# Gender and Nationalism: Women's Roles in Twentieth-Century Spain

An Interdisciplinary Thesis

by

Katja Zengel

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts with Specialized Honors in Spanish and Women's and Gender Studies

December 2023

**Abstract**

This thesis compares the social and political positions of Spanish women during the Second Spanish Republic (1931-1939) and Francisco Franco's authoritarian regime (1939-1975). With an interdisciplinary approach, this paper utilizes perspectives from historical, political, and feminist theorists to interpret the differing conceptualizations of Spanish womanhood and its evolution during this time period of the twentieth-century. Analysis of women's involvement during the Second Republic unveils the underlying sexism within the progressive Republic that hindered women's full emancipation. Upon the onset of the Franco regime, women's freedoms were gradually dismantled through legal measures that affirmed Franco's ideology of strict adherence to gendered social constructs. However paradoxical, efforts of women's mobilization emerged through channels of social organization that were reserved for women's concerns, such as the *Sección Femenina,* which was weaponized by the Franco regime as a tool of indoctrination. Investigation of laws and organizations that promoted structured gender ideologies, reveals the roots of Franco's conservatism to lie within Catholic doctrine. Franco's conceptualization of womanhood positioned women to become "reproducers of the nation" to ensure the continuation of his nationalist project of creating the Spanish state. The evaluation of women's roles, rights, and responsibilities during the reign of both political factions reveals how gender was utilized as a means to reinforce ideals that provided the framework of the Spanish nation.

## Table of Contents

The street of Gran Vía morphed into a sea of people as thousands of Spaniards marched on Madrid from across the country to proclaim to the world, "¡somos feministas!". A movement so captivating, so exhilarating, so ardently supported by millions seemed to be invincible, yet such an outward display of solidarity was unfathomable in prior decades. The freedoms Spanish women enjoy today were not always guaranteed, in fact, they were severely restricted only fifty years ago. Oscillating ideals surrounding women's responsibilities characterized Spain during the twentieth-century as opposing values and factions clashed fiercely. How and why differing moralities captured the Spanish people remains a complex subject, yet essential to understanding the impetus of contemporary Spanish feminism.

Adhering to modernity's relentless character, Europe in the twentieth-century succumbed to the unyielding consequences of previous decades of modernization that manifested in social upheaval and political unrest. The interplay of ideologies caused old regimes to topple as new states and political forces stepped in to fill their vacancies. Spain, the most expansive nation on the Iberian Peninsula, experienced monarchy, democracy, and autocracy within the span of one-hundred years. Although this singular century only comprises a fragment of the multi-millennia history that shapes this once world-dominating power, the turmoil of the twentieth-century is markedly reflected in the political and social landscapes of contemporary Spain. The tense social environment that produced the movements responsible for the creation of the Second Republic simultaneously fostered those in opposition to the short-lived government. The antagonistic force of the Nationalist brigade, led by future *Caudillo* Francisco Franco, spouted fascist ideology that contradicted the socialist framework supporting the foundation of the Second Republic. The Republican-Socialist coalition that guided Spain's Second Republic saw their revolutionary

politics implemented for only a few short years before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and Spain's descent into a socially restrictive autocracy.

This thesis will explore women's social and political positions in twentieth-century Spain, specifically the time period spanning the eight years of the Second Spanish Republic (1931-1939) and the dictatorship of Francisco Franco implemented in 1939 and ended in 1975. I will analyze women's social gains and losses within the contexts of both the Republic and the Franco regime. Utilizing the backdrop of the radical social changes created during the time of the Republic, I will investigate women's achievements under the Republic and contrast them with the regression of women's freedoms that developed alongside the growing power of the fascist regime.

The remainder of this chapter will give an overview of the short, radical, and influential eight-year stint when the Second Spanish Republic retained political power. The period of time under the Second Republic was an intense moment of social unrest and ideological clashing between multiple entities that ultimately constituted two umbrella groups – the left-leaning Republicans and the conservative Nationalists. Within eight short years, numerous lives were lost and hostilities only intensified, which culminated in an almost inevitable civil war. The events that predated the heightened animosity are incredibly intricate and involve multiple individuals and groups that often intertwined. This summary is not a fully extensive recounting of historical events, but effectively presents the positions of both parties and provides the basis necessary to understand the dissolution of the Second Spanish Republic and the formation of Francisco Franco's dictatorship.

This thesis investigates the historical and social positioning of Spanish women spanning the twentieth-century utilizing an interdisciplinary approach. Important to this work are historical

theorists that have provided factual perspectives, documentation, and research. This investigation provided the basis for deeper interpretation within this project. This includes political theories that I studied to interpret the ideology of the Second Spanish Republic and Franco's regime, which illuminated the differing motives of each faction. Various feminist theories illustrated the impact of the political and social consequences of each administration within its historical context.

Additionally, most of the research included in this thesis focuses on experiences of women from low-middle-class to upper-middle-class backgrounds who resided in urban/suburban centers. Considering the circumstances of the time, scholarship regarding impoverished and rural women is not as prevalent, as the majority of these women continued to labor on working farms and received little education during this time period. The few historical accounts that do exist depict the lived experiences of women from the Spanish *pueblos* to be largely detached from the Nationalist scriptures of womanhood (Schmoll 2014). Although substantial scholarship is lacking in regards to rural women's lives, their stories of endurance during these years are no less valuable and useful in critique of the regime. However, due to my focus on women's social mobilization and organizations that mainly impacted women concentrated in urban and suburban districts, my scholarship will be applied to women who shared that background.

**Historical Overview**

Spain's political history prior to the Second Republic excluded its populace from politics and any form of democratic participation. Centuries of monarchy followed by a brief dictatorship led by General Miguel Primo de Rivera, left behind a polarized society where the mass of wealth

and land was controlled by an elite few, while the lower-class and peasantry existed largely in poverty. The loss of Spain's last colonial territories in 1898 and military presence in Morocco to maintain Spanish territory continued to affect the economy in the early twentieth-century as international trade slowed and the unemployment rate climbed. Multiple strains on the country lowered Spanish morale. The opportunity to implement a drastic social, economic, and political transformation appeared upon the resignation of Primo de Rivera in 1930. Historian Stanley Payne explains this reconstruction began on April 14, 1931 when a Republican provisional committee, headed by Niceto Alcalá Zamora and comprised of cohorts from various political creeds, was established to preside over the country until the election of the *Cortes Constituyentes*, or Constituent Courts – the elected parliament of the budding Republic. In June, four disjointed and relatively new political groups were chosen to occupy an overwhelming majority of the seats in the Constituent Courts election (630). Although these parties were young and inexperienced, they garnered fierce support from the populace for their promises to tackle the glaring inequalities that structured Spanish society.

The new Constitution, ratified in December 1931, reflected the Republic's vision of an egalitarian society rooted in socialist and democratic principles. The first article stated, "España es una República democrática de trabajadores de toda clase, que se organiza en régimen de Libertad y de Justicia. Los poderes de todos sus órganos emanan del pueblo." Article two defined the Republic's commitment to total equality, "Todos los españoles son iguales ante la ley." (Congreso) Injecting optimism into the veins of the proletarian class and striking fear in the bourgeoisie, the coalition immediately implemented political action to commit to its central reforms embedded in the Constitution. Stanley Payne in his book *A History of Spain and Portugal: Volume 2*, identifies the Republic's goals: 1) extension of rights and civil liberties; 2)

education reform; 3) restriction of Church privileges and powers; 4) reorganization of the state to permit autonomy of regional territories; 5) reform of the national militia; and 6) agrarian reform. The five years following the implementation of the new Constitution were filled with pushback against the Republican-Socialist coalition that enforced radical measures of change in just a few, short years. The Second Republic sought an extreme transformation that threatened practices and principles deeply embedded in Spanish culture. Due to the severe modifications of social and political structures in an attempt at modernization, the Republic eventually succumbed to its own ambition.

The first biennium of the Second Republic (1931-1933), presided over by now President Niceto Alcalá-Zamora, confronted issues that had been plaguing Spain since the previous century. Enthusiasm for the approved Constitution catapulted the Republic forward into an aggressive agenda of improvement. In a recent article, Augusto Gayubas emphasizes the Republic's commitment to popular sovereignty through discussion of broadened freedoms at the hands of the new Constitution. Notable characteristics of the Constitution include the guarantee of women's right to vote and divorce among other civil liberties, which established Spain as one of the first major European nations to achieve universal suffrage. Spaniards were also guaranteed the freedom of association and expression, which encouraged civic engagement from both men and women. The creation of the *jurados mixtos*, or mixed juries, to handle work disputes strengthened workers' unions. Labor laws called for salary increases and the implementation of a forty-hour work week. These rights were protected through a division of power within the state legislature that prevented an abuse of power from one branch.

Following the inauguration of a secular state, participation in academic institutions by a religious order was now forbidden. Education became a strong focus of the Republic's reforms

as it was seen as a means to engage the population at not only a cultural level, but a political one. Marta García-Sampedro maintains the *misiones pedagógicas,* or the pedagogical missions, were united under the common goal to educate the rural populace about health care, culture, and other academic topics as a way out of poverty (72). This government-funded program provided schoolbooks, renewal or creation of school facilities, and training for educators. In 1932, the government constructed almost 7,000 schools that accepted both boys and girls. With educational projects acquired by the Republic, this meant religion was no longer ingrained in curriculum (77). The denial of subsidy and educational jurisdiction of the Catholic church, shoved the revered and deeply-ingrained institution of religion strictly into private life. Initial restriction of the Catholic church's jurisdiction, a principal authority of public education and a long-standing component of Spanish social life, sowed the first seeds of discontent among the Republic's opponents and even its supporters.

Catalonia became the first autonomous region and was granted special powers to rule as their own state. Under a home-rule statute, Catalonians were granted an internal autonomy that consisted of their own elected parliament, president, and prime minister. In September of 1932, the Generalitat of Catalonia was inaugurated, however, as Payne describes, the government faced difficulty maintaining peace in the region due to anarchist infighting (637). Basque and Galician separatists expressed desire for regional autonomy, but these goals were never realized under the jurisdiction of the Second Republic. To this day, the relationship between the regional and central governments in Spain remains complex as desire for full independence is still present.

The military experienced extensive reorganization as its power was downsized and concentrated solely into the hands of the government with the goal to prevent military interference in politics and strengthen democratic governance. Military training programs were

updated and modern weaponry was introduced to improve effectiveness in combat. Measures that addressed low pay, inadequate medical care, and poor living conditions were aimed to improve contentment among the troops. Those who did not wish to remain at the government's disposal were allowed to retire with full pay (Payne 632). The military's loss of privilege and prestige soured many officers to the political initiatives brought forth by the new Republic. Disdain towards the Second Republic among the ranks fueled the military coup that marked the beginning of the Spanish Civil War.

The largest threat to the Republic's reputation and reformist agenda stemmed from their agrarian initiatives, according to Sara Schatz in her article "Democracy's Breakdown and the Rise of Fascism: The Case of the Spanish Second Republic, 1931-36." Agrarian reform served as the bridge to unite the landless and lower-class peasants of the rural sectors with the urban proletariat. The agrarian reforms of the first biennium demonstrated solidarity between the urban, industrial workers and the small tenants and sharecroppers exploited on the rural *latifundias*. Owners of these large estates found their previous liberties severely restricted now that the government was much more involved with agricultural affairs. Workers were ensured their right to work along with improved wages and schedules, while landholders were required to comply with the state's requests to utilize their property (147). As their land was withheld by the radical government, upper-class latifundists fostered resentment against the Republic.

The political development during the first two years of the Republic directly challenged the institutions and privileged social groups that controlled them, which granted them tremendous power and influence within Spanish society. The moderate left offended conservative attitudes through their political attacks, placing their democratic regime in jeopardy. Discontent from those with moderate and conservative opinion added to the Republic's

disintegration along with the Spanish working class' disappointment when the proposed advancements began to lose traction. The bitter reactions of the upper-class catalogued the efforts of the democratic regime as failures, which spurred a transition of power in the November election of 1933. Conservative forces claimed the parliament for the next two years with the intent to reverse the progressive reforms put forth by the Republican-Socialist coalition.

The 1933 election ushered in two years of conservative control, nicknamed the *bienio negro*, or black biennium. The conservative political party CEDA (Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas) gained a following during the first biennium. According to Samuel Pierce, CEDA was formed to ensure conservative power and their main stipulation consisted of the reinstatement of the Catholic church's previous social responsibilities. With pushback on initiatives formed by the leftist parties, CEDA joined forces with another widely supported conservative faction, the Radical Republican Party headed by Alejandro Lerroux García. In the article "The Second Spanish Republic and the Holy See: 1931-1936," José Sánchez discusses Catholicism's reentry into the social and political sphere. Due to CEDA's support, the Radical party permitted political concessions to the Church by providing some state funding and allowing involvement in education (63). Agricultural reforms implemented during the first biennium halted under the conservative government's orders. Wages were slashed, laborers were expelled from the land, and land expropriation ceased (Schatz 148). Qualms voiced by the wealthy latifundia owners in the countryside reached the capitol as hostility toward them reverberated throughout the working class. Peasant disturbances and uprisings became more frequent in relation to the agrarian question. To handle the increased violence, anti-Republican figures were promoted to influential military positions, Francisco Franco being one to receive this honor. The promise of community autonomy was also reversed, challenging the energetic

movement of Basque nationalism and Catalonia's newly-established Generalitat (Payne 274). These conflicts embodied the ideological clashes and social inequalities that further deepened the rift in Spain.

The reversal towards conservatism in Spain in conjunction with Hitler's rise to power in Germany, struck fears of fascism across the left-wing populace. International tensions made many across the globe weary of the rising hostilities in Spain. CEDA's reversal of reforms, paired with the fascist inclinations and violent outbursts of their youth organization, prompted anticipation of an outbreak of armed and potentially devastating conflict (Gayubas). October of 1934 saw the bloodiest rebellion the Republic had yet seen. The radical left party PSOE (Partido Socialist Obrero Español) along with the affiliated worker's trade union UGT (Union General de Trabajadores) called for a general strike in devotion to returning to the original reforms of the Constitution first implemented in 1931. The movement in the eastern territories of Spain failed to take hold and the Catalonian segment of the insurrection was deemed a failure. However, in Asturias, the strike developed into a bloody revolutionary uprising. The rebellion was ultimately squashed by Spanish troops with Franco at the helm. The Asturian revolt, also known as the October Revolution of 1934, resulted in over 1,500 deaths and 30,000 arrests (Payne 279). Extreme violence resulted from the severe polarization between left-wing and conservative constituents. This incident of agitation served as a precursor for the brutal conflict that arose in the coming years.

