

The Construction of Spanish Masculine Identities from 1898-1936

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During the early 1930s, Spain was in turmoil. With the conclusion of the Spanish-American War in 1898, Spain ceded the last of its overseas colonies. This cessation of territory represented a crushing humiliation in an era when a nation measured its strength, and the strength of other nations, by the size of its empire. In the eyes of Spaniards, the Spanish-American war officially ended Spanish legitimacy on the international stage.¹ Because of this defeat, Spanish society began turning its attention inward, speculating where the blame lay in the decline of an empire that once encompassed a significant portion of Europe and nearly all of South and Central America.² In the beginning of this inward examination, explanations came from multiple political factions including Anarchists, Monarchists, Socialists, Conservatives, and Republicans, addressing a number of social, religious, political, and economic issues. The debate intensified through the 1930s as all sides blamed one another for the nation's decline. Many of these discourses, in the form of pamphlets, speeches, and political posters, carried an undercurrent of gendered language, either demeaning a group's masculinity or validating it, thus creating irreparable rifts between the many factions in Spain, making civil war more possible.

One of these gendered debates formed between the Republican faction and the Catholic Church. In the 1930s, the Catholic Church represented the most powerful spiritual institution and one of the most formidable economic and political entities in Spain. In terms of personnel, the Church counted "about 20,000 monks, 60,000 nuns and 35,000 priests... [Counting] 5,000 religious communities, of which 1,000 were monasteries, the rest convents."³ Although the Cortes, Spain's lawmaking body, first began passing laws in the 1830s in an attempt to curb the Church's power in Spain, the religious institution still commanded great wealth and control within Spain one hundred years later. One conservative estimate stated that the Catholic Church possessed one-third of all wealth in Spain which included "Forty-three of the largest industrial and financial enterprises and public utilities in Spain."⁴ Not

¹ Enrique Sanabria, *Republicanism and Anticlerical Nationalism in Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 123.

² *Ibid.*, 123, 144.

³ Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Modern Library, 2001), 47.

⁴ Reginald Dingle, "Democracy" in *Spain*, vol. 1-3, *Pamphlets on the Spanish Civil War* (London: Burns Oates & Washington Ltd., 1936-1939), microfilm, 6.

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only did the Church control a vast network of wealth, it also controlled education and the spiritual welfare of the Spanish people.

All of these factors meant the Church held significant influence over the population, especially women, due to the relationship between the clergy and women.⁵ Because of this influence over the population, coupled with the conservative disposition of the Church, the Republicans directed much of their debate against the Church, asserting that the Catholic Church interfered with the “the power and virility of Spanish men.”⁶ The Republicans argued that the Church upset the family structure stating, “Our children, [and] our wives are taught and governed by our enemies...of liberty, of progress...There are so many locations, so much money, so many pulpits...so many confessionals in which they can speak ...the education of 200,000 children, of 600,000 young girls, the addresses of millions of women: this is their colossal machinery. The unity that (they) can generate is enough to alarm even the State.”⁷ Priests often visited the homes of families and many Republicans felt that this undermined a husband’s duties, arguing that, although husbands were considered the heads of the household, the clergy often had the most influence in the home because husbands and fathers worked, leaving the clergy to influence the family in the husband’s absence.⁸ One critic of the Catholic Church characterized marriage as a three-member conglomerate, rather than the traditional union between two people, with the husband assuming the masculine traits of aggressiveness and virility, the wife possessing the meekness traditional to her gender, and the clergy which “born a man and strong,” took the guise of a woman.⁹ By blending the two genders, the clergyman, according to Michelet, placed himself as the conduit between the husband and wife, but instead of being an unbiased player in the marriage, the clergyman usually took on the protection of the wife from the husband in order to mold the husband into the man the woman and clergy envisioned. In response to this intrusion within the home, Republican men argued, “It is necessary that the home is truly our home, that this table is our table, and that we do not encounter a situation in which our wife or our son tells us a lesson that they learned from the works of another man.”¹⁰ This negative view of the clergy’s interference into the family unit reflected itself in the work of another church critic

⁵ Sanabria, 129.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

who accused wives and clergymen of trying to emasculate husbands by promoting characteristics identified with women.¹¹

Through their discourse on the clergy's role in Spanish family life, the Republicans accused the Church of negatively impacting the public and private spheres of the country; The Church's hold extended beyond the country's political, social, and spiritual institutions and into the homes of Spaniards themselves. Instead of men looking after their own household, it seemed to Republicans that the home was headed by two men, the provider and the spiritual guide, a model that Republicans increasingly interpreted as favoring the clergy's influence over the family more than the husband and father. For the Republicans, the interference of the Church into the family life represented the backwardness of Spain in comparison to the powerful nations of Europe such as Great Britain, Germany, and France where the separation of Church and State greatly diminished the power of religion to invade the privacy of family life. The Republicans believed that the only way to return the balance of power and restore hegemonic masculinity within the home, and thereby to the nation, would be to greatly decrease the Church's ability to educate and interfere with family life and to separate the clergy from politics. This drive to separate the Church from family life began with the establishment of the Spanish Republic in 1933, and became real, in the early part of the Republic during "the first biennium" when the new government passed laws to make this split official.¹²

