

WOMEN ARCHETYPE AND FEMALE PHYSICAL EDUCATION DURING FRANCO'S DICTATORSHIP.

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Abstract.

The subject of this paper consists on the ideal of women in Spain during Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975) and how it was transmitted through women Physical Education and female sports, directed by the Women Section. The research focuses on the concepts and values from different fields (political, professional, cultural, religious, etc.) which described women and determined their life during this period, and which showed through physical and sport activities specific to this gender.

The research is justified and put into context in the first part of the paper. In the second part of the paper it is described the female model as proposed by the ideology of the dictatorship, and how this model was reflected in female Physical Education - both in the initial training of female teachers and in the proposed practices for Spanish women. In the third part of the paper some of the contradictions of the Women Section regarding the woman archetype are exposed, as well as the final conclusions of this investigation.

Keywords: women; Franco's regime; archetypes; Physical Education; sports.

Introduction.

The concern about the role of women in western societies has increased in recent years, in such a way that many social, cultural and educational initiatives have been set up with the aim of achieving gender equality and promoting recognition and respect of the feminine idiosyncrasy.

The field of Physical Education and sport is full of unavoidable masculine connotations, especially in sports considered as traditionally masculine, such as football and rugby. Women who practice these sports have been systematically criticized, because the “natural” adequacy of the male body to sport excludes, by definition, the female body.

Female athletes confirm that the problems when accessing the practice of these “male” sports are mainly due to the female stereotypes, and not to the actual physical limitations of the female body.

A stereotype is defined as a coined conventional image, a prejudice or popular belief about groups of people, which categorizes these groups of people according to their appearance, behaviour or habits [1]. The female stereotype describes women as passive, overly emotional and tender, and without a desire for success.

Thus, before a situation in which women are subjected to prejudices arising from the female stereotype, which limit their access to many sport activities, we need to question the origin and base of the mentioned stereotype.

In this regard, and as a starting point, I quote Cagigal [2]:

“All the stereotypes traditionally dominant in Western and Westernized societies could be summarized in the diagram: insecure man - weak woman [...] Sport, especially when understood as the efficiency of physical exercises, configured itself as a typically male task”.

Therefore women had to fight for a place in the history of Physical Education and sport. They had to take on the characteristics of activities which had always been regarded as inadequate due to their own female idiosyncrasy.

In Spain, sport began in the nineteenth century. At that time, it was classist and masculine. Physical Education had a turbulent beginning, the different governments which succeeded in the nineteenth century sometimes included it as a subject in the educational programs and other times they just eliminated it from them. During the last years of the century, Physical Education began to have stability as a subject. The orientation of this subject was provided to the male [3].

During the Second Republic (1931-1939) there was a positive development, since some laws approved physical education and sport as not focused exclusively on men. These laws argued that sport should be practiced by men and women of any social class [4]. Unfortunately, after the Civil War, the political regime established the elimination of these advances.

In fact, in the recent history of Spain, the stereotypical situation described above is determined by the period of Franco's regime. During the nearly forty years that the dictatorship lasted (1939-1975) certain behaviour patterns supported by groups close to power (the Church, the Falange, and so on) that tried to implement the Catholic National-Syndicalism were established among the Spanish population. The archetypes for men and women revealed a difference which was not anchored in the concept of sex but in the concept of gender, and which was based on the supposed psychological, biological and moral characteristics of each gender.

The profile of women was restricted to the roles of housewife, wife and mother, thus strongly associating the terms wife and home as the basis for femininity. These roles are added on to the roles of devoted Catholic and patriot - in short, the so-called three "K" of Nazi Germany “Kinder, Küche und Kirche” (“children, kitchen and church”).

The Women Section, a State agency, was commissioned to deliver this model of woman through educational activities such as Physical Education and House Training, which were taught by teachers who, in many cases, lacked the minimum specific training but who had assimilated well the principles of the Movement.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze this period in the history of Spain, which has been so decisive in shaping female Physical Education and sports. This chapter focuses on the stereotypes which were created during this period and the great significance they had and, unfortunately, still have nowadays.

