What Difference Does Gender Make? The Extreme Right in the ABC Countries in the Era of Fascism

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Youths bomb synagogues and assault workers in Buenos Aires. A green-shirted audience salutes its leader, a Paulista intellectual, who addresses the rapt crowd in quasi-mystical language. Uniformed men fire on police in an ill-fated attempt to topple the Chilean government.

Violence, imported traits from Europe, ideological devotion, anti-Semitism, and coups: these are common images of the extreme right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile in the 1930s and early 1940s. All are identified with men. Until recently, most scholars conflated the men in these images with the entire movements, taking their apparent maleness for granted. Thus they ignored the women who belonged to the extreme right, as well as the constructions of gender –male and female– that permeated it.[1]

Adding considerations of gender does not contradict the images, but it completes them. It enables us to paint a fuller picture of extreme right-wing groups, activities, and beliefs.[2] Inserting gender teaches us about aspects of these political organizations that might otherwise remain obscure, particularly when one employs this perspective in a comparative context. In this case, a gender analysis of radical right-wing movements in the Southern Cone in the 1930s and early 1940s reveals their adaptability, extent of popular mobilization, and ideological ambiguity, as well as larger differences among them. These are the themes of this article.

The period under study forms part of the era of fascism in Europe and, not coincidentally, these years also witnessed the growth of related groups in Latin America. The subjects of this article –the Chilean Movimiento Nacional Socialista (MNS, or Nacistas), Acção Integralista Brasileira (AIB, or Integralistas), and Argentine Nacionalistas possessed most of the fascist

traits enumerated by Stanley G. Payne. Significantly, for the purposes of this article, these include the "extreme stress on the masculine principle and male dominance."[3] Some scholars, however, have questioned whether the South American groups distinguished themselves sufficiently from Catholic conservatism to be genuinely fascist.[4] Thus I refer to them as extreme, radical, or far right, rather than fascist. The use of these terms does not suggest a single undifferentiated whole. While the three movements utilized gendered discourse, included men and women, and shared goals and ideas, such as an emphasis on masculinity, they differed in some respects. A gender analysis shows that one movement, the Argentine, was more conservative than the others.

In this article, I privilege "femininity" and women's roles over "masculinity" and men's roles. In part, I do so to counter the tendency in the literature to concentrate on the radical rightist activities constructed as male. Another reason is that spokespersons for these organizations referred far less to the presumed characteristics of the male gender than to those of the female. Perhaps the overwhelmingly male publicists deemed it unnecessary to dwell on what they considered obvious. Or they may have regarded the issue of women's place in society and in their movements as more timely, given the challenge of feminism and evolving female roles in all three countries. In contrast, men's leadership and activities inside and outside the home remained stable. Another possibility is that they were more preoccupied with controlling women than with examining their behavior.[5]

A common view is that extreme rightists, in Latin America as elsewhere, have adhered to an inflexible ideology that has changed little over time. Female participation in the extreme right calls this essentialist notion into question.[6] The cases of the Nacistas and Integralistas demonstrate that movements could change their ideas and practices in response to perceived opportunities.

The MNS arose in the chaos of the early 1930s, when the Depression hit Chile more severely than any other Western country. Economic disarray helped foster leftist revolts, military interference in politics, and numerous shortlived governments, including a brief socialist experiment.[7] In the midst of extreme political instability and bourgeois fear of leftism, the Nacistas emerged in 1932. They urged Chileans to regenerate the political system and create a strong government of order, hierarchy, and social justice that would unite the people and impose the national interest. At their height, they recruited about 20,000 adherents, slightly fewer than the Communist party. Most came from the middle to lower classes and from Chileans of German ancestry. Heavily influenced by German National Socialism, the MNS

nevertheless cultivated its own style of violence, mysticism, class conciliation, and anti-imperialism.[8]

This style seemed to exclude women. So, too, did Nacista constructions of masculinity and femininity. Bold, warlike, and muscular, men in the Nacista view supported and defended their families in the public space of work and the streets. Ideally, they also served as examples of rectitude, austerity, and Christian values for their wives and children. The movement was preparing the way for the rule of "the strongest and best gifted," who contrasted with the "flabby, pampered, capricious" bourgeois male; indeed, Nacistas would rid society of this subhuman. With their delicacy, sedentary nature, and bodies adapted to childbearing, women were suited for motherhood and domestic tasks. Raising and educating children was their duty, one which men could not perform. If one sex invaded the natural territory of the other or somehow failed to play its proper role, the species would weaken and die out. Feminism, Marxism, and women's entry into the work force were already "masculinizing" women (and, by implication, feminizing men), and political participation threatened to further remove women from their natural domain. Moreover, if women attained "male" rights, they would lose the advantages and courtesies they received as members of what Nacistas regarded as the "weaker sex." Yet the MNS frowned on political activities for men as well as women; it rejected electoral politics, which it regarded as corrupt and atomizing, in favor of an authoritarian corporatist system. By labelling itself as a movement rather than a party, it justified its own existence and left the door open for the recruitment of women, but initially it did not seek female members. In its early years, the movement was exclusively male, with a "virile and manly" outlook, as its leader, Jorge González von Marées, observed.[9]

Yet a contradiction soon appeared. The instability receded as Arturo Alessandri assumed the presidency in 1932, backed by the moderate right, and succeeded in taming the military. Chilean devotion to party politics reemerged, prompting the Nacistas' decision, in early January, 1935, to begin running candidates. Campaigning and occupying office would increase the movement's visibility and spread its ideas.[10] This was only a tactical maneuver, however, for the MNS continued to press for the end of liberal democracy.