Following the Asturian revolution, Lerroux's government called for another set of elections in February, 1936. The leftist coalition of parties, led by Manuel Azaña, swept the vote and brought a win for the Popular Front or *Frente Popular*. When this group of leftist and moderate republicans regained power, they fully eliminated the conservative influence, returning

to previous agrarian reforms and reestablishing Catalonia's autonomy (Payne 641). The Popular Front government lasted only a few months before the social turmoil reached its boiling point. The last moments of the Spanish Second Republic saw violent clashes and its own military plotting against their leaders. The 1936 government's policies could not contain the spread of fascism within its borders and on July 17-19, 1936, Spain was faced with a military coup that divided the Spanish people in two: the Republicans and the Nationalists. The Nationalist zones taken during the coup led by Franco were subjected to harsh regulations aimed to purge Republican idealism. The organized and experienced Nationalist army fought the Republican's citizen militia for three years slowly gaining territory. Republican territory and soldiers dwindled as the Nationalists marched steadily toward Madrid, finally capturing the capital in November 1938. On April 1, 1939, the Spanish Civil War officially ended and the "Caudillo de España por la Gracia de Dios", assumed power to begin the Franco regime.


Agencia EFE, "Spanish Civil War"

The blue area on the map represents the territory that was quickly overrun by Franco's insurgent armies in the first year of the civil war. Upon capture of Madrid that was held by the Republicans, Spain fell to the Nationalists.

**Political Theory and the Spanish Case**

Fascism of the twentieth century based itself in ambiguous ideologies, which consistently varied from regime to regime. Fascism as the modern political movement originated in Italy in the early years of the 1900s, spreading quickly throughout Europe as the continent negotiated World War I and its consequences. Rooted in the rejection of dogmas, yet simultaneously riddled with contradiction, this political movement grasped Europe as it emerged from the horrors of World War I, politicizing people en masse and polarizing many more. Certain to never define itself with clear-cut characteristics, this political order afforded dictators the luxury of fomenting support for political parties designed for malleability to respond to the supposed needs of the nation. Details of fascist political movements vary nation to nation and leader to leader, however, political scientists have identified key elements that define a fascist regime. In his book *Fascism: A Brief Introduction*, Kevin Passmore summarizes the characteristics of fascist rule: one party leadership headed by a single leader; suppression of the opposition characterized as real or imagined enemies; control of the economy; monopolistic control of the mass media; and a specific classification of a "natural" social hierarchy that subordinates individual interests to the betterment of the state; all of which are woven into an all-encompassing ideology (often borrowing from religious doctrine) that "covers all aspects of man's existence" (12). Passmore further suggests the appeal of fascism stems from the fear of embracing modernity and the comfort of a nostalgic paradise, "fascism involved the revolutionary reconstruction of society in accordance with a utopian ideology, at a time when rapid change and crisis had encouraged people to seek a new way in making sense of the world." Jason Stanley in his book *How Fascism Works: The politics of Us and Them*, identifies nationalism as the core of the fascist project. A collective victimhood is then invented "to create a sense of group identity that is by nature

opposed to the cosmopolitan ethos and individualism of liberal democracy" (106). Such elements characterize a fascist regime, many of which were employed by Franco during his thirty-six-year domination as *Caudillo* of Spain. The regime utilized these methods to unite people behind the cause of an authoritarian, militarist, Catholic, and conservative government that rejected the antithesis of this political construction – the Second Spanish Republic. Budding dictators over the course of the twentieth-century turned to this type of despotism to negotiate social change in the midst of modernization.

Due to the inconsistency of fascism and its tendency to lend itself to leaders in need of pliable political ideology, some theorists hesitate to define Francoist Spain as a fully fascist state. Stanley Payne, in his book *Fascism in Spain: 1923-1977*, observes that, "…scarcely any of the serious historians and analysts of Franco consider the *generalissimo* to be a core fascist" (476). In his work, *Franco: A Biography*, Paul Preston maintains this stance by explaining that Francoist Spain displayed signs of authoritarianism with elements of fascism, but not strict adherence to fascist principles as Franco built his regime on his own values and allowed the participation of selected political officials. Preston views this classification as a mere technicality and does not deny Franco's involvement with known-fascist Mussolini and fascist-leaning Hitler. However, these small discrepancies prevent theorists from classifying the regime as absolutely fascist although Franco relied heavily on fascist principle and many elements of the Spanish regime that arose during this time period appear in contemporary fascist discourse. These theorists do not disregard the extremely repressive and dictatorial ideology of Franco's political legacy, yet suggest that the Franco regime may gain its reputation as an entirely fascist entity due to its opposition identifying itself as blatantly anti-fascist. Although the Spanish State did not fall

neatly into a categorically fascist regime, this thesis will critique the regime's authoritarian dogma that centered itself in fascist ideals, especially when assessing gendered constructs.

Francisco Franco Bahamonde, just one among the most notorious leaders of totalitarian states that emerged during the first decades of the twentieth century, employed fascist practices to manage the transition from a left-leaning socialist-communist republic to an ultra-conservative, authoritarian state. The bloody Spanish Civil War left the nation scarred and with prejudices that were only deepened by the conflict. According to Nationalist propaganda, social ills that lurked within the red sea of the Republic had eroded Spain's character, tarnishing the once strong and impenetrable might of Spain. Franco's victory assured him the power to rid Spain of the social plague and restore it to an idealized version through social and political strategy rooted in fascist and totalitarian principles.

The Francoist utopia was centered within the glorification of Spain's imperial past, a past thus revived as the model of the future, where the world would once again recognize Spain's domination within the world order and therefore the superiority of the nation as a whole. The creation of an ideal world manifested itself according to absolute principles such as a strict hierarchical order that segregated the masses into distinct groups that served their nation as directed by the individual at the top. Passmore contends that for fascists, the leadership of an elite few that directed the masses would eliminate the complaints of women and workers that turned them towards social movements such as socialism and feminism. Their promises to overcome gender and class conflict through grouped contributions were expected to quell the threat that socialists, feminists, and other anti-fascist groups posed to the "natural" order (124). Article 8 of the *Ley de Principios del Movimiento Nacional* published in May 1958, prohibited social and political organization that did not already align with sanctioned groups or ideals,

> La participación del pueblo en las tareas legislativas y en las demás funciones de interés general se llevará a cabo a través de la familia, el municipio, el sindicato y demás entidades con representación orgánica que a este fin reconozcan las leyes. Toda organización política de cualquier índole, al margen de este sistema representativo, será considerada illegal[1] (Agencia).

The fascist solution to addressing such social qualms was to incorporate 'problematic' interest groups into the regime via designated organizations that operated as part of the ruling party of the regime. These groups were consolidated under one political party, the FET de las JONS (Falange Española Tradicionalista de las Juntas Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista), also referred to as the Falange.

One component of this stratification is the dichotomy of gender roles, which this essay will explore in the context of Francisco Franco's construction of his military dictatorship and totalitarian state in Spain. Fascism viewed feminism as its antithesis because feminism innately disagrees with the concept that a woman's fundamental duty should be confined to domestic and reproductive responsibilities – a notion embedded in fascism and thus Francoism, which served as the regime's maxim for all women's concerns. Fascist ideology inherently categorizes itself as anti-feminist, yet its attempt to counteract feminism draws itself into the discourse. Fascism's tendency to group its population into organizations and unions allows its populace to challenge social policies of the regime, engage their participation, and unite them in the national community through action that 'suited' their gender justified by inconsistent rationale.

[1] The participation of the people in legislative tasks and other functions of general interest will be carried out through the family, the municipality, the trade union and other entities with organic representation that recognize the laws for this purpose. Any political organization of any kind, apart from this representative system, will be considered illegal.

**Chapter Outlines**

In the following chapter I will expand upon life prior to and during the Spanish Civil War, including republican attitudes regarding women and their changing role in society. This portion of the essay will give an overview of the contention revolving around women's political participation during the Second Republic in spite of the foundational rhetoric of equality the republic advocated. Chapter one will also dive into women's responsibilities during the Spanish Civil War, which includes the iconic figure of the *miliciana* and resistance to women's unconventional involvement during this period of armed hostility. Mary Nash and Lorraine Ryan lend their theories to the discourse regarding women's political and military mobilization during the short span of the Republic. I assert that the Second Spanish Republic's progressive politics offered an opportunity for women to challenge the circumstances of their gender and narrow the gap of social inequality with their male counterparts. However, women's strides implemented prior to the outbreak of the war did not lead to enduring change due to underlying sexism that compromised social advancements. I utilize the emergence of the *miliciana* as a representation of an equality that threatened the ever-abiding patriarchal order, hence women were restricted to a 'safe' femininity that resided in a woman's traditional, domestic role.

The second chapter will analyze the dismantling of women's rights following the defeat of the Second Republic. The systematic elimination of women's rights was replaced by new ideologies that legally implemented gendered constraints. This chapter will also examine women who were vilified due to their perceived connections with the Second Republic and how such defamation became politicized within propagandistic efforts put forth by the regime. I utilize theories from Victoria Enders, Pamela Radcliff, Jessica Davidson, and Rosario Ruiz-Franco to construct a discourse regarding women's autonomy and the complexity this topic presents within

Francoist Spain. This chapter will analyze the paradoxical nature of women's involvement in the development of their own interests through active participation in legislation and social organizations within a regime that perpetuated a traditional and conservative social framework. Ultimately, however, I will present the argument that women were still strictly embedded within a patriarchal hierarchy despite their efforts and even successes to contradict their submissive positions.

Chapter three will further explore women's involvement in state-supervised social organizations. This section will explore women's expected functions within the women's branch of the fascist political party, the *Sección Femenina*, and its arm for social welfare, *Auxilio Social*. It will also explore Spain's adherence to religious doctrine and how Catholic principles manifest in the expectations of women's comportment and contribution to society. Employing several theorists such as Joan Nagel, Rada Ivecović, Cynthia Enloe, and Nira Yuval-Davis, I will discuss how women and men engage in nation building. In this chapter I will argue that the emphasis on gendered constructs through a historical and religious lens is utilized to enable and justify the categorized functioning of the Spanish nation-state. This agenda is further advanced by the mandatory participation of women in social organizations dedicated to their concerns, which ensure women's conformity to social standards. I will also assert that a result of indoctrination of women's assigned duties positions women as a necessary entity in construction and continuation of the nation itself.

The events that transpired in Spain within the first few decades of the twentieth-century determined the country's future for the next thirty-six years. This outcome reversed the advances women had fought for and protected so diligently in the preceding years. The path to liberation had shifted towards one of repression. Propelled by a fervent commitment to the

conceptualization of his nation's legacy, Francisco Franco applied his ideals to his people and engaged them in his nationalist project, separating their contributions on the basis of sex.

**Chapter One: Women in Republican Spain**

Predating the Spanish Civil War and following the deposition of King Alfonso XIII, the Spanish political system transformed to a democracy at the hands of the Second Republic on 14 April 1931. In June of that year, the *Cortes Constituyentes* drafted the Spanish Constitution of 1931 in hopes that Spanish society would mirror this political evolution. No longer was the public sphere of politics the primary concern of man, as the egalitarian values of the new government sought after and fought for women's political participation. Although all-encompassing equality was still to be achieved, women made strides in regards to guaranteed, civil liberties that had never previously been granted nor protected under legal precedent. Legal validation of women's participation in affairs outside of the private sphere of domestic life, opened the gates for women to step entirely outside of those confines. A notable marker of these changes was women's political enfranchisement as women held political office, voted, and remained active in organizations that influenced legislation and civic engagement. In 1936 after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, these progressive attitudes bled into the Republic's combat policies, which effectively allowed armed women to fight on the frontlines. During the tenure of the Second Spanish Republic, women did not remain detached from social and political life, however, this newfound participation was not readily accepted by all in the way Republican women had grasped these opportunities. A relatively modern phenomenon, women's activity in politics and the war effort, further provoked arguments against the proposition of women's involvement in the masculinized matters of politics and war.

This contention was rooted in a historic, biological essentialism that justified the cultural norms responsible for gendered hierarchies and social roles. The "Republican Woman" thus threatened the deeply-rooted notions of women socialized to be subordinate within the gender

order. This contestation of gender identity influenced a woman's status amidst a modernizing Spain that promised an alternative to the gendered expectations of Spanish womanhood. Regardless of creed or political affiliation, women of different beliefs found themselves engaged in commitments that coincided with their cause and personal ideals. In this chapter, I will analyze the evolution of gender ideology in the Second Spanish Republic through governmental reforms and women's participation in the Civil War. Ultimately, I will argue that gender ideology needed to support the longevity of these reforms did not exist within the political and social fabric at the time, and therefore the advancements made during the Republic were undermined by misogynistic perspectives that permeated Republican progressivism.

**Women's Political Involvement Prior and During the Second Spanish Republic**

The founding of the Second Spanish Republic ushered in an eight-year period (1931-1939) that sought to expand the legal rights of women, which consequently challenged their positions in Spanish society. In theory, women were to gain absolute equality under the guidance of the Second Republic. Previous feminist movements from the nineteenth and early twentieth-century provided the basis for the Republic's reforms regarding women. Concepción Arenal, a lawyer and prison reformer, was an outspoken advocate for women to have opportunities beyond homemaking during the 1800s, a time when traditional values were set in stone. Anarcho-feminist ideology brought forth by Teresa Claramunt and Teresa Mañé in the nineteenth-century influenced women's demands decades later. In an article, Laura Vicente Villanueva recognizes the formation of Claramunt's various organizations, such as the *Agrupación de Trabajadores* founded in 1891, as some of the first women's coalitions to call for liberation through labor reform and education. The ILE (*Institución Libre de Enseñanza*) was founded in 1876 as a

reaction to Spain's restriction of academic freedom and implementation of religious doctrine in education. The ILE became one of the first organizations to recognize women's potential and create curriculum for them, Shirley Mangini maintains in her article, "Part One: Spanish Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." Through education reform, women's literacy slowly began to rise. The first political party to elect women to the coalition was the social-democratic party, Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) in 1902. Lisa Lines in her book, *Milicianas: Women in Combat in the Spanish Civil War*, discusses how PSOE members recognized their female counterparts lacked access to comprehensive education, yet little political action was taken to address this concern. Although it was the party most friendly to women's interests of the time, PSOE continued to disappoint its female members through the early 1900s by offering empty promises and no action. Confrontation of gender inequality by feminists of the nineteenth-century gradually improved women's social conditions by proposing issues through collective mobilization, a feat unfamiliar and out of character for Spanish women at the time. However, the constitutional monarchy did not implement the radical changes women requested. Such demands were left to the Second Republic and the feminists that followed.