Republican ideas about redefining the Church's boundaries and eliminating its interference in Spanish family life alluded to larger changes occurring in Spain and illuminated the rise of a new type of masculinity in the eyes of Republicans: a type that no longer considered religion essential to the Spanish ideal of masculinity. Although women continued to attend church in significant numbers, the decades leading up to the beginning of the Civil War witnessed the decline of men attending Church. In the years immediately preceding the beginning of the war, a majority of Spaniards no longer actively practiced their Catholic religion.¹³ In the region of New Castile alone, only "5 per cent of the rural population" observed the ceremonies and practices of Easter Sunday in 1931.¹⁴ In some of the small communities of the Andalusia region "only 1 per cent of men attended church," echoing the larger

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Lawrence A. Fernsworth, *Back of the Spanish Rebellion*, Vol. 1-3, *Pamphlets on the Spanish Civil War* (1936), microfilm, 6.

¹³ Thomas, 47.

¹⁴ Ibid.

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patterns shifts of men leaving the Catholic Church.¹⁵ Even those men coming from wealthy backgrounds attended in small numbers.¹⁶

The mass exodus of men from the Church, however, created another crisis of masculinity during this period. The Church interpreted the loss of the Spanish Empire along religious lines; its leaders felt that the lack of religion among Spanish men signified that they no longer possessed the necessary virility and strength to make Spain great. A pamphlet written by Fr. Albino G. Menéndez-Reigada, recalls the beginning of the Spanish Empire with nostalgia praising Isabel, Ferdinand, Charles V, and Phillip II for their devotion to the cross, which yielded a golden age of art, learning, and empire.¹⁷ However, Menéndez wrote that the Republicans threatened to destroy all of these symbols of the Spanish Empire with their "*Anti-España y el Anti-Cristo*" (Anti-Spain and Antichrist) rhetoric, which not only threatened the destruction of the Catholic Church in Spain, but also threatened the existence of Spain itself.¹⁸ In the opinion of the clergy, religion constituted a large part of the Spanish identity and helped to build the Spanish Empire during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a sure sign of the Catholic Faith being essential to the virility of the nation and without it the existence of Spain and the Church would cease to exist.

These fears of the diminishment of the Church's authority became a reality with the establishment of the Constitution of the Second Republic in 1931, which immediately mandated that the new Spanish government no longer recognize the nation as having an official religion.¹⁹ In addition to the government refusing to recognize Catholicism as the official religion of the nation, the new constitution dictated the government had the power to dominate the relationship between the "*Las Iglesias y el Estado*," which signified the stripping of the Church's power by removing all governmental support including financial assistance, and allowing freedom of religion, the legalization of divorce, and the establishment of secular education.²⁰ With these

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Fr. Albino G. Menéndez-Reigada, *España y la Cruz*, Reel 57, *The Spanish Civil War Collection* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife: Imprenta Católica-Plaza e la Constitución, 1938), microfilm, 36, 37. Translated by author from Spanish.

¹⁸ Ibid., 37.

¹⁹ José Maria González, "Constitución de la República Española," published 30 October 1999, accessed 14 October 2015, <http://www1.icsi.berkeley.edu/~chema/republica/constitucion.html>, Artículo 3. Translated by author.

²⁰ González, Articles 14, 26, 27, 43, 48. Translated by author with assistance of Pedrogg, "Constitution of the Republic of Spain 1931," published 2 February 2013, accessed 14

amendments to the Constitution, the Catholic Church's power greatly decreased as the new republic forced the Church to support itself financially and diminished its role in family life, not to mention that the freedom of religion made it possible for other sects of Christianity and other faiths to be practiced without persecution. To the Catholic Church, the nation seemed on the verge of losing its remaining virility. In response to the power it lost as a result of the 1931 Constitution, the Catholic Church formed its own political party. At first, Acción Popular only entered the political debate of Spain to regain its privileges in society, but after a few years of unsuccessful campaigning, the party grew to encompass other rightist groups to create the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right, or CEDA.²¹

Although debate between the Republicans and Catholic Church constituted a significant portion of the discourse centering on the future of Spain, it was by no means the only argument that occurred. In addition, to the larger debate framed by the Republicans and the Catholic Church, other discourses emerged along classist lines between landless laborers and the landed nobles and the upper middle-class. Spain, during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth century possessed little in the way of what constituted modern industry or a modern economy in the early decades of the twentieth century.²² Although, Spain experienced some economic growth from the nineteenth century until the onset of the Spanish Civil War, the growth was never enough to overtake the powers of Great Britain or France.²³ For example, although real per capita income grew during the nineteenth century, relative income suffered in the same period with "per capita income...[falling] from two-thirds of British levels at the time of the Napoleonic wars to half in 1930."²⁴ Furthermore, Spain's industrial development did not follow the rest of Western Europe; "there was a long delay between the start of modernization in 1830, measured by real income per head, and the beginnings of structural transformation, which came only at the end of the century."²⁵ In addition to this lack of industry,

October 2015, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/123469543/Constitution-of-the-Republic-of-Spain-1931#scribd>.