The first section is aimed at explaining the historical context of this research. In the second one, it is defined and characterized the woman archetype during this historical period. The third section is focused on the ideological principles of the Women Section, the organization responsible for the women's training during Franco's regime. This formation included Physical Education and sport. In the fourth section, the characteristics of physical education and sport specific for women are explained. The fifth section is aimed at presenting the contradictions of the Women Section in relation to their own principles. Finally, the conclusions of the research are exposed.

1. Historical context: Franco's dictatorship.

Several countries in Europe underwent a fascist regime during the twentieth century - and Spain was the country in which this regime lasted the longest. The first official political fascist event was the general Primo de Rivera's coup in 1923 [5]. However, despite the large intellectual support that this political movement had, the Spanish fascism could not prosper due to Primo de Rivera's simplistic character, which led to his demission in the early thirties. His regime was followed by two short quasi-dictatorial governments led by the military, which encountered the Great Depression of the 1930's.

This political and economic crisis led King Alfonso XIII to leave Spain in 1931, and so the Second Republic was proclaimed. Two organizations, which would have a great significance later on, were born during the Republican period: the "Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista" (JONS), in English "Assemblies of the National-Syndicalist Offensive", founded by Onésimo Redondo and Ramiro Ledesma; and the "Falange Española y Tradicionalista" (FET), in English "Spanish Traditionalist Phalanx", founded by José Antonio Primo de Rivera.

These two parties had little relevance until the military coup which would lead to the fateful Civil War (1936-1939), a period in which the number of supporters and members of the JONS and the FET grew in the same numbers as the Communist Party. The first two parties formed the National side, while the Communist Party formed the Republican side.

During the war, in 1937, Franco joined the JONS and the FET to the so-called Movement, which was a body that would encompass all the right-wing sections and which depended directly on him; in short, this was an uneasy coalition of falangists, monarchical and Carlists [6].

Once the war finished, Franco received congratulations for ending the Republic through the use of weapons. It is to note that not only Hitler and Mussolini welcomed the victory of the national side, but also Pope Pius XII did, and he gave his blessing to the new regime [7].

The two cornerstones of Franco's policy which directed the development of the country were the so-called Movement and the most traditional Catholic Church, which sought the re-evangelization of all aspects of the public and private life of Spanish people.

This strange union gave birth to the Catholic National-Syndicalism, which stated that the end of the glorious days of Spain were caused by liberal politicians who had led the

country into a state of anarchy which, fortunately, the Catholic National-Syndicalists had managed to change through the military uprising of 1936.

The Catholic National-Syndicalism conducted a purge of people and ideas through a tight control of all aspects of daily life: media, education, religion, sports, work activities, and so on. As a result, the strictest censorship and a ferrous dogmatism settled in Spain, resulting in an intellectual vacuum, which allowed for the entry of the German and Italian fascist ideology and also for the incorporation of the ultra-conservative Spanish tradition.

However, the definition of the regime became increasingly complex as the years went on, because it coexisted with fascist and social-democrat times [8].

In general, historians distinguish three phases within Franco's regime: The semi fascist phase of imperialist character (between 1936 and 1945); the decade of the Catholic National Corporativism (between 1945 and 1957); the developmental stage of technocracy (between 1957-59 and 1975), this was a critical period in which economic opening was essential.

Franco never created a clear theoretical definition of the regime that he had established, but he always kept a fundamental set of beliefs, whose key points remained almost unchanged [9]: the insistence on the Catholic character of the regime. The entire ideology of Franco's regime and the right-wing sections were combined in the Movement, the only legal party which wanted to impose cultural traditionalism. Franco achieved the union of Spain and Spaniards; thus, those who opposed him became anti-Spain.

These key points were put into practice in the people's daily life through the support of the Church and with the defence from the Catholic-military oligarchy, which sought for the development of a modern program for economic growth, while protecting the nationalism thanks to a strong and authoritarian centralized government with no political parties.

