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No God, No Boss, No Husband Anarchist Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Argentina

by
*Maxine Molyneux**

This article examines anarchist feminism, a tendency within the nineteenth-century Anarchist movement in Argentina, through a study of the content and social context of the newspaper *La Voz de la Mujer*. There are two main reasons for examining this phenomenon. The first is one familiar to feminist historians—that of making visible what, in Sheila Rowbotham's phrase (1974), has been "hidden from history." The history of anarchist-feminism in Argentina has never been written; nor has it been acknowledged as a distinct tendency within the Anarchist movement or the Latin American women's movements. The major historians of Argentine Anarchism—Max Nettlau, Diego Abad de Santillán, and Iaacov Oved—do little more than note the existence of *La Voz*, leaving its content unanalyzed and its significance unexplored.

A second reason concerns the political implications of such phenomena within feminist debate, especially in the Third World context. *La Voz de la Mujer* was a paper written by women for women, and the editors claimed that it was the first of its kind in Latin America. Although they were mistaken about this,¹ *La Voz* could claim originality in being an independent expression of an explicitly feminist current within the continent's labor movement. As one of the first recorded instances in Latin America of the fusion of feminist ideas with a revolutionary and working-class orientation, it differs from the feminism found elsewhere in Latin America during the initial phases of industrialization, which centered on

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educated middle-class women and to some extent reflected their specific concerns. In the Latin American context, in which feminism is all too often dismissed by radicals as a “bourgeois” or “reformist” phenomenon, the example of *La Voz* constitutes a challenge to this essentializing of the movement. Although empirical investigation cannot be the exclusive terrain for debate about the nature and effectiveness of feminism, a consideration of the facts can inform that debate.

THE CONTEXT

Anarchist feminism emerged in Buenos Aires in the 1890s within a context shaped by three factors that distinguished Argentina among nineteenth-century Latin American states: rapid economic growth, the influx of large numbers of European immigrants, and the formation of an active and radical labor movement.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the Argentine economy was undergoing a spectacular expansion. In the period between 1860 and 1914, real GDP growth rates were among the highest in the world, giving Argentina a lead over the rest of Latin America that it was to retain until the 1960s. The basis of this expansion was the exploitation of the fertile *pampas*, the rolling plains of the interior, which produced cheap wheat and meat for the European markets. As demand for these products grew and Argentina’s productive capacity increased, the area of land under cultivation rose from 200,000 acres in 1862 to 60 million in 1914 (Ferns, 1960).

The growth of the economy increased the demand for labor, and this was satisfied through immigration on a vast scale. From the 1870s on, special bureaus were set up in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany to lure immigrants to Argentina with the promise of cheap land, fares, and loans. The response in the depressed areas of Europe was overwhelmingly positive, and the rate of immigration achieved was unequaled anywhere on the subcontinent. Overall, between 1857 and 1941, when immigration all but ceased, over 6,500,000 migrated to Argentina, and of these nearly 3,500,000 stayed. By 1914 Argentina was the country with the highest ratio of immigrants to indigenous population in the world.² From 1857 to 1895, Argentina had received 2,117,570 foreigners, 1,484,164 of whom had stayed. In 1895 they represented 20% of Argentina’s nearly 4,000,000 inhabitants and 52% of the population of Buenos Aires, the capital city (Solberg, 1970).

The largest ethnic group comprised Italians, who in 1895 accounted for 52% of the total number of immigrants. Spaniards made up the second largest grouping with 23.2% of the total, and French accounted for 9.6%. Smaller percentages of Germans, British, Austrians, Uruguayans, Arabs, Swiss, and East Europeans made up the rest. It was among these immigrant communities that the group producing *La Voz de la Mujer* arose and was active. Anarchism as a political ideology was originally imported by immigrants from the European countries in which the Anarchist movement was strong—Italy, Spain, and France.³ Anarchist groups and publications, many of them founded by political refugees from Europe, first emerged in the 1860s and the 1870s.

Despite Anarchism's alien origins, there can be little doubt that the material conditions encountered by the immigrants in Argentina provided it fertile soil. On their arrival in Buenos Aires, about half the immigrants initially sought their fortunes on the land, whereas the rest found work in the expanding port economy and in other urban centers such as Rosario and La Plata. They became day laborers and artisans, domestic servants, and public employees engaged in the state-funded building projects. Whereas some had capital to invest in businesses and in real estate, the majority were members of the rural or urban working class who had come to Argentina to escape the hardships of their own countries and make their fortunes.

Few immigrants managed to achieve the social mobility they aspired to. Most remained workers; an estimated 70% of the immigrants were concentrated in the city of Buenos Aires, and of the working class as a whole about 60% were foreign-born. The frustrated desire for some improvement in their means was probably a major cause of immigrant discontent (Rock, 1975). For many of these workers, conditions were dismal. In Buenos Aires, where the population doubled between 1869 and 1887 and again between 1887 and 1904, housing was scarce and of poor quality. Many workers lived in *conventillos*, or tenements, where the average immigrant family of five persons shared a 12 × 12-foot room (Solberg, 1970). Although wages were not low by the standards of other Latin American countries, they were constantly eroded by devaluation. Workers were frequently cheated in deals with their bosses, and employment conditions were harsh, a ten-hour day, six-day week schedule being the norm (Marotta, 1960).

These material difficulties were compounded by political conditions that did nothing to lessen the immigrants' distance from and dissatisfaction with Argentine reality. Although in theory Argentina's was a constitutional government in which popular sovereignty prevailed, in practice

there existed a system of bloc votes, clientelistic relations, and informal alliances with local *caudillos* (bosses). This denied real political representation to most Argentinian residents, whether native-born or immigrant. As the immigrants became more vocal and working-class militancy increased, immigrants appeared to threaten the very economic prosperity they had helped engender. In order to increase control over them, the government made it almost impossible for immigrants to become naturalized, although their children were considered Argentine citizens by right of birth. It is therefore not surprising that in 1895, of a total of 345,493 foreigners in Buenos Aires, only 715 had become citizens (Bourd e, 1974).

This policy of restricted enfranchisement enabled the government to postpone some of the consequences of immigration for two decades. The immigrant population was kept in a precarious situation economically and politically. The double disqualification (electoral and national) that allowed minimal political expression of its aspirations encouraged it to find expression in a combative and often revolutionary form. Immigrant discontent was evident in the strikes of the late 1880s and reached a crescendo in the general strike of 1902. But the force the government wished to contain was one it was forced to continue creating.

