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## ORIGINAL

### FRANCOIST SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS A SCHEME TO INDOCTRINATE YOUTH AND WOMEN

### LA ACTIVIDAD FÍSICO-DEPORTIVA FRANQUISTA COMO INTENTO SOCIALIZADOR DE LA JUVENTUD Y LA MUJER

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## ABSTRACT

This paper studies how successive Governments over the first two decades of Francoism (1939-1959) made use of sport and physical activity, especially among youth and women, to best convey the messages of the model of society they sought to achieve and so to increase the number of adherents to the National-Syndicalist system. After detailed analysis of primary and secondary sources, it can be concluded that sport and physical activity did not influence attitudes in most sports people, instead it limited the chances of practising sport. Indoctrination and recruiting through physical activity had a slim success: few were those who embraced the National-Syndicalist ideology by engaging in physical activity.

**KEY WORDS:** Sport, Francoism, ideology, political doctrine, social control, “Youth Front”, “Female Section”.

## RESUMEN

En este trabajo se analiza si los diferentes gobiernos que se fueron sucediendo durante las dos primeras décadas del franquismo (1939-1959) utilizaron la actividad físico-deportiva, especialmente entre la juventud y la mujer, para transmitir mejor los mensajes del modelo de sociedad que proponían y conseguir así un mayor número de afines al nacionalsindicalismo. Mediante la revisión documental de fuentes primarias y secundarias se puede concluir que la actividad físico-deportiva no influyó mayoritariamente en las actitudes de sus practicantes, aunque sí que condicionó las posibilidades de practicarlo. El adoctrinamiento y el encuadramiento a través de esta actividad tuvo un escaso éxito, fueron pocos los que acogieron la ideología nacionalsindicalista por practicar actividad física.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Deporte, franquismo, ideología, doctrina política, control social, Frente de Juventudes, Sección Femenina.

## INTRODUCTION

Power, in regard to social matters, is usually defined as the possibility to channel people's attitudes and behaviour to express or carry out certain values by means of organising, using, modifying and controlling human and physical material (Nieburg, 1969, 10). Therefore, assuming authority and the degree in which it is implemented will influence subordinates' behaviour. In order to put power into effect it is firstly necessary some kind of legal legitimacy endorsed by the political hierarchy, but it also depends on current trends and national contexts, and requires the additional support of military, religious, financial and other coercive resources (Weber, 1987). Once this legal endorsement has been achieved, whether it is elected or imposed, the authority gets a firm footing inasmuch as it has the skill to conduct people's behaviour according to its own purposes.

After the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), victorious General Franco embarked upon a large-scale project: to dismantle the Republican system previous to the war (1931-1939) in order to concentrate power on himself and wield it in his particular way. This meant to control the whole of the population by means of a strong territorial and administrative centralization (*Ley de 5 Abril de 1938*). The Francoist dictatorship came about as the result of a notion of Spain which was deeply reactionary and traditional, as oppose to the values advocated by the Second Republic. The military coup got support from the extreme right, a section of the Armed Forces, and the representatives of the Catholic Church, who feared that the old social order was crumbling down (González, 2000; Rodríguez, 1997).

One of the main concerns of the Francoist State was to achieve social order and to accommodate its members so as to prevent social conflict. Thus official institutions were introduced to ensure compliance with law and regulations by means of police and security forces intervention. Although it may have been the unofficial institutions, such as education, art, social habits, music, ceremonies, and the influence of leading personalities or sport, which contributed the most when it came to achieve individuals' self control and therefore social self restraint (Oliver, 2005; Sumner, 2003). It was a search for uniformity in different domains: political, to impose and consolidate the regime; social, mostly to control the dissident and recruit the rest, and cultural, which sought ideological and religious uniformity. In order to achieve this aim, several means and institutions were used, such as the one-party system, the propaganda, the political mobilisation to publicise programmes and consolidate the ideology, as well as the control of social and economic policies and the revival of imperialist ideals (Molinero and Ysás, 1998; Moreno and Sevillano, 2000).

As mentioned before, the formal and informal resources the State used to convey the pattern of social behaviour included sport and physical activity. If this is understood as an entity in itself, it has a tendency to reproduce the political, social and economic system, so it was developed in order "to indoctrinate its participants" (Cagigal, 1975, p. 21), and so to generate "solidarity and social cohesion" (Duning, 1992, p. 257). Therefore, sport and physical activity became an institutionalised practise in which social values were reproduced. It worked as a "positive ideological superstructure" (Brohm, 1982,

97), which never challenged the status quo and which generated a behaviour style and a prestigious social model. Thus, it became a highly rated activity, which took root in the community and which public authority used for their own benefit (Cazorla, 1979) by means of intervening in those domains they had at reach, such as education, competition and leisure (Cagigal, 1975; Chueca, 1983).

From the very beginnings of the Franco regime, sport and physical activity – meaning a physical culture which sought to educate the people and to improve the race– was used to draw in the youth in particular and to disseminate the excellence of the “New National-Syndicalist State” (López, 2012). Most of the institutions in charge of this task belonged firstly to *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-sindicalista (FET y de las JONS)* [Traditionalist Spanish Falange and Juntas of National-Syndicalist Offensive], but afterwards they were part of the *Secretaría General del Movimiento (SGM)* [Movement General Secretariat], which was responsible for indoctrinating people. Then the *Delegación Nacional de Deportes (DND)* [National Delegation of Sports] was created by Decree of 22 February 1941, which meant a general attempt to control the whole of sport and physical activity in Spain. Also other sections of the Party contributed to this task, i.e.: *Sección Femenina (SF)* [Female Section], *Frente de Juventudes (FJ)* [Youth Front], the *Sindicato Español Universitario (SEU)* [Spanish University Union] and the *Obra Sindical de Educación y Descanso (OSD)* [Leisure and Education Trades Unions Organisation]. All of them fostered a kind of sport activity leading to achieve the Fascist goal of regenerating the race and preparing the citizens, under a mandatory separation of sexes, for a better defence of the motherland and so regain her Imperial past (point 3 of Falange's election manifesto, October 1934).