²¹ Pierre Broué and Emile Témime, *The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain*, trans. Tony White (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1970), 43. Translation by author.

²² Stanley Payne, *Falange* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), 2.

²³ Leandro Prados de la Escosura, "Economic Growth and Backwardness," in *Spanish History Since 1808*, ed. José Alvarez Junco and Adrian Shubert (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), 185.

²⁴ Escosura, 188.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 189.

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Spanish society allowed limited social mobility. With the country not seeming, or willing, to progress, many lower-class workers, a majority of whom were landless peasants, felt frustrated by the unfair working conditions that demanded much physically, but gave little back in terms of wages. For some laborers the wage amounted to “less than a peseta” a day.²⁶

The noble and the middle class held nearly all of the land not owned by the Catholic Church and these men saw no need to industrialize or pay fair wages to their workers.²⁷ The landowners perceived themselves to be the true embodiment of masculinity in Spain. They were conservative, wealthy, and if not religious, believed in the rhetoric of the Church, which promoted the old social order; anyone not belonging to one of these stereotypes was not even considered a Spaniard in the eyes of the upper and middle classes.²⁸ With the establishment of the Second Republic and the new constitution, the balance of power drastically shifted from the old social order to the construction of a new one. The new constitution guaranteed universal suffrage, regardless of gender, the ability for all Spaniards, regardless of gender or social class, to hold public office, and the protection of peasants from unfair wages and working conditions.²⁹ To wealthy landowners and aristocrats, many of whom belonged to Spain’s military, the idea of agrarian reform, universal suffrage, social equality, and wage increases attacked their masculinity, especially in regards to the landless workers who toiled in their fields; the landowners looked at these men with a deep-seated hatred that yielded an ideology labeling the peasants, in the words of historian Paul Preston, as “almost sub-human.”³⁰

These landowners, as argued by Stanley Payne, possessed an air of self-centeredness that led them to try to maintain the status quo within Spain, with no vision to better their country or help their fellow man.³¹ To the landless laborers, the lack of drive held by the landed class represented another area where the traditional masculine order of Spain was found wanting. Landless laborers believed that a new masculinity would have to be born in order to take Spain out of the hands of these lazy men and into the hands of men willing to rebuild Spain into a formidable, modern nation.³²

²⁶ Broué and Témime 36.

²⁷ Payne, 2.

²⁸ Broué and Témime, 37, 38; Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust*, 5.

²⁹ González and Pedrogg, Articles 36, 40, 46, 47, Accessed 14 October 2015

³⁰ Broué and Témime, 37, 38, 41, 42; Preston, *The Answer Lies in the Sewers*, 277.

³¹ Payne, 3.

³² Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust*, 7.

Those representing the landless peasants diverged into two sects: the Falange, or Spain's Fascist Party, and the numerous groups that made up the political left such as Socialists, Anarchists, and Republicans. The Falange attempted to appeal to all Spaniards, regardless of social or political disparities, with their key message being that service to the state was the greatest virtue in serving the nation of Spain.³³ In one of his many articles written in the 1930s, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, a prominent Spanish Fascist, labeled Spain as the "fatherland," a label invoking a sense of masculinity in regards to the nation and its supporters.³⁴ In order for the nation to become formidable, Rivera wrote, "All classes and individuals must seek to adapt themselves" to the idea of uniting under the Falangist banner.³⁵ Rivera made clear that he believed the ideal masculinity was one in which men should be in support of the Spanish state, but he also verbally attacked working-class men unwilling to become part of the Spanish state, charging these men "to shed their international or extra-national orientation and become a national force which identifies with the nation's destinies."³⁶ In invoking the idea of national solidarity, Rivera left no alternative to the idea of the Falange claiming, "Nothing that goes against this precious and transcendental unity can be accepted as being good, be those who favour it many or few."³⁷

By tying the people to the idea of the Spanish state, Rivera effectively labeled those that supported his idea as also embodying the masculine ideals of the fatherland. However, Rivera further strengthened the masculine idea by creating a periphery group that threatened the stability of the nation state, stating that anyone that threatened national unity would not be tolerated no matter their strength. For Rivera, the arguments against fascism only constituted a weak attempt to find an "excuse for laziness or cowardice, if not the ultimate national failing."³⁸ In his article detailing his ideas about the Fascist-led Spanish state, Rivera further defined the masculine ideal of fascism by stating that the

³³ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, "In the Direction of a New State," *José Antonio Primo de Rivera: Selected Writings*, ed. Hugh Thomas, trans. Gudie Lawaetz (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 44, 45.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁶ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, "Interview Granted by José Antonio to the Newspaper *Ahora*," *José Antonio Primo de Rivera: Selected Writings*, ed. Hugh Thomas, trans. Gudie Lawaetz (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 78, 79.

