, inspiring more women to follow in my steps".

It is impossible to cover women's contributions in the social space of sport in only one chapter. What is definitely missing from this chapter are the voices of female PE teachers who have made a difference in their students' lives. However sharing the voices of this small and representative group of inspirational women is vital, since an entire world of Greek women's achievements have been excluded from the country's mainstream media. Before continuing with their interviews, we deem it important to briefly explain to the reader why the accomplishments of women who have contributed to improving the position of the female athlete are *invisible* or imperceptible in Greek society.

## Insufficient Media Coverage in Major Sports Publications

Even though female sport fans seem to be growing, women's sports are underreported in the Greek media, as is the case internationally (CHRONI; DIAKAKI; PAPAIOANNOU, 2013; KAMBERIDOU, 2011; PATSANTARAS, 2015; POLITOPOULOU, 2007). Sport editors, journalists, reporters and columnists are mostly men who apparently have not been *gender sensitized*: trained or educated in social equality and diversity policies. Sports journalism is one of the biggest offenders in Greece (KAMBERIDOU, 2007, 2011; LEVANDI, 2013; POLITOPOULOU, 2008), considering the extensive coverage of men's competitions and male athletes in contrast to the comparative underreporting or *invisibility* of women's sports and female athletes, with the exception of the minority of commercialized female athletes who are portrayed as sex-symbols or super-feminine fashion models, and not for their sport achievements.

Figure 4 – Media underrepresentation by Areti



Scarce media coverage of women's contributions throughout Greece, including their *invisibility* in major sports publications, is alarming. For example, Katsiadramis (2011) conducted a content analysis of eleven widely circulated sport newspapers<sup>6</sup>, focusing on the front page news of 200 issues and covering a 12 month period (January to December 2011). The analysis revealed no references, not a single word on women's sports and not a single photo of a female athlete. In continuing this line of research, Levandi (2013) focused on exploring the representation of women's sports and the female athlete in the Greek press during a two-month period (November and December 2011). She examined the contents of five newspapers (a total of 155 issues) – two sport papers and three political dailies – to determine how much coverage was devoted to women's sports and how it compared to that of men's sports: number of stories, their length and word count; page placement; number of photos and what they portray (sport identity, women/men athletes or sex symbols). According to the findings, women's sports were almost

<sup>6</sup> The following eleven Greek sport papers: FOS, Ora gia Spor, Kitrinoamvri Ora, Gata, Exedra, Gavros, Sport Day, Goal, Philathlos Protathlitis, Prasini and Derby.

*non-existent* (underreported) in the two sport newspapers SportDay and Goal news. Furthermore, in the limited space provided for women's sports the female athlete was described as "sexy", "cute" and "pretty" or using phrases like "don't cry girls", "unlucky but sexy", "super star", "Beauty [...] in men's dreams", "the girls" and so forth. Levandi (2013) concluded that women athletes were not defined by their sport identity.

Women's sports were also underreported in the three political newspapers *Eleftherotypia*, *Eleftheros Typos*, and *Rizospastis* (LEVANDI, 2013). The content analysis revealed that female athletes comprised an "invisible minority" (KAMBERIDOU, 2007, p. 585) in all three dailies. Levandi (2013) shows that in the small percentage of space provided for women's sports, the two conservative right-wing dailies *Eleftherotypia* and *Eleftheros Typos* focused on gossip or scandals about female athletes, their love life or what they were wearing, with photos sexualizing their sport identity. In contrast, they were not sexualized in the newspaper *Rizospastis*, defined as left-wing or progressive, in other words there were no sexist remarks, insulting or demeaning language such as "sexy" and "cute", although women's sports were underreported here as well. To reiterate, the "modelification" (KAMBERIDOU, 2011, p. 63) of the female athlete was not observed in the daily *Rizospastis* as opposed to the dailies *Eleftherotypia* and *Eleftheros Typos*. The findings also show that in all three newspapers: men's sports outnumbered women's; front page reporting of women's sports was rare; more space and columns devoted to men's sports and male athletes; photos of male athletes outnumbered those of female; imperceptible sport identity for women, emphasis on sex appeal instead of athleticism.

Although media sexualization or objectifying women provides greater circulation and publicity, this exposure does not increase or reproduce women's sports or athletic participation. What it does do is delay progress. It prolongs and reproduces old, anachronistic, negative gender stereotypes such as those depicted in Politopoulou's (2007) revealing study concerning the social position of the female athlete in Greek society in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