Youth, women, students and young workers became the main target for sport and physical activity managers. By means of sport activity they tried to attune users' behaviour to the imposed social system. Therefore, the main aim of this paper is to ascertain if the ideological use and control of sport and physical activity carried out by the Francoist regime, over the 1940's and 1950's, predetermined sports people's attitude with regard to the task each individual had to undertake in that society, particularly youth and women; but also to assess if the sport managing bodies achieved the aims of indoctrination and recruitment as ordered by the State.

## **1. The Francoist legal context as the reference framework for sport**

At first the Falange's political manifesto became the ideological basis for the followers of the military revolt. Once the war was won, laws were being passed to give legal endorsement to the *New State*. This legislative framework had the specific purpose of defining citizens' proper conduct within that model of society, particularly over the first two decades, the 1940's and the 1950's, which are regarded as the most Francoist of the whole regime (de Riquer, 2013). It was during those years that the groups who gave support to the General during the war, i.e. the military, the Catholics and the Falangists, put more pressure to impose their principles and attitudes (Moreno, 1991). Although they would have

their differences, they all held fast to their interest in achieving a strong and cohesive State. They assumed without misgivings that through a strict discipline in education a united and strong national spirit would be achieved, and that would make citizens feel proud of their Motherland (according to point 23 of Falange programmatic basis). As declared by the *Ley de Creación de las Cortes Españolas, 1943* [Spanish Parliament Constitutional Act], God, Motherland and Justice were the three unmovable principles on which the *Movimiento Nacional (MN)* [National Movement] stood, the one and only permitted political group, of which Franco was the national head. The moral, philosophical and legal framework where society as a whole must fit in was defined by the Catholic religion, the defence of the Motherland through good physical training and the acceptance of a social model based on adaptation to the established order and equality in implementing the law.

Sport and physical activity was regarded as a fundamental part of the educational process. They believed that it encouraged social discipline, but it also eased the integration of large masses of population within the state apparatus. Thus, for instance, the intervention of the State in sport was justified in an article published in *El Alcázar* newspaper (23 November 1941): “Sport is played by masses [...]. That is why the State promotes it everywhere and wants to intervene in its favour”. When it came to allocate management responsibilities with regard to sport and physical activity over this period the military undertook the DND, whereas the Falangists took charge of the FJ and the SF. By controlling this activity the groups within power ensured their supremacy as socialising agents. In a subtle way, subsequent laws passed over this historical period provided the keys to define the roll that each citizen must perform in society. Indirectly, these keys also marked the way sport and physical activity — hence Physical Education, its educational branch— was to be planned and carried out.

The very first Act (*Fuero del trabajo* [Labour Charter], 1938) pointed out that the family was regarded as the primary, natural cell and the basis of society. Home was the ideal place where a woman belonged and where she should take care of her husband, look after her children and their education and therefore she should avoid seeking employment out of it, save in cases of dire need —quote from the National Delegate of SF (Primo de Rivera, 1942). Consequently, any physical activity and sport for a married woman were regarded as marginal activities to her everyday duties. They were only seen as appropriate for girls and young women, and their purpose must be to strengthen their bodies to better perform their later duties in marriage. Subsequently, the “26 points” of the Spanish Falange manifesto were declared the doctrinal basis of the Regime by the *Ley Constitutiva de las Cortes y el Consejo Nacional* (Parliament and National Council Constitutional Act)(1942). Points 23 and 25 specifically stated the model of education to be applied to the Spanish population. Under the influence of the military, the boys received a pre-military education in all teaching areas, so that they should better defend the Motherland. Later in the period they also understood that through international sport success the nation could be raised to the highest standards. At the same time the Catholic faith was brought in: the State transferred the management of Education to its leaders for them to instil its most traditional and conservative morals, and so the

Catholic Church regained the privileges it lost during the Republic. The Catholic clergy became the active defender of public morality and, for the sake of formal decency, they constrained not only the kind of sport and physical activity itself – to be regarded as having a “spiritual basis” (Inchausti and Gutiérrez, 1955, p. 12)–, but also the way it was to be carried out. But it was probably the *Fuero de los Españoles* (Spaniards' Charter) (1945) the law that became a real declaration of the rights and duties of Spanish people. This charter ratified the social order, the duty of obedience to the hierarchy and the duty of loyalty to the Head of the State. Segregation of tasks by sex, discipline, subordination to the authority in command and the traditional Catholic spirit were society's hallmarks over this first Francoist period.

## **2. Organisation and management of sport and physical activity to control Francoist society**

The study of sport and physical activity becomes a task of utmost importance especially when it comes to ascertain its impact on society. When State and politics ally to set clearly defined behaviour patterns, sport activity becomes a very useful resource to convey the social order. According to Diem (1966, 7), sport has become a reality that cannot be ignored, which has its unified expression, its own rules, words, spirit, advantages and defects. If by sport and physical activity we understand the full scope of its categories, we can be certain that not only does it serve the purpose of shaping and enhancing people from a private and personal perspective (Cazorla, 1979), but it also instils values and behaviour codes that reflect on the coexistence within the community, hence it serves as a tool of social identity and cohesion (Buggel, 1974).

From this approach we wonder if sport can be self-sufficient enough to better achieve its genuine aims. Can sport activity really get separated from politics? Can the State benefit from moralising, indoctrinating and mobilising the citizens, disregard of the social area they belong in? It is very difficult, indeed, to separate sport and physical activity from the ruling politics. As sport sociologists Elías and Dunning (1992) stated, sport, far from being a harmless and meaningless pastime, it is one of the keys that help us understand the origin and evolution of modern times, as well as the social relations of everyday life (Lagardera, 1995-1996).