³⁷ Rivera, "In the Direction of a New State," 44, 45.

³⁸ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, "Violence and Justice," *José Antonio Primo de Rivera: Selected Writings*, ed. Hugh Thomas, trans. Gudie Lawaetz (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 48.

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opposition of the Falange comprised of lazy, cowardly people that did not possess the will or fortitude to see a fascist state rise in Spain. By pointing out the opposition's weaknesses, Rivera defined the characteristics of the Fascist masculinity which embodied the ideals of hard work, courage, and the will to see Spain become strong. In December of 1933, Rivera further defined the Falange through the aligning of his party with the Catholic Church. Rivera argued, "Spain has always given the positive answer of the Catholic faith. Not only is the Catholic interpretation of life the true one; it is besides, historically, Spanish."³⁹ Through this alignment, Rivera furthered the definition of the Fascist masculinity; not only were they now hard working, willful, and courageous, but now they were Catholic. This contrasted with the masculine ideal established by anticlerical Republicans that portrayed the Catholic Church as undermining the virility and masculinity of Spain and its people.

While Primo de Rivera believed in necessary violence to take control of Spain and implement fascism, other fascists possessed a more brutal approach.⁴⁰ A Spanish conservative named Onésimo Redondo Ortega founded another Falangist group in 1931; however, his views of a national movement took on a more religious zeal in which "he burned to revive the martial spirituality of Spain's warrior monks of the Middle Ages."⁴¹ This religious aspect, combined with a martial ideal, echoed a masculinity of religious faith deeply seeded in a willingness to commit violence in the defense of the Spanish nation and the old masculinity. Although Rivera and Redondo both shared the same vision of masculinity in which Spaniards united as Catholics under a Spanish banner that advocated for modernization, the two men possessed different ideas on how to make that masculinity a reality.

Largo Caballero, a prominent Socialist, believed the opposite of Rivera; he was convinced that the only way to modernize Spain and make it strong was "destroy its [the Spanish state's] roots."⁴² This meant that the Spanish state Rivera and Redondo wanted to construct needed to be destroyed entirely, no religious institute, social class, or state could exist. The entire institution that Rivera argued made Spain unique would be completely wiped away, destroying a significant pillar of Rivera's masculine construct. While Rivera understood that the ascension of

³⁹ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, "Basic Points," *José Antonio Primo de Rivera: Selected Writings*, ed. Hugh Thomas, trans. Gudie Lawaetz (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 65.

⁴⁰ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, "Violence and Justice," 46-48.

⁴¹ Payne, 16.

⁴² Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War: Revolution and Counterrevolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 24.

socialism within Spain was due to social and economic conditions, he believed the Spanish faction perverted the original design of socialism by bringing attention to “a materialistic interpretation of life and of history,” and the antagonizing of the class struggle.⁴³ Rivera wrote, “The trouble is that socialism, instead of pursuing its initial course of aspiring to social justice among men, has been transformed into a mere doctrine of horrifying heartlessness, caring not a whit about the liberation of the workers.”⁴⁴ As stated previously, Rivera felt that the best course of action against the Second Republic and the future of Spain was to unite all people, regardless of political party and social class in order to build a strong state; in addition, he charged socialists as being unable to represent the working men, possibly alluding to the socialists as not being masculine enough to lead the workers, much less the nation of Spain. In contrast, the socialists believed that by inciting the working class to rebel against the upper classes they would not only engage in their own socialist revolution, but also eliminate the main antagonists of the repressed working class. Other factions, however, still wanted to see the entire Spanish state destroyed and then allow the people to build up their own utopia without the presence of a state.

The history of anarchism in Spain can be traced to “a general strike” in 1917 that occurred in a complex political and social situation which, while a failure, planted the seeds for trade unions to expand beyond economic protests to political and social protest.⁴⁵ Subsequently, anarchists developed their own ideals and aims to gain popularity with Spanish voters in 1919.⁴⁶ The Anarchist party that went to war in 1936 combined “the old Bakunist league for the destruction of the sinful capitalist world,” with the “Robin Hood” imagery of freeing the poor masses of peasants.⁴⁷ In addition, the group also sought to form a masculinity that saw no reason to belong to an overarching state, or belong to a religious institution, as well as “to sweep all the corrupt from the face of the earth.”⁴⁸ In the eyes of the anarchist “the corrupt” counted

⁴³ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, “Foundation of the Spanish Falange,” *José Antonio Primo de Rivera*, ed. Hugh Thomas, trans. Gudie Lawaetz (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 52.

