

From Gymnastics to Sports – Relations, Interactions, Contradictions in the Past and the Present: a Congress on the Occasion of the Founding of the German Turner Movement in 1811

The founding of the first gymnastics ground (Turnplatz) on Berlin's Hasenheide in Germany in 1811 by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn can be seen as the beginning of a new movement culture called turnen that concentrated on male German youth. However, Jahn had predecessors. Most of these put their emphasis on people's health, such as Johann Friedrich GutsMuths. Later turnen had to compete with Swedish Gymnastics and modern English Sport. Turnen, gymnastics and sport not only spread across Europe, but also globally. They changed in accordance with the prevailing social conditions. All three movement concepts involved different principles, goals and activities. While modern sport aimed at the constant improvement of quantitative performance and strove for records, turnen aimed in its beginnings at a holistic physical education of all young males. Gymnastics (in the narrow sense) was health-orientated and had educational and aesthetic goals; until World War II it was not done competitively. The variety of gymnastics systems and schools mainly attracted girls and women after the turn of the 19th to the 20th century.

Gymnastics, turnen and sport not only competed with each other but also influenced each other positively. Until the 1920s sportification processes were dominant. As a result, the games of turnen (Turnspiele), apparatus gymnastics

and certain forms of gymnastics developed into competitive sports at national and international levels. After World War II, however, processes of de-sportification emerged, i.e. more and more people took up physical activities, but not only at a competitive level. In the 20th century "Sports for All" and recreational sports became part of a global body culture movement. It had – and still has – specific forms and contents in various regions, countries and cultures.

Since the opening of Jahn's gymnastic ground 200 years ago turnen, gymnastics and sports have been confronted with expectations and political demands from all quarters of society. These have all contributed to the construction of gender arrangements in the various countries and cultures.

The ISHPES 2011 Congress will take up a broad range of topics related to all three movement cultures in detail, as well as to the relationships and influences between them.

We also plan to organize special workshops and events for young scholars.

Topics of the Congress

- Beginnings and development of turner and gymnastics systems in various countries
- Spread of sport and sportification processes
- De-sportification processes
- Political gymnastics and sports movements (e.g. workers' sport or workers' turner movements)
- Sport and politics: turnen, gymnastics and sport in dictatorships
- Current developments of turnen, gymnastics and sports
- Sports cultures in various countries
- Gender, age and ethnicity in turnen, gymnastics and sports
- History meets Sociology
- Open papers