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## “The ideal wife” as “the ideal mother”: some aspects of the Argentinian late eugenic thinking<sup>1</sup>

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**Resumen.** Este trabajo explora aspectos de la penetración cultural y pervivencia del paradigma eugenésico hegemónico en Argentina, cuya consolidación biopolítica se explica a partir de su imbricación immanente con las ideologías de sesgo liberal-conservador imperantes. El artículo se concentra en el débil impacto generado por la disociación entre sexo, género, genitalidad y procreación reafirmada desde la revolución sexual de la segunda posguerra; y, en paralelo, en el arraigo de un concepto de matrimonio como *locus* caracterizado por la vinculación sexual monógama y permanente. Se sostiene aquí que este espacio resultó condicionado por diversos influjos, entre los cuales la normalización eugénica de la sexualidad ocupó un lugar preponderante.

**Palabras clave:** Eugenesia; Historia de la sexualidad; Maternidad; Biopolítica; Biopoder; Revolución sexual; Argentina; Siglo XX.

## La “esposa ideal” como “madre ideal”: aspectos del pensamiento eugénico tardío en Argentina

**Abstract.** This work explores some aspects of the eugenic paradigm as a hegemonic thinking in Argentina, its cultural penetration and survival. In this way, that biopolitics consolidation is explained from its immanent imbrication with prevailing ideologies of Liberal-Conservative characteristics. The article concentrates on the weak impact generated by the dissociation between sex, gender, genitality and procreation, which was reasserted since the Sexual Revolution of the Second Post-War period; and, at the same time, in the social root of a marriage concept as locus characterized by a monogamous and lifelong sexual entailment. Here, we hold that this place was conditioned by different influences, as the eugenic normalization of sexuality, which occupied an important site in this field.

**Keywords:** Eugenics; History of Sexuality; Motherhood; Biopolitics; Biopower; Sexual Revolution; Argentina; 20th Century.

**Sumario.** Introduction: Argentinian eugenic expressions in the 60s. 1. An orthodox sexual mandate in context 2. From “the ideal wife” towards “the ideal mother” 3. Orthodox and heterodox eugenicists: the same thing? 4. Conclusions (or final reflections as a synthesis).

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## Introduction: Argentinian eugenic expressions in the 60s

We will explore in this paper an aspect closely linked to Eugenics and its consolidation in Argentina: the control over human procreation. In this way, we think that every eugenic formulation involves procreation as a biopolitic management of future generations, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the strong opposition of the Argentinian establishment to birth control which characterized the most widely accepted eugenic version in this country. Thus, we can underline that the female sexuality canon was marked there by a particular point of view, the social function of women which generated different biopolitic strategies; and, in consequence, the control of procreation in its qualitative and quantitative aspects was made. In this context, diverse coercion mechanisms were present, such as marital counselling and eugenic sterilization, even with prevalence of the first.<sup>3</sup>

So, we will analyse here some demonstrations of social control from a historic approach and, with these elements, we will put our focus on the duality sexuality-reproduction. That Eugenics tackled this binomial under the slogan of reproductive heterosexuality.

In this manner, and starting from the hegemonic character which the eugenic paradigm had in Argentina, strongly imbricated with ideologies of Liberal-Conservative characteristics which were sustained until the '70s, our aim is to review the concept of female sex-genitality organized around those ideas. And, from that perspective, we must remember the role granted to the right choice of couple and courtship, as its previous period. In addition to this, we will focus on women expected performance during their marriage, which was extended "till death us do part".<sup>4</sup> In this framework, the survival of anachronistic concepts during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century may be explained, in part, by the influence of different and fundamental actors of its biopolitics structure, with a particular role of the Catholic Church.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, by the symbolic capital of the medical and legal discourse that was sustained in a legality which outlined, discretionally, legitimate and illegitimate fields. In this

<sup>3</sup> Some aspects about eugenic sterilizations in Argentina were worked in: Eraso, Yolanda: "Biotypology, Endocrinology, and Sterilization: The Practice of Eugenics in the Treatment of Argentinian Women during the 1930s", *Bull Hist Med*, 81 (4), (2007), pp.: 793-822. [doi:10.1353/bhm.2007.0130]; and ERASO, Yolanda: *Representing Argentinian Mothers. Medicine, Ideas and Culture in the Modern Era, 1900-1946*. Amsterdam-New York, Rodopi; 2013.