⁴⁴ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, “Proclamation: Spanish Falange of J.O.N.S.,” *José Antonio Primo de Rivera*, ed. Hugh Thomas, trans. Gudie Lawaetz (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), 93.

⁴⁵ Luis Arranz, Mercedes Cabrera and Fernando del Rey, “The Assault on Liberalism,” in *Spanish History Since 1808* ed. José Alvarez Junco and Adrian Shubert (New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), 198.

⁴⁶ Franz Borkenau, *The Spanish Cockpit: An Eye-Witness Account of the Political and Social Conflicts of the Spanish Civil War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 35, 36.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

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rightists, nobles and upper middle class, and the clergy.⁴⁹ In contrast to the ideas of other Spanish trade unions, the General Confederation of Work, or CNT, provided anarchists an entity with which to carry out their mission even before the war began.⁵⁰ In order to gain a larger foothold within Spanish society, the CNT dropped its terroristic methods and proceeded to use law to bring equality to the workers, but the Iberian Anarchist Federation, or FAI, promoted the terroristic elements of the CNT.⁵¹ Even in 1931, the CNT fought not only against the rightist entities of the political arena, but also against the prominent socialist Unión General Trabajadores, the General Union of Workers, indicating a schism born out of the Communist belief of establishing a new government and the Anarchist belief of eliminating all government and debate of how to best lead the Spanish working class against its upper-class oppressors.⁵²

However, of the numerous entities of the Spanish political arena that vied for influence or control, one of the groups which usually looked to the foreign enemies of Spain now turned its attention inward and to the ongoing political debate. The institution of the Spanish army claimed a proud legacy likened to a cult from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century.⁵³ Unique among armies of the twentieth century, the Spanish army assumed the duty of being an extension of the king's power and authority with laws asserting that any offense committed against the army was, in theory, against the king. This outlawing of criticisms against the king, Spain, or the government meant that "republican agitation was a military offense."⁵⁴ Even before the capitulation of the monarchy in the 1920s, the Spanish military began to emerge into Spanish politics "as the guardian of national integrity and public order."⁵⁵ The Spanish people, especially those identifying with the political left, greeted the army with "anti-militarist sentiments."⁵⁶ This negative public sentiment only further served to push an already conservative entity further into the rightist camp.⁵⁷ After the fall of the monarchy and the establishment of the Republic in 1931, the military continued to enjoy the power of being an

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Translation by author.

⁵¹ Ibid., 35. Translation by author.

⁵² Ibid., 25; Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012), 15. Translation by author.

⁵³ Fernsworth, 8.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁵ Richard A. H. Robinson, *The Origins of Franco's Spain: The Right, the Republic and Revolution, 1931-1936* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970), 28.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

extension of the government despite the curbing of some of its power. As a result of the military being tied to the state, its officers belonging to the upper classes of Spanish society, and the deteriorating relationship between the leftist government and the officers, the military, primarily the Spanish army, adopted a similar mindset to masculinity that had been adopted by the Church, the Falange, and the wealthy Spaniards in which religion reigned supreme and the state of Spain had to endure as a strong conglomerate. For the bourgeoisie of Spain and their constituents, the attempted reforms for modernization threatened their esteemed positions in the social, political, and economic hierarchy of Spain.

These factions comprised the beginning formations that began the masculinity debate among both sides of the political spectrum. The right, comprising the wealthy nobles and upper-middle class, the army, the Church, and Falangists cultivated an image with religion as the centerpiece of their masculine identity, but divided over what other attributes should be included. Some advocated for a preservation of the whole hierarchy, while others saw a need to place the Spanish state at the core of the identity with all social and political entities prepared to sacrifice for the state. Still, others thought that the need to preserve the state came through brutal bloodshed. Even the left possessed problems regarding how to proceed in their own discussions of masculinity; anti-Catholicism played a central role in the construction of their masculinity, but they had little else to agree on. Socialists and communists believed in the destruction of the Spanish state with the establishment of a government in order to make the transition from the old Spanish state into what they called a true democracy.⁵⁸ Still, anarchists believed that the Spanish state should be destroyed and then allow the country to build itself into its own utopia.⁵⁹ It was only after the October Revolution that these separate entities, from the left and right, began forming political alliances and establishing concrete ideas of masculinity that would eventually be the nuclei for the two sides of the Spanish Civil War.

The October Revolution of 1934 represented the pinnacle event of Spain before war broke out in 1936. While violence erupted before and after the Revolution, the event proved to be the catalyst for the war as the insurrection “emerged as the first legitimate threat to democracy in Spain.”⁶⁰ The October Revolution’s original goal, as intended by the strikers and the Socialist and Anarchist trade unions, was the overthrow

⁵⁸ Bolloten, 26, 27.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 177, 178.