Failed feminist movements of the previous decades found their solace in the Republic's willingness to incorporate "women's issues" into their platform. Harnessing the energy of the feminist movements of former years, the new government offered legal protection of women's civil liberties under the Second Republic's progressive policies. In her book, *Spanish Cultural Studies*, Helen Graham details women's liberties in the Constitution of 1931, which included ensuring maternity leave, civil marriage, and no-fault divorce. Pro-feminist labor laws were implemented to abolish workplace discrimination and access to contraception advanced reproductive freedom (101). The political protections and freedoms that women gained,

predictably contributed to their political mobilization. Women's political organizations such as *Mujeres Libres, Mujeres Antifascistas,* and *Acción Católica de la Mujer*, provided women opportunities to enter the public sphere of politics regardless of their political leanings. Although women made strides to achieve equality with men before the law, those few years of political progress did not tackle traditional mindsets that still considered women second-class citizens with no need for legal guarantees outside of the domestic sphere. As Lorraine Ryan argues in the article "A Case Apart: The Evolution of Spanish Feminism," these divisions, even debated amongst women and their own organizations, hampered the feminist movement during the time period of the Second Republic. Ryan explains, "The tendency to irreconcilable political views, which, in turn, created trenchant divisions within the feminist movement - thus, substantially reducing the movement's capacity for consensus on key issues - once again plagued the movement during this period" (2). This dispute between the progressive and conservative inclinations is no better exemplified than in the political deliberation surrounding women's right to vote.

Women's interests to secure the vote remained hotly debated within the *Cortes*, especially amongst the three female representatives who, paradoxically, kept political office whilst elected solely by male constituents. Clara Campoamor Rodríguez (Radical Party), Victoria Kent Siano (Radical Socialist Party), and Margarita Nelken y Mansbergen (Socialist Party) distinguished themselves amongst their peers as outspoken proponents for women. These three women embodied the *Nueva Mujer*, or "New Woman," in vogue in North America and other European nations facing societal reconstruction post World War I, as Mary Nash explains in her book *Defying Male Civilization: Women in the Spanish Civil War.* In the article "Notes on New Womanhood," Catherine Lavender defines the New Woman who remained independent,

physically capable, and mentally astute in the male social sphere. This archetype prompted consideration of women's suffrage and analysis of how women's full citizenship would impact the new republic. Confronted with the fact that women's suffrage blurred the lines between male and female identities, both formulated by social and cultural factors, women's full political participation meant the initiation of the *Nueva Mujer*, and the progressivism she represented, into Spanish public society.

It was noted that with full emancipation, the voting population would double, yet potential political support was only well-received by some. Socialists, Radicals, and other Republicans asserted that the women's vote had the potential to jeopardize the new republic and the example Spain would set as a progressive nation. The presiding political commission doubted women's agency and their capacity for independent decision-making as Gerard Alexander argues in his essay "Women and Men at the Ballot Box: Voting in Spain's Two Democracies." Alexander states, "Following the separate sphere model of gender roles, observers assumed that women lacked the true qualities of political citizenship, even after they were granted all of its rights. Ruled by their emotions and generally weak in reasoning capacity, they were generally presumed to surrender their vote to the better judgement of others" (350). This apprehension concerning enfranchisement drew upon the predominant gender ideologies that painted women as easily manipulated and emotionally weak compared to their male counterparts.

In tandem with this perception of female identity was the question of the Catholic church, an entity that had just been abolished from public and political proceedings within the secular Second Republic. In her essay, "'Into the Clear Air of the Plaza': Spanish Women Achieve the Vote in 1931," Judith Keene explains:

> In a choice of action in which the two elements of liberalism [consent of the governed and anticlericalism] were at odds, as they were in the case of the vote in women's suffrage, the strength of liberal anticlericalism usually overrode any commitment to expanding the electoral bases of the state. As a consequence, liberals more often than not blocked female access to political and civil equality because it was assumed that female religiosity and pro-clericalism posed a threat to the secular state (331).

As political discourse remained a masculine arena, religious discourse became more feminized by tying women's concerns with secularism. Therefore, efforts were made to deny women full political participation to subsequently deny the Catholic church and preserve the secular state. Keene states that prominent discourse within Republican opposition stemmed from the idea that women would follow the direction of their religious leaders, thus becoming a political tool for the Catholic church (326). This logic also appealed to the argument that women's feebleness would render them vulnerable to charismatic leaders of nationalist and fascist leaders, thus endangering the foundation of the Second Republic if women were to elect conservative, rightist leaders (Alexander 351). These assumptions that strayed from the reality of women's political rights support the assertion that gender ideology greatly influenced public perception of women's capabilities and their feminine identities.

Victoria Kent and Margarita Nelken's own beliefs mirrored those of their parties as they believed women were not yet well-enough educated to support political reforms that would advance their sex. According to Lídia Puigvert in her chapter "Dialogic Feminism," both Kent and Nelken approved of women's emancipation on the ideological level, but argued that women remained ignorant due to lack of academic and cultural education, which prompted both women

to oppose the woman's vote on the political spectrum. Considering most female Spaniards lacked the well-rounded education afford to men, Nelken expressed her hesitation to grant women greater responsibilities. In her book *La mujer ante las cortes constituyentes,* Nelken explains, "Spanish women who truly love liberty must be the first to postpone their own gain, in favor of the progress of Spain" (Keene 335). Bigoted anxieties drawing on traditional, gendered doctrine surrounding women's agency and autonomy constituted the main arguments in opposition to women's suffrage.

Of the three female deputies, only one insisted upon women's enfranchisement for the sake of democratic principles. Campoamor argued that denying a citizen's right to vote was unconstitutional. Campoamor developed a clear defense to promote universal suffrage arguing that political citizenship is not prohibited by sex. She questioned Kent and Nelken's logic through her argument that if women were to be discriminated against due to their lack of cultural and educational awareness, men who also lacked such capacities should forfeit their right to vote (Puigvert 32). For this Radical politician, it was impossible for the Republic to maintain its declaration of equality without the total elimination of sexual discrimination. The differing considerations between Campoamor, Kent, and Nelken reflected the sentiments of larger Spanish society, a microcosm of the opposing visions for Spain's future.

Following furious debate, Article 36 passed on October 1 of 1931 stating that women's suffrage would be adopted into the Second Republic's new constitution. The drafting of the new constitution included declarations for gender equality, yet those same politicians that touted such egalitarianism, feared the potential impact of the collective enfranchisement of the opposite sex. Left-leaning parties, such as the Socialists, Radical Socialists, and other republicans, expected women to exist in the peculiar limbo of being allowed to exercise their newly-granted rights, yet

their opinions regarding those rights would not be legally considered. It became apparent that these parties, although running off the platform of women's interests, did not view women as total equals in all sense of the word, "The view was consistent with an ideology in which the working class was the source of social change and women workers carried the same oppression and the same revolutionary potential as their class brothers" (Keene 336). Rather, the Spanish woman was considered a comparable companion in the fight towards the theoretical pledge to sexual and social equality, but the ambivalence to true emancipation believed to be achieved through the right to vote, revealed many socialist and republican grievances with true gender equality.

The contradictory resistance to women's suffrage in the *Cortes* stemmed from gendered images and misogynistic stereotypes that alarmed the politicos envisioning their new Spain. The falsities and blatant bigotry manufactured by certain political parties, attempted to sabotage women's achievement of equality and exposed the sexism of deep-seated, traditional, and gendered philosophies that still existed behind the mask of modernity worn by the Second Republic. This controversy appeared after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War that reinforced women's gains prior to 1936 and simultaneously questioned their validity.

**Women's Involvement in the Spanish Civil War**

Upon the onset of the civil war, traditional gender roles would be further challenged amongst Republican women who put their lives on the line in the broader struggle against fascism. A majority of the Republican forces consisted of volunteer soldiers sourced among the communist, socialist, and anarchist political parties formed from the working class. Those that were fighting joined the civilian militias under the tenet that fascism should not be the guiding

principle of Spain, and that the egalitarian principles of the Second Spanish Republic must be protected. Men and women alike who had supported the Republic since its inception felt called to defend its principles. Rosario "La Dinamitera", a militiawoman praised for her fortitude after losing her hand in a dynamite accident at the warfront, rationalized her choice of enlistment, "Of course we were afraid, but we felt it was necessary to defend ourselves so that Franco couldn't wipe us out. With this ideal in her heart a woman is just as effective as a man wherever she serves" (Cuevas 63). Women's social condition had greatly improved since the inception of the Second Spanish Republic, which led many women, mainly those already active in political circles, to join their male counterparts at the front to renounce fascism and defend their social gains.

The *miliciana*, or "militiawoman," became an iconic figure of power and protest during the Spanish Civil War. They joined active combat in mixed-gender battalions alongside their communist and anarchist male comrades. Unlike men, the position of a *miliciana* was entirely voluntary and demonstrated women's commitment to eradicating the Nationalist forces that threatened the Republic and the advances women made prior to the Civil War. The emblematic and masculinized image of the *miliciana*, dressed in her overalls and wielding a rifle in front of the Republic's flags and battalions, demonstrated the militiawoman's rejection of traditional gender values and behavior, a byproduct of Republican attitudes. Posters of the militiawoman quickly turned to propaganda and beckoned soldiers to join the cause.


Cristóbal Arteche, 1936, "Les milicies, us necessiten!"

Women's display of militancy prompted multiple initiatives to integrate this energy into the fight against fascism by creating and encouraging support of women-led organizations. Women's organizations derived from political activists and their associated parties, such as the communist *Agrupación de Mujeres Antifascistas* (AMA), the Marxist *Partido Obrera de Unificación Marxista* (POUM) and the anarchist *Mujeres Libres* (Nash 64). These organizations were formulated to engage Republican women and siphon their aid to areas of need on the homefront. Although united by mutual facilitation of women's much-needed antifascist action, the organizations remained largely disjointed with no common consensus in regards to women's

social status as a whole. Mary Nash asserts in her book, *Defying Male Civilization: Women in the Spanish Civil War*:

> Superficially, there was an apparent harmony of interests and policy among different women's organizations on certain basic issues, such as access to education, work, and involvement in the war effort. Since the plurality marking the political and social scenario was reflected in the women's organizations, overall female concurrence cannot be assumed on either gender or social issues (63).

The need for efficient action against the fascist cause left little room for the various organizations to weave a feminist thread into the argument supporting women's undertaking of non-traditional roles in the public domain. Societal occupation with the war effort and the inability for women's organizations to cooperate regarding feminist matters weakened Republican women's ability to mobilize towards a more gender-conscious society, while simultaneously proving their capability in their newfound duties during the Civil War. This disjuncture proved to accommodate the sexist rhetoric that disputed women's competence and attempted to shove them back behind the front lines.

When women first arrived at the warfront, Republican forces endorsed the figure of the *miliciana,* standing behind her heroism and vigor for defending her homeland. Even though many of the *milicianas* did experience active combat at the outbreak of the war, the militia soon questioned women's enrollment as armed combatants. Surprised that women were reluctant to perform culinary, laundry, and mending duties for the entire co-ed company, men amongst the ranks were only keen to keep women at the homefront if this traditional role was filled and they relinquished the warfare to the men. Lisa Lines maintains that women were not militarily trained and coupled with the notion that women were biologically better suited to such supportive tasks,

provided enough rationale for women at the homefront to abandon the danger of battle and assume solely auxiliary responsibilities (180). To justify role separation, Republican forces in conjunction with women's organizations, utilized the gender difference based in psychological and biological characteristics.

To discourage women from assuming responsibilities that threatened their femininity, women's wartime propaganda evoked the image of motherhood, a representation of women in complete opposition to that of the independent and daring *miliciana*. Brett Schmoll details in his article, "Solidarity and silence: motherhood in the Spanish Civil War," the symbol of the submissive and self-effacing "ángel del hogar" was upheld as the woman's version of the courageous soldier, who sacrificed her sons for the good of the Republic (476). In alignment with her duties as the "ángel del hogar" who took refuge from the dangers of combat, but still completed her duty supporting men on the battlefield and offering her sons to the troops, the woman's complimentary role to the man's was fulfilled and the threat to male authority was subdued (Lines 127). Gendered justifications provided the basis for the argument to pull women front the front lines, yet still utilized the female labor force to the Republic's advantage.

With the exception of a few outspoken *milicianas*, women readily accepted their newly defined duties in the war effort in accordance with the compliance from major women's organizations. It became apparent their campaigns took root in the traditional values that underestimated women's capabilities in male domains, yet made an exception for women's participation in the war effort for the good of the Second Republic. Despite official state sponsorship, distrust of women's competence sabotaged the furthering of a feminist movement,

> Underutilization of the women's antifascist organizations indicates considerable distrust and inhibition regarding the enormous potential of female mobilization on the homefront

> and particularly in relation to military needs. Moreover, the official conception of women's role in the antifascist struggle as that of auxiliary relief work is a salient indication of government view on the function of women (Nash 72).

In her article, "Women and Images of Women in the Spanish Civil War," Frances Lannon agrees with Nash. Due to discrimination embodied within women of the communist and socialist parties, women's organizations outwardly supported the dismissal of women from the warfronts through agreement that women were better suited to assume auxiliary, rather than combative, tasks on the homefront.

Although women mainly operated outside of the battle zone, their contributions performing traditional tasks sustained and strengthened the war effort. Women's involvement soon became invaluable as women found their niche amongst production lines, replacing the men who were now on the battlefield. In order to maintain output and supply chains for the growing conflict, it was recognized that women were essential if Spain wanted to continue upholding their production quotas, therefore women's organizations endorsed women joining the war effort in this less than traditional sphere that offered jobs in the sectors of transportation, medicine, engineering, and industry. In fact, training programs were organized to supplement women's entrance into these newly accessible fields (Nash 125). Women's organizations that raised consciousness of women's inferior social position recognized women's work as an opportunity to harness the energy of women's mobilization and direct it towards a feminist campaign that affirmed women's ability to enhance their professional skills and perform tasks in alignment with male capacity. The antifascist youth organization *Unión de Muchachas* explained their desires for women's equal incorporation into the war effort and eventually society at large,

> También queremos trabajar. Al lado de nuestros jóvenes camaradas. Ir a las escuelas especiales, a las Universidades. Tener en difinitiva los mismos derechos que los hombres para corresponder con los mismos deberes. Por nuestra incorporación a la vida activa y productora[2].