<sup>4</sup> The importance of this election was, also, directly linked to the civil indissolubility of marriage. For further readings about biopolitic aspects of courtship, see: Miranda, Marisa: "Noviazgo y eugenesia en ámbitos latinos: 'casar selectos para parir selectos'", *Cadernos de Pesquisa Interdisciplinar em Ciências Humanas*, 15 (107), (2014), pp. 49-78. [http://dx.doi.org/10.5007/1984-8951.2014v15n107p49].

<sup>5</sup> The influence of the Catholic Church on Argentinian biopolitics was researched, among other texts, in: Scanzanella, Eugenia: *Italiani malagente. Immigrazione, criminalità, razzismo in Argentina, 1890-1940*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1999; Vallejo, Gustavo; Miranda, Marisa: "Dirigir el azar. Iglesia católica, evolucionismo y eugenesia en Argentina", in Miguel Ángel Puig Samper; Francisco Orrego; Rosaura Ruiz; Alfredo Uribe (Eds.): *Yammerschumer. Darwin y la darwinización en Europa y América Latina*, Madrid, Doce Calles, 2014, pp. 327-344; and in Vallejo, Gustavo; Miranda, Marisa: "Iglesia católica y eugenesia latina: un constructo teórico para el control social (Argentina, 1924-1958)", *Asclepio* 66 (2), (2014), pp.: 1-12. Available in: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3989/asclepio.2014.19> Doi:10.3989/asclepio.2014.v66.i2 .

cultural environment, the gender roles were well hierarchized and differentiated and involved the imposition -disguised as science- of certain behaviour, directly compatible with a sexual moral to support.

However, the paradigmatic fissures held by those imperatives -whose recognition had existed since some years before- were exponentially grown in the '60s; in part, by the wide diffusion of the female hormonal contraception method implemented through the so-called pill;<sup>6</sup> and also, by the increase of the recognition of sexual and reproductive women's rights.<sup>7</sup> By then, that hermetic conception of roles began to be questioned giving place to an image (unthinkable until this time) of female genitality dissociated from the procreative process. From that moment on, female pleasure has been emphasized as the basic condition of the sexual act, independently of the procreative goal, the only purpose of heterosexual unions before.

This disturbance in the Occidental culture constituted, clearly, a time hinge on the social comprehension of gender and sex-genitality. The new sexuality concept invites us to exhume it in different contexts which had a significant entity of Eugenics, as an ideology present in many fields, from health and sickness to law.<sup>8</sup> However, Eugenics did not imply a monolithic structure. In fact, it had several formulations linked, generally, to the particularities of each State; consequently, it is very common to differentiate Latin-Eugenics from Anglo-Saxon Eugenics.<sup>9</sup> The survival of the first formulation during the Cold War may be explained by its opposition to direct interventions on reproductive organs; and, at the same time, by the prevalence of the environmental factor instead of the strong concept of "race", recognizable with the Third Reich and identified with the Anglo-Saxon Eugenics.<sup>10</sup> However, we think that both lines were sustained in the legitimacy given to the public management of private life.<sup>11</sup>

Hence, and beyond the analogies between the eugenic theories (such as discourse

<sup>6</sup> About this issue, we recommend visiting: Mc Laren, Angus: *Historia de los anticonceptivos*, Madrid, Minerva, 1993; Felitti, Karina: *La revolución de la píldora. Sexualidad y política en los sesenta*, Buenos Aires, Edhasa, 2012; Cosse, Isabella, Felitti, Karina, Manzano, Valeria (eds): *Los '60 de otra manera. Vida cotidiana, género y sexualidades en la Argentina*, Buenos Aires, Prometeo, 2010; Cosse, Isabella: "Una revolución discreta. El nuevo paradigma sexual en Buenos Aires (1960-1975)", *Secuencia* [on line], 77, (2010), pp. 113-148. <http://www.scielo.org.mx/pdf/secu/n77/n77a5.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> See Gutiérrez, María Alicia: "Derechos sexuales y reproductivos", in Susana Gamba, (coord.): *Diccionario de estudios de género y feminismos*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2009, pp. 87-89.

<sup>8</sup> Eugenics was defined by Francis Galton as "the study of the Agencies under social control, that improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations either physically or mentally" in his text *Inquires into Human Faculty and its Development* (Álvarez Peláez, Raquel: *Francis Galton: Herencia y eugenesia*, Madrid, Alianza, 1988, pp. 79-130).