⁶⁰ Brian D. Bunk, *Ghosts of Passion: Martyrdom, Gender, and the Origins of the Spanish Civil War* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 7.

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of the government by the workers of Spain. The government represented the conservative factions of Spain, which impeded or eliminated several areas of the new Constitution such as providing protection and aid to peasants and promoting the separation of church and state. The CEDA's ascension to power in 1933 triggered the Revolution in 1934 due to its conservative party members acquiring key positions within the cabinet, inciting fears into "leftists" who interpreted the move as a possible coup of the government by the conservatives. However, the Revolution failed in its mission to bring down the conservative government. Historian Brian Bunk wrote that the leaders of the revolt, coming from different socialist, communist, and anarchist groups, failed to uniformly alert their supporters, which denigrated the revolt into small pockets of gunfire and disorderly conduct, mainly centered in Madrid. The only place where the rebellion lasted for any duration of time, or with any effectiveness, was in the Asturias region of Spain. The rebellion failed there as well with the CNT being unable to provide adequate weapons to the rebels. Although the government eventually quelled the revolt, the insurrectionists claimed, "one thousand buildings had been destroyed, including fifty-eight churches, twenty-six factories, and an extraordinary seven hundred and thirty public buildings." The death toll listed by the government included over one thousand rebels and a little more than three hundred soldiers. However, a "contemporary source" put the numbers at approximately nine hundred rebels killed as well as roughly two hundred and fifty soldiers. The rebellion ended, but the oratory debate began almost immediately afterward with the spread of propaganda by all sides that illustrated the horrors of the October Revolution and the horrors that awaited the losing side should the opposition gain control of Spain.⁶¹

As a result of the sides taken by the numerous factions of the Spanish nation in the rebellion, countless pamphlets and propaganda material were published by both sides to illuminate the danger each side posed to the future of Spain. As a result of this propaganda, the multiple political, social, and economic institutions began to align themselves on the basis of "pro-revolutionary" and "anti-revolutionary."⁶² For the Republicans, or pro-revolutionaries, this image produced what Bunk called a "working-class masculinity" which exemplified the protection of wives and family instead of an emphasis on protecting the state or the

⁶¹ Bunk, 29-33; Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012), 55-57.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 89.

Church.⁶³ In contrast, the nationalists, or anti-revolutionaries, developed a masculine ideal defined by militarism and defense of the Church.⁶⁴ The two forming entities not only used propaganda to build up their own ideologies of masculinity, but their propaganda also undercut their opponent's concept of masculinity. In the case of the Nationalists, the attacks exploited ideas such as universal suffrage and the rhetoric of an equal society as effeminate and "the consequent destruction of a weakened social and national order."⁶⁵ In regards to the Republicans, this attack took the form of portraying the Nationalists as barbarians who killed men, women, and children without differentiating between combatants and non-combatants.⁶⁶

The political posters of Spain provide some of the best documents for understanding the gendered makeup of the different groups vying for power within Spain. While military men like Francisco Franco left little in terms of their own gendered view of Spain in his own writing, posters provide stark visuals and words that portray the gendered rhetoric used against each organization's political enemies. Beginning in 1933, political posters illustrated these attacks up to, and through, the Spanish Civil War.

The Right emphasized the destruction of Spain as a nation with a poster in 1933. The poster depicted four figures with the symbols of Communism, Separatism, Masonry, and Judaism inscribed on their chests with claw-like appendages hovering over the nation of Spain with a slogan that said, "*Separatistas-Judíos- Quieren Aniquilar España*" ("Separatists- Jews- They want to annihilate Spain").⁶⁷ This political ad addressed the vitality of the nation, stating that these leftist groups were destroying the nation of Spain itself, caricaturing the groups as formless men with claws instead of hands, tearing at the very land of Spain.⁶⁸

However, the left also used posters to attack the rightist groups, but because of their control of the government during 1933, it does not appear that they put as much effort into attacking the opposition until the election year of 1936. During the lead-up to that election, the left produced a significant number of posters that attacked the right's ideas of

⁶³ Ibid., 89, 90.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 10, 91.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 92.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 96.

⁶⁷ Ambrós, "Votad a las derechas, votad contra el marxismo. Marxistas, masones, separatistas, judíos quieren aniquilar España," accessed 11 March 2016. <http://pares.mcu.es/cartelesGC/servlets/visorServlet?cartel=1829&page=1&from=busqueda>

⁶⁸ Ibid.

