

---

# THE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN TURKISH SPORTS WITH THE LAW NO 3530 (1938-1986)

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Uğur Abakay**  
*Gaziantep University*

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fikret Alincak**  
*Gaziantep University*

## **Introduction**

The dissemination of sports, which have a very important place in the lives of people and countries, and achieving success in the international arena depend, to a large extent, on the organization in this field. Because sports services and activities can only achieve their purpose in an efficient and productive manner by being properly organized in accordance with the conditions and structure (Ekenci and Seraslan 1997).

Sports and physical education have an important place in the cultures and processes of modernization of societies. When the Ottoman-Turkish society is examined, it is observed that it is a paternalistic society. In patriarchal societies like us, certain stereotypes, expectations, and norms have been formed for women and men within the social structure. A man is the army power of his family and state, he must be brave and have the characteristics of a warrior (Koçak et al. 2018).

When Turkey's history is examined, body politics gives us important clues about the modernization process. During the periods when sports activities were engaged with the concerns of the army power of the states, the founders of the late Ottoman and Republic developed the Physical Education policies with this concern (Akin, 2004).

The Ottoman Empire lagged far behind the West, thus it had to change in order to get rid of this difficult situation and eventually took steps to become Westernized. The modernization and westernization of the Ottoman Empire took place with the political reforms. During this period, reforms similar to those in the west were made in the fields of military, legal, education, literature as well as sports and physical education, and modern sports entered the country (Çelik, Bulgu, 2010,24). Previously, sports such as wrestling, marksmanship, horse-riding, archery and javelin came to the forefront with the support of the palace and sultans (Güven, 1996). Before the reforms were made, it is seen that sports were introduced as war training rather than an activity in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the places where sports training is provided are limited to military education and training institutions, educational institutions of the palace and lodges providing public education (Soyer, 2004,24). Although modern sports entered the country with the reforms, it is observed that the militarized perception of the body could not be left behind and the body was objectified and shaped in the state- monopoly (Koçak et al. 2018).

---

Numerous Ottoman sultans were interested in traditional sports themselves, and they also encouraged participation in these activities by means of rewards (Kahraman, 1995). However, faced with political, economic, military, and social issues, the Ottomans could not advance in the fields of sports and physical education either, and consequently, the sportive activities in Turkish territories fell behind those in the modern world (Ünver, 2004).

The aim of creating physically and mentally healthy generations was the rationale behind Atatürk's encouragement of the Turkish youth's participation in sports. It can be observed that this approach paved the way for a number of developments in the field of sports even before the foundation of the Republic. Following the foundation of the Republic, sports came under state supervision. Sports and physical education had four steps during the foundation years: The Period of Turkey Training Associations Alliance between 1922-1936. The Period of Turkish Sports Institution between 1936-1938 during which Turkey participated in international competitions for the first time. The Period of the General Directorate of Physical Education in 1938, Ministry of Youth and Sports after 1946. In this period, sports management took its current form (Fişek 1980). In this study, changes and developments in sport management concept of the Republic of Turkey with the Law No. 3530 will be discussed.

### **The Period of General Directorate of Physical Education (Law No. 3530)**

As is known, with the proclamation of the republic, this continues in order to fulfill the function of national spirit and national representation with the Turkey Training Community Alliance (TTCA) established in 1922 and then the Turkish Sports Association (TSA) established in 1936, and physical training and sport became a compulsory state policy with the Physical Education Law No. 3530 enacted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1938. This law required every needed individual to have the "physical education obligation" for the national defense and health (Bulut, 2007, ss. 125-126)

In the year of 1936, TTCA was transformed into the Turkish Sports Association, thus, the autonomous sports organization was centralized and affiliated to the Republican People's Party (Fişek, 1983; Akman and Meydan, 2018). Therefore, these years are the years in which the policies and politicians on physical education and sports activities were on the march. However, as Mustafa Kemal considered that partisanship in sports prevent the implementation of the desired objectives, the Turkish Sports Association abolished and the General Directorate of Physical Education was established. Major General Cemil Tahir was appointed as the director (Atabeyoğlu, 2001). Thus, the powers of the party on sports were taken and the state gained full control over sports. Physical education reached the desired level after the proclamation of the Republic and started to be implemented as a state policy. After the establishment of the GDPE (General Directorate

---

of Physical Education), all the federations that served until then were abolished, and new federations of athletics, football, wrestling (boxing, weightlifting), water sports, cycling (motorcycle), shooting, mountaineering, and winter sports were established. Tennis, handball, basketball, volleyball, and other branches fall into the remit of Sport Games Federation. Scouting Federation was incorporated into these federations in 1940 (Canşen, 2015; Akman, 2016).

World political conjuncture was reflected in Turkey more after the Second World War, and militarized physical training policies in various countries started to come into play in the Republic. For this reason, it was expected that young people, who were seen as the watchdogs of the regime, should be able to master military skills and knowledge that will help them fight against the potential war (Akın, 2004). During the period between two world wars, it was seen that the atmosphere and the idea that the wars are inevitable started to affect the Republic's body policies during the years of the General Directorate of Physical Education (GDPE). With the Physical Education Law enacted in 1938, the effective idea was that the youth can be prepared for war in the most effective and shortest way, directly disciplined by the state organization with the implementation of the "Physical Education Obligation." (Canşen, 2015).

This model of organization is similar to the model developed by the Nazis, it was accepted as a defense of the homeland preparing citizens by not imitating the systematic bodily movements for the military service, but by giving the abilities and elasticities to those who might become soldiers in the future. (Akın, 2004). The sport, far from being an individual activity, became a means of national struggle. The idea settled in the political field stating that all wars are inevitable, shaped the physical culture deeply with paramilitary tendencies. In the years when sports progressed on a military level, it can be seen that the body, especially the male body, was idealized and objectified by considering it as a soldier-citizen. All these models of physical education ended with the end of the Second World War and with the transition to multi-party system (Lüküslü, 2009).