This contradiction led to another. Women won the municipal vote in 1934, and Isabel Carrera de Reid, a contributor to the Nacista press, justified it by tying this measure to domesticity. Women fully deserved this type of suffrage, she wrote, since the city was the prolongation of the home and their problems were intertwined. The same year witnessed the rise of Acción Nacional de Mujeres, a group of Catholic aristocrats who hoped to inspire women to join the conservative side of the political spectrum. Its activities and the new

female electorate's preference for the right in the election of April, 1935, were not lost on the MNS. Seeing a potential base of support, Nacistas shifted their views on women, while pretending not to do so. They still insisted that women should not engage in electoral politics, but they called on women to participate in the Nacista type, whose concern for the general welfare supposedly distinguished it from the rest.[11]

In December, 1935, González von Marées declared that the MNS had decided to admit women in order to reflect the composition of the nation and respond to women's urging. It was only fitting that a spiritual and emotional movement include women, particularly since their membership had nothing to do with politics. They would not deliberate in assemblies or further their ambitions; in this regard, they would not differ from male Nacistas. As helping the poor was an "intuitive art," not a science, Nacista social programs, designed to win sympathy among workers, required female involvement. Participation in Nacismo would not entail the loss of femininity, for the woman would not compete with her male "comrade," unlike feminists, but would work alongside him as a "sister, wife, and mother." Her first duty was to "feminize herself" by cultivating her discretion, modesty, patience, delicacy, and feelings; the second was to help feminize impoverished women. Attracted by these appeals to the Marian virtues, women organized brigades in Valparaíso, Santiago, Puerto Montt, Valdivia, Concepción, and Temuco. At least several hundred women, probably of higher social rank than their male peers, became Nacistas.[12]

Brazilian Integralistas arose in 1932, the same year as the Nacistas, and in a similar context of instability. Organized two years after the Revolution of 1930, the AIB included about 200,000 adherents by 1937, making it the largest single organization of the three countries. European currents, particularly Italian Fascism, influenced it heavily. Its nationalism, anti-Communism, and adept use of mysticism and pageantry appealed to many members of the middle and even working classes. The Integralistas' belief in order, national unity, and a consistent ideology resonated in a country afflicted by regional conflicts and personalist rule.[13]

As was true for Nacistas, at least initially, Integralistas appeared to regard their organization as masculine in nature. The AIB magazine *Anauê!* declared "All Integralistas are young men". An Integralista student paper, *Quarta Humanidade,* warned that the movement "is not a girls' high school. It is a school of men, who want and are going to construct a great nation."[14] Like their Chilean counterparts, in theory Integralistas rejected liberal democratic politics and did not approve of female political participation. Their stance on liberal democracy, however, implied removing men from the political – although not the public– realm as well. Moreover, spokesmen avoided

explicitly excluding women, and by calling themselves a movement rather than a political party, Integralistas held out the possibility of female activism.

Circumstances convinced them to soften the stance on electoral politics. The depression, whose effects were less pronounced than in Chile, had weakened the legitimacy of the oligarchy and its liberalism. The Revolution of 1930 seemingly had swept away the stifling political structures of the Old Republic, and a new system awaited construction. The only parties existed at the state level and usually were vehicles for local elites and *caudilho* figures. In this political vacuum, new groups like the Integralistas and the leftist Aliança Nacional Libertadora found space to grow and aspire to power. Thus Integralista leaders decided to spread their message and attract recruits by campaigning for office, despite the hatred for partisan politics that they shared with Nacistas. Ironically, the AIB became the first nationally organized party in Brazil, and the first to court a popular following.

Reconciling their gender notions with political need even more easily than Nacistas, Integralistas adjusted their electoral strategy to include women. Decades of feminist struggle had culminated in the acquisition of the vote for women in 1932. Feminists successfully argued that suffrage would not remove women from their duties in the home, adding that it would signal modernity and help stabilize a country undergoing change. Conservatives and the Catholic church accepted this moderate position.[15] The fact that women could vote at all levels increased Integralista interest in mobilizing them.

Women joined the movement early in the AIB's history. By December, 1933, they organized a group in Teófilo Otoni, Minas Gerais. Feminine sections or departments arose in the federal district and São Paulo by June, 1934, and quickly spread throughout Brazil. By late 1936, perhaps 20 percent of the Integralistas were female, the largest contingent in the three countries.[16]

Women played a variety of roles in Integralismo. First and foremost, they were supposed to devote themselves to their families and raise Christian and patriotic children. Similar to Nacista women, they were to cultivate the "feminine" values of obedience, love, self-sacrifice, domesticity, purity, modesty, and spirituality. The AIB depended on them to spur their husbands and male relatives to greater efforts for the cause. It also expected them to fight materialism and immorality in society and the media. Their charity work heralded the class unity and compassion of the future Integralista order.[17] These roles closely approximated the usual duties of middle and upper-class women in the home and church.