However, the financial constraints of Spain made the economic opening necessary, which resulted in a great ideological damage to the regime. This is to say that Franco was forced to open the doors to liberal capitalism in order to ensure the country's economic growth, and this situation had a direct impact on the cultural and ideological traditionalism that he had defended.

Franco was fully aware of the ideological contradictions in which he was immersed. These contradictions were due to, on the one hand, the change of direction in the Vatican (mainly from the Second Vatican Council), and on the other hand, the necessary economic openness that Spain had gone through. According to several historians, the regime's inability to maintain a Catholic National-Syndicalist policy was Franco's big mistake, and yet it was necessary, because this failure was the unavoidable counterpart to the social and economic transformation that Spain went through from 1959.

The consequences of this situation were that the society and culture of the dictatorship wore out, even before the leader's death, because the lack of clear ideology of the regime prevented the possibility of support from the political and administrative Spanish elite.

Franco's dictatorship would end in 1975 when the leader died on the 20th of November that year. King Juan Carlos I, who had been made successor in 1969, became head of state, which meant the restoration of the monarchy. It also meant, the restoration of democracy, thanks to the political and social process known as "The democratic transition".

2. The woman ideal during Franco's regime.

Franco's regime meant an important halt to the development of women that had been forged during the first third of the century and especially during the Republic. Ballarín classifies women who lived during the regime into three groups [10]:

-Women who took on the role of wife/mother. Most women belonged to this group.

-Independent women or women with social significance, “which was a small group of unusual creatures led by an unearthly ideal that was stronger than any natural inclination” [11].
-Women who were on the side of the defeated, who were victims of the brutal repression after the Civil War, and were convicted and sentenced to death or had a life marked by hunger, fear, misery and a strong social control.

Fray Luis de Leon in *La perfecta casada (The perfect wife)* [12] defined perfectly the female model advocated by the regime, by stating that women under the husband’s authority reinforced in the family context the values of submission, respect for parental authority, and so on, which were the values that helped to preserve the established order of **gender**.

During Franco’s regime the woman is defined as a being that is notably different from the man because of religious and biological reasons. The model of woman had been established clearly by the ruling powers of the Catholic National-Syndicalist society. Let's take as an example the words of Pope Pius XII in 1945:

"Her job, her way, her innate inclination is motherhood. Every single woman is destined to be a mother (in a physical or a spiritual sense). For this purpose the Creator has commanded every woman's being (...) And so, the woman as such can not see or understand fully all the problems of human life beyond the family” [13].

Therefore, the role of women was limited in most cases to two specific functions: being a wife and being a mother, and always in the same context - the home. This situation included a total subjugation of the woman to the male head of the household, in such a way that from birth to marriage women depended first on their father and afterwards on their husband.

This subjugation was such that the woman had no legal standing, or money of their own; any participation in banks, government agencies and so on was always with the consent of their father or husband.

Passivity is a remarkable aspect of this model of femininity. Passivity not only kept women secluded at home, but was even reflected in an immoral idea of sexuality. This is reflected in a textbook by the Women Section:

“Have a delicious meal ready when he returns from work (referring to husband) - specially, his favorite dish. Offer to take his shoes off. Speak in a low, relaxed and pleasing tone (...).
In regards to intimate relations with your husband, it is important to remember your marriage obligations: if he feels like sleeping, let it be and don't force intimacy. If your husband suggests the union, then humbly agree, always bearing in mind that his satisfaction is always more important than yours. When he reaches the climax, a small moan from you is enough to indicate any enjoyment that you may have experienced. If your husband requested unusual sexual practices, be obedient and do not complain” [14].

Regarding sex, as shown in the previous quote, the regime had imposed a strong inhibition within the home, because the family was the basic structure around which the regime revolved, and so it was severely controlled. This position was supported by the Catholic Church, which defended the chastity and purity of women to surprising limits: "chastity and virginity, the key areas in regards to female morality, was expressed in centimetres of clothing, ways of walking, talking, having fun, etc.” [15].

However, this exaggerated inhibition also affected men, who ended up using prostitution as an escape valve. It is striking that, within such a traditional and Catholic social model, it was not until 1956 that brothels were banned, by a decree-law of 3rd March [16].