The immigrant communities formed an integral part of the nascent working class in Argentina and played a prominent role in shaping its ideologies and the character of its struggles. They brought from Europe a political culture that arose from their experience of working-class organizations and forms of action, transposing the debates over anarchism, socialism, and trade-union organization to the shop floors, tenements, and caf es of Buenos Aires, Rosario, and La Plata. The first strike, in 1878, was organized by the printers' union, established 20 years before by Spanish cooperativists. By the 1880s forms of working-class organization and resistance were widespread, and this growth was accelerated by the onset of a severe recession, known as the Baring Crisis, which gripped Argentina from 1889 to 1891. The economic collapse precipitated a governmental crisis, an uprising by supporters of the embryonic Radical party, and the first extensive wave of strike action, by the end of which there were few branches of employment that had escaped the effects of workers' discontent.

In the climate of growing working-class militancy in the 1880s and 1890s, revolutionary groups were active producing pamphlets and papers, organizing mass meetings, putting on theater performances, and participating in strikes and demonstrations. Until the emergence of the Socialist party as a significant force at the turn of the century, much of this activity was undertaken by Anarchists, many of them, like Ettore Mattei

and Enrico Malatesta, exiles from Europe. They enjoyed significant support within the working class and controlled several powerful unions, among them the bakers (organized by Mattei) and the bricklayers. In the 1880s and 1890s there were sometimes as many as 20 Anarchist papers being published at any one time, in French, Spanish, and Italian; occasionally articles in each language appeared in the same newspaper.

Anarchism in Argentina reached its peak in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and the earlier history of this movement can be seen as a slow and often interrupted advance toward this climax. *La Voz de la Mujer* appeared after half a century of tentative and continuous Anarchist activity and as one of the first expressions of what was to be Argentina's Anarchist heyday.

The ebb and flow of Anarchism and its preferred forms of organization and struggle followed a pattern similar to that in Europe, and by the 1890s it was, as elsewhere, largely under the influence of the anarchist communism propagated by Peter Kropotkin and Elysée Reclus in Europe and Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman in the United States. This was the tendency to which *La Voz de la Mujer* belonged. Anarchist communism was a fusion of socialist and anarchist ideas. It was dedicated to the violent overthrow of the existing society and the creation of a new, just, and egalitarian social order organized on the principle of "from each according to ability, to each according to need." Internationally, the movement was divided over whether the revolution was to occur through a popular uprising or through a mass strike. There were also disagreements over the degree to which the Anarchist movement should itself be organized and over the appropriateness of employing individual acts of violence against the state for propaganda purposes. Both socialism and anarchism focused on the working class but also expressed some sympathy for the principle of women's emancipation. By the 1880s there had emerged within the European Anarchist movement a distinctive feminist current, represented by writers such as "Soledad Gustavo" (Teresa Mañe) and Teresa Claramunt, just as within the movement in North America these ideas were developed by Voltairine de Cleyre, Emma Goldman, and others. Some of these writers were already being published in Argentina in the 1880s, and in the Anarchist press critiques of the family appeared together with editorials supporting "feminism," by then a term in current usage. The main impulse for anarchist feminism came from Spanish activists, but Italian exiles like Malatesta and Pietro Gori gave support to feminist ideas in their journals and articles.

In the 1880s and 1890s one of the main forms of Anarchist activity was the editing, printing, and distribution of newspapers, leaflets, and pamphlets. Indeed, there was apparently as much Anarchist literature circu-

lating in Buenos Aires by the last years of the century as there was in the Anarchist stronghold of Barcelona (Solberg, 1970). In the early years, much of the editorial content for these papers was imported from Europe, but as experience was gained the contents reflected an increasingly local involvement.

Very little is known about how these publishing ventures were financed, but from the information available it seems that some of the funds came in the form of small donations raised at meetings and lectures. Printing costs were relatively low; according to the accounts listed at the back of the publications, the cost of printing 2,000 copies of a newspaper was in the region of 45 pesos in 1897—a little over twice the weekly wage. The subscription lists show that individual donations were normally about 20 centaves and three or four groups, some in the provinces, regularly sent sums of up to 5 pesos each. Donors were usually identified by false names, evocative *noms de guerres* (such as “Firm in the Breach,” “Less Asking, More Taking,” “A Bomb-Thrower”), or trades; the latter, which include shoemakers, street sweepers, prostitutes, waiters, and bus drivers, together with the small sums donated, are some indication of the class nature of the readership.⁴ Pamphlets and newspapers were often given away. Because of the irregularity with which these papers appeared and the precariousness of their existence, the institution of the regular subscription was not effected.

La Voz de la Mujer was typical of the smaller, semiclandestine and ephemeral newspapers of the anarchist-communist tendency that advocated “propaganda by deed.” Although addressed to the working class, it appeared to have few organic links to it, and its militant antireformist stance further weakened its capacity for political intervention in the struggles of the day. Yet its feminism must have aroused some response among women workers in the cities of Buenos Aires, La Plata, and Rosario, for it lasted a year and printed between 1,000 and 2,000 copies of each issue—a respectable number for an Anarchist paper of its time.

It was among the women workers of the urban centers that *La Voz de la Mujer* arose and campaigned for support. The editors were drawn from the large Spanish and Italian communities and identified themselves with the women of the working class. There was certainly a constituency of urban working-class women in nineteenth-century Argentina, and many of these women were immigrants. The 1895 census reports that there were 368,560 immigrant women (just over half the number of men though women constituted the majority of the native-born population), 37% of whom were in Buenos Aires. We do not know what percentage of this total were workers, but immigrant women were the majority of the

economically active population of Buenos Aires and made up 40% of the 21,571 domestic servants, 66.1% of the dressmakers, 56.9% of the seamstresses, 16.9% of the cooks, 23% of the teachers, and 34% of the nurses. Overall, immigrant women constituted approximately half of the 66,068 women registered as employed in the capital and were concentrated in domestic service, the sewing and textile industries, and cooking (*Segundo censo*, 1898).

The little information available on women's wages and working hours shows that they suffered systematic discrimination, low pay, and long hours. The average working day for the domestic servants of Buenos Aires was over 12 hours in the mid-1890s, despite a strike by domestic servants over the denial of rest periods in 1888. A second domestic servants' strike is reported from the 1890s, this time in protest of employers' practice of issuing servants conduct books in which judgments of them were recorded; possession of such a book was required for employment, and a negative judgment made it almost impossible to find another job. It appears that women in the textile industry worked an 8½-hour day, below the average. As if to account for this, female workers in these trades received wages lower than the average: dressmakers and seamstresses received between \$0.50 and \$1.00 per day when the average wage for men workers was between \$1.50 and \$2.50. The wages of domestic servants may well have been even lower (Marotta, 1960).