<sup>9</sup> The Anglo-Saxon eugenic version was studied in the well-known book: Kevles, Daniel: *In the name of Eugenics: genetics and the uses of human heredity*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.

<sup>10</sup> Turda, Marius and Gillette, Aaron: *Latin Eugenics in Comparative Perspective*, Londres, Bloomsbury, 2014, p. 240.

<sup>11</sup> See: Bashford, Alison and Levine, Philippa (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010. For further works about Eugenics in Argentina along the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, See: Miranda, Marisa And Girón Sierra, Álvaro (coord.): *Cuerpo, biopolítica y control social. América Latina y Europa en los siglos XIX y XX*, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 2009; Miranda, Marisa And Vallejo, Gustavo (comp.): *Darwinismo social y eugenesia en el mundo latino*, Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2005; Miranda, Marisa And Vallejo, Gustavo (Dir.): *Una historia de la eugenesia: Argentina y las redes biopolíticas internacionales*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2012; Scarzarella, Eugenia: *Italiani malagente....*; Stepan, Nancy Leys: *The hour of Eugenics*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1991; Vallejo, Gustavo And Miranda, Marisa (dir.): *Derivas de Darwin. Cultura y política en clave biológica*, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 2010; Vallejo, Gustavo And Miranda, Marisa, (comp.): *Políticas del cuerpo. Estrategias modernas de normalización del individuo y la sociedad*, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 2007.

and practice) raised in nearby cultures, we consider here the profile of the Latin-Eugenics about female sexuality and its relevance in Argentina, as a South American country which was a regional lighthouse on eugenic networks.<sup>12</sup> In consequence, considering the structure of its field, we can distinguish four evolutionary moments, whose temporal boundaries may be related with key events in the international or national scope. The first moment is denominated the reception of Francis Galton's thesis (1883-1930); the second one, the field's consolidation (1930-1945); the third one, the late-eugenic period (1945-1980) and the last one, liberal-eugenic (since 1983).<sup>13</sup>

In the period of time when we will focus our analysis -the late-eugenic period- the local field was characterized by the revaluation of the environmental factor, which had been adjudicated a qualitative impact on both individual and social levels. That field had strong homogeneity and the majority of political parties agreed about the legitimacy of a paradigm, basically ideological, already in crisis, as, for example, the particular synonymy between sexuality, genitality and gender. At the same time, a weak heterodoxy formed by anarchists, marked -in a disorganized way- the danger of the social exclusion associated to Francis Galton's matter.

## 1. An orthodox sexual mandate in context

Late-Eugenics was rooted in the eugenic field after the shock generated by two key situations: The end of the World War II and the public knowledge of Nazism and its biopolitics of race, in the international framework; and, in the local level, the institutional division given in the country in 1945, with the creation of the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia,<sup>14</sup> as counterpoint to the Asociación Argentina de Biotipología, Eugenesia y Medicina Social, founded in 1932.<sup>15</sup> The latter, which was subsequently close to Peronism, and finished its life inside the State context. As an example, in 1949, there was a wide ideological gap between the group of eugenicists (Antiperonists, basically) that composed the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia, and its leader, the lawyer Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós<sup>16</sup> and the President of Argentina, Juan Domingo Perón.<sup>17</sup> However, during that year, the Sociedad

<sup>12</sup> Miranda, Marisa: "La Argentina en el escenario eugénico internacional", in Marisa Miranda and Gustavo Vallejo (dir.): *Una historia de la eugenesia...*, pp. 19-64.

<sup>13</sup> Miranda, Marisa: "Doxa, eugenesia y derecho en la Argentina de postguerra (1949-1957)", in Gustavo Vallejo and Marisa, Miranda (comp.): *Políticas del cuerpo...*, pp. 97-129.

<sup>14</sup> The Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia was a civil entity constituted in Buenos Aires on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 1945 which obtained its legal status in 1947 (Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: *La degradación cosista del hombre*, Buenos Aires, edición del autor, 1957 b, pp. 35 y 39).

<sup>15</sup> The Asociación Argentina de Biotipología, Eugenesia y Medicina Social was an enterprise of vital importance in the spread of Italian fascist endocrinology enunciated by Nicola Pende.