Regarding the possibilities for women to work or study, these were seen as special situations which were beyond the established limits, and which were only allowed when the situations were subjected to very strict conditions appropriate to their gender.

To justify this position, the governing powers used as a base theories that pretended to be scientific, using the writings of reputable doctors such as Botella Lluisa, Gregorio Marañón or Antonio de la Granda. Antonio de la Granda wrote:

"The strong and unavoidable sexual yoke of woman (menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and menopause) determine her body and mind (...), so that she is saturated with femininity and motherhood, which prevents the free flight of her mental faculties" [17].

There were, of course, plenty of educational policy leaders who expressed their opinions on this topic. For example Pemartín, director of Secondary and Higher Education, affirmed in an interview to the magazine "Signo" in 1942:

"My opinion is that women should stay away from university - I mean that their place, from my point of view, is the home" [18].

In this regard, we must mention one of those female figures who belonged to the "elite of unusual creatures led by an unearthly ideal which was stronger than any natural inclination" (this ironic note is based on the statements from Granero – see note 9): Pilar Primo de Rivera. She had an important role in the education of Spanish women during Franco's regime, since she was National Deputy of the Women Section for the 43-year history of this organization. The following excerpt belongs to her speech at the First National SEM Council, in 1942:

"Women never discover anything: they lack, of course, the creative talent reserved by God for male intelligence: we can only interpret in a better or worst way what men give us" [19].

However, this concept of woman did not remain unchanged along the nearly forty years of dictatorship. It is possible to differentiate two periods: between the early years and until the fifties, a period in which the Catholic National-Sindicalism doctrine was very fundamentalist (getting even to abolish co-education and reinforcing separate teaching for men and women, with the aim of securing the social model imposed); and the period between the late fifties and until the end of the dictatorship, in which there was a progressive economic advance for which it was necessary an openness to an international level, and which began to destroy the social structure advocated during the previous period. This development led to changes that influenced the concept of women. However, this does not imply that the aspects that defined the female model were changed, but that new nuances were added, such as the Law of Equality regarding Women Political, Professional and Working Rights [20].

Therefore we find a stereotype of the **femininity**, which is justified by supposedly scientific and religious arguments, and which is very repressive for women. This stereotype was defined, defended and severely imposed by the power structures of the regime, and it is characterized by: submission, passivity, impressionability, selflessness, frailty and intellectual inferiority (Pastor i Homs, 1984). This stereotype was part of what has been described as the social imaginary of Franco's regime, which is defined as the formation of collective representations that governed the social order (which was illegitimate in origin) and which came to be regarded as natural or, at least, almost unchallenged [21].

Finally, it should be noted that the regime was especially focused on the tight control of women because they were considered a cornerstone for the establishment of the social order. In this way, if they could control women then they could also control the rest of the members of the community. This is to say that, because the family was the basic, fundamental and natural structure according to the regime, and because the woman was in charge of the family morals and was who gave birth to and brought up the children, ensuring that the

woman did that under the neotraditional and Catholic principles of the regime also ensured the indoctrination of the people [22].

3. The Women Section.

The Women Section was set up in 1934 shortly after the creation of the FET and the JONS to represent the female branch of the Falange. This organization became an institutional body in the Civil War (1936-1939), due to the Decree for the unification of the Falange with the Carlist movement [23], and shortly thereafter it was given charge of the “social service of women” [24].

The Women Section was in place during part of the Second Republic and throughout Franco's regime, and it disappeared in 1977, like all organizations of the General Secretariat of the Movement, through the Royal Decree-Law for restructuring the bodies dependent on the National Council and for the creation of new legal system for associations, government workers and heritage [25].

The internal organization of the Women Section was characterized by centralism and a strong hierarchy, following the model of the regime, which led at first to uniformity and absolute control. However, as time went on, the uniformity morphed into rigidity of approaches that were continually repeated and that created an institutional stagnation.