This discrimination in employment was not primarily due to limited educational opportunities for girls and women. In Argentina the sexual disparity in education was very small compared with that of many developing countries, and the literacy rate was similar to that in many European countries at the time. In 1895 49% of all men and 41.5% of all women were literate. In Buenos Aires the rates were 6% and 10% higher, respectively. Gender inequality was even less marked in educational establishments. It was with pride that the editors of the 1895 census reported that Argentina was distinguished among the nations of the world for the fact that there was no significant discrimination against women as far as access to education was concerned. Whatever the qualitative differences concealed behind the numerical equality, there can be no doubt that there was less discrimination against women in education than in most countries of the world at the time. The 1895 census reports 298 boys per 1,000 at school compared with 294 girls per 1,000 (*Segundo censo*, 1898).

This relatively high rate of participation coupled with equal opportunities for girls in education means that the radical press had a potential readership that was not confined to the upper classes. *La Voz de la Mujer*

could also count on the existence of fairly large numbers of women with literacy and at least some education among the workers to whom they addressed their propaganda. The poorer immigrant women, however, were often uneducated. These immigrant women were generally attached as wives or mothers to their husbands and families, yet many of them must have suffered the usual problems associated with upheaval and adjustment to an alien culture even if alleviated somewhat by the continuities in language and religious values. For women, migration, whether internal or international, was both an effect and a cause of changes in the family and in their position in the wider society. As the socioeconomic structure of the Old World decomposed, relations in the family were redefined and, among some groups, liberalized. Yet it would appear that most immigrant women remained trapped within their own communal cultures in sexual and family matters and that the traditions and prejudices of southern Europe continued to exert an influence. Despite the tumultuous conditions of the capital in this period, women were kept within traditional social and economic roles and forced to work under the discriminatory structures prevailing elsewhere in the industrializing world. *La Voz de la Mujer* therefore arose in the context of decomposition and recomposition of the traditional role divisions.

The distinctiveness of *La Voz de la Mujer* as an Anarchist paper lay in its recognition of the specificity of women's oppression. It called upon women to mobilize against their subordination both as women and as workers. Its first editorial was a passionate rejection of women's lot:

Compañeros y compañeras! Greetings!

So: fed up as we are with so many tears and so much misery; fed up with the never ending drudgery of children (dear though they are); fed up with asking and begging; of being a plaything for our infamous exploiters or vile husbands, we have decided to raise our voices in the concert of society and demand, yes, demand our bit of pleasure in the banquet of life.

The appearance of this issue received a mixed response from the rest of the Anarchist movement, ranging from silence and hostility to praise. *El Oprimido*, edited by an amiable Englishman called Dr. Creaghe,⁵ extended a particularly warm welcome in its issue of November 1895:

By giving it this name, a group of militant women have unfurled the red flag of anarchy and intend to publish a magazine for propaganda among those who are their comrades both in work and in misery. We greet the valiant initiators of this project, and at the same time we call on all our comrades to support them.

A substantial section of the Anarchist press was sympathetic to feminist issues at this time. The mid-1890s in Argentina saw increasing coverage of issues relating to women's equality and in particular to marriage, the family, prostitution, and the domination of women by men. Some papers even published special series of pamphlets devoted to "the woman question." *La Questione Sociale*, the Italian-language paper founded by Malatesta when he came to Argentina in 1883, published a series of pamphlets "especially dedicated to an analysis of women's issues," including writings by "Soledad Gustavo" on women and education and on the sufferings of poor and proletarian women. These two pamphlets were well enough received to merit republishing, the latter claiming a print run of 4,000. The Science and Progress Press, a venture of Dr. Creaghe linked to *La Questione Sociale*, also produced numerous pamphlets on women, including the texts of a series of lectures given by "Dr. Arana" in the province of Santa Fé. These included an 87-page dissertation based on the work of Morgan called *Woman and the Family*, published in 1897, and a shorter work entitled *Slavery Ancient and Modern* that included in its examples of the latter type the institution of marriage. These pamphlets were first printed in editions of 500 but were reprinted three times before the end of the century, indicating some considerable interest in the subject. Ruvira (1971) notes that the first all-woman groups that emerged in 1895 were adherents of *La Questione Sociale* and that it was these groups that produced "the real militants"—"Pepita Gherra," Virginia Bolten, Teresa Marchisio, Irma Ciminaghi, and Ana Lopez.

The journal *Germinal*, which first appeared in 1897, was, like *El Oprimido*, particularly concerned with the "woman question"; it carried several articles under the general heading of "Feminism," and it defended "the extremely revolutionary and just character of feminism" against the charge that it was merely a creation of "elegant little ladies." Much if not all of the feminist material in the Anarchist press appears to have been written by women, although this is impossible to verify because the use of pseudonyms was common practice. *La Voz de la Mujer* enjoyed cordial relations with at least some of its contemporaries, particularly those belonging to the more extreme propaganda-by-deed tendency such as *El Perseguido* and *La Voz de Ravachol*. It also had relations with the Spanish papers *El Esclavo*, *La Voz del Rebelde*, and *El Corsario*, with the New York paper *El Despertar*, and with the Uruguayan paper *Derecho a la Vida*.

Yet this apparent sympathy for feminism in principle within the Anarchist ranks was matched by substantial opposition in practice. The first issue of *La Voz de la Mujer* seems to have aroused considerable hostility,

because in the following issue the editors attacked the antifeminist attitudes prevalent among men in the movement in no uncertain terms. (Since there appear to be no traces of this opposition in the rest of the Anarchist press of the period, it is probable that these criticisms had been expressed orally.)

When we women, unworthy and ignorant as we are, took the initiative and published La Voz de la Mujer, we should have known, Oh modern rogues, how you would respond with your old mechanistic philosophy to our initiative. You should have realized that we stupid women have initiative and that is the product of thought. You know—we also think . . . The first number of La Voz de la Mujer appeared and of course, all hell broke loose: “Emancipate women? For what?” “Emancipate women? Not on your nelly!” . . . “Let our emancipation come first, and then, when we men are emancipated and free, we shall see about yours.”

The editors conclude that women can hardly rely upon men to take the initiative in demanding equality for women, given this kind of hostile attitude.⁶

The same issue of the paper contains a second article on the question, entitled “To the Corrupters of the Ideal.” In it men are warned, “You had better understand once and for all that our mission is not reducible to raising your children and washing your clothes and that we also have a right to emancipate ourselves and to be free from all kinds of tutelage, whether economic or marital.” We can, however, assume that the polemic did not subside, because the editorial in the third issue is addressed “To Our Enemies” and states that despite “the veritable tempest [which] has broken over *La Voz de la Mujer*,” the editors, who have apparently been referred to as “savages of tongue and pen,” are still “firm in the breach.” A slight retreat is, however, indicated in their concern to emphasize that they were attacking not male Anarchist comrades in general but only those “false Anarchists” who failed to defend “one of Anarchism’s most beautiful ideals—the emancipation of women.”