The newfound enthusiasm for these unusual employment opportunities was quickly suppressed by conventional attitudes that called upon women to channel their energy to solely domestic efforts. Apprehensions that women were assuming men's occupations raised concerns that women not only threatened the gender order, but threatened male job security. Women and their associated wartime organizations conceded to this consideration by stating that this new undertaking was a temporary product of the war effort as Carme Julia of the Catalan Communist Party Women explained, "…men must not see their substitution as a desire for dualism or competition, as it is merely a transitory measure which will end once they return from the fronts" (Lines 62).

Such conservative views also infiltrated the same women's organizations that promoted this new realm of work. This unconventional involvement was linked with winning the war rather than advocacy for women's social advancement, "women's impact was often grouped through military rather than civil forms of organization in order to enhance the connection between civil and military resistance… access to work was couched in terms of war needs, which clearly linked women's work with war production and military recruitment" (Nash 121). The spirited campaign that spouted "Women to Work" emerged from the absence of men at the job posts and women willing to fill their shoes to ensure the Nationalist's defeat. The ultramodern

[2] We also want to work. Alongside our young comrades. To go to special schools, to the universities. To have definitively the same rights as men to reciprocate the same duties. For our incorporation to the active and productive life.

stance towards women's involvement in these masculine trades was condoned in light of their usefulness to the war effort, but condemned for using their own labor as an opportunity to make social demands.

The figure of the *miliciana* that joined the male-dominated militias at the Republican warfronts represented heroism and bravery, not only in the face of fascism, but also within the ongoing fight for social change. However, the revolutionary *miliciana* became more a symbol of resistance rather than a key participant on the war front. Although social roles were changing for women, Spanish women in combat were not fully accepted into the brigades, nor amongst other participants of the war effort, including their own women's organizations. Their occupation of dangerous combat roles was deemed unfit for women and breached the boundary of the dangerous combat roles that were reserved for masculine strength and honor. Soon after initial recruitment, the Republican faction deemed the *miliciana* inappropriate, pulling women from the front lines. However, Republican forces did not dismiss the resource of willing women dedicated to the cause, and thus redirected their efforts to less dangerous, albeit gendered, jobs more suitable for women. Despite the fact women participated wholeheartedly in the war against Nationalist forces, little progress was made to advance the gendered, social constructs that hindered them from making contributions of the same magnitude as men.

Seemingly, women were making strides towards their social emancipation by expanding into the public domain via political emancipation, participation and involvement in the war through assistance on the battlefield and subsequent ancillary labor efforts. However, this mobilization was not explicitly executed under the aegis of liberation. Widening beyond the narrow confines of a Spanish woman's duty as steward of her home and family, conservative opinion was challenged to envision women in positions that surpassed their "complimentary"

roles that defined women for decades. Despite these imperative political and wartime contributions, the hesitancy that opposed women's entry into nontraditional territory demonstrated the sexism that prevailed among even the most progressive of times. Eventually, the submissive and dutiful "ángel del hogar" was politicized to replace the militarized and masculinized *miliciana* that embodied women's emancipation and claim for equality. This evocative figure personified the radical change to women's expectations, a culmination of the reformist policies of the Second Republic prior to the Civil War. However, a discontinuity of women's societal positions emerged after the outbreak of the war, which solidified the fact that women's social equality was going to be a separate battle in and of itself. The war brought an opportunity for a questioning of gender roles through the breakdown of traditional gender norms via labor efforts. Although initiatives were presented for women to benefit from this unusual circumstance, pressure from more conservative political factions and ideologically fragmented women's organizations prevented a mass mobilization of feminist cause. Despite the fact that gender roles remained largely intact, women's initiation into the war effort broadened options for gendered jobs, granting women access to the public sphere on the basis of their sex. Future feminist movements will reflect upon the legacy of the heroines of the Second Spanish Republic and the Spanish Civil War, even though full development of their compelling movement was hindered by the outcome of the war.

Promises of social change were seen to be possible through political action, however, traditional sexism undermined their efforts, similar to women's attempts for emancipation during the early years of the Second Spanish Republic. This mindset was foundational to Francisco Franco's political endeavors that overturned any advancement women achieved during the eight years of the Republican government. In terms of gendered discourse, the path to totalitarianism

was seen to be one of little resistance as the Spanish public demonstrated acceptance and preference of the conservative gender models Franco strived to infuse in his regime.

## Chapter Two: Women's Rights During the Franco Regime

This chapter will give an overview of the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, which spurred a reign of terror meant to eradicate the 'poisonous' ideals of the Spanish Republic and prepare Franco to begin the solidification of his thirty-six-year regime. I will discuss the political basis of the Francoist regime as deeply rooted in historical Catholic ideals that served as the regime's legitimation and guiding principle. Within this discussion, I will outline legal regulations that dictated women's comportment and obligations through a religious, and ultimately patriarchal, foundation. I will also present the women's arm of the Falange, the *Sección Femenina* and its intended role within Francoist Spain, which I will further extrapolate upon in the following chapter, as this chapter will assess the *Sección Femenina* as a tool for women's advocacy. Through exploration of the interaction between Franco's idealized social expectations of women and their lived realities exists a discourse that affirms the existence of women's power within the oppressive institution of the regime. However, I will argue that, although certain instances of women's resistance challenged oppressive legal measures, such examples served to reaffirm a woman's obligation to a regime still firmly rooted in patriarchal principles of an aggrandized past.

The two decades following Franco's victory were a grim period of Spanish history as recovery from the harsh feud of the Civil War forced great suffering upon the Spanish people through a decimated economy, an enormous loss of life, and a repressive regime that sought to eradicate any and all evidence of the Republic. Anyone who had mildly associated themselves with the Republican agenda, or who was connected to a known Republican, soon found themselves at the receiving end of Franco's grave resolution for Spaniards against the Nationalists. Any person found guilty of involvement with the Republican cause was subjected

to Franco's Civil War reprisals, which condemned over one-hundred thousand people to death, adding to the total of over two-hundred thousand deaths at the end of the war with some estimates totaling above five-hundred thousand (Payne 662). Many women, even if not directly involved in the conflict, found themselves behind bars and at risk of execution for simply possessing ties with known Republicans. It was clear that anyone who expressed sympathies towards Republican ideology were to be eradicated as part of Franco's plan to quickly solidify his fascist regime.

Hitler's assistance during the Civil War contributed to the Nationalist victory, but upon the disintegration of Nazi rule in post-WWII Germany, Franco was threatened by the lack of fascist regimes as his allies. Franco's one-party political system remained palatable to Western democracies by establishing a myriad of institutions that gave the illusion of democracy and constitutional legitimacy (Payne 686). As José Pemartín, a Falangist and Franco's Minister of Education, described the Nationalist movement as founded on, "…sixteenth-century Spanish Catholicism, because our national identity forged itself in that historical moment, incarnating the Catholic ideal of our Military Monarchy" (Preston 323). National-Catholicism would thus provide the regime with malleability to navigate the changing political landscape of the twentieth-century and serve as the lifeblood of Spanish nationhood. Cementing these values while attempting to remain a non-threatening, yet authoritarian power of modern Europe, Franco fused fascist organizations, such as the Falange, with Catholic organizations, to subtly integrate the regime into daily life and imbue the public with fascist ideals. In order to reconstruct the nation, it would need to be united under the guise of the "imperial Catholic past," a notion that would inspire the country to look towards Franco as the chosen *Caudillo* to restore the Catholic church as a means to Spain's reclamation of greatness.

Catholicism as the national basis reigned supreme in Franco's construction of historical reality, articulated through the notable dichotomies of pro-Franco/anti-Franco and male/female. Through this "modernization" of Spain's aggrandized past via Catholic interpretation, the regime defined the parameters of accepted social relations. Christian values were interlaced in political and legal practices and subsequently signed into law. The decrees implemented during the beginning years of Franco's reign were foundational to what determined social guidelines for the remaining decades. The combination of spiritual and political authority would then cohesively govern the most prized institution – the Spanish family – where gender roles were unequivocally demonstrated and then replicated. Catholic womanhood became essential in the construction of *la patria*, or the fatherland, which preached the ideology of separate spheres. Since the church believed in these principles, the regime wove them into its social fabric as Aurora Morcillo in her book *True Catholic Womanhood*, exemplifies, "As the regime and the Catholic church saw it, gender difference constituted the very essence of selfhood; it rendered stability and social order to the nation, and clarity of purpose to the individual" (51). Franco leaned on biblical conceptualizations of gender once the Catholic faith became the official religion of Spain and provided the moral basis for the national agenda.

Known as the *Fuero de los Españoles*, the constitution drafted in 1945 declared the state as a guardian of the Catholic religion and protector of those practicing the faith, with little acceptance for other religious doctrine. Article six said,

> La profesión y práctica de la Religión Católica, que es la del Estado español, gozará de la protección oficial. Nadie será molestado por sus creencias religiosas ni el ejercicio

> privado de su culto. No se permitirán otras ceremonias ni manifestaciones externas que la de la Religión Católica[3] (Fuero).

The Catholic faith would be the guiding principle in the creation of the family, which was protected in Article 22, granting the familial institution rights beyond human law. Special privileges were given to numerous families, and marriage was permanently binding:

> El Estado reconoce y ampara a la familia como institución natural y fundamento de la sociedad, con derechos y deberes anteriores y superiores a toda ley humana positiva. El matrimonio será uno e indisuluble. El estado protegerá especialmente a las familias numerosas[4] (Fuero).

The unit of the family is especially sacred in regimes with authoritative tendencies; Spain was no exception. The goal for the future of Spain, a nation inspired by the imperial and Catholic glory of the past, was that the family would be the building block of that grand, collective destiny. Perceived threats to this sacred order were to be eliminated. To obtain compliance, legal restrictions were authorized to support the regime's declaration as protector of those Catholic virtues that held marriage and the creation of family in such high regard.

**Political Control of Female Sexuality within a Christian Framework**

To preserve the holy entity of the family, actions that presumably undermined this standard were labelled as deviant, harmful to society, and subsequently criminalized. This

[3] The profession and practice of the Catholic religion, which is that of the Spanish State, shall enjoy official protection. No one shall be disturbed by their religious beliefs or the private exercise of their worship. No other ceremonies or external manifestations other than that of the Catholic religion will be allowed.

[4] The State recognizes and protects the family as a natural institution and foundation of society, with rights and duties prior to and superior to any positive human law. Marriage will be one and indissoluble. The state will especially protect large families.

ideology culminated in the regulation of women's bodies. Chastity was viewed as the most desirable trait that a God-honoring woman could possess. In order to promote this notion, the Franco regime referred to sixteenth-century doctrine that detailed the proper instruction and education of a woman within parameters of the Catholic faith. In addition to religious mandates, the regime turned towards eugenic discourse to promote pronatalist policies. As a result, activities that compromised a woman's reproductive ability to increase the size and strength of the Spanish nation, were outlawed. Scientific and medical discourse paired with church doctrine supplied the state with moral obligation and justification to implement repressive norms of female conduct. Sanctioned by rules of science and Catholic ideology, a woman's body was further cemented in the possession of the state, formally dictated by religious and political law.

Sex was viewed only as a means for procreation and a woman's value was defined by her ability to reproduce for the state. Therefore, her sexuality was accepted in this context only. Contrarily, men's sexuality was linked with their virility, which remained the main reason prostitution was permitted until 1956 when it was declared illegal. Women who utilized their bodies outside the sanctity of marriage were considered social deviants who rejected the divine virginity of the pious, young, and unmarried woman. Nash further explains that the prostitute's loose morality marked her as the epitome of sin, which entrenched her within the paternalistic discourse that her promiscuity rendered her undesirable due to her status as a "fallen" woman (154). Social reform for prostitutes also stemmed from the fear of infectious disease, as prostitutes were presented as a plague that brought not only social scorn, but physical ailments such as venereal disease.

Displays of sexuality that were not condoned by the regime were harshly punished. Lucía Prieto Borrego extrapolates upon the societal fear of divergent sexuality through discussion of

the regime's reaction to the supposed societal blight of prostitution in her article, "La prostitución en Andalucía durante el primer franquismo." Following the criminalization of prostitution, known prostitutes were held in facilities headed by the Patronato de Protección a la Mujer in attempts to rehabilitate women and distribute punishment. Prieto Borrego identifies this legal measure as a politicized mechanism used to shape the moral character of Spain, specifically that of its women who possessed the responsibility of nurturing the Spanish family. Through state-regulated rehabilitation efforts, the threat of the deviant and sexual woman was neutralized, which in turn elevated the pious and virginal woman of noble standing within the regime.

Another example of Franco's attempt to eradicate moral subversion lay in the fierce repression of abortion. On January 24, 1941, the Jefatura del Estado declared abortion illegal, classifying it as not only a crime against the state, but a crime against God, warranting harsh punishments for the women and medical personnel involved in the crime as Inmaculada Blasco Herranz maintains (171). Clive Beadman adds that abortion was also linked as behavior characterized by the corrupt Second Spanish Republic which had no place in Franco's idealized nation (57). A similar mindset was applied to the question of birth control as it was not sanctioned by the Catholic church and interfered with the biological prosperity of the state. Legislation regarding abortion and other birth control methods served as an opportunity to further justify Franco's crusade against Republican ideologues who tarnished the purity of the Christian country.

Spanish eugenics policies were revived during the regime, which largely influenced legislation surrounding abortion and contraception in an effort to address the declining population and the need for an increased birth rate to serve the needs of the state. The practice of abortion, as well as the use of various methods of birth control, were viewed by the regime as

barriers to achieving the *Nuevo Estado* that was populated by Spaniards loyal to the nation. In a recent article, Ricardo Campos discusses the distinctions of Hispanic eugenics. Turning towards Spanish history as shaped by a multitude of cultures, he argues that the Spanish population could not be racialized under the Franco regime. Unlike eugenics practices in Nazi Germany, Hispanic eugenics was heavily influenced by Roman Catholicism that realized its goals through the manipulation of women's bodies for procreation, rather than extermination of a targeted race. The government utilized the encyclical letter of *Casti connubbi,* which denoted the dignity of Christian marriage as laying within a husband's superiority to his wife and children. Through moral coercion and Catholicism's opposition to negative eugenics, women were mandated to avoid methodologies that would hinder the family's production of children.