The Women Section followed this structure [26]: on the pinnacle was the National Delegate, Pilar Primo de Rivera (the sister of José Antonio, the Falange's founder) who occupied this seat during the entire existence of this organization. Following, there was the National Secretariat, which managed the heads and assistants of the various Service Central Departments (Youth, Education, Staff, Administration, Press and Propaganda, Foreign Service, Physical Education, Culture, Association for the town and the countryside, Disclosure and Health and Social Assistance, Social Service and Legal Advice). These departments remained stable during the dictatorship, apart from a few name changes and unifications. One of these departments, the Staff's, was directly responsible for the provincial delegates, which were followed by the provincial secretaries. On these depended provincial managers, followed by local delegates and secretaries, and followed by the local service managers.

At the base of this pyramid were the affiliates. These were organized into three groups: the "arrows" under 14 years old; the militants, from 14 to 35 years old, with greater responsibility and duties; and the adherents, over 35 years old, who had less duties because it was assumed that they were married and should meet their obligations as wives.

Finally it has to be noted that within this organizational structure there were Advisors, which were relevant men from the regime who were responsible for guiding the doctrines of the organization. Four of these advisors were permanent – the ones for Religion, Music, Health and Physical Education. The advisor in charge of Physical Education was Luis Agosti, a doctor, a national javelin champion and injured in the Civil War (he lost a leg). Agosti would have an important role in the evolution of female Physical Education.

The Women Section evolved from receiving welfare assistance during the Civil War to consider educational goals after the end of the war. According to a decree of 1939 [27], it was given the following functions: mobilization, mentoring and training of affiliates, political and professional education of women in the rest of the branches of the Movement; training for the home and social service of women. Therefore, we can say that the aims pursued by the Women Section were essentially two: indoctrination of women in the Spanish Falange theories, and the transmission of a feminine ideal characterized by submission and aimed at producing the perfect daughter, wife and mother. An example of this is the fact that the models of women established by this institution were Queen Isabel I and Santa Teresa, elected patron of the organization in 1937 in Salamanca.

However, the Women Section evolved in the same way as did the regime. During the first stage (from the end of the Civil War until the late fifties) the Women Section was focused on the indoctrination of Spanish women, insisting on procreation and family; from the sixties on, there was a shift towards the workplace, in order to guide the progressive incorporation of women to the workforce.

In order to achieve its goals, the Women Section had a large network of institutions and centres: Leaders Training Schools; Teacher Training Schools; Professional Training Schools at different levels; Senior and Junior Schools; Educational, Cultural and Recreational Institutions; and lastly, Services and Institutions for Family Assistance and Rural Working Women. The goals of these institutions and centres, especially during the first stage, were not to help the woman develop intellectually, but to give her the knowledge that was essential to fulfil her role in the family.

Other initiatives of the Women Section were the famous Songs and Dances and their respective competitions, which sought the exaltation of the national folklore; the network of mobile libraries with books specifically aimed at women, such as those on cooking or child care; summer camps, (known as "Hostels"); Youth Houses, home of the youth organizations; and the Mobile Teaching, an idea imported from Germany that sought to bring the teachings of the Women Section to the particularly isolated rural populations.

Finally, we need to point out that within this mix of centres, institutions and initiatives, was the Physical Education, as an important part in the formation of Spanish women. We will discuss this in length next.

4. Physical Education and feminine sport.

By law of December 6, 1940 [28] the Youth Section and the Women Section took charge of the Physical Education of its members and all non-affiliated youth – this is, the Spanish youth as a whole, which included students of First and Secondary education. Later on, an official Order entrusted this organization three more subjects: National Spirit Training, Political Education and Home Teachings [29].

This strange situation, in which certain subjects were split off from the general education program with the purpose of being taught by organizations adhered to the regime, responds to the following context. After the Civil War, there was an extensive discussion between two groups that supported the so-called National Uprising: the Catholic Church and the Falange. The object of that discussion was the control of the educational system. The final distribution was clearly favorable to the clerical side, which obtained the responsibility for most of the teaching load, leaving to the Falange those subjects addressed specifically to the indoctrination and control of pupils.

This distinctive educational system would continue until 1977, when all the agencies with social functions that were under the General Secretariat of the Movement were transferred on to the Public Administration.