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masculinity. One poster dated 1936 depicts a woman with a child in her arms, one of her breasts exposed, trying to defend herself from a beastly hand branded with the symbol of the Falange and a caption that read, “*¡Defiende a tu hijo!*” (Defend your son!).⁶⁹ The poster attacked the Nationalist masculine ideal and outlined the expectations of the Republican masculine ideal. While the Nationalist hand is portrayed as bestial and a possible rapist, as denoted by the exposed breast, the caption calls on men to defend the women from the evils of fascism. The woman, dressed in white and with a breast exposed, is a symbol of vulnerability and purity with fascist hands almost as large as her grabbing at her. The image of the woman, combined with the caption and the fascist hands, call upon Republican men to fulfill their duty as family protector, a masculine trait prized by Republican propagandists.

Another poster produced by the Ministry of Propaganda addressed the vitality of Spain. Published in 1936, the Republican poster showed a boat filled with all kinds of people, ranging from an effigy depicting Francisco Franco, to a man resembling a Bourgeoisie Fascist with a swastika on his suit sleeve, the Pope, and two men dressed in African garb, alluding to the Moroccans that fought in Spain’s Foreign Legion. In the center of the boat, hanging on a piece of rope, is a picture of Spain with a caption that reads “*Arriba España.*”⁷⁰ The poster attacked the idea that Nationalists were destroying the vitality of Spain by allowing outside influences such as the Pope and Moroccan soldiers onto Spanish soil and preserving the old social order as evidenced by the man holding the moneybag and wearing a swastika. By depicting a likeness of Francisco Franco alongside these foreign influences, the Republicans sent a clear message that the vitality of Spain, the fatherland, was endangered by the Nationalists since they were greatly influenced by Catholicism and Fascism, two ideologies that originated outside the Iberian nation.

In the aftermath of the October Revolution, the Nationalists began to align themselves as a result of the dangers highlighted by the attempted revolt. On June 30, 1935 José Gil- Robles, a prominent member of the CEDA, gave a speech “at the great mass meeting at Median del Campo” stating that the army of Spain was at the service of the nation.⁷¹ However, Spanish citizens realized that the speech was a plea by Gil-

⁶⁹ Aníbal Tejada, “*Defiende a tu hijo!*”, *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte*, accessed 11 March 2016. <http://pares.mcu.es/cartelesGC/servlets/visorServlet?cartel=15&page=1&from=busqueda>.

⁷⁰ Juan Antonio Morales, “*Los Nacionales,*” *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte*, accessed 11 March 2016. <http://libraries.ucsd.edu/speccoll/visfront/nacionales.html>.

⁷¹ Fernsworth, 7; Thomas, 126.

Robles to interfere on the behalf of the conservative political order of Spain.⁷² With his ties to CEDA, which had merged the Catholic Church with other conservative groups, Robles now had the army allied with him, greatly elevating the power of Robles and giving rise to the ideal masculinity of a strong, militaristic, Catholic, and Spanish state. Although the Falange still existed at this time, its power was not enough for it to become a serious contender like the Church or the Army, but Rivera, its leader, was a high-ranking politician who maintained contact with men like Gil Robles, resulting in the Falange becoming a part of the Nationalists.⁷³

In contrast, the Republicans had never really engaged in any alliance with each other as evidenced by the violence in southern Spain that pitted the CNT against the UGT. But with the alliance of the army and the CEDA, the left did not possess a single, dominant party that could go up against the CEDA and win.⁷⁴ "Dimitrov, a Bulgarian communist," addressed this problem in regards to the rise of Hitler and his version of Fascism saying, "The formation of a joint People's Front providing for joint action with social democratic parties is a necessity. Cannot we endeavor to unite the communist, social democratic, Catholic and other workers?"⁷⁵ As a result of his speech, the Spanish leftists, socialists, communists, social democrats, and republicans, agreed to unite into a "Popular Front" in order to combat the CEDA.⁷⁶ The only group that refused to initially join up was the anarchists, but they agreed to unite with the Popular Front before the election of 1936 "because one of the main proposals of the Popular Front programme was an amnesty for political prisoners."⁷⁷

The election campaign of 1936 ignited the gender and social discourse once again. Claude G. Bowers, the United States Ambassador to Spain, noted that the Republicans released several papers that pointed out the savage violence of "the Moors and the Foreign Legion in the Asturias," which criticized the militancy aspect of Nationalist masculinity.⁷⁸ Throughout his account, Bowers stated that the Nationalists took pains to criticize the policies of the Republicans,

⁷² Fernsworth, 7.

⁷³ Broué and Témime, 143.

⁷⁴ Thomas, 145.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 145, 146.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 146.

⁷⁸ Claude Bowers, *My Mission to Spain: Watching the Rehearsal for World War II* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 103.