**Involvement of the *Sección Femenina* in Women's Labor Legislation**

Women, whose duty it was towards the nation to birth and raise children, were responsible for the new generations that would implement Franco's vision of an eternal Spain. To ensure women operated solely within the confines of the home, laws such as the *Fuero del Trabajo* that relied upon religious gender theory, were implemented to protect men and women's respective right to gender-appropriate work. However, upon expansion of the economy in the 1950s, the *Ley de Derechos Políticos, Profesionales, y Trabajo de la Mujer*, spearheaded by the *Sección Femenina*, challenged the state's policies regarding feminine labor. This novel legal proposal promoted by the Women's Section of the fascist party – an organization that directed women's education and recreation under the Francoist state – contests the *Sección Femenina*'s role as purely propagandist within Spanish feminist scholarship. Theorists such as Victoria Enders, Pamela Radcliff, and Jessica Davidson argue the role of the *Sección Femenina* as a tool

for women's agency within a hierarchy that imposed patriarchal control. Other theorists, such as Rosario Ruiz Franco, contend that the *Sección Femenina* was a strict and oppressive institution within the Franco regime that perpetuated women's subordinate positions. This section of the chapter will explore the contested role of the *Sección Femenina* in regards to women's advocacy in the context of women's interaction with labor legislation that served to further hinder their rights.

Legal limitations passed in the first decade of the dictatorship reflected the notion that a woman's work was only acceptable within the context of homemaking, which was ensured by restriction of women's labor endeavors outside of that realm. After the Nationalist victory, women's labor rights and expectations would be centered on domestic duties. Once married, a woman's relationship to work was restricted to labor that supported a woman's responsibility of dedicating her life to rearing her children, remaining dutiful to her husband, and overall providing a foundation for the idealized Spanish family – a family loyal to the Spanish nation. The newly established Francoist state pushed pro-natalist policies, offering monetary compensation to partners intent on marriage and further incentives when they had children (Davidson 404). It was clear the regime's intentions promoted its citizenry to devote their livelihoods to strengthening the budding nation.

One of the first legal stipulations regarding women in post-Civil War Spain reinstated a nineteenth-century Civil Code that yielded household financial power to a woman's husband, requiring her to seek his permission for particular transactions. The *Fuero del Trabajo* of 1938, and another law validated in 1947 under the guise of *excedencia forzosa*, further entrenched women in legal restrictions that claimed to "liberate" them from "unfeminine" labor. by barring women from working paid jobs outside of their households once married, "…regulará el trabajo

a domicilio y libertará a la mujer casada del taller y de la fábrica"[5] (Admin). The regime even went so far as to prohibit women from certain white-collar professions regardless of their marital status. The charter further envisioned the divide of gendered realms through legal directives explained by Catholic principle. As the preamble of the decree states,

> Renovando la Tradición Católica, de justicia social y alto sentido humano que informó la legislación del Imperio,… la Revolución que España tiene pendiente y que ha de devolver a los españoles, de una vez para siempre, la Patria, el Pan y la Justicia[6] (Admin).

The work charter of 1938 further solidified the binary of gender within Christian ideals, binding women to motherhood through the defense of *men's* right to work. Morcillo explains,

> The right to work was associated with the ability to sustain the family, a task entrusted to men. Women… needed protection from the "crime" of having to work… Thus, working class women were considered first of all to be mothers, bound – as prescribed by the Catholic church – to fulfill the only purpose of Christian marriage: reproduction (34).

The *Fuero del Trabajo* made it clear that a woman's place was within the confines of her home, as multiple decrees and charters attempted to exclude women from the masculine project of intense physical and mental labor. Engaging in labor outside of the delineated boundaries would ultimately tarnish a woman's reputation and jeopardize her ability to effectively produce citizens fully dedicated to the state. Although Franco's administration drew clear lines around women's pursuit of labor, extenuating circumstances brought on by the changing times provided an

---

[5] "...it will regulate home work and free married women from the workshop and the factory."

[6] Renewing the Catholic tradition of social justice and high human sense that informed the legislation of the Empire,… the Revolution that Spain has pending must return to the Spaniards once and for all, the Fatherland, Bread, and Justice.

opportunity for women to reach beyond the limitations of current labor allowance, simultaneously challenging these seemingly steadfast constraints.

Following the conclusion of World War II in 1945, fascism was renounced with the defeat of the Axis powers. Spain was already experiencing economic difficulty amidst redevelopment following the Civil War. Due to Spain's friendliness to Nazi Germany, they were excluded from economic assistance for reconstruction under the Marshall Plan of 1947. In response to their exclusion, Franco turned inwards and relegated all economic policy under jurisdiction of the state. Aligned with Italian and German models, Franco implemented total self-sustaining policies to support the economy (Payne 246-248). The decade of the 1940's became known as "the hungry years" as the industrialization and agricultural initiatives created in hopes of bolstering Spain's economic independence failed miserably, leaving scarcity and hunger in their wake. Despite heavy economic burdens on the populace, women were still required to remain in the home. It was permitted that a woman could take up small jobs that complimented her role as a homemaker, such as mending and laundering, if her husband allowed her to take on extra duties that did not distract her from running her own home. In special instances, women were permitted to work in factories, provided her husband supplied his written consent, which was to be documented on a legalized form. Women were slowly making their way into the workforce when Spain encountered the opportunity to join international trade in the 1950s, giving up their previous policy of economic and political isolation (Payne 431). During the autarkic years of the 1940s, few women held jobs, most often out of necessity, however, to keep up with Spain's growing economy during the mid-twentieth century, working and middle-class women increasingly found themselves in the labor pool. By 1960, fifteen percent of Spanish women occupied the workforce as agricultural laborers, domestic servants, and service providers,

becoming important actors in Spain's push for economic modernization (Davidson 405). Due to the increased presence of women in the labor force, it was apparent that women needed legal protections regarding their employment. To help with their needs, women turned to the prominent women's organization of the time to advocate on their behalf, the *Sección Femenina*.

Proposed in 1961 in recognition of the emerging female workforce, the *Ley de Derechos Políticos, Profesionales, y Trabajo de la Mujer* (Law for Political, Professional, and Labor Rights for Women) indicated the beginning of an era for women's advocacy in labor campaigns. This new law, advocated for by the *Sección Femenina*, challenged nineteenth-century legislation, which was rooted in conservative opinion that monopolized the parliament and society at the time. Women gained privileges that validated their right to equal pay and condemned sex-based discrimination within their work environment. The law also guaranteed a woman's right to vote for and hold public office. Women could also vie for civil service positions through passing national exams that were formerly only available to men. This legal mandate recognized a woman's right to work in a nation that had previously, and continuously, questioned a woman's ability to perform duties apart from those placed upon her by the state. As demonstrated by the stipulations of the law, women were still considered beings not capable of full emancipation as these new privileges hinged upon the permission of her husband, thus maintaining previous policy of marital approval. They were entirely excluded from certain professions such as military service or acting as an officer of the court (Fernández 1998). Such masculine professions considered "dangerous and unhealthy" for women's general well-being, barred access for women through justification of a woman's weaker emotional and physical capabilities as Pilar Primo de Rivera, director of the *Sección Femenina* had stated, "not due to the notion of [their] lack of ability or responsibility to fill such posts, but rather to protect their feelings from certain actions

that carrying out the job would make unavoidable" (Ruiz Franco 131). Primo de Rivera maintained her stance that job opportunities should be made available to women as their homemaking duties would be enhanced with employment experience. She reassured opposing lawmakers to remain unalarmed by severing the intent of the new law from any feminist aspirations,

> … Lo que pedimos con esta ley es que la mujer empujada al trabajo, por necesidad, lo haga en las mejores condiciones posibles; de ahí que la ley en vez de ser feminista sea, por el contrario, el apoyo que los varones otorgan a la mujer como paso más flaco para facilitar la vida…[7] (Arribas 86)

Primo de Rivera emphasized the value of women's work, albeit with limitations, which was needed to support a household in addition to a man's work. Against the desires of several *cortes* members, the *Ley de Derechos Políticos, Profesionales, y Trabajo de la Mujer* was put into effect on the 15 July, 1961. Incorporation of women into the construction of Spanish society was praised by women seeking work and those who accepted the decree for the sake of Spain's modernization.

A controversial measure of legislative action, the *Sección Femenina*'s approach to women's entrance in the workforce remains convoluted. Jessica Davidson, in her article "Women, Fascism, and Work in Francoist Spain," pinpoints the *Sección Femenina* as a mediator for women's advancement and agency. Davidson contends the importance of such progressive politics, "The labour law represented an important movement away from the conservative gender ideology and expectations of the Franco regime, and established the SF as a pioneer of change"

---

[7] What we ask with this law is that the woman pushed to work, out of necessity, do so in the best possible conditions; that is why the law instead of being feminist is, on the contrary, the support that men give to women as a weak step to make life easier…

(403). The involvement of the *Sección Femenina* in such a contentious battle that pushed the boundary of a woman's place, proved the organizations commitment to women's concerns was permitted in the political and legal realm that was reserved for men. Granted this progress was implemented within a strictly patriarchal regime, the landslide legislation that was the *Ley de Derechos Políticos, Profesionales, y Trabajo de la Mujer,* established the *Sección Femenina* as a curator of change and a presence in politics unafraid to challenge women's legal restrictions in an environment hostile to women's personal advocacy.

Further extrapolating upon women's social standing, theorists Enders and Radcliff recognize the complex roles women occupied in twentieth-century Spain in their edited volume *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain*. Gender roles in Francoist Spain were carefully defined by historical interpretation and conservative ideology and were thus firmly upheld by societal expectations. Although the rigidity of these gender models was projected on the population, historical accounts reveal the complexities, and even ambiguities, that existed within women's identities as mothers and wives, identities that were configured outside of a traditional setting. Enders and Radcliff look beyond the two dichotomies that Franco attempted to construct, and assert that women established and challenged the construction of their social identities:

> While most women did not directly flout the reigning gender ideology, neither did they embody a monolithic and unchanging traditional woman, who rarely left the house, maintained complete submission to male authority, and left work and politics to her husband. Instead, many women incorporated autonomy, work, politics, and agency into their traditional identities as mothers and wives. In other words, women did not reject the

framework of traditional gender roles in order to step beyond its apparent boundaries (401).

The theorists' refused to concede to the often-employed historical perspective that women accepted passive roles in the private sphere and remained subordinate to men who occupied the public sphere, which proposes a paradoxical interpretation of Spanish social policy during the Francoist era. As demonstrated by the *Sección Femenina*'s political involvement tackling women's labor rights, women challenged the gender confines the regime initiated via political participation, opposition, and subsequent entrance into the workforce. In this context, the *Sección Femenina* moved beyond the constraints of social life and into the political sphere where it disputed its legacy of suppression and proposed further complexities.

Contradictory the *Sección Femenina* may remain, this does not detract from the fact these advancements were made with justification rooted in patriarchal ideology. Ruiz Franco, in her book *¿Eternas menores? Las mujeres en el franquismo*, agrees with Davidson's perspectives that women, in a rather paradoxical manner, did gain more freedom to join the workforce, however much those laws did reinscribe patriarchal constraints. She expands on this analysis, illustrating the development of laws throughout the regime that originally sequestered women entirely followed by a gradual allocation of rights. She asserts that this juridical order, however inclusive it may have seemed at the end of Franco's regime, still existed to guarantee men's control of women. Many of a woman's "rights" could not be obtained without requiring her husband's permission nor were they granted unless they reinscribed women to a life of servitude for family and fatherland. For example, Primo de Rivera further engraved fascist ideology by subscribing women to their marked duties, although her ideological purity faltered through her paradoxical participation in the political realm, her ultimate loyalties lay with the hierarchal and patriarchal

state. Her outspoken critiques of the labor system and mobilization of her *Sección Femenina* did challenge the outline of the submissive and family-oriented woman, however these advancements were made for the sake of strengthening the Spanish nation, which founded itself in the principles of the traditional, Catholic model intent in its preservation of the family and of the actors and its binaries that comprised that sacred unit.

Despite harsh laws implemented to keep women under patriarchal authority, several degrees, argued for by women themselves, contradict traditional views of women as submissive and weak figures within the eyes of Francoist law. Per Enders and Radcliff's assertion, it is true that women contested their social identities as demonstrated through legal reform enacted by the most distinguished women's organization of the time. Overlooking the complexity that convened between a woman's state-established responsibilities and her lived reality would unjustly disregard the efforts of women who lobbied for reform, including the convoluted and paradoxical means women went about achieving such freedoms, as Davidson reveals. By no means does Ruiz Franco's argument neglect these truths, however, it confronts the overarching fact that such improvements were authorized with the intent to support a woman's gendered duties to the state. Moreover, although women gained more freedoms than they previously possessed at the onslaught of the regime, the rights they did receive were bestowed upon them by a state still deeply embedded in patriarchal culture. Feminist movements following the demise of Franco's regime owe much of their progress to the Francoist women's efforts to expand labor rights, as Ruiz Franco maintains, however, in comparison to women's freedom of contemporary Spain, their rights far surpass those of women under the effects of the Franco regime. Through control of a woman's body and her activities before, during, and after marriage and motherhood, a woman was subjected to surrendering to men's desires and the state's need for respectable

Spanish women. By channeling energy to her performance as a homemaker, the need for personal agency yielded to the prized and God-given roles of wife and mother.

**Conclusion**

Franco harnessed the teachings and power of the church and supplanted them in his legitimacy, utilizing its moral philosophies to influence the social principles that would govern the state, especially those concerning the different responsibilities of men and women. The ideal Spanish nation was to be comprised of gendered groups – two different, yet complimentary entities essential to the restoration and function of the enduring nation. To ensure this success, legal proclamations were implemented that outlined a woman's loyalties to her husband, family, and more importantly, to the state. Her sexuality, responsibilities before and during marriage, and activities outside of the household were regulated to conceive of a woman that remained devoted to her country and its demands. The suffocating laws implemented during the course of Franco's regime in regards to women's rights restricted them to second-class citizens with little power for self-determination within a regime that valued and perpetuated patriarchal power. Women's social mobilization that challenged the established patriarchy was performed in an acceptable manner for the regime – through the channel of the *Sección Femenina* whose jurisdiction was women's concerns – such organization contradicted the gendered outlines within the fascist body politic. Although women created an opportunity to refute the laws that restricted them, their advancement did nothing to upend women's inequality that remained deeply entrenched in the patriarchal ideology that characterized the authoritarian state. These laws and women's reactions to them serve as a means to interpret Francoist gendered discourse, which

demonstrated the regime's requirements for all Spanish women to become mothers in and of the fatherland.