Regarding its competencies, both the Youth Section and the Women Section had the authority to appoint teachers, prepare the programs, supervise, set schedules, and so on [30].

All these factors, combined with the indoctrinating character of the subjects they taught, provoked that these teachers and these subjects were not welcome by the rest of the teachers in schools, because they were seen as intruders adhered to the regime.

If Physical Education, in general, was quite discredited, the case of female Physical Education was even worse, due to a general misunderstanding around the fact that women practicing some type of sport or physical activity for leisure.

From the beginning, the role of Physical Education in women's training had a direct relationship with the social roles imposed on them, as stated in this excerpt from the article titled "Female Athletics", published in the *Correo de Mallorca* on November 4, 1941:

"All female education should be directed to women's mission: motherhood. Physically, the mother should be in a state of good health and physical shape, without her having to possess much muscle or strong biceps. The female athlete, the champion (...) can not be the ideal wife for a man, and undoubtedly, will never be the best mother" [31].

Physical Education became a tool to train mothers in order to give birth to strong and healthy children, and it was complemented with knowledge on childcare and child health, which were also key elements of their training.

The rationale for a different and specific Physical Education for women was based on explanations coming from different fields - scientific, medical, religious and political.

Firstly, scientific and medical arguments determined the need to establish a program for hygiene and physical health, always in the context of the woman's great mission on earth: motherhood. Thus, physical exercise was always aimed at the prevention of sickness and the preservation of the reproductive function, which helped foster the stereotype of the frail, delicate woman who is not suited for physical effort. Serve as an example the fact that Agosti, a great theoretician of Spanish Women gymnastics, said in his writings that the critical periods for practicing sports were puberty and menstruation [32].

Therefore, all competitive activities in which there was a great physical effort were banished from female Physical Education. The activities considered suitable for women were gymnastics, dancing, swimming, hockey, skiing, basketball and handball; athletics was excluded from the sports of the Women Section until 1961, because it was considered masculinizing and unfeminine [33].

Secondly, there were arguments based on the fundamentalist Catholicism of the time, which stated that every woman's physical activity should strictly comply with the moral rules imposed by the Church. This included rules about the dressing code, rules about keeping a decent behavior, or the perception that sports should not be contrary to Christian morality. Such was this fundamentalism that, for instance, the Archbishop of Valladolid forbade women to riding bicycles because he considered it sinful. Other peculiar prohibitions included the ban for women to go out dressed in sports clothes, or the famous ban of Cardinal Segura, who disallowed gymnastics in girls' schools in the city of Seville, a rule that was in place until his death in 1957 [34].

Thirdly, we find the neo-traditional political position, closely related to religion, which viewed Physical Education from a perspective of service to the nation, using it to indoctrinate the new generations in the ideology of the regime. Thus, Physical Education was used as a preparation to ennoble Spain; the man should be ready to serve the country - and the woman too, but she would do so in her specific area, that was no other than the home and the care for the children and the husband [35].

Finally, we need to mention some characteristics of female Physical Education, in relation to methodological issues. First, the Women Section leaders' lack of knowledge, concerning Physical Education, made it necessary to seek expert advice, which in this case came from Luis Agosti [36]. As part of the Third National Council of the Women Section, Luis Agosti introduced an educational plan for female instructors in 1939. This plan was exclusively targeted at women, and it was based on Swedish gymnastics, although this education also included dance, folk dances, women sports, and knowledge on anatomy and physiology.

Second, Physical Education handbooks (which were in many cases mere catalogues of physical exercises with a questionable scientific justification), often ignored women or otherwise specified which gender was the exercise intended for, that is, which exercises were indicated for men and which ones for women.

Third, the teaching method was characterized by the Direct Command, and it was only in the late forties that the introduction of the so-called women sports allowed for the expansion of the methodology on Task Allocation. In any case, the female students simply repeated the exercises posed by teachers, and individualized education did not exist.

5. The contradictions of Women Section.

In its 43 years of history, the Women Section fell into some contradictions. These contradictions are a clear indication of the evolution of the Spanish society at the time and, most importantly, of an existing underground feminism within the organization.