Franco's regime also established links between sport and the State. Sport politics were undertaken exclusively by FET y de las JONS, which saw sport from the start as a social issue which caused a high political impact. Following that purpose it was placed in the hands of the most ideologist section of the DND which organised and coordinated it and set the basis of the suitable framework to achieve the right ideological aims. Thus sport was deprived of its associative and educational properties to be used as part of the training of citizens and so to draw up the necessary political and social behaviour patterns for an authoritarian State (Bielsa and Vizquete, 2012). The Constitutional Decree of that Delegation (1941) clearly stated the significance of sport when it came to adapt the citizens to a model of society that did not admit a plurality of ideas.

But it was also used to keep the supremacy of the leading and commanding group who had control of it throughout this historical period.

## 2.1 Powers and organisation of the National Delegation of Sport

Franco, following his ambition to control all bodies and entities of government through loyal subjects, gave the head of the Delegation, for the first two decades, to a military war hero, General Moscardó, who surrounded himself with Falangists and civil servants expecting promotion (González-Aja, 2002), and also with a person who was closely linked to youth and the Movement, José Antonio Elola-Olaso (*Acuerdo de la DND*, 1956), who had previously been National Delegate of the Youth Front (FJ). This leader was himself very keen on using sport to give shape to a model of society. He considered sports practise as a “public need” and a “complete educational tool, not just of a physical nature, but also moral, intellectual and wholly human” (Elola-Olaso, 1959, p.4). Maybe his approach was not as military-like as Moscardo's, but he underlined the educational and socialising potential conveyed by sport and physical education. On the other hand, this monopolizing policy breached the independence the Spanish Olympic Committee must have, since it was bound by the guidelines of the Falangist Delegation.

As it can be inferred from the previous lines the main undertakings of the Delegation included a plan compatible with the defence interests of the Motherland through improving the race by means of physical exercise. This aim endorses point 23 of the Falangist manifesto, revealing a clear symbiosis between the direction of national sport and the interests of the Party. It was necessary then to fairly deliver the possibilities of access to that activity. It was not easy to provide the whole of the population with access to sport and physical activity; for one thing, people were not prepared to assume that challenge right after a war, but also the autarchic economic decisions did not allow to increase investments in infrastructure. Despite this provision problem, the potential of sport to be used as an instrument to escape from reality was never forgotten. As sport sociologist Levet points out (1988, p. 208), it gives a picture of a perfect world in which harmony and order rule.

The Delegation itself drew up a plan of intervention that reached all possible areas where sport could take place. The first domain to be intervened was competitive sport. Every federation was managed by people directly appointed by the governmental body, and they, in turn, appointed those who headed the provincial delegations. Club and association leaders, loyal to the social and political control pursuits of the regime, carried out a political purge implemented by the civil governors, and a sport one through the Delegation itself (*Estatutos de las Sociedades Deportivas* [Sport Association Corporate By-laws] 1943).

Another area of intervention was the Party Sports Department, also known as “*Deportes del Movimiento*”, which organised its own competitions. This section of the Delegation was the most politicised and the most closely committed to Falange. Its leaders, and particularly the one who undertook the challenge of conducting it in 1943, José María Gutiérrez del Castillo, always held the idea that “sport was used for the benefit of the Motherland”, with the aim of “placing



the future of Spain in the hands of men with tough complexions and steel muscles, and with as firm an inner stability as their bodies” (Gutiérrez-del Castillo, 1944, p. 3). “*Deportes del Movimiento*”, as an organising entity, had the ambition of becoming the leading banner of sport in Francoist Spain, clearly emulating the successful *balillas* young Fascists in Italy or the *Hitlerjugend* Nazis in Germany, but it encountered difficulties as it will be explained below.

The third link in the organisation of the Delegation was taken up by sport within the armed forces, another of the logistic supports of the Francoist State. According to de Vivar (1946, p. 2), “combat demanded that armies should make sure to train troops in physical activities related to fighting” as a school of citizenship. Soldiers sport training —women were not allowed in State defence forces— became a very valuable training instrument to shape the model of the ideal man. It is perhaps for that reason that it was the least active department, since its initial domain of intervention was limited to military men. Fencing, equestrian sports and shooting were particularly popular, especially among high rank officers. But the rank and file did not usually play those sports, their training being limited to foot drill and a few minutes of hygienic gymnastics. On the other hand, pre-military training was included in physical education and training programmes for young members, since it was regarded as an aid to make true the myth of the perfect man —vigorous, gentleman, austere, self-sacrificing and physically fit—, ever so praised in Francoist society (González-Aja, 2005, p.64), as opposed to the model of woman, as will be seen below.

Therefore, after 1939 sport associations were controlled by power organs within the Party and under their own legislation. Hence, “the whole of the social organization of sport was placed under an absolute nationalization or quasi nationalization, or at any rate under the strict discipline of public authority” (Cazorla, 1979, p. 198). Still, although they tried to use federated sport as an instrument to disseminate the values of Falangism, not even in the “bluest”<sup>1</sup> first years did they achieve this goal, save for some minimal signs, as for instance, up to 1945 it was mandatory for players to stretch up their arm in the Fascist salute before a match or the traditional red shirt of national teams was replaced by a dark blue shirt which was the colour of the Party. However, they did manage to turn sport into a resource that diverted people's attention from the harsh everyday conditions they went through, particularly the most popular, like football, boxing and cycling (Iglesias, 1992).