They also participated in politics, however, and here they departed from the past. A few Integralista women ran for office, and one won a city council seat in São Paulo state. Interestingly, political campaigns entailed competition with men, which diverged from the radical rightist doctrine of separate

spheres and nonconflicting complementary roles for men and women. AIB spokespersons did not address this apparent contradiction. Preparing for the presidential campaign of 1937, women taught potential voters to read, for only the literate could vote, and helped them register. The AIB estimated that women cast 6 percent of the ballots in the internal plebiscite that overwhelmingly chose its head, Plínio Salgado, as the movement's presidential candidate. Had all women voted, however, the figure would have been about 20 percent, suggesting that most Integralista women were reluctant to exercise their new rights. Lest even these limited roles grant women too much autonomy, Salgado reminded them that voting was outmoded and useless. His statement indicated that the decision to play politics – and involve women in it– was opportunistic.[18]

Integralista spokespersons justified female political participation by relating it to conservative notions of femininity. Dr. Irene de Freitas Henriques, secretary of the AIB national department of women and children (whom, significantly, the organization grouped together), predicted that if women did not enter politics, Communism would destroy the family and, along with it, love and affection, solidarity, comfort, and the entire basis of happiness. Humans would revert to an animal-like existence, which was the Communists' aim. As the base of the family, women bore a responsibility to preserve it. Accordingly, Henriques invited them to enter the AIB's brand of politics, but to abstain from the low form of politics that sullied female purity, presumably referring to what Integralistas regarded as the libertine left and the divisive and corrupt center. Joining the AIB would merely extend women's customary duty as the "great watchperson of the virtues of the home," according to Salgado's wife, Carmela. Similar to González von Marées's justification of female membership in Nacismo, Plínio Salgado observed that the AIB wanted to fulfil its aesthetic conception of life by creating a work of moral, spiritual, political, and economic beauty. He believed that their instinctive artistic sense of harmony made women suited for participation in this cause and the movement.[19] This backward-looking view of women nevertheless accommodated the expansion of female roles.

Like their peers, the Argentine Nacionalistas also arose in a time of economic and political crisis. They originated in the late 1920s as a reaction against the middle-class democratic party, the Unión Cívica Radical, which ruled from 1916 to 1930. Many younger members of the former oligarchy, which had presided over Argentina before the Radical era, interpreted democracy to mean their exclusion from power. Not surprisingly, they embraced authoritarian ideas of European origin, including those of the French counterrevolution, integral Catholicism, and Italian Fascism. Others of less august class origins joined them. Nacionalistas, as they called

themselves, formed various organizations divided by personality, ambition, and minor political differences. Membership in these groups overlapped, however, as did their allegiance to a corporatist state and their hatred for liberals, leftists, democrats, immigrants, and Jews. Thus, despite the divisions, one can speak of a Nacionalista movement.

Although the effect of the depression was less marked than in Brazil and especially Chile, it nonetheless destabilized the Radical government. Nacionalistas influenced the military coup that toppled President Hipólito Yrigoyen (1916-22, 1928-30) and ended democracy in 1930, as well as the regime it installed, that of General José F. Uriburu (1930-2). Uriburu's corporatist experiment failed and gave way to the rule of oligarchical conservative parties, allied in the Concordancia. Fearful that voters would choose the Radicals, the Concordancia perpetuated itself in office through fraudulent elections. Nacionalistas plotted against the Concordancia while agitating to gain influence within one of its components, the Partido Demócrata Nacional. They also spread their views within the miltary and the Catholic church.[20]

Nacionalistas demonstrated less interest than the other movements in mobilizing women. They, too, defined their course of action in terms of masculinity. For example, the most important organization of the late 1930s, the Alianza de la Juventud Nacionalista, regarded its tasks as a "manly crusade." *El Pampero,* a nationalist newspaper, took its name from a breeze that swept the pampas: "an old wind / but a young, macho wind!"[21] Belonging in their separate domestic sphere, according to Nacionalistas, women did not seem to fit into a cause constructed as male.

As Nacistas and Integralistas had originally, Nacionalistas opposed participation in partisan politics and voting. They saw female involvement as even more harmful than male. In 1927, women in the province of San Juan achieved the right to vote in municipal and provincial elections. This prompted Nacionalista Juan E. Carulla to disagree with those who thought that women, being inherently conservative, would counter the ill effects of male suffrage. Women were conservative only in their own sphere, he claimed. Outside the home, they were more likely than men to fall into moral decay, as they were doing in San Juan by voting for Radicals and attending political functions.[22]

In the 1930s most Nacionalistas continued to oppose female suffrage. The Uriburu regime of 1930-32 suspended the women's vote in San Juan, and the Nacionalista newspaper *Bandera Argentina* considered the entire issue an "insanity". Able to perpetuate themselves in power without the assistance of new electoral groups, the ruling conservatives, once seemingly sympathetic to the notion of female suffrage, joined their more extreme cousins in opposing

it. Trying to assuage the Nacionalista-influenced climate of hostility, the most prominent feminist organization of the early 1930s, the Asociación Argentina del Sufragio Femenino, asked Congress in 1932 to give the vote only to Argentine-born women who were literate, mature and capable. At least one Nacionalista woman agreed. Speaking on Nacionalista radio in the same year, Isabel Giménez Bustamante, an aristocrat and future member of the Asociación Nacionalista de Estudiantes Secundarios, advocated the vote for the literate, native-born woman, who wanted to "elect her rulers, conserve her religion, defend her home, educate her children." She did not win over Nacionalista or Concordancia men to her view, and women did not achieve suffrage till 1947.[23]

Since women could not vote at any level, Nacionalistas had little reason to mobilize them. Moreover, the difficulty of entering a system of a few relatively long-lasting parties, along with the prevailing fraud, kept most Nacionalistas from participating in the electoral arena. Under these conditions, unlike those in Chile and Brazil, most male Nacionalistas retained the belief that women should not involve themselves in politics.

