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**TRACES OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL'S PEDAGOGICAL IDEAS IN ANTONIJA CVJIĆ'S WORK *RUKOVOĐ ZA ZABAVIŠTE* (KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK) (1895)<sup>1</sup>**

*Abstract:* The pedagogical concept of Friedrich Fröbel (1782 – 1852) was the first concept of institutional early childhood education. This has left a significant mark on the history of institutional early and preschool education on a global scale. Friedrich Fröbel developed his pedagogical concept over an extended period. He thoroughly explained the fundamental principles and approaches of his concept in the work *Die Menschenerziehung* (*The Education of Man*). The broader pedagogical community enthusiastically accepted the opening of kindergartens. His pedagogical ideas also found “fertile ground” among domestic educators. Antonija Cvijić, (married name Kassowitz) (1865 – 1936) stands out among domestic educators. Based on her own practice in the Zagreb children's kindergarten and under the influence of Friedrich Fröbel's pedagogical ideas, she wrote *Rukovođ za zabavište* (1895), which is considered a seminal work of Croatian pedagogy in the second half of the 19th century.

**Keywords:** Croatia, institutional education, educator, preschool age, preschool institutions

## INTRODUCTION

The beginnings of theoretical pedagogy in Croatia are associated with the second half of the 19th century. During this period, pedagogy began to separate from the corpus of philosophy and establish itself as an independent science.

<sup>1</sup> The paper is extracted from the master's thesis of Marta Dujmović.

Other events during this period were also significant for the development of pedagogy. Compulsory school education was introduced, teaching in schools began to be conducted in Croatia (the mother tongue), the Teacher's School in Zagreb was founded, textbooks for the pedagogical group of subjects (Stjepan Basariček) were published, the first children's playhouse (kindergarten) was opened, the pedagogical journal *Napredak* began to be published, etc. Particularly significant was the more systematic publication of books and articles thematically related to various pedagogical issues. The interest of domestic pedagogues was focused primarily on school topics, didactics, and special methodologies. However, domestic pedagogues also began to be interested in the topic of kindergartens (Mendeš, 2020), which at that time were called children's playhouses. Among domestic pedagogues, Antonija Cvijić, who married Kassowitz (1865-1936) particularly expressed an interest in the issues of educational work in children's playhouses. Her pedagogical views, and the views of other Croatian pedagogues on institutional early education, were formed under the influence of the pedagogical ideas of Friedrich Fröbel (1782 – 1852). Owing to his efforts, kindergartens “started to conquer the world” (Engelbrecht, 1986).

### **FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL: BASIC BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Friedrich Fröbel was born on April 21, 1782, in Oberweissbach, Thuringia. He is considered one of the most significant and influential educators of the 19th century. He attended a girls' school and subsequently a forestry school. After forestry school, he enrolled in the School of Medicine at the University of Jena. In 1801, he returned to his family home. Došen-Dobud (2019) noted that in the girls' school, Fröbel received the attention that he could not get in his own family and that this school was of higher quality than the one attended by other boys his age. He went to a girls' school and in his autobiography, he writes how he excelled in religious studies and mathematics (Fröbel et al., 1889). At the age of fifteen, he started forestry school. Fröbel admitted that trees were his first teacher and that he would never forget what they taught him (Došen-Dobud, 2019). Fröbel lost his mother when he was only nine months old, which he later wrote about: “This loss represented a heavy blow for me and influenced the entire development of my being; I consider that the death of my mother determined more or less the outward position of my entire life” (Fröbel, according to Zaninović, 1988, p. 169). When he was four years old, his father remarried and had a child.

He associated with educator Anton Grüner and, owing to him, obtained a position as a teacher in a model school in Frankfurt, even though he had not previously performed any similar job. Fröbel was enthusiastic about the