### **3. Sport and physical activity and physical education as projects to indoctrinate the young**

Sport and physical activity is most relevant during the first years of a human life, that is why for all country leaders the young have always been an attractive target for their doctrinaire interests. As well as other totalitarian states, the Francoist regime tried to make politics with the young in mind (Sáez, 1988),

1. T. N.: That is, the years when the Falangists were most powerful within Franco's regime, dark blue being the conspicuous colour of their shirts.

because the purpose was to conduct rather than to cooperate. The easiness to mould their behaviour motivated the creation of a youth organisation, the FJ, which was part of the *Secretaría General del Movimiento*, by *Ley de 6 de diciembre de 1940*. Its domain comprised all the population under 21 and it influenced its members as well as the whole of the student population, who were regarded as conscripts. This privileged position made it possible, on the one hand, to indoctrinate the whole of this age group through a series of activities, of which sport and physical education were specially prominent. But also, to adapt the young to the established social system, for which “they should be supplied with the suitable watchwords to guarantee their loyalty to the regime” (Manrique, 2014a, p. 428).

As we have underlined above, political indoctrination was undertaken by the different sections of the Party. In addition to these political bodies, the *Ministerio de Educación Nacional* also contributed to this task, and during this period it was managed by ministers of a Catholic leniency. It was just the political and the religious sectors who showed more interest in instilling their rules of conduct into young people. The assignment of tasks in respect of education was clear from the start. Formal education was undertaken by sectors affiliated to the Catholic Church, except school sport and Physical Education, because since 1942 they were exclusively assigned to FJ and SF; whereas after school and non-formal education, including sport and the rest of physical activities, were assigned to the different *Delegaciones de la Secretaría General del Movimiento*. But the overlapping of interests among those directly responsible for the training of the young often brought up conflict when it came to defend their privilege in their respective areas of intervention (Cañabate, 2003; Pastor, 1997).

Each institution undertook to define its model of man for the same kind of society. Franco himself, in the first article of the FJ Constitutional Act, pointed out that the State created it “with hope, and for the political and military training of the man who will benefit from the sacrifices of our generation” (*Decreto de creación de los estatutos de FET de las JONS*, 1937). In turn, the *Ministerio de Educación Nacional* (*Ley sobre la reforma de la Enseñanza Media* [Reform of Secondary Education Act], 1938), under Catholic influence, also defined its ideal “new man” in Francoist society, and included religious values:

A new man, educated by and for the new-born regime must be religious, besides polite, physically fit, racially Hispanic and imbued with the social doctrine that derives from [Encyclical] *Rerum Novarum* and from *Quadragesimo Anno* (Circular of 5 March 1938).

In short, two approaches, one political, one religious, which define an ideal Spanish citizen based on the values of physical vigour, political determination and Catholic conviction.

### 3.1 Training and duties of male and female trainers

Through sport and physical activity and physical education the young were supposed to develop the necessary basis to achieve the said “racial improvement”. So, all governmental and religious bodies in charge of organising sport and physical activities sought the goal of training a “healthy and fit youth in body and mind” (*Estatuto Orgánico de la DND* [Organic Statute of the DND], 1945, p. 5). But reality did not contribute to effectively achieving this aim, because there was not enough provision of well trained teachers and instructors to accomplish such a huge demand. In order to overcome this hindrance it was decided to create training schools to prepare those future professionals.

These schools were overseen by the *Delegaciones del Frente de Juventudes y de la Sección Femenina*, hence their students' learning, especially over these two decades, was closer to indoctrination than to knowledge of sport specialities. The *Academias Nacionales* were named “José Antonio” for male trainers and “Isabel la Católica” for female trainers (*Decreto de creación*, 1941) and were the seedbed of politicized rather than specialist staff, what really mattered was to strengthen the *Formación del Espíritu Nacional* (Education of National Spirit) (Vizueté, 2012). As a matter of fact, the first classes were made up of people closely attached to the regime as a result of after war demobilisation, such as: warrant officers (*oficiales provisionales o de complemento*) ex-combatants, ex-prisoners-of-war, war orphans, children of assassinated people or “crusader” teachers. With regard to female trainers, they were required to comply with a series of conditions like: being disciplined, having a National-Syndicalist spirit, having commanding qualities and being enthusiastic about physical education (Circular no. 70, 1940).

The school management focussed on the strict observance of the internal rules, bringing the atmosphere closer military barracks rather than education institutions. At the end of their studies, these Academy graduates had three job options: teacher, trainer or youth leader (Manrique, 2013), with the overt mission of training the future National-Syndicalist citizens. In addition to physical education and sport and physical activity, boys received pre-military education, girls received introduction to housework, and both of them had recreation and outdoor activities. As can be seen, the aim these first supplies of teachers and trainers had to achieve was to comply with their ideological engagement and to stand ready to attend the Organization's demands, rather than to train and teach physical education with an educational approach to its members. All these activities were carried out in the FJ and SF facilities, that is, the so called “Homes”, camps and Falangist hostels, but also in public and private schools (Manrique, 2014a).

Still, their inclusion into schools was seen as a control competition between institutions. Trainers were eyed with mistrust by regular teachers in primary schools, secondary schools and universities, because they were not Ministry of National Education staff. However, they were imposed due to a short supply of Physical Education teachers (*Orden del Ministerio de Educación Nacional*, 1941). At the beginning, PE classes and training of school sport teams entailed an overload of work for them, because they also had to give Political Education

lessons, apart from participating in programmed activities by youth organizations which were of mandatory attendance. According to Manrique's study (2010) —drawn up on the basis of the personal experience of female PE teachers over that period—, their day's work comprised extremely long hours with very low wages. Only their ideological convictions and their political commitment helped them to face the challenge in the best possible way.

As the years went by, this staff settled down into schools and universities, which meant they turned into a kind of bureaucratic staff whose job had more to do with doctrinal apostolate than with scientific development of sport. The end of the postwar and the social changes that came about were thought to be some of the most obvious reasons that demanded changes in the curricula of National Academies. In the mid 1950's the teaching contents were adapted to the social demands the graduates would have to meet: political contents were gradually cut out while the contents related to "youth leadership" and "working techniques for leisure time" were increased (*Orden de 20 de enero de 1955*).