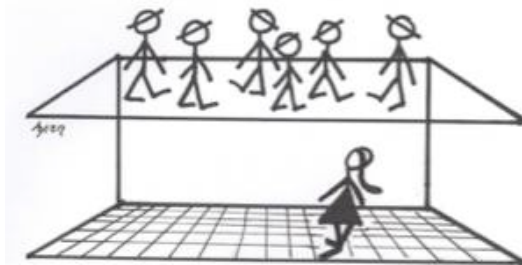


Politopoulou (2007) examines the position of the female athlete in Greece through the mainstream press during three political periods: after the First World War (1950-1967); during the dictatorship/military junta (1967-1974); during the *new order* (1974-2000). This she does through a content analyses of nine (9) Greek daily newspapers and two sport papers which she classifies according to their political affiliations: "conservative or right wing", "fascist", "centre", "centre-right", "left", "left-wing" or "progressive/democratic". The content analysis shows that the female athlete, in accordance with the political period, is totally ignored and women's sports are "invisible" and later on – when she appears in the press – she is portrayed with a mannish-masculine body or a sexualized one. It is important to point out that after the fall of the dictatorship in Greece, specifically during the 1974-2000 period, newspapers no longer ignored the female athlete's existence but gradually began showing "tolerance" (POLITOPOULOU, 2007). Exceptions to this rule were the so-called "left-wing" or "progressive/democratic" dailies that encouraged women's sport participation, although women's sports were underreported here as well.

## The Voices of Six Inspirational Greek Women in Sport

In this section, having interviewed six successful women who have excelled in their fields, we selected some focal points so as to offer the reader their insights, recommendations and observations on three themes: firstly, "what inspired them to take that Leap", specifically what motivated them to enter male-dominated fields, secondly, the "obstacles they faced" and thirdly, "how they moved forward", concluding with their "tips for success".

Figure 5 – Glass ceiling & women's underrepresentation by Areti



*Yvonne Harahousou*, founder of the Hellenic Union for the Advancement of Women and Girls in Sports (PEPGAS) advises us to "take action and no longer remain silent observers", adding that in order to succeed and excel in your field, you have to respond dynamically and challenges roadblocks. *Xanthi Konstantinidou*, the first female football player in Greece and coach of the women's Olympic football team, feels proud of her contribution in incorporating women's football in the curricula, as a mandatory course, for female students of the university faculties of physical education and sport science in Greece.

*Dimitra Koutsouki*, the first woman to be elected President of a Faculty of Physical Education & Sport Science, a successful role model and mentor for women in leadership, whose inspirational attitude regarding gender is her contribution to young women, argues that leadership skills do not have a gender, adding: "I never perceived my gender as an obstacle", in contrast to *Sophia Papadopoulou*, volleyball coach and member of the *Gender Equality Committee* of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki who feels she had to work much harder than her male counterparts, almost reaching burnout, to achieve her goals: formal qualifications, knowledge, publications, training. *Kyriaki Giannakidou*, the country's first woman Secretary of Sport, argues we need awareness-raising campaigns, especially regarding child abuse and gender based sexual violence in sport. She also points out that gender equality issues in sport have concerned the international Olympic movement for many years. Olympic champion *Voula Patoulidou* insists that we need to support and

encourage promising and talented female athletes, adding that they should receive state support so they can excel in their fields, not drop out or burnout as well as maintain a career-family-private life balance.

## What Inspired Them to Take That Leap?

**Yvonne.** My life experiences! The gender segregation in my PE classes throughout junior high, high school and during my undergraduate years infuriated me in contrast to the great joy I felt when I participated in coed or mixed games in out-of-school settings. My athletic participation usually involved recreational sports. I was a fan of track & field for a great number of years, moreover my husband and my brother were both discus throwing champions. However, what made me determined to take action and no longer remain a silent observer were my experiences during my graduate studies at the University of Birmingham, the courses I took in the Gender Studies Department and subsequently the discouraging research results that repeatedly confirmed Greek women's underrepresentation on all levels of sport.

**Xanthi.** I was raised in the countryside, in Aghios Athanasios Drama, a neighborhood with many boys, where playing football was a prerequisite to being accepted by your peers. I not only had to play but I also had to prove to them that I was as good as they were, if not better. From then on football became my passion, a way of life and a profession. I feel my persistence did not go to waste as I am not only acknowledged and respected in a male-dominated field today, but I opened the road for many other women and girls to follow.

**Dimitra.** I love sports, I used to be an athlete and I never felt my gender could be an obstacle in my career and professional development. As an athlete I learned teamwork, to believe in myself, to listen to my heart, to set high goals and achieve them. The strength I gained from such an awareness led many people, who doubted women in leadership roles, to believe in me and accept me.

**Voula.** My passion for sports. I felt I was satisfying some undefined need which came from a love for athletics until I gained true awareness of my skills and potential. I feel my contribution to girls and young women is showing them that they can reject the myth that a woman can't have it all! A women can have a sport career and be a wife and mother at the same time.

### What Obstacles Did They Face?

Figure 6 – Obstacles by Areti



**Yvonne.** I had to confront constant marginalization, reminders that my social role as a woman was different from that of men and frequently being discouraged to participate in sports that were considered socially inappropriate or incompatible to my role as a mother and wife, to name a few.

**Sophia.** When I was young I was overwhelmingly disappointed and enraged with the gender barriers in Greek society regarding my social role as a woman. As a female volleyball coach and later as an academic I had to deal with sexual harassment and gender discrimination, including the *glass ceiling* phenomenon, among other things, inevitably developing a strong desire to contribute to gender equality issues in sports.