Nevertheless, some women joined Nacionalismo. They formed their own sections within such groups as the Legión Cívica Argentina, Fascismo Argentino, Asociación Nacionalista de Estudiantes Secundarios, and the Unión Nacionalista Santafesina. They also created a few small independent organizations, such as the Asociación de Damas Argentinas "Hogar y Patria," Comisión de Damas de la Junta de Recuperación de las Malvinas, and the Comisión Femenina Pro Homenaje a los Héroes de la Reconquista de Buenos Aires. Members of these groups carried out charitable work and hosted ceremonies commemorating figures and events that nacionalistas held dear. A movement dedicated to military conspiracies, ideological writings, and assaults on Jews, leftists, and Radicals, however, marginalized these activities and their sponsors.[24]

Aside from the viability of an electoral strategy, there were other reasons why Integralistas and Nacistas bent their views and paid attention to women. The large number of women in Integralismo, for example, related to its aim of creating a total way of life for its adherents. Exhaustively described in its publications, intricate rituals and symbols played a more critical role in the AIB than in Nacismo or Nacionalismo. Integralista men and women wore uniforms (as did Nacistas and some Nacionalistas) and greeted each other with the fascist salute and an *anauê,* a word supposedly derived from the indigenous Tupi language. Distinctive ceremonies marked the rites of passage in an Integralista's life. The movement celebrated the baptisms and birthdays of Integralista children, the graduation of Integralistas from the university, and the marriages and deaths of Integralistas. It had its own social gatherings

and charities for impoverished Integralista families. Over a hundred periodicals supplied members with the AIB's view of the world, including articles written by and directed towards women. Symbols reached into the home, as the AIB provided large round plastic pictures of Plínio Salgado for attachment to tabletops and walls.[25] The creation of an all-encompassing lifestyle, which made participation exciting and meaningful to many who were new to politics, required female involvement. Women took part in the rites, organized many of the social and charitable activities, bore and educated the children to be inducted into the movement, and disseminated Integralista symbols and ideas in the home. A way of life could not be total without both genders. Nor could this attempt to mobilize a broad popular base –the most ambitious of the three movements– succeed without female participation.

Radical rightist constructions of femininity, which focused on domestic virtues, drew upon the past. It is unclear whether radical rightist constructions of masculinity, emphasizing violence, strength, heroism, virility, and control over women, did as well. The dearth of studies on this topic makes it difficult to determine what the customary notions of masculinity were.[26] That the extreme right sharply distinguished manhood from womanhood, however, is evident.

Maintaining gender distinctions would guarantee stability. The Argentine Nacionalista, Santiago Ferla, declared that his comrades wanted "a strong, audacious man – 'man!' and a delicate, conciliating woman – 'woman!'". This strong man was a husband and father, and he ruled over his wife and children, for all the movements honored hierarchy within the family. A gendered hierarchy prevailed within the radical rightist organizations as well. The supreme leaders were men, and the Argentine and Chilean *jefes* picked men to command or "advise" the female section of the Legión Cívica Argentina and the Santiago female brigade of the MNS, respectively. According to extreme rightist spokespersons, the family structure ideally characterized other areas of society. Salgado noted that the family represented a synthesis of the state, classes, nation, and humanity, and thus expressed the reality of the wider world. In this microcosm, the "Large National Family" found "the secret of its lineage and structure, the principle of solidarity, the essence of authority, of harmony of movements." Integralistas would base their state on this "small humanity." For the three movements, orderly relations within the family and between the sexes meant order within society.[27]

This notion of the nation as the bourgeois family writ large offered clear evidence of the extreme right's conservative side. Such pronouncements on gender and the family fit alongside the movements' devotion to private

property, antagonism towards labor unions and the left, and provisional alliances with moderate rightists. At times, spokespersons admitted that these characteristics placed them in the right, although they insisted they were not reactionaries.[28]

Yet nationalists, Nacistas, and Integralistas usually claimed they did not fit in the customary categories of left and right. They offered a dual message of traditionalism and radicalism, and this ideological ambiguity maximized their appeal among different social sectors. Thus, these groups also formulated an alternative to the left which, they asserted, placed them in the vanguard. Theirs, they insisted, was a revolutionary project of the twentieth century. In contrast, the left had originated in the previous century and was outmoded. The screaming rhetoric, militarized style, and emphasis on youth, masculinity, and pageantry formed part of this alternative, as did their violent forays against workers and leftists. Welfare policies for the poor and the establishment of a corporatist state, in their view, would create social peace, and this superceded class warfare. Furthermore, the notion of the struggle of proletarian against capitalist nations substituted for that of proletarians against capitalists within each nation.[29] Opposition to nefast international economic forces, which radical rightists often characterized as Jewish, also replaced notions of class conflict. Ideologues of the extreme right claimed to be bitter enemies of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, which they defined, respectively, as an economic system ruled by greed and materialism, and those upholding these values. Divesting these terms of class content made their opposition possible.

Gender permeated this alternative to the left. Clearly, masculine traits and combative activities shaped rightist radicalism. Yet this revolutionary project was not exclusively male. The extreme right's notions about women and the roles women played in the movements sometimes defied convention. Moreover, Integralistas and Nacistas attempted to appropriate feminism.

In Chile, the main exponent of feminism in the 1930s and 1940s was the Movimiento Pro Emancipación de Mujeres de Chile (MEMCH). From its founding in 1935, its several thousand members struggled for the political, legal, and economic equality of women, the use of contraceptives, and, in general, the implementation of a leftist program.[30] Not surprisingly, these stances antagonized Nacismo, which declared itself the enemy of feminism.

Once Nacistas decied to recruit women, however, they shifted their stance. *Trabajo,* the Nacista newspaper of Santiago, now asserted that the MNS engaged in "feminist politics." Granted, its feminism did not involve altering traditions imposed by nature or converting women into men. Spiritual rather than demagogic, Nacista feminism entailed restoring women's exalted position in the household and ensuring that men respected their role. This

conservative definition of feminism clashed with that of MEMCH, but the use of the term was significant.[31] It suggested that Nacistas were claiming an alternative feminism, one that fit within their larger alternative to the left.