Due to their obvious poor training, in their classes they followed suit the contents of the most influential manual of this period, published by the Youth Organization, *La cartilla Escolar para la Educación Física* [Physical Education School Primer] (*Delegación Nacional del Frente de Juventudes*, 1944). That book was supposed to follow a national method, based on Spanish pedagogy. It implied that physical activity must strengthen the values of service, discipline and devotion, and must be segregated by sex, follow Roman Catholic teachings and be guided towards race eugenics in order to better defend the Nation. The conscripts, which were by extension the whole of the school population, received, depending on whether they were boys or girls, a kind of physical education based on games, gymnastics, sport, dance and rhythm as core contents. The differentiation of contents by sex supported the notion of gender imposed by society and the legislative apparatus. Male teachers valued physical strength in their students, whereas female teachers focused on the aesthetics and gracefulness of their students' movement. As can be seen only with a strong emotional attachment and a firm commitment could this kind of work be carried out. Without ideological convictions it would have been impossible to perform.

Although this teaching staff was present in all education institutions, their direct impact was reduced by the fact that schooling during this period never reached a hundred per cent and there was a high drop-out rate, particularly in rural areas.

According to data collected in 1941 (*Arriba*, December 1941), there were 6.5 million young Spaniards under 18. Taking into account that the target age group of the Youth Organization was 7 to 18 year olds —which were grouped in the following sections, from younger to older: *Pelayos*, *Flechas*, *Cadetes*, *Margaritas y Flechas Azules*—, up to the late 1950's that population census included three million children and youngsters of both sexes. Of that total, only half a million were members, the rest were considered potentially recruits.

Furthermore, statistics by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (1954) revealed that schooling rate in the 1952-1953 year, in primary school —6 to 12 year olds—, was 69.15%, that is 2,028,715 pupils, including state and private schools. In addition, according to Martínez, Maqueda and de Diego (1999), in 1950 there were 214,847 secondary school students and 54,605 university students. By any reckoning, those were very small numbers as compared to the total population of this age group. Still, there were more male trainers in boys secondary schools, whereas female trainers carried out their work mostly at primary schools, because at secondary school most girls dropped out. On the other hand, enlisting to FJ and SF hardly reached 8% of the total youth population. From this statistical viewpoint, their training had a relatively mild impact on the enlisted and schooled population and none on those who were neither students nor members.

### 3.2 Competitive sport and National School Games

Due to the punctilious control that the DND imposed on all federations and because it was impossible to create clubs and associations out of its reach, the FJ considered the possibility, or the need, to disseminate the excellences of sport in education institutions. It was thought to be an adequate resource to indoctrinate the new generations within the principles of the Regime and so to draw in and enlist a larger number of believers. School sport was approached under this initial purpose as an extension of physical education, hence of the regime itself, with a clear monopolizing interest (Vizueté, 1996; Vizueté, 2013). But also, although only as from the 1960's onwards, it was used as a springboard by those trainers with an ambition to climb up the career ladder within the Party, by means of increasing the number of sport participants among their own pupils. Therefore, the *Juegos Escolares Nacionales* (National School Games) became an icon of the Youth Organization and the Regime.

These Games were first organised in 1949 for boys only. Girls did not take part in competitions till 1969, since sport was not regarded as relevant for the female sex, at times it was even thought counterproductive. Female instructors preferred to focus on games, rhythm, educational gymnastics, strolls, hiking and classical and folk dance (*Ley de Ordenación de la Enseñanza Media* [Regulation of Secondary Education Act] 1953). However, the FJ clearly understood that sport could be a suitable resource to convey the National-Syndicalist spirit to the young during the time they spent at education institutions. The main reason they argued was that their kind of sport, apart from being a training resource which conveyed ideological and moral values, it was seen as competition, since individuals on the playing ground pitted against each other and developed their monk and military skills (*Delegación Nacional del FJ*, 1944).

Competition was more in line with the revolutionary Falangist ideology, that is why it was very appreciated by school boys. For many of them it was their only chance to play their favourite sport, but it also worked as a good showcase for the trainers and teachers who coached the teams. Schools and teachers under the Movement control actually operated like sport clubs and trainers. But it was the head management teams of private schools, most of them under Roman

Catholic ownership, who better used school sport as a propaganda resource. They invested large amounts of money in high quality sport facilities and engaged renown trainers to raise the competitive level of their teams and lure a larger number of students from the well-off classes.

The number of sport participants was increasing, but not the number of Youth Front members, and at the same time a natural selection among the participants took place. The high competitive standards imposed on school competitions caused that those who did not meet the required technical skills dropped out. So with an overt proselytizing approach, the most competent were chosen and these, in turn, were to become the future leaders of the different sections of the Party. But, in turn, a good number of youngsters were left in the lurch, which meant that they gave up physical activity and moved away from the model of a Falangist man.

### 3.3 Outdoor sport and physical activity

Simultaneously to the School Games, the Youth Organization introduced after-school sport activities in the country side. They were colloquially called “outdoor” and they were very successful. The most demanded included hiking, camping, camp games, rambling, mountaineering and lifesaving, which sought to build tough characters and sturdy bodies (Granados and Lorente, 1974). The leaders of the FJ, especially those in the group of volunteers of Franco's Youth Falanges, were very keen on these activities, because they made easy their instructive and indoctrinating task.

Leisure and education came together in the natural environment for the individual to develop different skills to bolster the model of citizen that the State expected to implement in society (Chaves, 1964). So, in a comradeship atmosphere, priority was given to those virtues which were particularly appreciated in the National-Syndicalist environment, such as self-denial, a will to outdo oneself, courage and discipline (López, 1960). There were camp shifts of 15 or 21 days each all through the summer season and they were an attractive and inexpensive option for school children and youngsters of the time.