teaching profession and wrote to his brother that from the first moment he came to work at school, he knew it was his life call (Zaninović, 1988). Grüner was a student of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, the most famous educator at that time, which sparked Fröbel's interest in pedagogical issues. He managed to contact Pestalozzi and briefly went to Switzerland to visit him (Mendeš, 2020). Pestalozzi worked in Yverdon at that time, and Fröbel spent two weeks with him in 1805. The visit was short, but Pestalozzi left a strong impression on him. Došen-Dobud (2019) stated that Fröbel decided to visit him again when the opportunity arose. Zaninović (1988) writes that after a year, Fröbel left the model school where he worked and became a private tutor. He goes back to Pestalozzi and stays with him for two years as his associate, bringing along his three students. He was enchanted by Pestalozzi, and was especially thrilled by his outdoor play, which he considered a refreshing bath for the soul (Seidel, 1883, according to Zaninović, 1988). He returns to Germany at the age of twenty-nine and enrolls at the University of Göttingen. After just a year, he transferred to the University of Berlin, where he studied natural sciences. The same author states that Fröbel repeatedly felt the desire to return to pedagogical work, and in 1816, he definitively decided to devote himself to educating youth. The following year, he opened a school for boys in Keilhau, model after Pestalozzi's school in Yverdon. During this time in Europe, the Holy Alliance was being formed, so Fröbel left the school to his close associates and went to run educational institutions in Switzerland. In 1836, after the situation calmed down, he returned to Germany with the intention of dedicating his life to the education of preschool children. Mendeš (2020) notes that in 1837, Fröbel founded the first preschool institution called "Institution for the development of creative activity motives in children and youth". This name seemed unacceptable to Fröbel, so he changed it to "kindergarten". Zaninović (1988) explained that the term "kindergarten" was a product of his imagination because he believed that a child is like a plant, the school represents a garden, and the teacher is the gardener. Friedrich Fröbel married Henrietta Wilhelmine Hoffmeister, the daughter of a member of the Berlin War Council, in 1817. According to the writings of Fröbel and colleagues (1889), Fröbel first saw Henrietta in a museum and was instantly captivated by her. She died in May 1839 after a short illness.

During his lifetime, Fröbel published many texts and works. His first text was *A Brief Description of Pestalozzi's Principles of Education and Teaching* (Heiland, 1999). In this work, although impressed by Pestalozzi's ideas, Friedrich realized that his system was unfinished and wanted to learn as much theory as possible to continue Pestalozzi's ideas. One of the most important works he published during his lifetime was certainly *The Education of Man*. Fröbel also published a collection of songs and various games for mothers and children, and *The Sunday Paper*, which used the motto "We live for our

children". He opened many kindergartens in Germany and married his second wife, his student Luise Levin, in July 1851. After his death, she continued his work according to the methods of the kindergarten in Keilhau (Fröbel et al., 1889). He died on June 21, 1852, at the age of seventy. Došen-Dobud (2019) notes that a monument was erected in Fröbel's honour in Blankenburg, at the site of the first "Kindergarten". His gravestone features a cube, a sphere, and a cylinder, which are indispensable parts of his concept, and an inscription that says: "Let us live for our children!"

## **FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL'S PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPT**

Mendeš (2020) stated that Friedrich Fröbel's leading idea is that humans are inherently good. Fröbel also believes that humans are the final and most perfect product of evolution. Through proper education, the divine principle within them is revealed. He believes that just as a plant contains a force that governs its growth, there is also a force within humans that enables its development. This understanding of the human being is an important part of Fröbel's philosophical views. He starts from the idea that a child is born good and that there is no evil in them. If evil occurs, it is due to improper upbringing (Zaninović, 1988). This stance was first developed by Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau's ideas of a child's spontaneous development intrigued Fröbel, who adopted them as a conceptual element of his pedagogy. He believed that a child has the right and needs to be treated as a child. Rousseau argues that the gradual establishment of a balance between what is possible and what the child desires ensures that the child's needs are met (Došen-Dobud, 2019).

Fröbel also based his concept on Pestalozzi's ideas and German idealistic philosophy. He was intrigued by the philosophy of Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling and his explanations of the relationship between nature and spirit, i.e., between the spiritual and the material. Fröbel's interest in science was also highly important. He has studied physics, mathematics, mineralogy, botany, and linguistics. Zaninović (1988) noted that despite many ideals, Fröbel was still an independent spirit. On this basis, Fröbel created the foundation for his understanding of humans, nature, and education. Here lies the idea of seeking a general law of physical and moral unity, universal unity, and the divine principle that governs matter and spirit (Kamenov, 1987). Fröbel's main determinant of education rests on two philosophical ideas: the idea of universal unity and the idea of evolution. In this way, he explains education and its goal, to which he gives a religious-mystical meaning. Unlike Comenius, Pestalozzi, and Rousseau, Fröbel was the first to emphasize the social component of child education. He believes that a child transitions from an animal stage to a human stage only when they enter into relationships with other beings and when they can cooperate with others on common goals. Therefore, it is important that

education starts in early childhood and is properly directed. The same author noted that Fröbel understood education as a means by which a person, as a rational, intelligent, and conscious being, is guided to exercise, develop, and liberate the life element they possess. Education should be connected with nature because it has provided the child with instincts and drives. Therefore, the early development of a child proceeds spontaneously, and it is better not to interfere to avoid hindering the natural course of the child's development (Zaninović, 1988).