Some AIB spokespersons criticized feminism. Several writers denounced it as a false and outmoded doctrine that obscured the "natural" differences between the sexes, despite the moderation of most members of the Brazilian women's movement. Nilza Perez, editor of the female section of the Integralista magazine *Anauê!,* regarded feminism as a Communist tool dividing the people at a time when they needed to unite forces against the red threat.[32]

Rather than completely reject feminism, however, Integralistas usually preferred to qualify it. Dr. Dario Bittencourt, head of the AIB in the southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul, believed that there were different kinds of feminism. The socialist variety, which destroyed the family and promoted immorality, was repugnant, but Integralistas could embrace a Christian feminism that accepted the distinct natures, duties, and rights of men and women. *Anauê!,* the movement's mass-oriented magazine, lauded the "true feminism, Christian and Brazilian," of female Integralistas. The AIB approved of what it called the "Brazilian feminism" of Rosalina Coelho Lisboa, a writer and frequent speaker at Integralista rallies, who combined strident anti-Communism and authoritarianism with a belief in female equality. To stimulate a "rational feminism" was a goal of *Brasil Feminino,* an AIB mouthpiece that favored expanding their political and civil rights without removing women from the home. The magazine's desire for order and hierarchy in the domestic sphere, as indicated by its approval of the fact that married women did not enjoy as many liberties as widows or single women, did not contradict its gender views. The Integralistas' piety, anti-individualism, and distinctions between married and unmarried women separated their interpretation of feminism from that of the Federação Brasileira pelo Progresso Feminino, the principal suffragist organization. These views, along with their anti-leftism, also distinguished Integralistas from the Aliança Nacional Libertadora, which included women.[33] Like Nacistas, Integralistas employed the term feminism while tampering with its meaning, although they stretched the definition further than the Chileans. They, too, set up their version of feminism to compete with the moderate and leftist types.

Integralistas and Nacistas challenged prevailing notions of womanhood by incorporating women into their militarized style of politics to some extent, therby permitting them limited entry into the male sphere of heroism and combat. *Trabajo,* for example, referred to female Nacistas in martial terms as "the falanges of future mothers of the Nacista state" and "the soldiers" or

"legions" of the Nacistas' "spiritual crusade." Their use of uniforms may have seemed mannish to many Chileans, even though the gray-shirted women donned skirts instead of trousers. In November, 1936, uniformed Nacista women marched in the funeral procession of a young martyr of the movement, Raúl Lefevre Molina, joining the men in raising their arms in the fascist salute. Forestalling possible criticism of this female intrusion into public space, an anonymous female Nacista wrote that the sacrifice of a comrade had wounded their delicate hearts, compelling them to share the pain of Lefevre's parents. She insisted that onlookers exclaimed over their uniforms, which the women wore with elegance, "natural coquetry," and a certain arrogance — the last not being a usual component of femininity. She also praised them for an instinctive knowledge of how to step in time.[34] The MNS's attempt to reconcile gender conservatism with participation in a militarized movement seemed somewhat forced.

On one occasion in Brazil, women were even involved in an armed encounter between left and right. Integralismo had not hidden its aggressive intentions against workers and leftists, who organized to fight it. When the AIB announced a march in October, 1934, to the Praça da Sé in downtown São Paulo, where it would hold a rally, a Communist-led group of activists defiantly invited the public to a simultaneous counter-gathering in the same square. Most observers expected a confrontation. The first to arrive in the Praça were uniformed members of the newly formed feminine department of the AIB, who took up positions on the top steps of the cathedral. Leftists regarded this self-styled "honor guard" as a cowardly means of protecting Salgado and other leaders, who were supposed to stand directly in front of it once they arrived in the parade. Whether this was the Integralistas' intent, however, was unclear. The leftists shouted anti-AIB slogans at the women, and shooting broke out between the former and hundreds of policemen and civil guardsmen. Several grenades exploded. In the midst of the fighting, the female Integralistas lifted their arms in the salute, sang the national anthem, and stood their ground to the applause of the crowd, including non-Integralistas. The gunfire ended, but it resumed when the marchers entered the plaza, resulting in six deaths and over thirty other casualties.[35] Here, conservative gender notions did not prevent women from taking part in the violent side of Integralismo.

Again, the difference between Integralismo and Nacismo, on the one hand, and Nacionalismo, on the other, is instructive. The Brazilian and Chilean movements attempted to cultivate a broad following through radical appeals earlier (and, in the AIB's case, more successfully) than the more oligarchical Nacionalistas did. Until the second half of the decade, the Argentines offered more of a single reactionary message than a dual and ambiguous one. In

keeping with their less radical nature, the Nacionalistas did not appropriate feminist language, nor did their female members appear in violent forays or in military uniform. The only example I found of female dress resembling a uniform was that of the Unión Nacionalista Santafesina, a provincial group of the late 1930s and early 1940s. A photograph of its female section revealed a group of young women clad in full white aprons. While it fulfilled some of the purposes of a military uniform, such as concealing class distinctions and imposing unity, this type of clothing tied women to their habitual duties in the home. It also evoked women's roles in schools, where female students and teachers since the late nineteenth century had worn a similar costume.[36] As such, the Nacionalista women in apron contrasted with the gray-shirted female Nacistas and green-shirted female Integralistas, who partook of the broader movement's militarized style.