**Xanthi.** The greatest obstacle was convincing my social environment, including my family, to accept what I was doing and persuade them that football was a socially

appropriate activity for women. Another difficulty was convincing my professional environment that I was capable of accomplishing the same things that a man could. It took me 20 years to surpass these barriers. I finally felt acceptance and recognition during the 2004 Athens Olympics, when I walked on the field, before an audience of 20,000, as the coach of the Greek women's Olympic football team for the opening game with the United States. It was at that point that everything I had ever dreamt of as a child had been accomplished. At this point I realized that girls no longer had to wait decades to succeed, the road had finally been opened.

**Kyriaki.** Undeniably, in the beginning I had to deal with many gender barriers. My social environment was unsupportive, always discouraging me to go on, saying things like: 'Running around the field and playing football with boys is no place for girls.' Fortunately my parents supported me and helped me overcome such barriers. Later on I had to deal with the same mentality and prejudices from the National Track & Field Team. However, the greater the barrier the stronger I became. Difficulties made me more stubborn and headstrong to go on and to work harder to achieve my goals. Eventually, through my victories, I realized that my decision to take up athletics was the right one.

**Voula.** Although I was raised in a family where both genders were treated equally and my father had an open mind, he became extremely worried about my decision to go into athletics and asked me if I wouldn't rather pursue an art career. I had to convince my parents that I wasn't going on the field to flirt with boys and my mother use to come to all my practices to check up on me. When I was older I had to deal with horrible and nasty remarks about my muscular body structure, necessary for my sport. This influenced me so much that I too began questioning my gender, whether I was a woman or not.

### **How Did They Move Forward?**

**Yvonne.** Dynamically, continuously *battling* obstacles with determination, stubbornness and inflexibility as well as setting clear targets and objectives for change.

I established a women's organization that would promote women and girls in sport and physical education, a result of my specialization in Sociology and Sport Sociology, which eventually led me to approach sport – competitive and recreational – as a human activity, a space that unites genders.

**Sophia.** I had passion and faith in my abilities. I always went after what I wanted, demanding and sticking up for my rights to equal opportunities. In time, however, I became less aggressive and began to learn to strive forward with greater patience and diplomacy, working towards my goals with more perseverance and determination.

**Xanthi.** With a great deal of work and continuous effort, knowing that in order to be acknowledged in a male dominated field, I had to be a lot better than the male coaches. I also had to make many more sacrifices in my personal life. In Greek society, especially during the period when I began my career, it was even more difficult to achieve a family-career balance, especially in a space men consider their "arena". My sacrifices were not in vain. I believe I have contributed in making women's football a socially accepted sport for girls and women during my 40 year experience and career in sport, physical education and women's football. Football was a *non-existent* sport in Greece of 1979 when I was the first woman football player and coach. Today, girls have many more opportunities to participate, without confronting social prejudices, and women's football is organized on the level of football clubs and national teams.

**Dimitra.** Women should dare, challenge, reach for the sky and especially consider entering male-dominated fields. As I mentioned earlier, I use to be an athlete so I learned to believe in myself and set high goals and standards. There is no specific formula or recipe. For me moving forward meant confronting and overcoming difficulties or obstacles, usually related to the level of competition. During a storm every wave is different from the previous one. I believe we set our own boundaries which are usually related to our priorities and faith in ourselves. This is how I learned to win and overcome difficulties without ever losing my female identity.

**Voula.** Every "male-dominated barrier" can be overcome when you have clear goals, good organizational skills, persistence and determination. Moving forward also requires self-discipline, patience and inspiration. Success entails love or passion for your sport combined with inspiration. If your coach or someone close to you inspires you, supports you, encourages you to cultivate your talent and believes in you, then that is the "recipe for success".

**Kyriaki.** Dedication and never giving up. When you lose a game or fail at something, do not feel frustrated or disappointed but shield yourself by becoming stronger, more stubborn and dedicated in working towards achieving it in the future. My dedication to athletics along with the psychological and moral support of the people closest to me were the catalysts for my success. Awareness is also important. I would advise girls and young women to be mindful and take the time to make a careful decision when choosing their sport.

## In Place of an Epilogue: Dare to Fly – *Tips for Success*

Figure 7 – Nike (Winged Victory) by Areti



We would like to express our gratitude to these exceptional role models and mentors – who followed their passion with ethos and commitment, daring to fly and disregarding gender barriers – for helping us compile a list with their invaluable *tips* for success:

- Ethos, inspiration and dedication.
- Follow your passion.
- Never give up, persistence.
- Believe in yourself.
- Never perceive your gender as an obstacle.
- Never allow anyone to question your abilities due to gender, disability, sexual orientation, race, age, etc.
- Support and help other women.
- Share, collaborate, teamwork.
- Determination, continuous effort.
- Go after your dream.
- Faith in your abilities.
- Show courage, dare, challenge.
- Reach for the sky.
- Dare to fly, cross thresholds.
- Enter fields considered male dominated.



- Take action and no longer remain *silent observers*.
- View sport as a space/activity that unites genders.
- Be proactive in communication.
- Pursue visibility.

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# 7

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