Fröbel advocated certain principles in his concept. Zaninović (1988) divides them into adaptations to nature, self-activity, versatility, the unity of teaching, and a dynamic understanding of the child. His understanding of adaptation to nature is based on his idealistic and mystical views. Kamenov (1987) stated that from the first day a child is born, they must be understood, guided, and placed in situations in accordance with their nature. In this way, the child can fully utilize their strengths. A more contemporary division of Fröbel's principles, which are still used today, was described by the author Tovey (2020), who divides them into the following: freedom with guidance; unity, connection and community; harmony with nature; learning through self-activity and self-reflection; and the importance of play, creativity and the power of symbols; and educated and caring educators. The ability to think independently and emancipation represents freedom for the child. Fröbel emphasized that freedom does not mean that children do absolutely everything they want but that they must be responsible to others and to nature. It is also important to emphasize Fröbel's view of unity. He believes that learning should be strongly connected with children's lives and viewed as a whole.

## ANTONIJA CVIJIĆ'S PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM

Antonija Cvijić was born on January 16, 1865, in Zagreb. She was a prominent Croatian educator in the second half of the 19th century (Došen-Dobud, 2019). Her family was related to the Fuchs–Lisinski family. She began her education at a public school in Zagreb and later continued her studies in Vienna (Jerand, 1942). Her mother, Antonija Cvijić Lukšić, was the founder and owner of the first children's kindergarten established in 1869 (Došen-Dobud, 2019). The founding of the kindergarten was reported in issue 233 of *Agramer Zeitung*. It was a private kindergarten modeled after similar institutions that had spread from Germany to other countries. It was announced that in this kindergarten, children would have the opportunity to engage and develop appropriately for their age by arranging sticks and circles, sewing, knitting, and more (Batinić, 2013). After successful operation, her mother, Lukšić, appointed her daughter Antonija as the director, a role that she successfully performed for thirteen years. Mendeš (2020) noted that after marrying, she had to retire

according to the practice of the time. After some time, her husband fell ill, and she decided to dedicate herself to literary work. She organized her own bookstore, which she ran by herself for eight years, and from 1909, she actively engaged in literary and cultural work, which she pursued until the end of her life (Maroshi, 2023).

She soon began collaborating with the magazines *Smilje*, *Bršljan* and *Napredak*. She published her first book in 1889, and shortly after, in 1895, the Croatian Pedagogical Association invited her to write *Rukovođ za zabavište* (Kindergarten handbook). The same year, she was invited and chosen to be a corresponding member of the Croatian Pedagogical Literary Association. Her work was also sent to an international exhibition in Paris. *Rukovođ* became a seminal work in Croatian preschool pedagogical thought (Mendeš, 2020). From that period, there was another similar manual called *Teorija zabavišta* (Theory of Kindergarten), but the author, year of publication, and publisher are still unknown (Došen-Dobud, 2019). After 1908, she wrote cultural-historical articles, essays, literary reviews, and more for *Jutarnji list* and *Narodne novine* (Jerand, 1942). She also collaborated with the *Kazališni list* (*Theatre Gazette*), where she translated operas and operettas. Her plays *Krasuljica* and *Demetru u pohode* were performed at the Croatian theatre in 1911 and 1912. Her research interests were Illyrism and the Zagreb theatre. She wrote over two hundred articles in Croatia and German, describing the theatrical, musical, and literary life of Zagreb. Maroshi (2023) noted that Cvijić is considered a pioneer of romanticized biography and monographic editions of actors. In her autobiographical article titled *My Confession*, Kassowitz Cvijić highlighted that the then director Aleksandar Freudenreich assigned her the role of a theatre presenter. This meant that Cvijić announced or led the program during theatre performances. All her stage works can be classified as occasional pieces. These are short theatrical parts written to commemorate an important event or the date of a writer, artist, or actor. The same author noted that Cvijić used the Kajkavian dialect in her stage of work, continuing the tradition of the Illyrians who still adhered to the Kajkavian dialect. She is considered the “last Illyrian romantic” (Kassowitz-Cvijić 1934, according to Morashi 2023). She aimed to convey Croatian patriotic enthusiasm and the spirit of the Illyrian era in her occasional pieces. She died on December 18, 1936, in Zagreb.