Uniformed women in the Brazilian and Chilean groups conducted other activities in public spaces. Female Nacistas participated in predominantly male rallies. Breaking with custom, sometimes they travelled away from home to do so, as when several hundred from different areas marched in a parade of 7000 Nacistas in Concepción, in December, 1936.[37]

Integralista women held their own congresses. The female congress of October, 1936, in the federal district, drew representatives from at least eleven states, and another in Petrópolis, in June, 1937, attracted delegates from the federal capital and the state of Rio de Janeiro. At these proceedings –opened and closed by men– women leaders acquainted their female listeners with details of administrative functions and a variety of other topics. These gatherings provided opportunities for women from different areas to mingle with each other, exchange ideas, present speeches to large audiences, and aspire toward leadership. The fact that many women travelled long distances from their homes to attend the congress of 1936, which lasted several days, again departed from tradition.[38]

What, then, does the study of gender reveal about the extreme right in the ABC countries in the early 1930s and 1940s? Nacista and Integralista mobilization of and shifting discourses on women demonstrate these groups' willingness to alter their ideologies in response to perceived electoral opportunities. Their participation in electoral campaigns offers further evidence of flexibility, if not opportunism. The Integralistas' enthusiasm for recruiting women sheds light on their effort to attract new members of the electorate through the creation of a unique way of life. The extreme right's binary constructions of masculinity and femininity, and the roles women and men generally played in the movements, call attention to its conservative side. Nevertheless, the extreme right also formulated an alternative to the left, including feminism, as evinced in Integralista and Nacista rhetoric and

practice, which helped these two organizations mobilize a popular base. Thus the study of gender helps one perceive the far right's dual message, rightist yet radical. Finally, a gender focus reveals the differences among groups of the extreme right, particularly the relative conservatism of Argentine Nacionalismo compared to Brazilian Integralismo and Chilean Nacismo.

NOTES

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1. The earliest works on Latin America to question such assumptions were María de los Ángeles Crummett, "El Poder Femenino: The Mobilization of Women Against Socialism in Chile," *Latin American Perspectives*, 4:4 (Fall 1977), 103-113; and Michelle Mattelart, "Chile: The Feminine Side of the Coup, or When Bourgeois Women Take to the Streets," *NACLA's Latin America and Empire Report*, 9:6 (Sept. 1975), 14-25. Both described women's roles in the overthrow of Salvador Allende.
2. For Latin America see Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Counterrevolution in Argentina, 1900-1932: The Argentine Patriotic League* (Lincoln, 1986); "The Visible and Invisible Liga Patriótica Argentina, 1919-1928: Gender Roles and the Right Wing," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 64:2 (May 1984), 233-58; Margaret MacDonald Power, "Gender, The Right, and Anti-Democratic Politics in Chile 1964-1973" (Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Illinois-Chicago, 1996); María Elena Valenzuela, *La mujer en el Chile militar* (Santiago, 1987). For Europe and the United States see Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991); Victoria de Grazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922-1945* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1992); Glen Jeansonne, *Women of the Far Right: The Mothers' Movement and World War II* (Chicago, 1996); Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family and Nazi Politics* (New York, 1986); Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York, 1994); George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison, 1985); Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, 2 vols. (Minneapolis, 1987, 1989).
3. Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Madison, 1980), 7; also see 12-13.
4. Opposition to conservatism was one of Payne's criteria, yet he recognized that fascists sometimes allied themselves with this tendency. According to Payne, the "specific espousal of an idealist, voluntarist creed, normally involving the attempt to realize a new form of modern, self-determined, secular culture," characterizes fascism. However, his use of the term "normally" suggests there were some exceptions. Indeed, he described the devoutly Catholic Spanish Falange and Orthodox Romanian Iron Guard as fascistic. Other historians have also noted the participation of fervent Catholics in Italian Fascism and other European fascist movements. See Payne, 149-50; and Martin Blinkhorn, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives* (London, 1990).
5. As was the case for U.S. Klansmen; see MacLean, *Behind the Mask*, 114. Susan K. Besse noted the primacy of women's issues in early twentieth-century Brazil, in *Restructuring Patriarchy in Brazil, 1914-1940: The Modernization of Gender Inequality* (Chapel Hill, 1996). I offer much more detail on men (and women) in *Las derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939* (in progress).