The editors’ outrage was justified in that Anarchism advocated freedom and equality for *all* humankind. Women as an oppressed group could rightly demand support from fellow Anarchists in their struggle for emancipation. But although Anarchism’s principles had attracted many free-thinking women to its ranks and the movement certainly took feminism seriously, there was a certain ambivalence over the precise status of the struggle for women’s emancipation per se. Women were welcomed as militants in “the cause of Anarchy,” as *El Oprimido* had put it, but they

were given somewhat less encouragement to struggle for feminist demands and none at all to form autonomous feminist groups. Anarchist doctrine was itself somewhat ambivalent about feminism, and there was remarkably little theoretical debate about the subject. Although Bakunin had included in the program of his International Alliance of Social Democracy the explicit aim of abolishing sexual inequality along with class inequality, the Anarchist record on women's rights was an uneven one. The French Proudhonists had opposed the demands of feminists for equal pay and equal work and thought women's natural place to be in the bosom of the family (Rowbotham, 1974). The chief inspiration of the anarchist-communism of the 1880s and 1890s, Kropotkin, encouraged women's activism within the movement but disapproved of feminism. He saw the struggle of the working class for liberation as primary; women's specific interests were to be subordinated to the achievement of this goal.

In Argentina, as Anarchists began to take up some of the practical demands of the working class toward the end of the century, one of their most vigorous campaigns was for protective legislation for women. When for the first time equal pay for women was raised as a demand and supported by a significant number of labor unions in the Argentine Workers' Federation in 1901, Pietro Gori, a renowned Anarchist propagandist, moved that "women should be prohibited from working in those areas which could be dangerous to maternity and which could undermine their morals; and children under 15 should be stopped from working altogether." The concern with women's morality and the juxtaposition of women and children in this paternalistic formulation is telling.⁷ The committee voted unanimously to "organize women workers in order that they might raise their moral, economic, and social conditions" (Marotta, 1960).

Despite these limitations, it is not difficult to see why feminists were attracted to Anarchism. Its key tenets stressed the struggle against authority, and anarchist feminism focused its energies on the power exercised over women in marriage and the family, seeking their freedom to have relationships outside these institutions. The Anarchist emphasis on oppression and on power relations, albeit largely untheorized, opened up a space within which women could be seen simultaneously as the victims of society and as the victims of male authority. As *La Voz de la Mujer* expressed it in No. 4, "We hate authority because we aspire to be human beings and not machines directed by the will of 'another,' be this authority, religion, or any other name." One of *La Voz's* supporters elaborated on this "any other name" when she signed herself "No God, No Boss, No Husband."

Thus Anarchism, more than socialism with its emphasis on economic exploitation, was able to accommodate some aspects of feminism, but feminist ideas did not meet with wide acceptance in themselves either within or without the Anarchist movement. This tension between the Anarchist movement as a whole and the feminists within it is reflected in the trajectory of *La Voz*.

As far as we know, *La Voz de la Mujer* was published only nine times, the first issue appearing on January 8, 1896, and the last almost exactly one year later on New Year's Day. It may well have been revived at a later date. The standard sources on the Anarchist movement of this period date its existence to 1896-1897 and tell us virtually nothing about it. The editorials refer to three changes of editorship, but no names are mentioned. However, in an issue of a periodical called *Caras y Caretas* published in 1901, mention is made of the "two beautiful women who edit *La Voz de la Mujer*." An unnamed actress is also alluded to as one of the collaborators. A series of photographs accompanying the article shows three women named as editors of *La Voz*—Teresa Marchisio, Maria Calvia, and Virginia Bolten.⁸ Unfortunately, no further light is cast on these women, and we are left with the intriguing possibility that *La Voz de la Mujer* was revived after its closure in 1897 and was again being published in 1901. Whether this was the same paper with the same editors is impossible to say.

It is also reported that another version of the paper and bearing its name was published in the provincial town of Rosario by Virginia Bolten.⁹ She was said to be a "great orator" and indefatigable organizer and is the only woman known to have been deported in 1902 under the Residence Law, which gave the government the power to expel immigrants active in political organizations. It also appears that yet another *La Voz de la Mujer* was published in Montevideo (Diego Abad de Santillán, personal communication), and because this was where Virginia Bolten was exiled it is reasonable to suppose that she may have been involved in establishing this Uruguayan version.

Like many other Anarchist papers of the period, *La Voz* appeared sporadically, bearing on its cover the words *Sale cuando puede* ("Appears When It Can"); at first this was about once every three weeks, and then the time between issues lengthened to six weeks to two months. It was published in newspaper format and contained four pages of copy. Numbers one through four claimed a print run of 1,000, numbers five, seven, and eight 2,000, and number nine 1,500.¹⁰ As was normal for these Anarchist papers, it was financed by voluntary subscription, and a list of subscribers was printed at the back of each issue. An indication of the

temper of its readership can be gained from the following donors' names: "Women Avengers Group," "One Who Wants to Fill a Cannon with the Heads of the Bourgeois," "Long Live Dynamite," "Long Live Free Love," "A Feminist," "A Female Serpent to Devour the Bourgeois," "Full of Beer," "A Man Friendly to Women."

The paper's contents were presented in a number of different ways; the main form was the article, varying in length from one to two columns to a page and a half. Each issue usually contained an editorial, a poem,¹¹ and a moral tale about "martyrs" of bourgeois society (the poor, the workers, the prostitutes) or their adversaries (judges, priests, the police). In addition, translations and articles from the European movement were reproduced as they were elsewhere in the Anarchist press of the time, among them the writings of "Soledad Gustavo," Laurentine Sauvrey, Teresa Claramunt, A. Maria Mozzoni, and Maria Martinez. The editors of *La Voz de la Mujer* actively sought the cooperation of prominent women Anarchists and, according to a note in number five, wrote to Emma Goldman and Louise Michel in particular. The back page of the paper contained a section entitled Round Table in which small items of news from Europe and Argentina were discussed. It was here too that the Socialist party of Argentina was regularly berated for its reformist politics—vis-à-vis the working-class movement, not the woman question—and that topical issues relating to women were reported. We hear, for instance, of the spirited intervention of a young woman Anarchist in a workers' meeting on behalf of women's emancipation.

Most of the signed articles bore the names of women, and most were written in Spanish, with only occasional items in Italian. Although the paper accepted articles in either language, the names of the editors, collaborators, and contributors indicated the paper's affiliations with Spanish Anarchism and with the Spanish immigrant community.¹² This is not surprising, as it was primarily from Spain that anarchist feminism came to Argentina. Even the feminist material in the Italian press was written largely by Spanish authors.