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORK *RUKOVOĐ ZA ZABAVIŠTE* BY ANTONIJA CVIJIĆ (1895)**

Antonija Cvijić enriched Croatian pedagogy with her work *Rukovođ za zabavište* (Kindergarten handbook), written at the behest of the Croatian Pedagogical Literary Association in Zagreb in 1895. Cvijić cited sources that inspired her work, attributing her long-term practice in kindergarten and

Fischer's "volkskindergarten" as primary influences. Her experience was extensive, given that her mother, Antonija Cvijić Lukšić, appointed her as the director of a kindergarten that Lukšić had established in 1869. Antonija Cvijić intended *Rukovođ za zabavište* for all kindergarten workers and those preparing for such a vocation. Her wish was to lay the foundation for kindergarten literature in Croatia with this handbook. From 1874 to 1899, 212 kindergarten teachers graduated from the teacher training school. Cvijić explained her motivation for writing such a book:

*"I was compelled to do so primarily by the realization that in many countries, kindergartens are growing in number and reputation because numerous missionaries spread the ideas of this humanitarian institution with their writings, thereby paving the way for kindergartens to become, as desired by the renowned pedagogue Adolf Diesterweg, an essential factor in public education"* (Cvijić, 1895, p. V).

The manual was published in Zagreb since, at the time, the development of preschool education was most prominent there. Franković (1958) noted that there were only sixteen kindergartens and seven days of care in Croatia at the time, with a total of 1541 children attending them. Antonija Cvijić took pride in the fact that only forty-two years had passed from the first kindergarten in Blankenburg to the first city kindergarten in Zagreb. As mentioned, another book from that time, *Teorija zabavišta (Theory of Kindergarten)*, whose author, publisher, and year of publication remain unknown, has been preserved. Among the notable pedagogues of that time were Antun Čuvaj, who also enriched Croatian pedagogy with his work *Rieč o zabavištih (A Word on Kindergartens)*, written in 1880. The book includes nine points (kindergartens in general, the origin and development of kindergartens, the essence of kindergartens, the significance and value of kindergartens, the task of kindergartens, a word or two about educational means in general, the educational means of kindergartens in particular, the relationship of kindergartens to the family, and the relationship of kindergartens to schools).

Through these points, the basic concept of educational work in kindergartens was addressed. Čuvaj defined kindergartens as institutions for children who have reached the age of three but have not yet turned seven (Mendeš, 2015). Serdar (2013) noted that this booklet, though small in scope, was intended for all parents and friends of Croatian youth. The same author (2017) considers it still unknown why Antonija Kassowitz Cvijić never mentioned the works of Antun Čuvaj. *Rukovođ za zabavište* follows the Froebelian approach. Cvijić, at that time, had no other role model. All significant pedagogues of that period, such as Diesterweg, advocated for Froebel's ideas, so Antonija Cvijić could not think otherwise (Došen-Dobud, 2019).

The *Rukovođ* is divided into three main chapters:

- History of Educational Institutions for Young Children – The first section
- Theory of Kindergartens – The second section
- Organization of Kindergartens – The third section

In the first section, Cvijić (1895) describes the entire history of institutions for young children from the generation of John Amos Comenius. Serdar (2013) noted that the fundamental ideas of Comenius's *School of Infancy* are recognizable in Cvijić's *Rukovođ za zabavište*.

Her *Illustrated ABC* also shows influences from Comenius's *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* from 1654. The first section further identifies four types of institutions for young children: nurseries, daycares, kindergartens, and public or combined kindergartens.

In the second section, Antonija Cvijić examines the theory of the educational process in kindergartens. She discusses the educational role of kindergartens, play and toys, exercise systems, and "zabavice" (various children's activities such as knitting, drawing, building, cutting, connecting, singing, etc.) (Mendeš, 2020). This chapter highlights Friedrich Froebel's educational system.

In the final section, Cvijić (1895) provides a detailed description of kindergarten organization, from internal and external arrangements to schedules, administrations, and celebrations such as Christmas and year-end events.