Efforts to restructure the sports management in Turkey include the opinions on the election of the Federation presidents in the 1st Physical Education and Sports Council held in 1946, and "a draft law that will organize especially the organization of the General Directorate of Physical Education in a way that will develop Turkish sports and meet the current requirements, for the development and reorganization of Turkish sports," in the Sports Council held in 1961 (Karaküçük, 1999).

This sport organization established and affiliated with Prima Ministry in 1938 in which the state started to take control of the sport organized with the establishment of the General Directorate of Physical Education, was on various grounds affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in 1942, then to the Prime Ministry again in 1960, and

---

finally to the Ministry of Youth and Sports established in 1970 with the Presidential resolution. GDPE was later affiliated with the Ministry of National Education Youth and Sports, which was established in 1983 with the merge of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of National Education, and then the Prime Ministry again in 1989. In the meantime, Law No. 3530 was replaced by Law No. 3289 in 1986, and the name of the GDPE was changed to General Directorate of Physical Education and Sports (GDPEs). However, this name was changed again in 1989, to General Directorate of Youth and Sports (GDYS) (İmamoğlu 2010).

### **Conclusion**

In Turkey, the search for the management of sports has always been on an agenda since the first national organization of sports. The transition from an autonomous sports administration to the state authority and the fact that the institution representing sports administration is affiliated with another institution for different reasons is a clear indication of the search for a suitable management model.

The goal set with the foundation of the Republic of Turkey is to create a modern society. The Republic accepted science, art, and sports as important building blocks on the way to civilization. In order to realize the revolution rapidly, the education concept of the civilized world and their programs and practices in science, art, and sports were closely followed, educators and scientists from the west have been invited to the country, and the promising students of the young republic were sent to western countries for education.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk made significant moves that will develop the country in sports as well as the developments he made in many fields during the process that started with the proclamation of the Republic and lasted until the end of his life. The most important of these is the decision to establish the General Directorate of Physical Education which was established in 1938 and to carry out sports as a government policy. This decision is considered to be the most important decision on the organization and dissemination of sports in the country.

Although the General Directorate of Physical Education, which is regarded as the beginning of the period of sports management by the government, has been affiliated with various public institutions and organizations and has undergone name changes, it can be stated that its philosophy of sports management is still continuing.

### **References**

- Akın, Y (2004). *Gürbüz ve Yavuz Evlatlar, Erken Cumhuriyet'te Beden Terbiyesi ve Spor*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Akman, Ö. (2016). The Importance of Using Archive in Social Studies Education,

---

*Research Highlights in Education and Science*, Eğiten Pupliching, Editör:Wenxia Wu,Selahattin Alan, Mustafa Tevfik Hebecci, Basım sayısı:1, Sayfa Sayısı 173,ISBN:978-605-66950-0-1.

Akman, Ö. and Meydan A. (2018). 3 March 1924 Tevhid Tedrisat Law And Requirements. *Social, Educational, Political, Economic and Other Developments Occurred in Turkey between the Years of 1923-1938*, İres Pupliching, Editörler: Assoc.Prof.Dr. Özkan Akman Asst.Prof.Dr. Mustafa Murat ÇAY Asst. Prof .Dr. Fatih Bozbayındır, Basım sayısı:1,ISBN:978-605-81654-6-5.

Atabeyoğlu, C.(2001). Sporda Devlet mi? Devlette Spor mu?. Türkiye Milli Olimpiyat Komitesi Yayınları, 2001, s. 30. 24

Bulut, T. (2007). Cumhuriyet'in Bir Gençlik Projesi Olarak Kızılay Kampları. ÇTTAD, Cilt 6, Sayı 14, (s. 103-135).

Canşen E. (2015). Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Spor Politikaları. Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 17(1):33-48.

Çelik O.V., Bulgu N. (2010). Geç Osmanlı Döneminde Batılılaşma Ekseninde Beden Eğitimi ve Spor. Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 24;137-147

Ekenci G., Serarslan MZ. (1997). Gelişim Aşamaları Bakımından Türk Spor Teşkilatı ve Değerlendirmesi. Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi, 2(3):72-81.

Fişek K. (1980). Spor Yönetimi, A.Ü.S.B.F. Yayını, Ankara.

Fişek, K. (1983). Türkiye'de Spor. Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Güven Ö. (1996). Türkiye'de Cumhuriyet Döneminde Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Öğretmeni Yetiştiren Okulların Eğitimini Hazırlayıcı Çalışmalar. Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi, 7(2):70.82.

İmamoğlu A.F. (2010). Türkiye'de Sporun Yönetel Yapısı içinde Spor Federasyonları. Gazi Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi, 16(2), 3-10.

Kahraman A. (1995). Osmanlı Devleti'nde Spor. T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, Ankara.

Karaküçük, S. (1999). Cumhuriyet Döneminde Spor Şuraları, GSGM Yayını, Ankara.

Koçak N, Turan EB, Şahan H. (2018). Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Beden Terbiyesi, Spor Ve Militarizm. Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi, 11(57), 925-931.

---

Lüküslü, D. (2009). Türkiye’de “Gençlik Miti” 1980 Sonrası Türkiye Gençliği. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Soyer, F (2004). Osmanlı Devletinde (1839-1908 Tanzimat Dönemi) Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Alanındaki Kurumsal Yapılanmalar ve Okul Programlarındaki Yeri Konusunda Bir İnceleme. GÜ, Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 24 (1).

Ünver D. (2004). Atatürk ve Spor. BAL-TAM Türklük Bilgisi Dergisi, 1(1):167-172.