As for the girls, the name of camp was not accepted by the Falange female section since its military connotations had more to do with soldiers than with women. The SF requested that their outdoor activities should not follow the male pattern, and it was granted so (*Orden de constitución de la Juventud de la SF del Movimiento*, 1945). It was not exactly “toughening” what they sought (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1944, p. 6), but an education based on their typical female gender values: tenderness, sweetness, pure thoughts and submission (Agulló, 1990).

Therefore, in 1946 they created hostels which were more suitable for the concept of the ideal woman. There, besides no more than ten minutes of corrective gymnastics, together with rhythm exercises within a sense of aesthetics (*Delegación Nacional del Movimiento*, 1969), the girls were trained in such skills as tidying up the linen, darning and dressmaking. They were also

instilled with the notions of home order and economics (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1941), in line with the kind of home caring ideal woman as planned by the different institutions.

In fact, although the activities carried out in camps and hostels were different, they invariably shared the final aim concerning the doctrinal and educational purpose they had, not to be forgotten that their collective physical activity was entertaining and filled in leisure time. Maybe, since all that activity took place away from education institutions and families, and under less interference by chaplains, the National-Syndicalist message was conveyed more clearly there.

On the other hand, all the camp and hostel shifts were State subsidized. The offer of cheap enrolment fees sought to appeal to the highest possible number of followers. The aim was to increase the participation of the young by means of providing those activities as a social service in a hard postwar time. However, recruiting youngsters from the lower classes was not what the leaders of the Organization really expected, since those social sectors were not a first priority for the Party (Sáez Marín, 1988), apart from the fact that membership of FJ and SF did not increase as expected. And yet just the opposite took place in private education institutions where “they cast their nets” on children of well-off families from which they thought the leading elites would emerge (Jerez, 1982).

#### **4. A model of woman for gender sport and physical activity**

In this attempt to adapt each citizen to Francoist society, women became a key element to be controlled. As it has been repeatedly explained above, their roll was enclosed within the private domain of the family unit, and was kept away from public life and from employment out of the home. Nevertheless, their potential to educate future citizens did not go unnoticed for Falangists and Catholics:

A woman, as it is Falange’s wish, must be cheerful, austere, Catholic and she must prepare herself to serve the family, the municipality and the union. A frail and submissive woman can influence a man’s decisions by means of her tenderness and abnegation (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1951, p. 5).

Empire, justice, motherland, order, discipline, hierarchy are some of the values underlined so far in this paper which citizens must observe in Francoist society. We can also see in what way sport did its bit to its development. But maybe a rather defining feature of that social framework remains to be explained: that is gender and the rhetoric of masculinity and femininity. First of all, we shall focus on the tasks and responsibilities that society assigned to women, which were imposed as hereditary and immutable, and which turned them into the axis of morality (Ortiz, 2006); and then we shall see how sport and physical activity was adapted to the traits attributed to them.

José Antonio Primo de Rivera, one of the founders of Falange, in his 1933 constitutional speech, argued that their prototype of society must be based on

three “natural units”: family, municipality and institution (Primo de Rivera, 1976, p. 24). And that was endorsed by the *Fuero del Trabajo* in 1938. In order to implement the training and indoctrinating process among women, especially to reach their family units, Falange's SF was commissioned with the task to achieve those aims, and one of them was sport and physical training.

Pilar Primo de Rivera<sup>2</sup>, National Delegate since the creation of the institution until it disappeared in 1977, more concerned with reassertion than with objectivity (Pujadas, 2011), and ignoring the female sport splendour in the 1920's and 1930's (García-Gallego, 2015), declared herself the initiator of women's sport and physical education in Spain, as well as the founder of a professional body of specialists in that matter (Primo de Rivera, 1983). It is true however that she proved to be interested in those activities by creating a physical education council as early as 1939, which the female Organization itself justified on the basis of “the existing abandonment in previous years” (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1951, p. 88). Perhaps this Government body was too ambitious, but its attempt to conscript and indoctrinate all women in the new society was based on the belief that, as conveyors of culture, they were the “support for the greatness of the Future Spanish Empire” (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1938, p. 6).

#### 4.1 In search for scientific counselling

As it has been explained in a number of studies (Gallego, 1983; Manrique, 2014b, Richmond, 2004), Francoist society established an ultra-conservative model of woman: patriotic, good mother and wife, ideologically well schooled and bearing strong Catholic convictions. Therefore It was necessary to design a sport and physical activity programme specifically for her. In the face of the evident lack of technical knowledge that the SF leaders had, they looked for the counsel of an expert in the matter and it was doctor and Olympic sportsman Luis Agosti who would provide that (Suárez, 1993). His treatise on *Gimnasia educativa* [Educational Gymnastics] (Agosti, 1948) became the handbook in use, together with *La cartilla escolar para la Educación Física* [Physical Education School Primer] (1944) as mentioned before. Those two books were very appreciated by both girl leaders and female teachers and trainers as their guidebooks to prepare either school girls, SF members or any other women who showed an interest in sport.

Throughout more than seven hundred pages, Agosti's treatise explained how a working session had to be carried out and, what is more relevant, it offered a thorough analysis about the relationship between sex and age, which defined the guidelines of a gender model of physical activity. It argued that physical activity must be planned differently for women and men, otherwise it would contravene a “universal biological law” (Agosti, 1948, p. 720). That message was in line with the established concept of the ideal woman in that society, supported by a different educational process for each sex. It backed up the

2 T. N.: Sister to José Antonio Primo de Rivera.



Fascist tendency towards regeneration of the race, and it also reclaimed local folk traditional culture as well as the age-old religious heritage. It validated a kind of physical education and sport which did not overstep the moral bounds of the established femininity, and so it borrowed arguments from the three most influential domains: medical-scientific, religious and political (Manrique, Torrego, López and Monjas, 2009).