La Voz de la Mujer described itself as "dedicated to the advancement of Communist Anarchism." Because its politics were of the militant Anarchist variety that defended acts of violence, it was published semiclandestinely. It was addressed to a working-class readership, and its editors wrote frequently and passionately about the misery and poverty endured by women of this class, to which they purported to belong. The mood of the paper was one of fiery optimism, as exemplified in the following verse from a poem entitled "A Toast," by Josefa M. R. Martínez: "Greetings, *compañeras!* Anarchy/Hurrah, dear brothers and sisters, to the fight/

Strong of arm, serene of heart." In common with the rest of the Anarchist movement, the editors were militantly opposed to the authority of religion and the state and uncompromisingly hostile to the police and other representatives of the law. They tended to offer robust advice to strikers on how to handle police harassment, urging them to "knock off a few" in order to teach the police a lesson.

The central theme running through *La Voz*, however, is that of the multiple nature of women's oppression. The storm in the Anarchist movement that greeted the paper's appearance seems to have been caused by the militant feminism of the first editorial, which took the distinctive and, for anarchists and socialists, heretical position that women were the most exploited section of society. A later editorial asserted, "We believe that in present-day society nothing and nobody has a more wretched situation than unfortunate women." Women, they said, were doubly oppressed—by bourgeois society and by men.

The specifically feminist development of Anarchist theory lay in its attack on marriage and upon male power over women. Anarchist communism had taken over from Engels the critique of bourgeois marriage as a means of safeguarding capitalist property transmission. It also reiterated his view that the family was the site of women's subordination. The writers in *La Voz de la Mujer*, like anarchist feminists elsewhere, went on to develop a concept of oppression that focused on gender oppression. Marriage was not just a bourgeois institution; it also restricted women's freedom, including their sexual freedom. *La Voz* attacked the "conjugal onanism" of marriage as a central cause, along with class oppression, of misery and despair. Marriages entered into without love, fidelity maintained through fear rather than desire, oppression of women by men they hated—all were seen as symptomatic of the coercion implied by the marriage contract. People were not free to do as they pleased, even less so because until 1897 divorce was illegal in Argentina. It was this alienation of the individual's will that the anarchist feminists deplored and sought to remedy, initially through free love and then, and more thoroughly, through social revolution.

La Voz de la Mujer was a keen supporter of free love. This was an issue that had been taken up by both the North American and Spanish Anarchist movements by the 1890s and remained an Anarchist ideal in decades afterward. Advocacy of free love and hostility to marriage were shared by other anarchist and libertarian groups in Latin America, some of which went farther than *La Voz* in both elaborating the ideas and putting them into practice. Literature on the benefits of multiple relationships was circulating in the movement in Argentina, as was information

and propaganda on the free-love communes that had come into existence among the immigrant communities in some Latin American countries.¹³ *La Voz de la Mujer* offered its readers few practical guidelines for living out their ideal, and it is not clear what social arrangements were envisaged for those who practiced free love or for their probable offspring.

What the editors had in mind appears to have been a liberal variant of sequential heterosexual monogamy, their ideal consisting in "two comrades freely united." In a context in which contraception was at best minimally available, the editors had little to say about children, and what they did say represented a variety of views. There is only one reference to family limitation, of which the writer expressed approval on the grounds that too many children increased the poverty of the poor (a position that was to gain ground in Spain at the turn of the century). There is no explicit discussion of abortion, and the few references to it reveal the ambivalence of the editors. Abortion is mentioned as something nuns and bourgeois women do and is seen as evidence of their hypocrisy. We are left uncertain whether the act itself is to be deplored or only the people performing it. Attitudes toward children range from maudlin sentimentality to angry denunciation of the mother's lot. The editors adopted the conventional Anarchist position on illegitimacy, deploring it as an irrational social prejudice and expressing sympathy for its victims. In general, and especially in the later issues of *La Voz*, children were written about with great feeling for their sufferings, and considerable stress was laid on the emotional bond between mother and child. In an article on the horrors of war the focus was upon the mother's fear of losing her son in combat. Mothers were held up as the main repositories of parental affectivity. The editors' hostility to the family and to marriage, then, was tempered by respect for at least some conventions. The fact that they at no point proposed the more obvious forms of alleviation of the problem of child care, through nurseries or collective organization, is significant. Child care must have represented a problem for a readership of women workers, and the absence of any discussion on the matter suggests that traditional attitudes toward motherhood may have been stronger than the more radical of the editors would have wished.

There is a silence, too, on the entire question of domestic work. Although the editors attacked the oppression of women and their entrapment in the home and in drudgery, they never proposed either that men should share this labor in the household or that it should be more equally administered. It may well be that they were prevented by their particular variant of Anarchist ideology from proposing any solution that would have involved the state or private capital (with nurseries, for example) or

that could have been considered a purely reformist measure. Nonetheless, the fact that they did not argue for an equal distribution of labor within the home or communal responsibility indicates that they could not break with prevailing notions of the place of women within the traditional division of labor.

La Voz's position on free love, although more cautious than that of some of its contemporaries, did amount to a rejection of men's traditional authority over women and control of their sexuality. In the context of Southern European *machismo*, in which virginity, fidelity, and the double standard were the common currency of male privilege, such demands for female autonomy were certain to arouse a hostile response. An item in number 7 of *La Voz de la Mujer* shows that the editors' ideal of free union and dissolution, with women taking the initiative, was far from acceptable to men, even within the Anarchist movement itself. The article deplored the action of the male Anarchist activist F. Denanbride, who had shot his lover five times as she was attempting to leave him. (The woman, a collaborator of *La Voz de la Mujer* called Anita Lagouardette, had miraculously survived.) The paper's treatment of this episode illustrates a flaw in its anarchist feminist reasoning. The editors saw free love as the solution to the problem of male-female relations; when marriage, the cause of misery and despair, was abolished, the home would become "a paradise of delights." Men and women would be free to enter into relationships with whomever they chose and dissolve them at will, without the corrosive effects of law, state, or custom. This view ignored both the complex and internalized subordination of women and the modes of oppression and sense of superiority internalized by men.

Free union could only have been an adequate solution if the interests of both parties involved had been identical or if the party whose wishes were contradicted had had no feelings. In any situation in which partners to a conflict differed in strength, the weaker would obviously lose, and in a world in which people were socialized along lines of male/female inequality, the stronger, the male, would be able to use slogans of "freedom" to impose his will on his female companion—either by leaving her when she did not want to be left or by forcing her to remain. Moreover, in a world in which women had few alternatives to dependence on men through marriage, the bid for independence probably seemed not only romantic but also a more realistic possibility for men; hence it threatened rather than liberated the least advantaged women.