6. On essentialism and the right, see Roger Eatwell, "The Nature of the Right, 1: Is There an 'Essentialist' Philosophical Core?," 47-61, and "The Nature of the Right, 2: The Right as a Variety of 'Styles of Thought'," 62-76, in Roger Eatwell and Nöel O'Sullivan, eds., *The Nature of the Right: American and European Politics and Political Thought Since 1789* (Boston, 1990).
7. Paul Drake, "Chile, 1930-1958", in Leslie Bethell, ed., *Chile since Independence* (Cambridge, 1993), 93-6.
8. On Nacismo see Michael Potashnik, "Nacismo: National Socialism in Chile, 1932-1938" (Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1974); Mario Sznajder, "A Case of Non-European Fascism: Chilean National Socialism in the 1930s," *Journal of Contemporary History,* 28:2 (April 1993), 269-96; Jaime Antonio Etchepare and Hamish I. Stewart, "Nazism in Chile: A Particular Type of fascism in South America," *Journal of Contemporary History,* 30 (1995), 577-605. Also see Biblioteca Nacista No. 1, *El movimiento nacional-socialista de Chile (M.N.S.). Declaraciones Fundamentales. Plan de acción–organización–programa* (Santiago, 1932).
9. *Trabajo,* 10 Aug. 1933, 3, 8 Feb. 1934, 3, 14 Mar. 1935, 5, 25 Apr. 1936, 2, 10 June 1936, 6, 16 July 1936, 10; *Acción Chilena,* 1: 12 (Apr. 12, 1934), 355, 4:2 (1935), 78, 129, 5:1 (1936), 51-3. German Nazis made similar statements about female and male natures and separate gender spheres. Emphasizing that their movement was masculine, initially they made no attempt to recruit women. See Koonz, *Mothers,* 56-60, 86, 189, 201, 218. The Germans differed from the South Americans, however, in their biological and racial focus, which made them willing to tamper with sexual mores, and in their crudeness. See Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945* (Cambridge, 1991), esp. 242-66.
10. *Trabajo,* 3 Jan. 1935, 1.
11. Carrera de Reid, in *El Rayo,* 3 Apr. 1935, 1; *Trabajo,* 14 Dec. 1935, 3; *Consigna,* 23 June 1934, 2, 5; *El Mercurio,* 4 June 1934, 3, 9; Edda Gaviola A., *et al., Queremos votar en las próximas elecciones: Historia del movimiento femenino chileno, 1913-1952* (Santiago, 1986), 60-1; Asunción Lavrin, *Women, Feminism, and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, 1890-1940* (Lincoln, 1995), 305-6, 313; Acción Nacional de Mujeres de Chile, *Reportaje a la Señora Presidenta de la Acción Nacional de Mujeres de Chile, Doña Adela Edwards de Salas* (Santiago, n.d.). I thank Asunción Lavrin for the last source.
12. *Trabajo,* 16 Nov. 1935, 1, 11 Dec. 1935, 3, 21 Dec. 1935, 2, 3, 21 Mar. 1936, 2, 17 Apr. 1936, 6, 22 Apr. 1936, 2, 13 Aug. 1937, 3; *Acción Chilena,* 4:3 (1935), VI, 5:2 (1936), 119; Jorge González von Marées, *Pueblo y estado* (Santiago, 1936), 12; Potashnik, "Nacismo," 244. On Marianismo and the cult of motherhood and female virtues in Latin America, see Evelyn P. Stevens, "Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo," in Ann Pescatello, ed., *Female and Male in Latin America: Essays* (Pittsburgh, 1973), 90-101.
13. On the AIB see Hélgio Trindade, *Integralismo (O fascismo brasileiro na década de 30* (São Paulo: Difel, 1974); Elmer R. Broxson, "Plínio Salgado and Brazilian Integralism, 1932-1938" (Ph.D. Diss., Catholic University, 1972). There may have been as many Nacionalistas as there were Integralistas, but the Argentines belonged to various organizations.
14. *Anauê!,* No. 2 (May 1935), cover; *Quarta Humanidade,* 7 Sept. 1935, 4.
15. June Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex: The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940* (Durham, 1990), 144-61; Besse, *Restructuring,* 174-8.
16. *Fon Fon,* 30 Dec. 1933, 36; *A Offensiva,* 24 May 1934, 8, 28 June 1934, 1; Hélgio Trindade, "Interview with Margarida Corbisier," MS, 1969-70, 3; figure in Broxson, "Salgado," 197. I thank Trindade for sharing this interview.
17. *Monitor Integralista,* 4:16 (5 Dec. 1936), 5-6; *Anauê!,* No. 22 (Dec. 1937), 32-33.
18. *A Offensiva,* 17 Oct. 1936, 5, 1 May 1937, 1, 2, 17 Jan. 1937, 13, 12 June 1937, 1; *Acção,* 7 Oct. 1937, 13; *Brasil Feminino,* No. 36 (June 1937), 25.
19. *Província de Guanabara,* 19 Apr. 1937, 2; *A Offensiva,* 11 Oct. 1936, 15; *Brasil Feminino,* No.

38 (Nov. 1937), 21. Klansmen also feared Communism would destroy the family; see Maclean, *Behind the Mask,* 117-8.