## Chapter Three: Gender Roles and Nationalism

The difference in ideas of gender roles between the Republicans and the Nationalists was extremely distinct. In the Republic before the Spanish Civil War, women had autonomy and liberties that were not granted during the Francoist period. The change in gender roles forced women who had fought for their liberation into restrictive duties that reflected the conservative ideals of Franco's Nationalist government. The indoctrination of Franco-Falangist ideology prompted women to create loyal families of the state that in turn perpetuated principles of social conformity, especially those of gendered constructs. Franco's government used state organizations, publications, and the Catholic church to prepare and teach women how to convert themselves into the ideal, Francoist woman. These women were the product of extensive propaganda and manipulation that promoted the function of a traditional, Spanish family through conventional gender models. Through the employment of women operating within a controlled femininity, traditional masculinities were bolstered, which paved the way to enhance an argument for the necessity of a nation conceptualized by Francisco Franco. In this chapter, the symbiotic relationship of gendered dichotomies and nationalism will be explored along the intersection of political involvement, social engagement, and religious teachings in twentieth-century Spain. This discussion will include an introduction of two sixteenth-century treatises that formulated a woman's proper education and their use within the regime. I will also expand upon the state's use of the *Sección Femenina*, which was introduced in the previous chapter, for purposes of indoctrination. The historical creation and manipulation of gender employed by Franco's regime demonstrate the use of gendered social constructs to enable the prosperity of the highly-conceptualized nation-state.

**Gender and the Nationalist State**

The development of an accepted framework that Spanish women were expected to follow is the product of a broader ideology of nationalism that carefully articulated the gendered dichotomy that existed within the social tapestry. This common binary was used to conceive the ideology that guided the development of the greater "nation" or *patria*, in Spain's case. The "nation" exists in the abstract where patriotism is extrapolated into masculine and feminine domains that are assumed to operate as separate, yet complimentary iconographies of nationalist ideology. Nation-building is an inherently "masculinist project," as described by Joan Nagel in the article "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations." The roles of citizens (distinctly, men and women) are defined by placing the interests of the nation above those of the individual, in an effort to arrive at a historically, idealized version of the state. Thus, to restore the nation to its traditional "greatness," women are called upon to participate in this nationalist-masculinist production by performing carefully fabricated civic duties alongside men, "the scripts in which these roles are embedded are written primarily by men, for men, and about men, and that women are, by design, supporting actors whose roles reflect masculinist notions of femininity and of women's proper 'place'" (243). In tandem, the two groups work to strengthen the nation, taking great care to bolster the masculinity of the male population where traditional notions of masculine power and dominance are translated in the projected image of the state.

In creating this national image, men promote a sense of uniformity between each other, which creates difference between others who do not fit the accepted mold of the masculine. These binary standards symbolically represent the power systems at play in the social order, where one group is accepted and all outlier bodies that do not fit the criteria of the established

group are thus demonized as “the Other.” In her article “Women, Nationalism and War: ‘Make Love Not War’,” Rada Iveković explains this strict hierarchy. To maintain the separation of power, this system legitimizes itself by justifying the differences between the two groups, with manipulation of gender disparity as a main point of contention. The careful creation of “the Other” serves the nation by operating as an embodiment of the enemy that must be eradicated to ensure the prosperity of the nation. Women comprise part of this subordinate group, with their acceptance among the dominant social group hinging upon the dominant group’s expectations. Within this masculine group affiliation, men attempt to control aspects of women's lives and institutionalize social relations that engender loyalties to this male-defined group. Men appropriate the abstract concept of “the woman” that is constructed to cater to the country’s needs as envisioned by men. Through this conditional acceptance, women are employed as weapons of nationalism that ultimately perpetuate their subordination whilst upholding the hetero-patriarchal hierarchy.

The traditional roles women exemplified in twentieth-century Spain demonstrated the gendered essentialism used to support a nationalist state. The dichotomized “Other” asserts her identity and allegiance to the nation via the established roles that the dominant, masculine group bestows upon her. In her book *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases,* Cynthia Enloe asserts that the common goal of a unified nation prompts women to pursue their patriotic duty and follow the rigid roles the regime had established for them. The harmony of the nation as the utmost goal is not a force to be questioned, suggesting any deviation from established roles to be divisive and against the cohesive identity of the governed society (120). The political implications that emerge from the masculine/feminine structure paints women as responsible for the biological reproduction of the nation. Nira Yuval-Davis adds to Enloe’s discussion in chapter two of her

book *Gender and Nation*. In fascist societies, women assume the task of 'reproducing the nation,' which means bearing children who must then be inculcated with national values as they will grow up to be future soldiers, mothers, and citizens of the state. Yuval-Davis states,

> …in the sex/gender systems in their societies men are dominant, women are not just passive victims, or even objects, of the ideologies and policies aimed at controlling their reproduction. On the contrary, very often it is women who are given the roles of the cultural reproducers of 'the nation' and are empowered to rule on what is 'appropriate' behaviour and appearance and what is not and to exert control over other women who might be constructed as 'deviants' (37).

Domestic duties now become politicized within this framework as reproduction and education are implemented as national duties for the sake of the state's survival. In order to ensure the continuous cycle of 'reproducing the nation,' women must undergo their own process of indoctrination that emphasizes their place as wives and mothers who at heart serve the nationalist cause. Spanish women experienced this through engagement with women's organizations that promoted the ideal conceptualization of woman.

**Gender in Nationalist Spain**

Before and during the Spanish Civil War, women enjoyed similar rights and liberties as men – the right to a divorce, the right to vote, employment rights, as well as representation within the government. Although complete equality was never achieved, the ratification of many women's rights was a step forward in terms of gender equality. As detailed in Chapter One, the political rights that women obtained was a result of the liberal politics of the Second Republic. Although the fight for women's rights was a slow process, eventually the political culture was

changed from the inside through women's own political participation and mobilization. During this period, women held the ability advocate for themselves with the law on their side. Unfortunately, these privileges did not last, and the Nationalist victory brought a drastic change to women's lives.

As the Nationalists gained power, women experienced a loss of the autonomy they had worked so diligently towards just a few years prior. Upon Franco's rise to power, the implementation of women's rights experienced a severe regression, effectively rendering women dependent on their male family members for permission to exist outside of the home. These women who once enjoyed shared freedoms with their male counterparts, now found themselves restricted to a traditional, domestic role enforced by the growing regime. This complete shift in gender roles changed the structure of civil life to reflect the conservative ideals that were revered during the dictatorship. Stripping women of civil liberties and instead emphasizing their commitments within the home began the Francoist formulation of the Spanish woman who soon saw her duties to be adjusted towards service of the state from inside the private realm.

During the early construction of Francoism, women underwent a new characterization that found its origins within the most prominent political party, the FET de las JONS. The FET de las JONS was the exclusive, presiding legal party of the Francoist regime that conducted the development of ideology during Franco's dictatorship. Following the Falangist party's foundation in 1933, the women's branch was founded a year later, amidst the turmoil of the civil war, and would remain the guiding body with authority over women's political concerns throughout the duration of Franco's regime. Appropriately named the *Sección Femenina,* or the Women's Section, this administrative division shaped Spain's expectation of femininity through women's involvement in state organizations. During the early years of the Falange, Primo de

Rivera was a respected leader among the Falangist elite, who was the only woman political leader amongst the masculine-dominated regime (Richmond 891). She worked extensively in Franco's government to orchestrate the female branch of the Falange that eventually came under total control of the FET de las JONS. Created amidst social revolution, Primo de Rivera's brother, José Antonio, founded the Falange to combat the class conflicts that riddled the Second Republic. To address these concerns, the Falange promoted the fusion of the family, the community, and the *patria* as a way to mend social tensions. In the chapter "Problematic Portraits: The Ambiguous Historical Role of the *Sección Femenina* of the Falange," Victoria Enders emphasizes the Falange's reliance on traditional Catholicism in the creation of their ideals for the ultimate goal was to redefine Spain as a Christian nation in accordance with its historical destiny as leader of the Hispanic world (376). As co-founder of the *Sección Femenina*, Primo de Rivera envisioned this new faction as a means for women to live by the same ideology that male Falangists adhered to. A reaction to the social ills of the Second Republic, Francoism based its politics in Falangist ideology and utilized changes in gender relations as a mechanism to further establish social and political ideals. Women participated in the making of the new nation under the guidance of the women's arm of the unquestioned Falange party.

As a method to diffuse the new expectations of women in Spanish society, social organizations that incorporated Christian teachings were utilized to indoctrinate all participants – women who served in the organization and those who received its benefits. According to Astrid Kromayer, Pilar Primo de Rivera promoted her beliefs that a woman should focus on service, which propelled her to implement that ideal into the framework of education for young women. The mandate required participation in the *Sección Femenina* for a minimum of six months, emphasizing community service as an important element of their education within the branch.

Due to the emphasis on social service, the *Auxilio Social,* or Social Aid, was a central aspect of the *Sección Femenina* that worked to provide social services, such as childcare assistance for working mothers and orphans, medical attention and food for underprivileged persons and injured soldiers, as well as conducting academic, nutritional, and agricultural classes for their attendees (Kromayer 343). It was mostly poor women and children who received these welfare services under the direction of the Spanish state. Those being served were among the "vanquished" or disenfranchised persons, who were largely affiliated with the Second Republic and represented the epitome of Spain's national crisis. In her article "Memories and Resistance," Angela Cenarro writes that those who sought assistance were first required to engage with the pro-fascist ideology that the emerging state sought to achieve, including the Catholic teachings that demarcated the limitations of women's roles in and outside of the domestic sphere. Cenarro maintains the *Auxilio Social* was wielded as a tool to provide social assistance to struggling Spaniards, not only fostering an appreciation for the new state as a means to curb potential social upheaval against the new order, but simultaneously it imbued in the previously "fallen women," with the redefined expectations of the appropriate Spanish woman. This site of social engagement became a nexus to build the "national community" that embodied the burgeoning Spanish state, "According to this totalitarian scheme, welfare sought to incorporate the masses into the state; individuals were not conceived as subjects entitled to social rights but as members of a hierarchically ordered, state-controlled 'national community'" (41). Social aid coincided with the expectation of women's work, relegating this national service to women's responsibility.

The collective effort of all participants to assume the state-sponsored feminine identity, physically and ideologically created through one's involvement in the *Auxilio Social,* allowed a

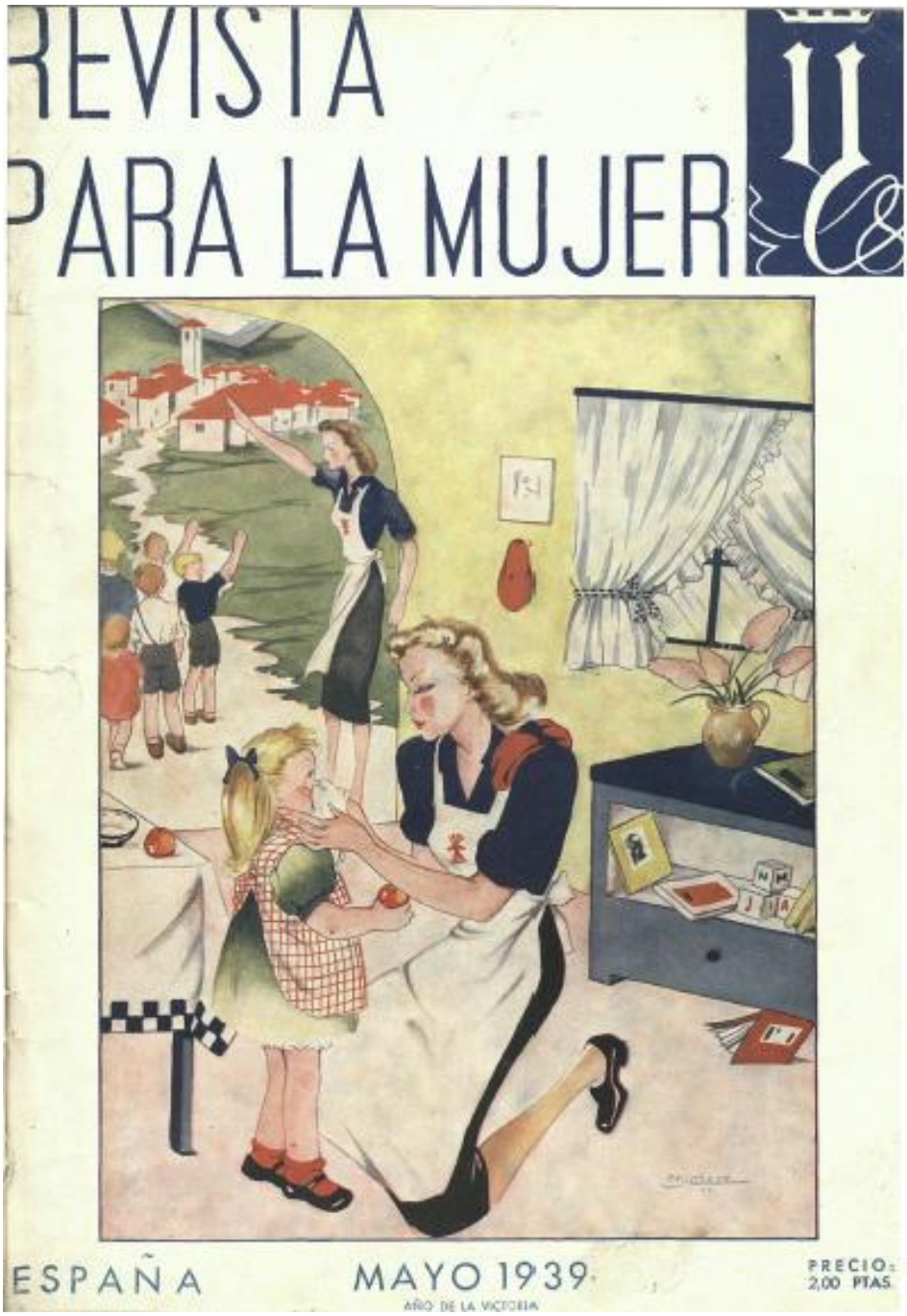
woman to find her place within Spain's new order, eventually implementing this indoctrination into her own life as a dutiful wife and mother for the nation. Women became an essential component to the early functioning of Franco's regime through their participation in the deployment of state sponsored welfare and propaganda. Throughout a woman's service, Franco's nationalist ideals of the strict limitations of femininity were instilled in each participant, as they simultaneously felt they were making contributions to the improvement of society with their collaboration in the creation of the "New Spain".