Sport activity was to be applied as preventive medicine for the sake of health (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1941). It urged women to take up exercise which would not harm their physical constitution, nor mould their bodies in a masculine shape: “[...] woman are not adapted to exercise that demands high muscle strain [...], or requires high contractile speed” (Agosti, 1948, pp. 710 and 719). Therefore, the model of woman proposed should not show competitive or instrumental traits, because they did not belong to the femininity “stereotype”. That is,

Every exercise that required strength, courage and endurance and many others regarded by men as anti-feminine, according to the masculine ideal of beauty and common sense, [...] They were specially rejected by the medical profession and branded as potentially dangerous (Pfister, 2008, pp. 50 and 51).

It was advised to practise corrective gymnastics, classical and folk dance, rhythmic activity and sports which did not require excessive physical strain or too much aggressiveness, such as swimming, hockey, tennis, handball and basketball. Track and field was excluded until 1961, because it was regarded as extenuating and it could shape up virile looking bodies.

#### 4.2 The religious influence

The church authority, apart from being a firm defender of a kind of society in which women carried out their distinctive mission as mothers and submissive wives to their husbands, also disseminated slogans as to how physical activity should be taken up. The very same religious counsellor of the SF, Benedictine Friar Justo Pérez de Urbel, pointed out in regard to sport that the Church blessed it “as a healthy cause of joy [...], as a school of virtues that would be transposed to family, social and national environments” (Pérez de Urbel, 1953, p. 2). The female Organization itself accepted these ideas and suggested a way to do sport full of Catholic moral arguments, particularly leading to training for motherhood, “as a spiritual basis” (Inchausti and Gutiérrez, 1955, p. 12), for the right socialization of women.

A woman, being a mother, has been commissioned with an initial educational task for her children, therefore she needs the right preparation to carry it out. Physical Education is, for that reason, one of the teachings she must learn (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1941, p. 7).

The Church aired its opinions about the spiritual benefits that sport brought to women, but it also kept a watchful eye on all matters regarding the operating

rules of championships and sport events organised by the SF (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1938). For example, in a competition schedule, a match was not to clash with Sunday mass (Circular nº 206, 1943); or in respect of sport uniforms, they would decide the right length of the trousers or the cut of the blouses or the compulsory use of a robe after swimming. In short, they gave orders rather than recommendations about the appearance to bear in front of her co-citizens, because sport should not justify public exposure. For instance, the SF included the following guidelines dictated by the Church Authority:

Sport must not be used as an excuse to wear scandalous sport uniforms. We are allowed to exhibit our sport skills, but they must not serve the purpose of giving indecent exhibitions. Neither shall we use sport as a pretext to become independent from our families nor to take any liberties which go against common decency (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1968, p. 23).

Given this framework of constrictions, the SF was directly commissioned to organise sport for all women, comprising SF members and conscripts. As it was a delegation belonging to the *Secretaría General del Movimiento* it followed suit Falangist ideological principles. Any kind of effort, especially physical strain, was reckoned as an act of service to the community, which lead to improve cohesiveness among its members. All physical activity projects were linked to eugenics and improvement of the race. As it was underlined by the female Organization itself, “hygiene, gymnastics and sport turn each of us into the kind of healthy and morally clean women the State expects as mothers to our future men” (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1941, p. 8).

#### 4.3 A model of physical culture endorsed by the Female Section

In order to accomplish the vast mission of training and indoctrinating women, at first the SF organisation chart included five councils, one of them was the so called *Cultura Física* [Physical Culture], and Cándida Arenas was the head of it. Its “officers”, who also went by the name of hierarchies, were aware of the lack of sport tradition among Spanish women (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1951), but also had to face the general incomprehension of the community when watching them do such activity in public. Specialised staff was scanty, and what made matters worse was the fact that they assumed that the task was to be undertaken by women only, since men were thought to be “insufficiently gifted for the speciality of women and children” (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1951, p. 90). They soon became aware of the need to create a *Escuela Nacional de Instructoras Generales y de Educación Física Femenina* (National School for Female General Instructors and Physical Education) (Manrique, Torrego, López and Monjas, 2008), but the number of female students who graduated as teachers and trainers was clearly insufficient to undertake the task. In 1959, according to data provided by *Asociación Nueva Andadura* (New Endeavour Association) and collected by Zagalaz (1998, p. 175), the total number of women in Spain who were government PE teachers, government instructors and basic instructors and trainers was 1,078, by all accounts insufficient.

Given this shortage of human resources, they had to engage women teachers to be able to face the challenge of training and indoctrinating school girls —also regarded as recruits—, especially in villages and areas far away from cities. On top of that, women teachers had to deal with yet another disadvantage. Country girls used to help at home with housework, apart from contributing to farming and tending livestock, which prevented them from attending school, and that hindered the possible influence of a teacher. This is one of the reasons why the SF decided to travel with their *cátedras ambulantes* (roaming schools) to the remotest places on Spanish land (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1965). The aim was to tackle the education deficit of country women especially in regard to sport practise. PE teachers and instructors took part in a women's revolutionary professional endeavour over this period. Contrary to the previously underlined principle that employment outside the home was not in a woman's nature, the SF fostered it by encouraging sports practise. Their professional engagement let them have a more self-sufficient life style, which placed them apart from the model of woman devoted to her family. This ambivalence about how to deal with women's physical culture recurred throughout the Francoist period, and restrictions would alternate with an interest in the greatness of sport.

Over these two decades, teachers' technical training with regard to physical education and sport was the bare minimum. This is why teachers' training gradually incorporated some subjects related to free play and conducted games, educational gymnastics, dance, rhythm, school strolls, and some sports. Afterwards these uses were included in the curriculum for the 1953 *Cuestionarios Nacionales para la Enseñanza Primaria* (National Questionnaires for Primary School) (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1948). In addition, due to the expected educational deficit future women teachers would have, in December 1940 the SF issued *Consigna*, a teachers' magazine. The target of this magazine was SF member teachers, although later on it was available for non-members too. With a heavy ideological and indoctrinating bias, it offered counselling for all fields of knowledge, including physical education, games and, to a lesser extent, sport.