We find the first contradiction in the defense and promotion of a Catholic neo-traditional model, since it was contrary to the objectives of the teaching centres of the Women Section. These centres taught an elite of women who were about to assume leadership positions within the Women Section or to work as teachers or instructors of Physical Education. However, the fact that women developed a career was not in harmony with the model of woman (daughter, wife and mother) that this organization was trying to convey to Spanish women.

The same contradiction was present in regards to the creation of childcare centres in rural areas, which were set up in order to assist the children of up to 6 years of age from rural working women. This contradiction was somehow more subtle, as the Women Section acknowledged that this solution was not desirable but it was necessary. This contradiction is also found in the case of smaller colleges, which were created to assist both male and female students from rural areas who wanted to study in the city.

In this regard, we need to note that these two types of centres (childcare centres and smaller colleges) were intended not only to assist these children, but also to guide them into academic courses and provide additional learning experiences of a clearly indoctrinating character. Here we find another contradiction, since these centres encouraged girls to study and coached them toward higher education, which obviously would result in those women obtaining a job.

Along the years, the Women Section was proposing a more active, independent and effective image of a woman than other organizations close to the regime were. It used a practical approach, which consisted on provisionally transferring women from the family to an institutional hierarchy that was completely organized by females.

However, the situation described above stood on a precarious ideological balance. In fact, this organization frequently praised the specifically feminine values in relation to society, but there was an obligation for women to leave work and retreat at home once they got married.

Finally, we find a striking contradiction within the context of the Ninth National Council held in 1945, in which the benefits that the Spanish society had achieved thanks to the Women Section were outlined. One of these benefits was the introduction of Physical Education and sport as part of female education. However, there was a strong opposition to the possibility of female athletes standing out - Pilar Primo de Rivera even affirmed that the Women Section did not seek to produce elite athletes, but to reach all Spanish women. However, one thing inevitably entailed the emergence of the other.

6. Conclusions.

The period of Spanish history between 1939 and 1975, which was marked by a dictatorial regime, had a great influence on Spanish men and women's lifestyle, especially women's. The tight control on women from governing powers contained political overtones: the basis for the social model of the dictatorship was the Christian family, in which the

woman was the cornerstone, so if women were controlled then most of the population would be controlled too.

In this context of repression and censorship, it is necessary to emphasize the deep anti-feminist character of society. This anti-feminism was based on an integral Catholicism, which provided the basis of the regime in terms of sexual and moral education.

The situation described above led to the control of female education by the Movement, and in particular by the Catholic Church. The education of women was entrusted to the organization called Women Section, a role that this organization assumed vehemently, trying to spread the model of woman (daughter, wife and mother), whose place was the home. The woman was characterized by submission, passivity, self-denial, fragility and intellectual inferiority.

However, although the Women Section served its purpose, with the passing of the years the organization was proposing in a veiled way and almost unconsciously a number of measures that covered the needs of Spanish women (this occurred mainly since the economic liberalization initiated during the late fifties). This new model of woman, which was banned by the regime, led the Women Section to fall into incoherences. On the one hand, it supported the emerging model of woman with certain actions, but on the other hand it was the ultimate responsible for the transmission of the traditional model of woman.

A highlight in regards to the educational work carried out by the Women Section was Physical Education, which contributed to the evolution of the sports level of Spanish women and to her comprehensive education. However, certain negative aspects typical of female Physical Education should also be noted.

On the one hand, its objectives, contents and methodology differed from those of male Physical Education, because they were based on the stereotype of woman imposed by the regime. Based on medical, religious and socio-cultural grounds, Physical Education for females was focused on Swedish gymnastics, rhythm, dance, regional dances and the so-called female sports: swimming, hockey, skiing, basketball and handball.

On the other hand, female teachers, specially at the beginning, lacked good training but strictly adhered to the policy of the regime. Teachers were chosen for their political views more than for their professional experience. This contributed to a marked difference with other teachers, both in education and in the path of access to training; they were seen as intruders of the regime in the educational system. The result of this was that Physical Education remained in the background, where it still stands nowadays.