## **ELEMENTS OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL'S PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPT IN ANTONIJA CVIJIĆ'S WORK *UKOVOĐ ZA ZABAVIŠTE***

Friedrich Fröbel changed the perspective of early education and upbringing. He recognized the unity of all a child's potential and possible abilities, talents, and creativity (Santos, 2012). He believed that anyone who recognizes the uniqueness, abilities, and potential of each child has a holistic view of the child's development. Despite many criticisms, he remained an important pedagogue focused on the child, inspiring many who continued his work. One example is Antonija Cvijić, whose work *Rukovođ za zabavište* is infused with Fröbel's ideas. In his works, Fröbel demands that children be seen as beings in development (Zaninović, 1988). He continues by stating that it is much more important to influence a child's will than their intellect. He mentioned that the primary objective of education is the formation of character and will, as this is the goal of education. One of the important aspects he emphasized was adapting the child to nature and its laws. This is one of the principles he highlights, and his pedagogical concept is developed on the basis of it.

Regarding adaptation to nature, Fröbel believes that one should cautiously follow instincts and write about four instincts: the religious instinct, the artistic

instinct, the work instinct, and the instinct of cognition. For each child, it is necessary to emphasize all physical and mental abilities, including physical education (Zaninović, 1988). He explains that a child should not be seen as a separate being, isolated in itself, but should be viewed as a member of society. Nature must be observed as a whole because only in this way can a child understand that all objects in nature are actually parts of an organic whole. In this way, the child learns to observe and differentiate colors, name objects, and similar skills. In his autobiography, Fröbel and his collaborators (1889) state that the study of nature must take place in nature itself, not in enclosed spaces. This shows how much he was influenced by Rousseau, who also advocated for observing nature outdoors. He mentioned that every mother has a certain genuine instinct given to her by nature. In the rapidly industrializing era, he believed that mothers did not have enough time or knowledge to properly raise their children. For this reason, he decided to shift the focus of education from the family itself to children's institutions.

Antonija Cvijić had similar views to those of Fröbel. She also expresses scepticism in *Rukovođ za zabavište* about parents being able to devote as much quality time to their children as kindergarten teachers can, advocating for the transfer of education to specialized institutions. She believes that children in kindergarten can gain much more knowledge and experience than if they are always at home. She also does not mention the individual development of the child but observes it in conjunction with other children. Although we are aware of the shortcomings of this approach, such as not meeting individual children's needs, disrespecting children's rights, and not respecting children's personalities, Antonija Cvijić followed the latest understanding of children and was greatly influenced by Friedrich Fröbel. Notably, the ideal at that time was the transmission and acquisition of knowledge through reproduction (Došen-Dobud, 2019).

Unlike Fröbel, who believed that the goal of education is the formation of will and character, Cvijić (1895) stated that, for her, the goal of education is "to bring the child as close as possible to the ideal of a person, a being that embodies all the virtues that we believe should adorn a mortal being". She emphasized the importance of play, considering it the child's "serious work". Cvijić (1895) also suggested that the inexperienced soul of a child does not know the difference between good and evil and that free play can negatively affect the child's physical development. This again presents a contradiction, considering that Cvijić's writings advocate for the birth of freedom, satisfaction, and joy in children. Thus, the question arises of how these values can be achieved without free play (Došen-Dobud, 1979). Antonija Cvijić also agrees with Fröbel regarding the education of the child and nature. She states in *Rukovođ* that it is mandatory for children to use the kindergarten garden and to walk at least once a week (Cvijić, 1895). She writes:

*“Such children should be taken into beautiful God’s nature as often as possible, at least once a week if possible. Walks are of invaluable educational value. The main thing is for children to move freely... thus strengthening their lungs and refreshing their entire body” (Cvijić, 1895, p. 228).*

In Fröbel’s Kindergarten, children are divided into three groups:

- The younger group, ranging from two to four years old,
- The middle group, from four-to-six years old,
- The oldest group of children is six to eight years old (Došen-Dobud, 2019).

In *Rukovod̄*, Antonija Cvijić advocated the establishment of various types of institutions for young children, dividing them into four categories:

- Nurseries,
- Daycare,
- Kindertartens,
- Public or combined kindertartens (Došen-Dobud, 1979).