As can be seen, sport was not included as a priority educational content in the PE subject. It was taken up as an after school educational supplement. Since creating independent sport clubs was not allowed, women's sport was practised almost by young members only. This situation presented the opportunity to bring together all those interested in the practise of a particular sport. So the SF viewed in a positive light the idea of formally organising a series of championships so that women from different parts of Spain could come together. The competition operating rules were the same as set by each sport federation. But in addition, the female Organization imposed its own code of ethics on all participant players, which was given the name of *Los doce puntos deportivos*, following again an indoctrinating zeal. This statement of principles focussed on encouraging proper behaviour and mutual respect among sport girls, giving support and encouragement to participants for them not to give up their pursuits in the competition, to avoid overstraining themselves and, in a more patriotic rhetoric, to strive for the glory of sport, Falange and Spain (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, undated; quoted by Zagalaz, 1998).

The SF implemented its own sport championships with all those preconditions, but of course for their members only. Nevertheless, they did not have the same positive attraction the National School Games had for boys since 1949, probably because they were not developed for the girls till 1969. The only option left for sports girls was to enlist and take part in the female Organization championships, and they did so, although many of them did not share the ideology of the institution.

In spite of all those constraints, and according to the records of the Organization itself, the interest in those championships increased over those two decades. For example, enrolment figures went from 5 championships and 349 participants in 1949 up to 199 championships and 10,934 participants (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1951, p.99). Significant though these figures may seem, they actually prove a shortage of sports girls, if they are placed side-by-side with the whole of the women population. As for the sports with the highest number of participants, according to 1946 records (*Consejo Superior de Deportes*, quoted by Vizquete, 1996, p.546), gymnastics was the most popular (3,343 enrolments) followed by handball (512), hockey (488) and basketball (425). Gymnastics was the most popular sport, probably because it was at the top of the syllabus in PE classes. But also because it better matched the ideal woman they envisaged: elegant, refined, balanced, among other virtues, and distant from the competitive and vigorous profile presented by other sports. In 1959, at the end of the period studied in this paper, educational gymnastics was the sport with the highest number of enrolments (20,936) followed by basketball (8,938), volleyball (6,170) and handball (4,340) (*SF de FET y de las JONS*, 1959). As can be seen, those figures still increased and yet they did not reach the expectations demanded by women.

## CONCLUSIONS

Over the first two decades of Francoism, sport and physical activity was regarded as an attractive factor to convey the doctrinal contents that both the Movement and the other establishment powers —the Church and the Armed Forces— wanted to impose on all Spanish people. The different National-Syndicalist sections undertook the task to train those in charge of influencing youth, schoolchildren and women as well as to spread a kind of physical activity that matched the roles imposed on the citizens. Through sport and physical activity they tried to mould a kind of man connected to effort, courage, gallantry and patriotism, whereas the model imposed on women urged them to be bodily nimble, coordinated, not inclined to public exhibition and not showing virile traits in body or behaviour.

In this paper we have pointed out that those political bodies in charge of running sport and physical activities clearly sought the aim of indoctrinating the people. But they did not accomplished it to their expected standards. Men and women instructors who graduated in the Academies eventually lost interest in indoctrinating the youth. Successive curricula of these Academies produced graduates who took their job more as a profession or a means to climb up the career ladder, than as a pastoral mission, especially after the 1953 and 1956 curricula, which introduced proper sport and physical education contents and

did away with political issues. The training that graduates from successive years provided was more technical than ideological and they were less interested in luring people to the Party.

Physical education was used as a suitable instrument to politicise the school population, segregated by sex. As shown in the 1945 *Cartilla Escolar*, boys were encouraged to do sport, gymnastics on apparatus and athletics which were thought to be the suitable means to develop vigour and a competitive spirit. Whereas girls were introduced to sport rather late, instead they were trained in other skills regarded as more suitable for their roles such as educational gymnastics, games, dance and folk dance.

Despite the fact that it was possible to get in touch with the whole of the population between the ages of 7 and 21, they did not gain many sympathisers. Firstly because almost a third of the young population were not schooled. Secondly because due to lack of human resources it was not possible to get through to all the rural population, and these were the majority in those days. And thirdly because hardly one tenth of the young were members of the FJ and the SF. On the other hand, teachers' help —although they were poorly trained in the subject—, and the creation of the National School Games —boys only— meant an attempt to relaunch sport as a conveyor of the values of the Political Regime.

It was probably outdoor activities which had a greater ideological impact on its participants. Being away from the influence of the family and the low profile religious counsellors kept —only the compulsory presence of a chaplain in every shift— made it easier for the message to get through. Over their stay in summer camps boys were instilled with principles of self-denial, a will to outdo oneself, courage and discipline; whereas in girls' hostels the fostered values were obedience, order and decorum to match the established model of an ideal woman. Attracting new members by means of subsidising part of the enrolment fees did not meet the expectations. Attendance to those camps and hostels was introduced as a means to increase participation and as a social service to the young community as a whole, but the majority of participants came from a low-middle social background, and those were not the foreseen classes from which the future elites of the Movement were to be extracted.

We can state that the attempt to politicise sport and physical activity by the Francoist regime did not have a major impact on the attitude of sports people, but it constrained the possibilities of participating, particularly with women, due to the zeal with which they controlled their public behaviour. Indoctrinating and recruiting through sport was hardly successful, few people adhered to National-Syndicalist ideals through sport and physical activity and few people also became members of FJ and SF.

This piece of research is offered with an open mind. Despite the evidence we have provided, there is more research to be carried out, mainly on the impact of other ideologies. Especially on women, because the influence of the Regime itself had to live with that of the Church. Women were regarded by the Catholic Church as a second class large segment of the population who, nonetheless,

had a great educational influence within the family unit and so it constrained their behaviour to a great extent.

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