Propaganda in the form of publications were used to visually present the regime's idealization of womanhood. One example of this was the monthly publication of the *Sección Femenina*, the "Y", among other magazines and brochures such as "Hogares Rurales" and "Juventudes" that Franco's government and the *Sección Femenina* used to target wider audiences and solidify the acceptance of these new and radical ideals (Kromayer 344). These publications provided instruction on proper behavior and advertised the work of the *Sección Femenina* and *Auxilio Social* to teach women how to be better wives and mothers to ultimately prepare them for the sole duty as caretaker. These magazines promoted family as the building block of society, directing women to a role of domesticity, while actively degrading women's work outside the home by prefacing it as a social ill meant to harm women's health and motherhood. These magazines literally illustrated the model of the perfect Spanish womanhood. Marichu de la Mora, director of the "Y" journal asserted upon its first publication,

> It contains everything we need: our codes of conduct, based on the spirit of the new Spain, guidance for us to adhere to examples to follow, and, mixed with spiritual inspiration, our magazine also features a children's corner, pages of chores, fashion, and cooking. In short, everything we women need (Nationalist Faction).

Various images from the "Y" depict women in caretaking roles, including multiple spreads advertising the accepted service roles of the *Sección Femenina* (Image 2). Idyllic drawings of domestic women amidst tranquil backdrops, characterize them as mothers raising children to become future citizens that will bring strength to the *patria*, as seen on the cover of the "Y". These magazines exemplified women as devoted and religious wives and mothers that served the interest of the new Spain in their expected roles of submission and selflessness.


"Social Aid", Y: The National Female Unionist Magazine, No.1, February 1938.




Claret, María, cover of Y: The National Female Unionist Magazine. No. 16, May 1939.

**Women and Catholicism**

The emphasis on religion in Franco's construction of the nation operated as a crucial theme amongst the Nationalist discourse that permeated women's indoctrination. Franco and his government redefined what it meant to be a woman during twentieth-century Spain. The most important of these characteristics was a woman's unification with the Catholic church. Religious doctrine guided the Spanish woman in the care of her children, her husband, and her household. In the article, "Sexual Politics: Women and Social Change," Helen Graham notes the difference of opinion this prompted for Spanish women. Republican women viewed this notion as a step backwards from the independent woman they had painstakingly created. However, women of the Nationalist cause viewed this regression as a return to a tradition that women should gladly be a part of – the private family and loyalty to God (182). Pilar Primo de Rivera encouraged women to remain dutiful to her traditional role of caring for her family, placing an emphasis on the importance of motherhood, "the only mission that women have in the *patria* is to be at home" (Carbayo-Abengózar 81). The state reinforced separate spheres of gender through the institution of the Catholic church, which further legitimized the existence of the regime. Catholic teachings adopted by the *Sección Femenina* set the tone for women as servants to the *patria* through self-sacrifice and service of the common good.

The two texts the Franco regime relied upon to construct Spanish women's ideal behavior revived the respectable figure of the Renaissance woman. The treatises of Juan Luis Vives' *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana*, (1523), and Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada* (1583) were utilized to position the status of women within Spain's glorious, Catholic past and to weaponize their analyses of female character as a representation of the woman best suited to serve the new Spanish nation. Vives and de León's commentary regarding women's vices and

virtues became the blueprint of women's comportment and education during the Francoist period due to their heavy reliance on qualities revered by the Catholic church.

> A large portion of Vives' treatise emphasizes the importance of a woman's purity,
>
> Si la mujer pensara exclusivamente en ello, sería una guardiana más atenta y mas cuidadosa de su castidad; si ella sola permanece incólume, todas las demás virtudes están a buen recaudo, pero, si se pierde, todas las restantes se desvanecen con ella[8]
>
> (Valenciana).

The revival of the historical Renaissance woman coincides with Franco's desire to restore Spain to its national glory experienced during that time period. The preserved virtue of the Spanish woman would indicate her as worthy of a husband and marriage, which Aurora Morcillo identifies in her book as a woman's ultimate goal (39). Marriage then becomes the bridge toward motherhood, where the Spanish woman, established as virtuous and beholden to God and her country, is prepared to procreate for *la patria*. Through her prolific reproduction, the Spanish mother is converted to an essential agent of the nation's strength and continuity.

Women received the responsibility of defending the *patria* by developing her household through her role as wife and mother. To raise children, the presence of the government and social hierarchy were taken into consideration, as boys were raised to become head of the household and girls to become housewives. Aurora Morcillo explains in the chapter "Shaping True Catholic Womanhood: Francoist Educational Discourse on Women," the responsibility to have children for the *patria* was imposed upon married women, which created a system to continually produce new children, or new bodies loyal to the state. A large part of this indoctrination began in the

[8] If the woman were to think exclusively about it, she would be a more attentive and careful guardian of her chastity; if she alone remains untouched, all other virtues are in good stewardship, but if it is lost, all the remaining virtues disappear with her.

home, where mothers raised their children, making it essential that women learned and understood the expected obligations both men and women had (55). The restoration of Spain's glorified Catholic past resided in the miniature reflection of society at large – the family. Enloe maintains that a woman asserted her national identity through traditional feminine roles, with the creation of her family being the most highly regarded (109). The preparation of women to be mothers and wives was essential to the restoration of the authentic values that governed the past Christian kingdom, thus bolstering the preservation of traditional feminine values within the parameters of the Catholic church. The rigid gender roles taught within the private sphere of the Spanish family constituted a great portion of the constructed unity of Franco's idealist Spain. The reliance on women as homemakers was an essential means to promote the family as the main constituent of the nation-state under Franco's control.

Famous religious figures were used as a means of instruction and a method to relate to the public. Spain's historical connection with Christianity continues to reside in the notion that Spain as a whole, exists under the protection of the Virgin Mary. As the Mother of God, and therefore the mother of Spain, the nucleus of the *patria* must exist within the familial structure, "…it is a different narrative based upon the `uniqueness' of Spanish identity, the repeated `way of being'…, founded on the myths of common origin and a mythical common destiny" (Carbayo-Abengózar 85). Franco's emphasis of the pure, Catholic woman placed the responsibility of upholding the purity of the nation in the hands of wives and mothers who were a key component of the properly cultivated Spanish family. By emphasizing the role Catholicism had in Spain's lengthy history, the importance of the Godly, Christian mother became immortalized in Spanish doctrine, which was deployed through instruction performed by the *Sección Femenina* that made use of historic and religious figures as examples for women to follow and admire. Saint Teresa

became the patron saint of the *Sección Femenina* due to her religious devotion, however a more sanitized version was promoted to the branch that excluded Saint Teresa's role as a religious reformer (Graham 191). In a journal article, Inbal Ofer explains the glorified images of feminine figures. Queen Isabella I, "La Católica", was idolized among the *Sección Femenina* for her role in uniting Spain with her marriage to Ferdinand II of Aragon. Her efforts of establishing Catholicism as the dominant religion during her reign (667), as well as her roles of serving as a devoted queen, wife, and mother, were revered. The circumstances of her roles in the unification of Spain converted her into the ultimate Spanish woman that not only served her country, but her family in alignment with the Catholic church.

The Virgin Mary also served as the greatest example of Spanish womanhood, where motherhood and purity intersected. Franco's goal was to create a *patria* that was pure, a country devoted to its historical greatness where all alien aspects existed outside of this perfect, pastoral realm. In her article, "Shaping Women: National Identity Through the Use of Language in Franco's Spain," Mercedes Carbayo-Abengózar explains the embodiment of this perfection was epitomized in the female body (90). Virginity remained an esteemed characteristic of the female form, lending its sanctity to be utilized as a means to control sexuality. A woman's sexuality was manipulated through the event of *noviazgo*, or engagement that brought the tranquil unity of marriage, ushering in the security of the familial unit (84). Traditional gender identities rely on the supposed natural instincts of the woman, who will thus begin work as a natural wife, mother, and defender of the *patria*. The aspect of purity in this traditional gender model rejects the sexual lewdness of Republican women that tarnished the image of Spain. A woman that condemns those vile actions, further sacrificing her individuality for the improvement of her nation, serves as a building block for her nation's future. This expectation reinforces the gendered binary that

the nation-state relies on for its continual pristine and uncontaminated existence. The extrapolation of the "pure" woman expands to the whole of the country as her efforts to suppress her sexuality translate to the perceived cleanliness of the nation.

**Conclusion**

The Francoist government of twentieth-century Spain manipulated traditional gender roles to promote nationalism, reflecting the conservative ideals of the Nationalist government. The pinnacle of Spanish womanhood was imbued through the use of state organization, publications, and the teachings of the Catholic church that upheld conventional gender models. The perpetuation of these Nationalist ideals through gendered dichotomies served to bolster traditional masculinities and enhance the argument for the necessity of nationhood. The symbiotic relationship of gender and nationalism illustrates the power systems that converge within the hetero-patriarchal order, where male citizens are accepted, and all other bodies that do not fit the established criteria are demonized through their "otherness". The purposeful involvement of women in state-led organizations, such as the *Sección Femenina*, may seem counterintuitive to the conceptualized social spheres that separated men and women into dichotomized public and private realms. In the article, "'Sección Femenina' y 'Acción Católica': la movilización de las mujeres durante el franquismo", Inmaculada Blasco-Herranz contends that this confined arena where women were authorized to carry out heavily involved public roles, was the only manner in which Franco's anti-feminist regime could conceive of women's participation in nation-building outside of the home. Such blatant participation of the female population was not overlooked, but rather sanctioned for the sake of indoctrination,

> Su objetivo general era contribuir a la construcción del Estado franquista, es decir, tuvieron una función política, aunque la desempeñaron por la única vía que un régimen antifeminista y jerárquico, excluyente de la participación de las mujeres en política, podía concebir y permitir[9] (58).

Assuming a more masculinized role did not discount a woman's femininity as this conduct operated within the socially constructed scope of a woman's nationalist duty. These duties were envisioned to be achieved through separate spheres that were promoted through women's participation in more public roles that still satisfied gendered archetypes and contributed to the overall goals of state unity and strength. Although women did not fully enjoy the freedoms awarded men within this hierarchy, they were still recognized as contributing members to the national order. Ultimately, if a woman's work was deemed useful to the construction of the regime, work and activity that negated her position in the traditional sense, while paradoxically enforcing it, was permitted. This convoluted concession adhered to the regime's strict gendered constructions as it simultaneously perpetuated women's subordination while upholding the hetero-patriarchal structure through approved roles and civic participation.

The historical administration of gendered constructs deployed by Francoism, demonstrate the use of these social constructs to enable the prosperity of a nationalist state. This essay highlights the importance of examining gender and its intersection with political involvement, social engagement, and religious teachings in the development of the nation-state. Understanding the construction of gender roles during the Francoist period can inform contemporary discussions on the perpetuation of gendered dichotomies and their implications within nationalism. By

[9] Their general objective was to contribute to the construction of the Franco State, that is, they had a political function, although they played it by the only way that an anti-feminist and hierarchical regime, excluding the participation of women in politics, could conceive and allow.

recognizing the role gender plays in nationalist discourse, a more inclusive conversation can be shaped that appreciates the power of gender diversity in future discussions.

In Francoist Spain, these dichotomies were utilized to unite Spanish citizens under one common goal of reconstructing the nation through the traditionalist lens that viewed Spain as the world-dominating power it once was in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Franco and his supporters viewed the progressive Republican values as a blight on Spain's legacy, therefore prompting an aggressive regression towards conservatism. This reflected in the reconfiguration of gender roles, emphasizing a strict code of conduct that expected women to return to the primary status of caregiver who served her family, her community, and consequently, her nation. Franco diffused women's social and political power through the use of social organizations that spouted indoctrination in conjunction with the teachings of the Catholic church.

## Conclusion

Franco's death in 1975 marked the end of a thirty-six-year long dictatorship characterized by extreme political repression and strict gender codes. Women especially, felt the consequences of the oppressive regime that restricted their liberties and, in turn, funneled their livelihoods into strengthening the Spanish State. The severe reversal of women's rights upon the installment of the regime demonstrates the sharp ideological divisions that characterized the liberal Second Spanish Republic and the fascist-leaning FET y de las JONS. Although legal measures between the two governments diverged regarding women's full emancipation, traditional mindsets in terms of women's abilities and freedoms permeated both factions. Although the progressivism of the Republican coalition fostered promise for women's social advancement, this prejudice undermined their movement and left women wanting for the liberation they expected and fought for, both in parliament and on the battlefield. Legal codes during the regime criminalized a woman's personal freedoms and denoted her mandatory responsibilities, which were meant to uphold the core values of Franco's nationalist project. Centered within historical Catholic doctrine, the laws imposed upon women reflected the conservative ideology that firmly tied women to a submissive and self-sacrificing position within the social fabric. Expected to devote her life to serving her family, *patria*, and God, women were indoctrinated through mandatory participation in social organizations, such as the *Sección Femenina* that managed women's concerns under the eye of the regime. Women's utilization of the *Sección Femenina* as a tool for advocacy offers a paradoxical interpretation of the Women's Section's purpose within Francoist society. Although women used this organization as a means for mobilization for an inherently feminist cause, these advancements were accepted in recognition that women's homemaking skills would be enhanced and thus her commitment to the state was reinforced. By positioning

women as instruments of social influence within the domestic sphere, Spanish women were employed to invigorate the nation-building project of Franco's idealized *Estado Español*. The Second Spanish Republic and Franco's regime adhered to vastly different beliefs that completely transformed Spain in the span of two generations. In order to proceed following such drastic change, it was time to give voice to the Spanish people once again.

This thesis details one aspect of the social and political reactions of two distinct eras of Spanish history. However, this body of work does not investigate the time period following the culmination of Francisco Franco's dictatorship. The Spanish Transition (1975-1978) saw the rollback of many archaic policies that prevented Spain from receiving the benefits of full social, political, and economic participation on the world stage. Omar Encarnación in the article "Spain after Franco: Lessons in Democratization", explains that almost immediately following Franco's death, social and political pressure pushed to dissolve the regime and a constitutional monarchy that incorporated a democratically elected parliament government replaced the authoritarian government. The Constitution of 1978 repealed de facto laws that consolidated Franco's power and advocated for justice, freedom, equality, and political pluralism as the new system's core values. Reminiscent of the commitments the Second Republic had to the Spanish people, the new constitution ensured its democratic responsibility to the public.