For all its radicalism, the free-love slogan was still tempered by the conventions of its day, and this was especially true of its implications for sexual practice. The demand for free love had to do with personal

autonomy. Although it involved a greater measure of sexual freedom, it did not mean sexual libertarianism. The caution that characterized the editors' free-love advocacy can be at least partly explained by the ambivalence they expressed about sexuality. Their writings on the subject, like those found in Spain at the time, reveal a combination of vulgarity, radicalism, and shocked prudery. Marriage was attacked because it corrupted those involved and led to degenerate sexual practices. In a particularly florid passage, it was denounced as harboring "coital fraud and aberrations," with all its attendant "disgusting diseases, and its thousands and thousands of loathesome and repugnant practices which convert the marriage bed into a trough of disgusting obscenities—and from there to adultery!" "Degenerate" sex, including masturbation, was associated with the enemy, especially priests and the bourgeoisie, who were berated as homosexuals and pederasts. The limits of the editors' radicalism are clear; they were not advocating sexual permissiveness and were not even sure that they liked sex very much. Their free-love slogans signified a desire for freedom from certain legal and personal constraints, but sexuality was to be confined to the realm of normative practice.

This reflects the cultural context from which these women emerged. They saw the main problem in terms of freeing themselves from the power of men and questioned the privileges that men enjoyed at women's expense. Moreover, given the existing moral climate and the power relations between men and women, the latter frequently found themselves the victims of sexual exploitation for which they paid the social cost in terms of damaged reputation and illegitimate children. It is therefore not surprising that sexual exploitation is a recurrent theme of anarchist feminism: sex was a threat to women. *La Voz de la Mujer* combines various anarchist elements, such as hatred of the Church and of class exploitation, with a specifically feminist critique of the sexual exploitation of women. A powerful illustration of this, addressed in quite explicit language, is contained in number 3, in which the Church is attacked with all the venom of Spanish Anarchism for the hypocrisy of its functionaries in relation to sexuality. "Luisa Violeta" gives an allegedly autobiographical account of an incident between a priest and herself in a confessional. The priest rebukes her for not attending mass. She explains that her mother has been ill and she has had to care for her, but the priest will have none of it: "Disgraceful girl, don't you know that it is the soul first and then the body . . . ?" In the course of the confession Luisa asks forgiveness for masturbating, a subject that provokes a keen interest on the other side of the grille. The priest wants to know exactly what parts of her body she touches and whether she performs these acts alone; then he asks her

whether she was taught to do this by someone else. She retorts that it was none other than the priest himself. At this point, he invites her into his cubicle and tries to rape her.

Insistence on the profanity of the priesthood was a recurrent theme, together with a more general attack on the hopelessness of looking to religion for a salvation that can only come through social revolution. Given that the prevailing view of women was conditioned by expectations of their religiosity, piety, and chastity, this kind of critique must have been particularly scandalous at the time.

Hostility to the Church eclipsed even such sororal sympathy as the editors of *La Voz de la Mujer* might have mustered for their cloistered sisters, the nuns. These women were originally just as much the victims of the lack of opportunities as were the prostitutes to whom, in one article, they were likened. In number 4 nuns were bitterly criticized not so much for their ideological role as the purveyors of religious values as for their hypocrisy and deceit concerning sexuality (“parasites of society, who after satisfying your carnal appetites with your saintly men—the priests—cast the fruits of your entrails in the streets or bury them in your convent gardens”). Not surprisingly, this article appears to have aroused criticism from readers of *La Voz de la Mujer* that prompted a reply in number 5. The author insisted that the story was true and in her defense cited newspaper reports of a young girl being raped by a priest and the disposal of unwanted babies by nuns.

Hypocrisy, the double standard, and the sexual exploitation of women formed the basis of the editors’ feminist sympathy for prostitutes. Prostitutes were “fallen women,” innocents who had been corrupted, doubly betrayed on the basis of their sex and their class. An article by “Pepita Gherra” in number 4 contains this description of the ideal-typical prostitute: “Yes, I know, poor child, the priest was your lover and the monk bought you for four coins. Your father was sacked, your mother is ill, and your little brothers and sisters are suffering agonies of hunger . . .” In keeping with the nineteenth-century Romantic tradition, the prostitute was considered “the martyr of society”: as the creation of social corruption, she occupied a central place in the Anarchist conception of society. The editors held that prostitution was forced on women through poverty, men’s rapacity, and the lack of realistic alternatives for earning their living and was reinforced by the double standard and the institution of marriage, which trapped people in empty and unfulfilling relationships and drove men to look for their pleasures elsewhere.

In the late nineteenth century, Buenos Aires was already in the process of becoming the Latin American vice capital. Although fewer than 700 prostitutes were registered in the 1895 census, this was a considerable

understatement if other contemporary accounts are to be believed. It appears from the figures that a large percentage of the prostitutes in Argentina were immigrants, and this is consistent with reports of a white slave trade at this time (Rock, 1975). Number 8 of *La Voz de la Mujer* carries a long discussion of a pamphlet, apparently written by women who had been shipped to Buenos Aires by a "well-known entrepreneur" in this trade, calling for police intervention to stop the traffic in women. *La Voz de la Mujer* supported the women in mobilizing against the practice but considered it futile and incorrect to ask the police to intervene.

Changes in editorship with numbers 5 and 7 are associated with a shift in political emphasis—a gradual retreat from the militant feminism of the first few issues in favor of more orthodox Anarchist concerns. When in its early issues *La Voz* vigorously defended a feminist position against the criticisms of men in the movement, it was careful to point out that it was not against men but against those who opposed the idea of women's emancipation. After number 3 there were no further explicit allusions to recalcitrant men, and this may bear some relation to the significant editorial change that took place with number 5. This issue appeared in a different, larger format, apparently part of a campaign to increase the readership. This was necessary because there was "still great prejudice against women and against the great headway made by women's propaganda." The articles of "Pepita Gherra" were now prominently featured, and more articles tended to be on general Anarchist themes rather than specifically women's questions. The tone of the writing was less militantly feminist, less analytical, and less critical of men than before. Another significant index of the editors' increasing defensiveness was their denial that the paper was in the hands of the "Grupito Amor Libre" (Free-Love Sect), and it is interesting that from this issue on, there was no more discussion of free love. However, the slogan "Long Live Free Love" continued to be included along with "Social Revolution" and "Long Live Anarchy" in the programmatic calls that ended editorials.

Despite the change in editorship, there was no explicit criticism of the previous editorial line of the paper, and the new editors affirmed their intention to follow "the path of the old editors, that is, to fight ceaselessly against bourgeois society: we shall fight without compromise against those prejudices and preoccupations inculcated in us during our childhood by stupid men and fanatical women, and by others who place their pens at the disposal of scoundrels." With the seventh issue there appears to have been a further editorial change. According to a small announcement on the last page, a new group was now running the newspaper; as in the earlier case, no reasons were given for the change and no criticisms made of previous policy. The only indication of a change of line is given

by the contents of the paper; it was now being written, apparently, almost entirely by "Pepita Gherra," and these last three issues were even less concerned with feminist issues than the previous two. They are characterized by a concern with general Anarchist themes such as antipatriotism and anticlericalism.