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threatening that the Republican policies would mean the end of Spain.⁷⁹ Bowers expressed disbelief in the policy of the Nationalists since they continued to support the old social and masculine structures by refusing to institute any labor protection of peasants or attempt to expand secular education while continuing to imprison thousands of people from the October Revolution.⁸⁰ When the general election of February 1936 ended and the Popular Front emerged victorious, the gendered rhetoric continued. José María Iribarren, an aide to General Emilio Mola, called the Republican men “swine,” further emphasizing the dehumanization and emasculation of the Republican men.⁸¹ Bowers wrote that he was woken one night after the election by a call that the Republicans were inciting revolution in the streets and churches were being burned.⁸² While the claim proved false, Bowers believed that the Nationalist defeat was prompting them to use propaganda to get the Republicans out of power. These two accounts reflected some of the larger incidents occurring in Spain in reference to the Nationalists attempting to prevent the new Republican government from coming to power. Rivera requested weapons for his men and people approached Gil-Robles requesting “a *coup d'état*.”⁸³ General Franco, at that time a “chief of staff,” urged the old regime to instate “a ‘state of war,’” which would bring the nation under the control of “martial law.”⁸⁴

These incidents illustrated the gendered rhetoric of the Nationalists trying to preserve their old masculine institutions; after the gendered propaganda that came out in the aftermath of the October Revolution, both sides had been unsure what the victory of the opposition would mean for the future of Spain.⁸⁵ When the Nationalists learned of the Republican victory, panic gripped their leadership as seen from the actions proposed by several men of the right; they feared that Spain’s masculinity would shift from the structured, religious militancy of the CEDA to the atheistic, nationless, hierarchy-less society of the Popular Front where universal suffrage was guaranteed and agrarian reform was promised.

When the political prisoners of the October Revolution were released, Bowers noted that the right continued to send the message to

⁷⁹ Ibid., 183.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 188.

⁸¹ José María Iribarren, *Con el General Mola: Escenas y Aspectos Inéditos de la Guerra Civil* (Zaragoza: Librería General, 1937), 6.

⁸² Bowers, 198.

⁸³ Thomas, 150.

⁸⁴ Iribarren, 10; Thomas, 151.

⁸⁵ Bowers, 198.

the people that the country was dissolving into anarchy in an attempt to stir up some resistance against the new government.⁸⁶ With the victory of the left, several anarchists set fires to churches, taking special care to gather all of the religious relics and images and setting fire to them, thus giving the Nationalists enough evidence to promote the ideas of the new leftist government as being a threat to the old Spanish order.⁸⁷ In the background of this chaos, members of both sides began arming themselves in preparation for a coming conflict; for the Nationalists, especially the Falangists, believed that the time to defend the old Spanish structure and restore it was coming.⁸⁸ The Popular Front, especially the anarchists, believed that soon the government would fall and the time of revolution was ripe.⁸⁹ Bowers reflected this scene as chaotic in his account when he was stopped by “an armed Assault Guard” and “searched for arms.”⁹⁰ When Bowers inquired if a search was necessary for an ambassador, the “socialist chief of police” replied, “We know no personalities,” echoing the socialist masculine ideal of all men being equal.⁹¹ Bowers also noted that “Fascist propaganda was going beyond all bounds.”⁹² Stories appeared where Nationalists were being killed in their sleep with “their heads carried on pikes,” and other rightists were killed “and their bodies ‘fed to pigs.’”⁹³ All of these ghastly accounts, which Bowers claimed were not true, instilled in the readers that leftists were savage beasts willing to annihilate all rightists and fascists. As a result of these actions, coupled with Largo Caballero’s remarks about an imminent revolution, the Nationalists began to make plans for a “*coup d’état*” in March of 1936.⁹⁴

Thus, the gendered discourse of Spain as a nation and its future began in 1898 following the loss of Spain’s overseas empire. At first, that discourse stayed between the Republicans and the Catholic Church, but soon encompassed nearly every major political entity and trade union as people began to see the early twentieth century as a crossroads for Spain’s future. The discourse and the entities began to take sides with the establishment of the Second Republic in 1931 and the subsequent October Revolution in 1934; these two events helping to push the multiple entities

⁸⁶ Ibid., 200; Thomas, 146.

⁸⁷ Bowers, 201.

⁸⁸ Thomas, 153, 154.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 154.

⁹⁰ Bowers, 207.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid., 210.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 209, 214; Thomas, 155.

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to form two larger blocs, the Republicans and the Nationalists which produced large amounts of propaganda validating each bloc's respective masculine ideal and demeaning the opposition's ideal. Once the Spanish Civil War began in July 1936, these masculine images that came about after the October Revolution provided the basis for the masculine institutions of the Spanish Civil War; the army, the Church, and the nation-state comprise the nucleus of the Nationalists while the Republicans rallied around the idea of a family man with no discernible socio-political positions, making his masculine institutions the workers, women, and children.⁹⁵ As a result, whether it was deliberate or inadvertent, both sides of the Spanish Civil War targeted these institutions in order to destroy their version of masculinity.

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⁹⁵ Bunk, 105.

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