Unlike Fröbel’s Kindergarten, where the youngest group consisted of children aged two to four, Antonija Cvijić also considered younger children, with nurseries accommodating children from just fourteen days old. They stayed there until the age of three. Mendeš (2013) noted that nurseries were shelters for children up to three years old. They were also called “nursing homes”, later referred to as cradles. Antonija Cvijić borrowed the idea for nurseries from Firmin Marbeau, who established Crèche nurseries in Paris at the time. The name “crèche” comes from the image of Jesus starting his life in a manger on straw (Cvijić, 1895). The first nursery in Zagreb was established in 1855 by the Sisters of Mercy, exactly six years after the first such institution was founded in Vienna (Došen-Dobud, 1995). Cvijić noted that Catholic churches and priests were the most involved in placing children from poor social backgrounds into nurseries. At that time, there were already 144 such institutions in France, and the first nursery in Vienna was founded in 1849. A nursery was subsequently established in Zagreb at the initiative of Juraj Haulik, followed by a cardinal nursery (Došen-Dobud, 2019). Antonija Cvijić was highly sensitive to social changes that often impoverished families, and by organizing nurseries, she sought to help their situation.

Daycares were also intended for all-day childcare, as Cvijić (1895) stated, from seven in the morning to six or seven in the evening. They housed children from the age of three until they started school. Daycare operates every day except on public holidays and Sundays. Došen-Dobud (1979) noted that children receive minimal compensation and food and learn to sing, pray, and play folk games. Cvijić stated that children were kept away from harmful influences and that daycares were “a great relief for the working class because

they free mothers from the worry over their children” (Cvijić, 189, p. 15). From this, it is evident that, unlike nurseries, daycare had some educational work.

Kindergartens are not social institutions; rather, they are attended by children who are educated there according to Fröbel’s method of education, which encompasses both physical and mental development (Cvijić, 1895). Kindergartens were not open all day but operated three or four hours before noon, with an additional two to three hours in the afternoon. Cvijić emphasized that they were intended for children from the age of three until they started school, just like daycares. The children spent a few hours a day there, but no more than twenty children could be accommodated to ensure better movement. They were intended for all social strata. Došen-Dobud (1979) noted that Antonija Cvijić was aware that it was not easy for all social strata to use kindergartens, and she proposed another type of preschool institution called public or combined kindergartens. Kindergartens were headed by municipalities, the state, or social foundations. Many factory owners have also started establishing kindergartens so that their workers can leave their children there (Došen-Dobud, 2019).

In public or combined kindergartens, children spend the whole day, just like in daycares. Došen-Dobud (2019) noted that children in such kindergartens receive education for five or six hours a day, emphasizing the pedagogical aspect. Children received physical care and food from trained kindergarten teachers. The same author believes that the time when daycare will completely disappear and be replaced by public kindergartens.

## **COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF THE PEDAGOGICAL IDEAS OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL AND ANTONIJA CVIJIĆ**

### ***PLAY***

Fröbel recognized the uniqueness of a child’s abilities and potentials, their creativity and talent, and the crucial role of play in their development and learning. In his book *The Education of Man*, Fröbel states that play directly influences children’s education, revealing their inner power. During play, a child is able to discover their potential and effectiveness depending on their own will. When children were considered adults at the age of seven, Fröbel designed kindergartens (Santos, 2012). Retter (1979), according to Bognar (1986), grouped Fröbel’s games into three different types:

- maternal singing and caressing,
- games with objects, and
- movement games.

For movement games, Fröbel also created a collection of games with music.

Cvijić, in her *Rukovođ* (1895), described a different classification of Fröbel's games, dividing them into the following:

- physical exercises,
- marching games with and without singing,
- hand and finger games, and
- movement games.

Physical exercises, as described by Cvijić (1895), are procedures that improve the normal development of the body. She noted that a child comes to kindergarten with a weak and sensitive body. Therefore, selected exercises are performed every day in the kindergarten, "early in the morning, then after mental work, when the children have been sitting for half an hour" (Cvijić, 1895, p. 38). In Fröbel's kindergarten, exercise is also performed daily, in the morning and afternoon, but not for more than half an hour. Physical exercises were performed in the classroom in positions such as standing, walking, hopping, running, jumping, and turning. Exercises were also performed with the head, torso, shoulders, elbows, arms, fingers, and legs.

Marching games with and without singing were exercises that allowed children to strengthen their muscles and improve their ability to walk. Cvijić (1895) also noted that these exercises play a role in harmony among children in kindergarten, as well as in developing a sense of rhythm. Similarly, Fröbel considered these exercises extremely important for strengthening social integration (Pounder, 2019). Cvijić also believed that children should first be trained to walk properly and that only then could marching games be used.