20. On Nacionalismo see Deutsch, *Counterrevolution;* Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart, eds., *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1993); Marysa Navarro Gerassi, *Los nacionalistas,* trans. by Alberto Ciria (Buenos Aires: Jorge Álvarez, 1968); David Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina: The Nationalist Movement, Its History and Its Impact* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1993); Enrique Zuleta Álvarez, *El nacionalismo argentino,* 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Ediciones la Bastilla, 1975).
21. Alianza de la Juventud Nacionalista, *Postulados de nuestra lucha* (Buenos Aires, n.d.); *El Pampero,* 4 Nov. 1939, 7.
22. *La Nueva República,* 1:12 (Apr. 28, 1928), 1.
23. *Bandera Argentina,* 7 July 1938, 1; *La Fronda,* 5 Aug. 1932, 6; Elsa Chaney, *Supermadre: Women in Politics in Latin America* (Austin, 1979), 169. On the women's cause in the 1930s see Marifran Carlson, *¡Feminismo! The Women's Movement in Argentina from Its Beginnings to Evita Perón* (Chicago, 1986), 169-80; Lavrin, *Women,* 278-85. See Miguel J. Font, ed., *La mujer: Encuesta feminista argentina. Hacia la formación de una Liga Feminista Sudamericana* (Buenos Aires, 1921), for indications of earlier support for women's suffrage across the political spectrum.
24. These groups were mentioned sporadically in the Nacionalista press, especially *Bandera Argentina, La Fronda,* and *Crisol.*
25. *Fon Fon* (Nov. 4, 1933), 62, (Dec. 28, 1935), 36; *Anauê!,* No. 20 (Oct. 1937), 9; *Acção,* 4 Dec. 1936, 3; *A Offfensiva,* 16 July 1937, 7; round picture in Integralismo File, Arquivo Leuenroth, IFCH/UNICAMP, Campinas, São Paulo; number of periodicals in Plínio Salgado to Getúlio Vargas, AAP 38 . 01. 28, Serie ANL/AIB, Augusto do Amaral Peixoto Archive, Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporánea do Brasil da Fundação Getúlio Vargas (CPDOC/FGV), Rio de Janeiro.
26. For the colonial period, see Cheryl English Martin, *Governance and Society in Colonial Mexico: Chihuahua in the Eighteenth Century* (Stanford, 1996); Steve J. Stern, *The Secret History of Gender: Women, Men, and Power in Late Colonial Mexico* (Chapel Hill, 1995); Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, 1991). For the post-independence era, two authors have described the gauchos' cult of masculinity. See Richard Slatta, *Gauchos & the Vanishing Frontier* (Lincoln, 1983); and John Chasteen, "Violence for Show: Knife Dueling on a Nineteenth-Century Cattle Frontier," in Lyman L. Johnson, ed., *The Problem of Order in Changing Societies: Essays on Crime and Policing in Argentina and Uruguay, 1750-1940* (Albuquerque, 1990), 47-64.
    Klansmen defined their masculinity in a similar fashion; see Blee, *Women of the Klan,* 44.
27. Klansmen agreed; see MacLean, *Behind the mask,* 100, 113. Also see Salvador Ferla, *Doctrina del nacionalismo* (Buenos Aires, 1947), 49-50; *La Fronda,* 11 Aug. 1931; *Trabajo,* 22 Feb. 1936, 3, 29 Apr. 1936, 6, 6 Aug. 1936, 7; *Jota,* 1:1 (Sept. 18, 1937), 3; Salgado in *A Offensiva,* 17 Jan. 1935, 1; Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review,* 91:5 (Dec., 1986), 1053-1075.
28. See, for example, *Acção,* 18 Jan. 1937, 4.
29. Miguel Reale, *Obras políticas (primera fase – 1931/1937),* 3 vols. (Brasília, 1983), 2: 87, 115. Also see Enrico Corradini, "The Proletarian Nations and Nationalism," in Adrian Lyttelton, ed., *Italian Fascisms from Pareto to Gentile* (London, 1973), 149-51; Abraham Ascher and Guenter Lewy, "National Bolshevism in Weimar Germany: Alliance of Political Extremes Against Democracy," *Social Research,* 23:4 (1956), 458-60.
30. *MEMCH: Antología para una historia del movimiento femenino en Chile* (Santiago, 1982); Corinne Antezana-Pernet, "Fighting for Their Welfare: Grassroots Activism in the Movimiento Pro Emancipación de la Mujer Chilena (MEMCH), 1937-1949," paper

presented at the American Historical Association meeting, New York, Jan. 1997; Lavrin, *Women,* esp. 310-12.

31. *Trabajo,* 17 Apr. 1936, 6. Italian fascists formulated "Latin feminism", emphasizing family, charity, reverence for tradition, and some cultural pursuits. See De Grazia, *How Fascism,* 236-271. The Ku Klux Klan supported legal and political rights for white Protestant women in the United States –male Klan members somewhat opportunistically, female members more unreservedly. Women of the Klan, however, distinguished themselves from what they regarded as extreme feminists by not favoring full equality with men. See Blee, *Women,* 49-50, 52, 55-7.
32. *Enciclopédia do Integralismo: Estudos e depoimentos,* 9 vols. (Rio de Janeiro, 1958-9), 9: 56, 67-8; *A Offensiva,* 11 Oct. 1936, 15, 17 Oct. 1936, 4; Perez in *Anauê!,* No. 19 (Sept. 1937), 58.
33. Bittencourt in *A Offensiva,* 17 Jan. 1937, 13; *Anauê!,* No. 4 (Oct. 1935), 29; on Lisboa see Custodio de Viveiros, *Os inimigos do Sigma* (Rio de Janeiro, 1936), 79-80; *Brasil Feminino,* No. 36 (June 1937), 22, 46, No. 38 (Nov. 1937), 1, 8; Hahner, *Emancipating,* 134, 149, 155, 168-9, 175; Robert M. Levine, *The Vargas Regime: The Critical Years, 1934-1938* (New York, 1970), 75. A voice of conservative feminism, *Brasil Feminino* became Integralista in 1937, when its founder and editor, Iveta Ribeiro, joined the movement.
34. *Trabajo,* 14 Dec. 1935, 3, 17 Apr. 1936, 6; 6 Nov. 1936, 6. Jack Cassin-Scott and Angus McBride, in *Women at War, 1939-45* (London, 1980), 15, 18, documented resistance to women in uniform in wartime Britain and the U.S. An Italian Fascist leader downplayed the military connotation of young Fascist women's uniforms and emphasized their attractiveness, in De Grazia, *How Fascism,* 147-8.
35. On this incident see Eduardo Maffei, *A batalha da Praça da Sé* (Rio de Janeiro, 1984); *Correio da Manhã,* 7 Oct. 1934, 5, 9 Oct. 1934, 1, 3; *A Offensiva,* 11 Oct. 1934, 1, 5, 7, 8, 22 Nov. 1934, 1; *A Platéia,* 5-6, 8-9 Oct. 1934.
36. *Crisol,* 21 Dec. 1941, 3. I thank Ana María Kapelusz-Poppi for the observation on school uniforms.
37. *Trabajo,* 9 Dec. 1936, 1, 10 Dec. 1936, 7.
38. *A Offensiva,* 3 Oct. 1936, 1, 16-18 Oct. 1936, 25 June 1937, 1.