

Abstract:

The goal of this paper is to analyse the evolution of the perception of the German gymnastic movement founder Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) and of his ideology in the German Gymnastic Club. Since the eighties of the 19th century, the Jahn's ideas had been specifically interpreted in the gymnastic clubs in Lower Austria. This interpretation, under the direct influence of growing racial anti-Semitism, consisted of an extreme national and racial intolerance. The clubs, since 1889 associated in German Gymnastic Club, gradually made their way to the radically national movement that gained the epithet of "völkisch". Various methods have been applied to determine how the club adopted, interpreted and in its own way also changed the Jahn's teaching in the field of the language, physical exercise, national and anti-Semitic ideology and, last but not least, in terms of festivities and symbology. The result of the study has shown that the "völkisch" interpretation of Jahn's controversial ideas enabled the Club to lay the foundations for the new ideology which was to become dominant in the gymnastic movement of the German speaking countries in the thirties of the 20th century.