Hand and finger games were used by both Antonija Cvijić and Friedrich Fröbel. He included these games in kindergartens even before physical exercise was discussed in schools. In these exercises, Fröbel's effort to cultivate children harmoniously is evident. This promotes strength, flexibility, and dexterity in all parts of the hand. These exercises can be performed with the elbow, fingers, hand, nails, joints, and fingertips, accompanied by a short song (Cvijić, 1895). Heiland (1999) noted that in 1844, Fröbel published a collection of songs consisting of fifty games for mothers, finger games, and various songs. The mother should play the finger game and then ask the child to repeat it, continuing until the child masters the game. In Fröbel's collection *Mother-play and Nursery Songs*, many songs with similar words and rhythms are shown, as described by Antonija Cvijić in her *Rukovođ*. This indicates how much she relied on Fröbel's concept.

Movement games begin in the earliest stages of a child's life. Mendeš (2020) stated that even the youngest children should have an object with them to manipulate freely. Cvijić (1895) suggested that movement games start in early childhood and that the instinct for social movement games never fades.

Every nation has movement games that reflect its character. In the kindergarten, movement games included the following:

- *catching*—in these games, it was important for the child to jump and run as skilfully as possible and practice keen observation. Cvijić noted that tag games were often played.
- *guessing* – children had to guess various things during the game. In this way, they can nurture their senses and become more sensitive in judgment.
- *imitation* games—these games imitated children’s movements, starting with some educational conversation or story. It was important to repeat the story until the children fully understood it. The children imitated objects, animals, and people.
- *Circle dance* – Every nation has its traditional dance, so the children danced the circle dance to the simplest songs and with proper movements to the left and right. Circle dances are divided into simple circles, combined circles, and chains (Cvijić, 1895).

Along with movement games, children often sang short songs adapted to the game. The rhythm of the song had to be perfected, so the text had to be short and clear, and the melody should match the meaning of the game (Cvijić, 1895, p. 54).

She also provided clear rules for conducting any children’s game in her *Rukovođ za zabavište*, on the basis of Fröbel’s pedagogical concept. The rules were intended for kindergarten teachers and those who were yet to become them.

- *Do not command children’s play like a master but share it with the child as an advising friend*; this means that the kindergarten teacher should not interfere with the children’s play.
- *Be cautious in choosing games*—not every game is suitable for every age, gender, or physical condition of the child.
- *Carefully preparing each game*—She believed that the best preparation for children’s play was a story. The child could get to know all the characters and parts of the game, thus perfecting the play.
- *Let the game be repeated often* – Cvijić noted that children enjoy a game more once they have learned and perfected it. The teacher’s task is to repeat the game frequently and talk about it before playing to ensure that the children understand it.
- *There should be some variation in games* – significant changes should not be made, as frequent and large changes indicate superficiality and instability. Changes should be measured and small.
- *Sometimes, the children perform the learned games on their own*—the kindergarten aims to make children independent. From time to time,

the teacher can choose a child to lead the game, and the other children play as they remember it.

### **GIFTS**

Cvijić (1895) writes in her *Rukovođ* that every toy is dear to a child in a certain way because it satisfies the work instinct. Although a child always enjoys playing with friends, a toy makes them happy because it also entertains them. Fröbel provided children in kindergarten with basic and inexpensive toys, which, owing to their simple shapes, can be used frequently and for a long time, thus entertaining the children. These toys, or gifts, are as follows:

- ball
- sphere, cylinder, and cube

Zaninović (1988) names Fröbel's gifts differently and believes that there are six gifts, with only three basic shapes: spheres, cylinders, and cubes. There are various classifications of Fröbel's gifts, and Došen-Dobud (2019) mentions that Fröbel distinguishes gifts as follows:

- ball,
- little ball,
- sphere,
- cube, and
- cylinder.

Cvijić (1895) considers the ball a traditional toy. Fröbel gave a ball to a young child in the cradle, believing that the ball was pleasing in shape and appearance. Along with individual large and soft balls, six soft balls in rainbow colors are connected together. These were used to demonstrate ball movement in various directions, helping children understand directions (Došen-Dobud, 2019). Fröbel saw the ball as a symbol of man's unity with all divine things. Došen-Dobud (2019) explained that Fröbel followed Pestalozzi's principle by using geometric shapes as gifts. Cvijić (1895) stated that children in kindergartens use two types of balls: woollen balls and simple balls. She also believes that children can learn about various directions with the ball: left, right, up, down, etc. There are various games played with the woollen ball, accompanied by short songs with simple lyrics. Children play with the ball together or in pairs, tossing or aiming at a stand (Cvijić, 1895, p. 35).