However, without denying anything said before and being aware of the impossibility of making a fair assessment, due to the Women Section being the sole organization responsible for the education of Spanish women, it is necessary to acknowledge the work that they carried out. The Women Section could do no more, because no direct criticism was allowed. Its overall objective was to raise the cultural level of Spanish women, and it achieved remarkable results in spite of starting from a situation of general illiteracy and of forced confinement of women at home. Moreover, the Women Section was the only outlet for active, restless and independent women [37].

It is also necessary to recognize the work of Physical Education teachers who were responsible for female Physical Education. Those teachers promoted the practice of several sports, and acted as coaches, players, referees, and so on. This was not an easy task, because it took place in precarious working conditions, not only in terms of material resources but also in relation to salary (which was around 666 pesetas per month at best).

There is a revealing fact in regards to the acknowledgment of the work carried out by the Women Section: in the early forties no ordinary woman practiced sports, while 90,000 women practiced some kind of sport in 1970 [38].

Finally, the feminine archetype and the model of female Physical Education that was created during Franco's regime still carries influence nowadays. In this regard, it is striking to see the results of a survey conducted among high school students [39], which shows that boys and girls who did not even experience the transition period make statements such as “football is for boys” and “dance for girls”. Even more interesting to observe are the results in regards to sports practiced outside school: 88.8% of those students who play football are boys, while 97 % of those students who practice aerobics are girls. Future researches will examine the persistence of the feminine archetype and female Physical Education in our days, corroborating these statements, complementing them, or rejecting them.

7. Notes.

1. Correa, Guzmán y Aguaded, *La mujer invisible*, 54.
2. Cagigal, ‘Mujer y deporte’, 109.
3. Lucas Heras, ‘La Educación Física en el siglo XIX español’, 33-63.
4. González Ajá, ‘La política deportiva en España’, 169-202.
5. González Ajá, ‘Monje y soldado’, 64-83.
6. Ibid, 64-83.
7. Biescas y Tuñón de Lara, *Historia de España X*.
8. Payne, *El régimen de Franco*.
9. Biescas y Tuñón de Lara, *Historia de España X*.
10. Ballarín, *La educación de las mujeres*.
11. Granero, ‘Lo femenino y el feminismo’, 440.
12. De León, *La perfecta casada*.
13. *Colección de Encíclicas y Documentos Pontificios*, 1688-1692.
14. Sección Femenina, *Economía doméstica para bachillerato y magisterio*, 45-46.
15. Ballarín, *La educación de las mujeres*, 117.
16. Law of March 3, 1956.
17. De la Granda, ‘Los fundamentos biológicos’, 493.
18. Pastor i Homs, *La educación femenina en la postguerra*, 31.
19. Ballarín, *La educación de las mujeres*, 54.
20. Law of July 22, 1961.
21. Herrero, ‘Por la educación hacia la revolución’, 22.
22. Manrique et al., ‘Educación física y deportiva de género’.
23. Decree of April 19, 1937.
24. Decree of October 7, 1937.
25. Royal Decree of April 1, 1977.
26. Pastor i Homs, *La educación femenina en la postguerra*.
27. Decree of December 28, 1939.
28. Law of December 6, 1940.
29. Order of October 16, 1941.
30. Carbajosa, *Las profesoras de Educación Física en España*, 21.
31. ‘El Atletismo Femenino’ Correo de Mallorca.
32. Agosti, *Gimnasia Educativa*, 1974.
33. Zagalaz, ‘La educación física femenina’, 11-12.
34. Alted, ‘Las mujeres en la sociedad española de los años cuarenta’, 297-298.
35. Chaves, *Manual Escolar de Educación Física*, 23.
36. Manrique, ‘La Educación Física femenina y el ideal de mujer’, 96.
37. Zagalaz, ‘La educación física femenina’, 11.
38. Zagalaz, ‘La educación física femenina’, 15.
39. Blández, Fernández y Sierra, ‘Estereotipos de género’, 1-21.

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