The appearance of an appeal for help in number 9 indicates that the paper had entered a crisis. The print run for this number dropped from 2,000 to 1,500 and the issue was dominated by a disquisition on the Spanish-Cuban War reportedly printed in *La Voz* for lack of funds to publish it as a pamphlet. The appeal for support that reviewed the paper's development reads as follows:

TO OUR READERS

A year has passed since the first number of La Voz de la Mujer appeared. It has been a year of struggles, of sacrifices, of cruel choices, of expectations and failures which have only been alleviated to some extent by the rewards of struggle.

Two editorial groups have undertaken the work of producing this paper, and they have both placed all their limited knowledge and their energies at the disposal of the cause which they defend: Anarchy. Throughout this year, the life of this paper has been precarious and uncertain, so much so that we must confess and emphasize that comrades who like our propaganda work must (1) help us a bit more efficiently, because otherwise our efforts will be useless and we shall have to stop bringing out La Voz de la Mujer and that (2) this will mean the end of the ONLY paper in the Americas and perhaps in the whole world which is propagating our ideals about women and is particularly for women.

Compañeros y compañeras: we must repeat that we are not lacking in enthusiasm and will, but our resources are very few. Therefore, if we cannot go on, we shall retreat until we can return once again to the breach and shall always be ready, when the hour of combat sounds from the clock of human consciousness, to run forward and either win or die for Anarchy; for this cause we shall give all our intellectual and bodily energies, and our final breath.

The Editors of La Voz de la Mujer

Notes

(1) *Therefore we say: given the state of ignorance in which women are kept, we believe that our journalistic role is to break open the ground of*

women's minds; another paper, or this one some time in the future, will sow and cultivate the seeds. This is why our propaganda work is as it is; every paper has its own role.

(2) Alternatively, we may have to hand it over to other women comrades who are more capable or have more resources.

Despite this appeal, however, it appears that with number 9 *La Voz de la Mujer* ceased to exist.

The difficulties faced by such a paper were formidable. It readily acknowledged its failure to generate sufficient support, and there were a variety of reasons for this, both practical and political. Among the practical difficulties can be listed all the problems of publishing under clandestine or semiclandestine conditions. *La Voz* used a variety of different presses and probably relied on the collaboration of sympathetic men, who may in turn have forced the editors to moderate their more unacceptable views. There are indications that the paper was distributed mainly by male activists and that these men were not very diligent in ensuring that it was circulated or that the funds it raised were paid to the editors. This raises the more complex political reasons for *La Voz de la Mujer's* decline: If it was circulated mostly by men, then there were either few women to whom Anarchism appealed in nineteenth-century Argentina or few sympathetic to the project of *La Voz*.

There are two separate but related issues here: Anarchism and feminism. Anarchism clearly enjoyed fairly widespread sympathy among immigrant workers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but support for it was gradually eroded by changes in the immigrant communities themselves. It was initially popular among immigrants, especially the least advantaged, because its unanchored cosmopolitanism, idealism, and militant opposition to all forms of authority were expressive of the frustrations of a displaced rural southern European labor force faced with the realities of urban poverty in an alien land. Disappointed hopes and political disenfranchisement fueled these immigrants' militancy and fostered their disengagement from their host country. Those who stayed, whether through choice or circumstance, had to survive within Argentine society. About half of the male migrants married Argentine women and established a less attenuated relationship to their adopted country. Meanwhile, both male and female Argentine workers as well as some immigrants were, by the 1890s, committed to the struggle for practical reforms to ameliorate the condition of the working class. Some of the Anarchist groups entered into these struggles and gave them a militant edge. These groups remained, at least until the first decades of

the twentieth century, serious rivals of the more avowedly reformist Socialist party.

The revolutionist currents of Anarchism, such as *La Voz*, remained aloof; whereas some sectors of the working class, both national and immigrant, were demanding an eight-hour day, higher wages, and better conditions, many Anarchists derided such struggles and called instead for direct action against the state and its institutions. The Anarchist press of *La Voz de la Mujer*'s disposition was particularly disengaged from the struggles of its day. The papers' contents scarcely mention strikes or repression, working-class demands or action. Instead, the main concern was with ideological struggle.

La Voz de la Mujer's militant stance against what it saw as reformism probably marginalized it from the women workers it sought to influence. Its semiclandestine nature made organization and public meetings difficult. The paper appeared infrequently and circulated mainly among the radical members of the various immigrant communities. Thus, by far the greatest proportion of the material printed in *La Voz de la Mujer* could have been written in almost any Spanish-speaking country at any time between 1870 and 1930; ironically, the section of the paper that gives the most vivid indications of life in Argentina at this time is the subscription list, with its fleeting references to trades, living conditions, regions of the country, and leisure activities. Overall, its links with the realities of immigrant women's lives in Argentina were extremely attenuated.

Even in the 1890s, the splits that had developed in the movement reflected the direction events were taking. The more militant variants of anarchist communism, such as *La Voz* and the *Voice of Ravachol* (named for a bomb-thrower), soon lost out to those tendencies that were more responsive to the working class and embraced its struggles. The Anarchist movement was henceforth characterized by a growing support for anarcho-syndicalist ideas. This was, however, a question of too little and too late, and Anarchism, even in its more syndicalist form, was within a few decades a spent force. The Socialist party, founded in 1894, committed as it was to electoral participation and labor reform, had by the second decade of the twentieth century overtaken the Anarchists, and both were eclipsed by the liberal populism of the Radical party.

La Voz de la Mujer was therefore already a minority tendency within the Anarchist movement as a whole whereas Anarchism was being challenged to adapt to both the needs of the immigrants who were planning to stay in Argentina and those of the indigenous working class. But *La Voz* lost the contest twice over. Not only did its politics marginalize it from the working class, but also it gained insufficient support from women.

In one sense, *La Voz* was not particularly concerned to attract a wide readership. Anarchist feminism sought to develop small groups of dedicated activists rather than a mass movement. Its politics were avowedly sectarian and its sympathies reserved exclusively for working-class and poor women. There was little or no cooperation with other radical groups that shared *La Voz*'s concern for the working class. The Socialist party was reviled in much the same terms as the bourgeoisie, its paper *La Vanguardia* being described by one writer, presumably on account of its reformism, as "socialistic-bourgeois filth." Although the women workers to whom they addressed their writings had many a cause for grievance, the editors' commitment to militant Anarchism made it virtually impossible for them to involve themselves in any discussion of the practical issues they faced.

There was therefore a tendency to avoid formulating any precise strategies for change and action, even when certain more practical demands can be seen as emerging. Apart from the abolition of marriage, the editors called for an end to unequal and restricted opportunities for women, discrimination against women at work, domestic slavery, unequal access to education, and men's uncontrolled sexual demands upon women. But these issues are merely signaled, with little or no detailed discussion. Given the expressed concern for women workers, there are surprisingly few references to the employment and work conditions prevailing in Argentina at the time. *La Voz* was opposed to strikes for better wages and conditions. Its only intervention on behalf of women workers was to point out to laundresses the futility of boycotting the washhouses in an attempt to bring down the price of admission; instead it advised them to smash the machinery. Even when considerable space was allotted to a theme, as in the case of free love, the editors offered their readers few practical guidelines for realizing their ideal.