Women's involvement in the Second Spanish Republic and Franco's regime differed immensely. Following the fluctuation of women's eligibility for civic participation during prior decades, Spanish women during the transition years encountered a new social attitude that confronted the heteronormative and misogynistic patterns that previously pervaded Spanish society. A notable development was the sexual revolution that coincided with the liberation of Spanish government mixed with the integration of international ideas. The *destape* or

"unveiling" of Spain occurred in light of the recent sexual and political freedoms the offered new commodities previously shunned under Franco's rule. The proliferation of erotic media, especially pornographic displays of women, symbolized the liberalization of the country. It was clear that following Franco's death, the Spanish public did not have any intention to revive the dictatorship. Study of the aftermath of Spain's expansion, especially the expression of sexuality, would provide interesting material in comparison to the harsh repression of sexuality during the regime. The drastic shift in political ideology and sociological practice could perhaps offer insight to the people's opinion of the Francoist regime that was not allowed to be expressed beforehand.

The scholarship that appears in this work presents a perspective that excludes the voices of many who were affected by implementation of laws that intended to enfranchise and then disenfranchise them. Most of this research appeared following the dissolution of the dictatorship, as rhetoric that critiqued or questioned the regime immediately deemed the commentator suspicious or in extreme cases, a traitor to the state. Although slowly investigated at first, research compiling the voices of women who lived through an influential period of history has contributed to feminist studies of today. In true feminist fashion, scholarship is incomplete without considering the lived realities of the women subjected to such brutal and unforgiving repression. Did their lives fully mirror Franco's romantic formulation of womanhood? Did their loyalties align with the Spanish State's as Franco had intended? What were their opinions about the prescribed femininity during those decades, and did they change? What were their thoughts when the Republic fell and the Nationalists acquired full political power? Did they anticipate this outcome? My understanding of this influential time period remains limited to the larger social and political reactions that occurred rather than those on a more intimate basis. Investigation of

the actualities of women's lives and their engagement with the Francoist regime's core beliefs will unearth the voices of women who had been silenced for too long.

These reactions, realities, and thoughts will continue to live within the women, children, and grandchildren who experienced these historical moments and who continue to live in a society that is a product of them. I am privileged to have resided in Spain on two separate occasions, learning the language and discovering a culture that is proud of its traditions and aware of their origins. My time abroad has provided me moments of observation and education that fed my appreciation and knowledge of the Spanish language, while simultaneously engaging my curiosity of gender studies. Each visit, I encountered Spanish women of all ages with a fierce commitment to feminism. My engagement with feminists of the Hispanic world in conferences, seminars, marches, and mobilizations fostered continual admiration of these women. My questions as to where their ferocity originated was answered upon my initial investigations of Francisco Franco's regime. It became apparent that their participation in this movement was considered a right not to be taken for granted. The oppression of women's freedoms during the twentieth-century culminated in a widespread, fearless, and ceaseless display of solidarity with their loved ones of the past, present, and future Spain.

# Bibliography

Admin. “Fuero Del Trabajo - 9 de Marzo de 1938.” *Torre de Babel Ediciones*, 20 Apr. 2022, e-torredebabel.com/fuero-del-trabajo-9-de-marzo-de-1938/.

Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado. *Leyes Fundamentales del Reino*. Presidencia del Gobierno, 21 April 1967, https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1967-40312, Accessed 17 November 2023.

Alexander, Gerard. “Women and Men at the Ballot Box: Voting in Spain’s Two Democracies.” *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1999, pp. 349–374.

Arribas, Manrique J.C. “La educación física Femenina y el ideal de mujer en la étapa franquista.” *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte* vol. 3, no. 10, 2003, pp. 83–100, http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista10/artmujer.htm.

Beadman, Clive. “Abortion in 1940s Spain: the social context.” *Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2002, pp. 55–66.

Borrego, Lucía Prieto. “La prostitución en Andalucía durante el primer franquismo.” *Baetica. Estudios de Arte, Geografía e Historia*, no. 28, 2006, pp.665–687.

Campos, Ricardo. “Entre la ciencia y la doctrina católica: Eugenesia, matrimonio y sexualidad en el primer franquismo.” *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, vol. 40, 2018. pp. 51–71.

Carbayo-Abengózar, Mercedes. “Shaping Women: National Identity Through the Use of Language in Franco’s Spain.” *Nations & Nationalism*, vol. 7, no. 1, Jan. 2001, pp. 75-92.

Cenarro, Ángela. “Memories of Repression and Resistance: Narratives of Children Institutionalized by Auxilio Social in Postwar Spain.” *History and Memory*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2008, pp. 39–59.

Congreso de los Diputados. “Constitución de la República Española: 9 de Diciembre de 1931.” 1931, https://www.congreso.es/docu/constituciones/1931/1931_cd.pdf.

Cuevas, Tomasa. “Chapter 7: The Dynamiter: Rosario Sanchez Mora at Durango.” *Prison of Women: Testimonies of War and Resistance in Spain, 1939-1975*, translated and edited by Mary E. Giles, State University of New York Press, 1998, pp. 57–66.

Davidson, Jessica. “Women, Fascism and Work in Francoist Spain: The Law for Political, Professional and Labour Rights.” *Gender & History*, vol. 23, no. 2, August 2011, pp. 401-414.

Encarnación, Omar G. “Spain after Franco: Lessons in Democratization.” *World Policy Journal*, vol. 18, no. 4, 2001, pp. 35–44. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40209776. Accessed 1 Dec. 2023.

Enders, Victoria L. and Pamela Beth Radcliff. “General Conclusion.” *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain*, edited by Enders Victoria Lorée, and Pamela Beth Radcliff, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1999, pp. 399–406.

Enders, Victoria L. “Problematic Portraits: The Ambiguous Historical Role of the *Sección Femenina* of the Falange.” *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain*, edited by Enders Victoria Lorée, and Pamela Beth Radcliff, State University of New York Press, 1999. pp. 375-397.

Enloe, Cynthia H. “Chapter 3: Nationalism and Masculinity: The Nationalist Story Is Not Over - and It Is Not a Simple Story.” *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2014, pp. 83–124.

Fernández, Celia Valiente. “La Liberalización Del Régimen Franquista: La Ley de 22 de Julio de 1961 Sobre Derechos Políticos, Profesionales y de Trabajo de La Mujer.” *Historia Social*, no. 31, 1998, pp. 45–65. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40340675. Accessed 17 Oct. 2023.

Folleto Unión de Muchachas españolas, pp. 6 y 7. Gráficas Valencia intervenido, UGT, CNT, ilustraciones: Juana Francisca, archivo IR, No Reg. AIR 748.F.055.

Franco, Rosario Ruiz. “El Canto Del Cisne de La Sección Femenina de FET y de Las JONS.” *Ayer*, no. 102, 2016, pp. 121–43. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24759458. Accessed 17 Oct. 2023.

Franco, Rosario Ruiz. *¿Eternas menores? Las mujeres en el franquismo*, Biblioteca Nueva, Madrid, Spain, January 2007.

“Fuero de Los Españoles de 17 de Julio de 1945.” *Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes*, 2015, www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/fuero-de-los-espanoles-de-17-de-julio-de-1945-/.

Garcia-Sampedro, Marta. “The Pedagogical Missions: An Innovative, Educational and Social Intervention During the Second Spanish Republic (1931–1936).” *Prima Educatione*, vol. 1, no. 71, January 2018, pp.71–80.

Gayubas, Augusto. “Segunda República En España: Contexto, historia y análisis.” *Enciclopedia Humanidades*, 2 Oct. 2023, humanidades.com/segunda-republica-en-espana/.

Graham, Helen. “Sexual Politics: Women and Social Change.” *Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction: The Struggle for Modernity*, edited by Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, pp. 99–115.

Herranz, Inmaculada Blasco. “‘Sección Femenina’ y ‘Acción Católica’: la movilización de las mujeres durante el franquismo.” *Gerónimo de Uztariz*, no. 21, 2005, pp. 55-66.

Herranz, Inmaculada Blasco. “Actitudes de las mujeres bajo el primer Franquismo: La práctica del aborto en Zaragoza durante los años 40.” *Arenal*, vol. 6 no. 1, Jan-Jun 1999, pp. 165–180.

Iveković, Rada. “Women, Nationalism and War: ‘Make Love Not War.’” *Hypatia*, vol. 8, no. 4, 1993, pp. 113–126.

Keene, Judith. “‘Into the Clear Air of the Plaza’: Spanish Women Achieve the Vote in 1931.” *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1999, pp. 325–347.

Kromayer, Astrid. “The ‘Sección Femenina’ of Spain.” *Hispania*, vol. 50, no. 2, 1967, pp. 342–345.

Lannon, Frances. “Women and Images of Women in the Spanish Civil War.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 1, 1991, pp. 213–28. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.2307/3679037. Accessed 13 Nov. 2023.

Lavender, Catherine J. “Notes on New Womanhood.” Prepared for Students in HST 386: Women in the City, Department of History, the College of Staten Island/ CUNY, 1998, https://web.archive.org/web/20141028054812/https://csivc.csi.cuny.edu/history/files/lavender/386/newwoman.pdf, Accessed 21 November 2023.

Mangini, Shirley. “Part One: Spanish Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.” *Memories of Resistance: Women’s Voices from the Spanish Civil War*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1995, pp. 1–39.

Morcillo Gómez, Aurora. “Chapter 2: The Francoist Recovery of Tradition.” *True Catholic Womanhood: Gender Ideology in Franco’s Spain*, Northern Illinois University Press, Dekalb, IL, 2008, pp. 27–45.

Morcillo Gómez, Aurora. “Chapter 2: Shaping True Catholic Womanhood: Francoist Educational Discourse on Women.” *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain* edited by Victoria Lorée Enders and Pamela Beth Radcliff, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1999, pp.51–69.

Nagel, Joane. “Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, Mar 1998, pp. 242-269.

Nash, Mary. “Chapter 3: Women’s Organizations During the War.” *Defying Male Civilization: Women in the Spanish Civil War*, Arden Press, Denver CO, 1995, pp. 63–99.

Nash, Mary. “Chapter 4: ‘Milicianas’ or Homefront Heroines: Women’s Place in the War.” *Defying Male Civilization: Women in the Spanish Civil War*, Arden Press, Denver CO, 1995, pp. 101–139.

Nash, Mary. “Chapter 5: Survival in Wartime: The Changing Boundaries of Public and Private.” *Defying Male Civilization: Women in the Spanish Civil War*, Arden Press, 1995, pp. 141–176.

Nationalist Faction, The. *Museo Nacional Centro De Arte Reina Sofía*, https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/research-projects/women-civil-war/nationalist-faction.

Ofer, Inbal. “Historical Models, Contemporary Identities: The Sección Femenina of the Spanish Falange and Its Redefinition of the Term ‘Femininity.’” *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2005, pp. 663–674.

Osborne, Raquel. “La sexualidad como frontera entre presas políticas y presas communes bajo los Nazis y el franquismo.” *Política y Sociedad*, vol. 46, num. 1 y 2, 2009, pp. 57–77.

Passmore, Kevin. “Chapter 1: ‘A and not A’: What is fascism?” *Fascism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2014, pp. 1–21.

Payne, Stanley G. “Political Violence During the Spanish Second Republic.” *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 25, 1990, pp.269–288.

Payne, Stanley G. “Conclusion.” *Fascism in Spain: 1923-1977*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1999, pp. 469–481.

Payne, Stanley G. “Chapter 18: The Regime at Mid-Passage, 1950-1959.” *The Franco Regime: 1936-1975*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 2011, pp. 413–461.

Payne, Stanley G. “Chapter 25: The Second Spanish Republic.” *A History of Spain and Portugal, vol. 2*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1973, pp. 630–643, https://libro.uca.edu/payne2/index.htm.

Payne, Stanley G. “Chapter 26: The Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939.” *A History of Spain and Portugal, vol. 2*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1973, pp. 645–662, https://libro.uca.edu/payne2/index.htm.

Payne, Stanley G. “Chapter 28: Spain in the Franco Era.” *A History of Spain and Portugal, vol. 2*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1973, pp. 684–712, https://libro.uca.edu/payne2/index.htm.

Preston, Paul. “Chapter 13: Basking in Glory: The Axis Partnership, April-September 1939.” *Franco: A Biography*, Harper Collin’s Publishers, New York, NY, 1994, pp. 323–342.

Puigvert, Lídia. “Chapter 2: Dialogic Feminism: ‘Other Women’s’ Contributions to the Social Transformation of Gender Relations.” *Counterpoints*, vol. 242, 2001. pp. 29–60. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42976713. Accessed 23 Nov. 2023.

Richmond, Kathleen. “Women and Spanish Fascism: The Women’s Section of the Falange. *1934–1959”*. *The Journal of Modern History.* vol. 77, no. 4, 2005, pp. 881-1212.

Ryan, Lorraine. “A Case Apart: The Evolution of Spanish Feminism.” *Feminisms Within and Without*, National Women’s Studies Centre, Galway, 2006, pp. 56–68.

Sánchez, José M. “The Second Spanish Republic and the Holy See: 1931-1936.” *The Catholic Historical Review,* vol. 49, no.1, Apr. 1963, pp.47–86, https://www.jstor.org/stable/25017192.

Schatz, Sara. “Democracy’s breakdown and the rise of fascism: the case of the Spanish Second Republic, 1931-6.” *Social History*, vol. 26, no. 2, May 2001, pp. 145–159.

Schmoll, Brett. “Solidarity and Silence: motherhood in the Spanish Civil War.” *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, 2014, pp. 475–489.

Stafford, Katherine O. “The Myth of Marisol in Twenty-First-Century Spanish Cultural Production.” *Journal of Gender and Sexuality Studies / Revista de Estudios de Género y Sexualidades*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2018, pp. 63–75. *JSTOR*, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/jgendsexustud.44.2.0063. Accessed 4 Dec. 2023.

Valenciana, Generalitat. “Biblioteca Valenciana Digital.” *Bivaldi.Gva.Es*, DIGIBÍS, 1 Jan. 1970, bivaldi.gva.es/en/corpus/unidad.do?idCorpus=1&idUnidad=10075&posicion=1.

Villanueva, Laura Vicente. “Teresa Claramunt (1862-1931). Propagadora de La Causa de Los Oprimidos.” *Historia Social*, no. 53, 2005, pp. 31–46. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40340954. Accessed 19 Nov. 2023.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. “Chapter 2: Women and the Biological Reproduction of the Nation.” *Gender & Nation*, Sage Publications, 1999, pp. 26–38.