Other gifts include spheres, cubes, and cylinders. For Fröbel, spheres symbolize hardness and movement. Cvijić (1895) suggested that spheres bring the universe closer to children. Fröbel suggested that cubes represent the idea of stability and were among the selected gifts. Cubes symbolize completeness and peace and are versatile with their vertices, faces, and edges (Došen-Dobud, 2013).

Friedrich Fröbel was the pioneer of his didactic material, although he did not construct it himself. The same author noted that contributions came from Hermann Goldmann, Franz Schmidt, Luisa Fröbel, and others. The cubes were disassembled into their components and later returned to their original position. The cylinder is also a type of gift and has a certain symbolic significance. It represents the positions of both the sphere and the cube, indicating the idea of movement and stability (Došen-Dobud, 2013). This is not all the didactic material used; in addition to these three geometric shapes, there were boxes with sticks, lines, threads, fences, pebbles, peas, beads, rings, and weaving paper. In *Rukovođ* Antonija Cvijić (1895) described all the materials and their use in detail. She noted that these three geometric shapes are in a box with a stand. "In it, there is a small stand on which the shapes can be hung; each shape has a small hole, so a ribbon can be attached and a stick inserted" (Cvijić, 1895, p. 37).

### ***ENTERTAINMENTS***

Fröbel believed that everything a child can perceive with their senses should be allowed to be represented with their hands. The most significant means of representation are the hands. Fröbel divides entertainments into those involving assembly and those involving creation (Cvijić, 1895). Assembly entertainments are those where the child is given ready-made material. The material is usually made of hard substances so that the child can use it frequently without fear of destroying it. Creation entertainments are those where the child is given materials that will change shape, size, and volume through play and can never return to their original form. Mendeš (2020) provides a detailed classification of entertainments:

- a) Assembly entertainments
  1. Group of bodies: building
  2. Group of planes: tiles
  3. Group of bodies: sticks, slats, and rings
  4. Group of bodies: pebbles, seeds
- b) Creation entertainment:
  1. Group of points: perforating
  2. Group of lines: guiding chains, drawing, stitching, moving threads
  3. Groups of planes: folding paper, weaving, cutting out, painting
  4. Group of bodies: basket weaving, joining sticks with peas, modeling

Cvijić (1895) noted that such prepared entertainments were not used in kindergartens until 1892. Occasionally, something needed to be changed because, for example, doctors sometimes complained that certain entertainments harmed children's eyesight, leading to modifications. Lascardies and Hinitz (2000) explain the difference between gifts and entertainment. Gifts were intended for children to learn about the external world, and such learning was adapted

to the child's development. Entertainments are materials prepared in advance to help children practice a specific skill. Any objects can be entertainments, but the material should be suitable for children and adapted to their abilities to use it freely. *Rukovođ za zabavište* provides detailed information about the entertainment and its use. From this chapter, we see that Cvijić based the entire educational work in kindergarten on Fröbel. This highlights Friedrich Fröbel's educational system (Mendeš, 2020).

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the 19th century, significant changes occurred in the field of early childhood and preschool education. New insights have begun to explore the importance of early childhood for a child's development. Today, we are accustomed to most children of early and preschool age attending kindergarten due to parental employment. During Friedrich Fröbel's time, specialized institutions, named Institutions for the development of creative activity motives in children and youth, which were established by Fröbel himself, began opening only in 1837. He found the name incorrect and later changed it to Kindergarten, which is the term we use today. Despite receiving numerous criticisms, Fröbel also found many educators who continued his concept.

One of them was the renowned 19th-century Croatian educator Antonija Cvijić, who published *Rukovođ za zabavište* in 1895 under the Croatian Pedagogical Literary Association.

Her focus on preschool education was influenced by her mother, Antonija Cvijić Lukšić, who founded the first children's kindergarten in Croatia in 1869. From the work *Rukovođ za zabavište*, it is evident how much Antonija Cvijić supported Fröbel's ideas, basing her concept almost entirely on his. Došen-Dobud (2019) provided a simple explanation for this. At that time, many well-known educators valued Fröbel and advocated for Fröbelianism, so she could not have thought otherwise. Although *Rukovođ za zabavište* was written more than 100 years ago, it remains indispensable work in Croatian pedagogy. Their pedagogical ideas can still be applied in preschool education today, highlighting their historical importance for preschool education.

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