From the turn of the century on, a different variant of feminism emerged that did take up such issues, that of the Socialist party. Such women as Cecilia Grierson, Alicia Moreau de Justo, and Juana Rouco Buela launched the struggle for equal rights, better educational opportunities, and reform of the civil code, and in so doing they radically redefined the politics, strategy, and terrain of feminist struggle.¹⁴ Unlike *La Voz* and those of its persuasion, the Argentine Socialist party, influenced by the gradualist vision of Edouard Bernstein, was committed to a program of demands formulated principally in terms of concessions that could be won from the state.

Although the Socialist program was directed at achieving more tangible results than the Anarchism's, it lacked the fiery feminist radicalism

that had been so much a part of Anarchism's militancy. More important, in their tendency to derive women's oppression primarily from capitalism or to see it as mediated by the discriminatory practices of the state, the Socialists did not develop, as the Anarchists had done, a radical critique of the family, *machismo*, and authoritarianism in general. Nor did sexuality occupy any important place within Socialist feminist discourse. The free-love slogans of Anarchism were replaced by more traditional notions of women's "natural" moral superiority, with all its connotations of hearth, home, and virtuous motherhood (Little, 1978). The insights of the Anarchist feminists had to wait half a century to be given theoretical substance and even longer to form the basis of a distinctive practice.

This vignette of Argentine Anarchist history indicates that there was greater diversity of feminist discourse in Latin America than is commonly supposed. It also underlines the point that the individuals who make up a social movement enter it from different social positions and therefore have specific needs as well as, on occasion, conflicting interests.¹⁵ Women and men Anarchists, though united in a common cause, entered politics from different positions in the sexual and social divisions of labor, positions that shaped both their experience and, in the case of women, their specific demands. The tension between men's and women's needs in a political movement with universal goals was clearly experienced by the editors of *La Voz de la Mujer* as it has been by their successors in different epochs and national contexts.

Yet for all this, *La Voz* failed to universalize its feminist appeal. Although it had its supporters among the women of Argentina's urban centers, it could not sustain a readership of any size. This was not, however, because its targets were misconceived or because it had "imported" an alien and inappropriate vision from Europe. Women suffered as much in Argentina as in Spain or Italy from sexual exploitation, the double standard, and oppressive family situations that expressed both the inequality and the power relations between the sexes. The problem was rather that its message was expressed in terms too outrageous for the mainstream. Argentina was a more secular society than many of its counterparts at the time, but most women, whether native or immigrant, would have been scandalized by attacks on the Church and family and by the explicit discussion of sexuality.¹⁶ To many women, the family was a site of oppression, but it was also a locus of relative security in a rapidly changing world in which they had few alternatives. The abolition of marriage without other radical changes in their position would have left women even more exposed, threatening not greater freedom but possible loss of financial help and status in the eyes of the community. *La Voz*, though a spirited

intervention into an important terrain, had limited appeal, primarily because it lacked a deeper concern for the needs and beliefs of the women it sought to influence.

NOTES

1. *O Jornal das Senhoras*, for example, appeared in Brazil in 1852 and was dedicated to the "social betterment and the moral emancipation of women" (Hahner, 1978).

2. On the eve of the First World War, 30% of the Argentine population were immigrants in contrast to 14% of the U.S. population in 1910 (Solberg, 1970).

3. There were, of course, indigenous anarchist currents in Argentina—forms of spontaneous popular resistance—but these were unable to achieve a stable organizational expression. One of these, known as Gauchesque culture, became a central theme for Anarchist playwrights and poets from the 1890s on (see Franco, 1973, and Yunque, 1941).

4. Unfortunately, there are too few listings to form an accurate picture. Oved (1978) argues that in Argentina, as elsewhere, Anarchist support was among unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

5. Mentioned in the literary journal *Caras y Caretas*, 1901. According to Abad de Santillán (1930), Creaghe was "much beloved" of the Argentine Anarchist movement. Before leaving Britain, it seems, he had been active in the workers' movement in Sheffield and had brought out a paper there called *The Sheffield Anarchist*.

6. This ambivalence in the movement's attitude toward feminism and women Anarchists' successes and failures is discussed in the context of Spain up until the Civil War by Kaplan (1971) and Junco (1976).

7. From the 1900s on, the statutes of some of the workers' groups in which Anarchism was strong contain demands for equal pay for women and for the abolition of marriage. The latter demand appeared in the Anarchists' proposals for the statutes of the Federación Obrera Argentina, Argentina's first workers' federation, but was dropped from the final list of demands, probably on account of Socialist opposition (Marotta, 1960).

8. According to *Caras y Caretas*, Maria Calvia also founded a group called "Los Proletarios."

9. Quesada (1979) reports that one of the editors turned up in Rosario between 1900 and 1903. He writes that the visitors to the newly built Casa del Pueblo included Pietro Gori "and many others used to gather there: the Marchisio woman, who together with Virginia Bolten founded 'La Voz de la Mujer,' the latter publication called the Rosarian Michel due to the ardor of its oratory." (From other sources it would appear more likely that it was Bolten, not *La Voz*, who was dubbed "the Rosarian Michel.")

10. Number six is unavailable. The first four issues measured 26 cm. × 36 cm., whereas the remaining ones were slightly larger and varied in size, suggesting the use of different presses.

11. Some of these poems were written to be read at meetings. Number eight of *La Voz* carries a 207-line poem by "Pepita Gherra" that was, according to the editors, to be read at the Spanish Workers' Union meeting.

12. See Junco (1976) for a discussion of the family, free love, and feminism in Spanish Anarchism.

13. The Santa Cecilia Colony in Brazil is the best known of these. *El Oprimido* was at the center of a debate on this question, having apparently sponsored the publication of the pamphlet *An Episode of Love in the Socialist Colony "Cecilia,"* which advocated multiple relationships, abolition of the family, and communal care of children. Ruvira (1971) says that these Argentine Anarchists did have their free unions and that their children appear in the civil register with names such as Anarquía, Acracia, and even Libre Productor.

14. In 1900 Cecilia Grierson founded the National Women's Council, and five years later a feminist center was founded in which the core members of the Argentine suffragette groups came together.

15. For a theoretical discussion of this question of "interests" and feminism, see Molyneux (1984).

16. Two English writers of the period, of Church of England persuasion, lament that by 1891 37% of all marriages in Buenos Aires were civil ceremonies, following the legalization of secular marriage in 1887 (Mulhall and Mulhall, 1892).

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