<sup>16</sup> Argentinian lawyer (1895-1973) who participated in different institutions dedicated to Eugenics, such as Asociación Argentina de Biotipología, Eugenesia y Medicina Social. Bernaldo de Quirós founded in 1945 an institution called Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia, which had strong connections with several eugenic institutions from Latin America, for instance Sociedad Boliviana de Eugenesia and Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia para el Mejoramiento de la Raza. He published several books and works about Eugenics, Law, Sociology and Demography.

<sup>17</sup> Juan Domingo Perón (1895-1974) was President of Argentina in three different periods: 1946-1952; 1952-1955 and 1973-1974. It is interesting to point out for our piece of research work that in 1949 during his first presidency the Argentinian Constitution was reformed. After his dismissal by the Revolución Libertadora, that Constitution was derogated.

Argentina de Eugenesia presented in Parliament four legislative projects to give impulse to the “eugenization” of the State from the normalization of sexuality undoubtedly based on the legitimacy of the Victorian science enunciated by Francis Galton, Darwin’s cousin.

The fact that Peronists and Antiperonists concurred in accepting Eugenics is very important for our work; yet, that initiative was finally refused by non-substantial ius-philosophical matters. Actually, the government based on Carlos Cossio’s Egological Theory of Law sustained the ineffectiveness of law to change natural or social orders. As a consequence, during the First Peronist period (1946-1952) both government and main opposition lived together under the Eugenics’ thinking. Then, when Peron was toppled, the first and only University of Eugenics in the world was founded precisely by Bernaldo de Quirós in 1957.<sup>18</sup> Through that failed legislative corpus, the eugenicists closest to Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia, were trying to implement a programme of sanitary education as a response to venereal diseases. This initiative dealt with the report of contagious venereal diseases, the research of sources of contamination, the implementation of epidemiological surveys, the equipment of free laboratories for venereal diagnosis, the making of periodical and free clinical tests, the foundation of the anti-venereal sanitary policy, the creation of schools of social researchers, the compulsory and free treatment of venereal diseases and the economic distribution of medicine and promotional materials. In parallel to these events, they thought it was the State’s duty to forbid the existence of not authorized prostitution houses, while allowing only the solitary female prostitution, without public scandal; and, at the same time, to declare a compulsory treatment and hospitalization of all venereal patients who did not want to receive medical treatment; and, their prohibition of marriage or cohabitation as long as they were ill. Through the creation of a specific institution (Registro Nacional de Higiene Sexual) the personal details of the patient and the place where, eventually, they had been infected would be recorded. This office would work in connection with other local sanitary authorities. Simultaneously, the Servicio de Fiscalización Antivenérea would be the organism assigned to control the concurrence of sick men to hospitals and to investigate the sources of infection. Meanwhile, the Sección de Educación Sanitaria Antivenérea had as a goal to stimulate the conscience of the population about the dangers of venereal diseases and to highlight the benefits around sexual eugenic education.

So, the eugenic controls would be extended from the compulsive collection of human blood and urine tests to the implementation of an “individual and permanent document of sexual ability” (rather than being called by its actual name, “reproductive ability”). This aspect shows, once again, the relationship between Eugenics, sexuality and morality that was thought around Latin-Eugenic orthodox.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For a deeper educational approach, see: Vallejo, Gustavo: “Una eugenesia liberal y católica en la segunda posguerra. Argentina en la década de 1960”, in: Luis Calvo; Álvaro Girón and Miguel Ángel Puig Samper (eds.): *Naturaleza y laboratorio*, Barcelona, Residencia d’Investigadors, CSIC, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2013, pp. 265-298.

<sup>19</sup> For an analysis of sexuality management in Spain, see: Guereña, Jean-Louis (ed.): *La sexualidad en la España contemporánea (1800-1950)*, Cádiz, Universidad de Cádiz, 2011. For inquiries about this issue in broader spectrums, see: Balbo, Eduardo and Huertas, Rafael (coords.): “La sexualidad y sus límites”, Número monográfico de *Asclepio*, 42 (2), (1990). For a history of biopolitical of sexuality in Argentina, see: Miranda, Marisa: *Controlar lo incontrolable. Una historia de la sexualidad en Argentina*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2011.



If we take into account the central position education had in that proposal we can understand the intention of declaring sexual eugenic education as a compulsive topic; and, in that context, it would be taught at the three scholar cycles (primary school, secondary school and university) and in private institutions.<sup>20</sup> The study programmes should include different contents such as biogeographical, climatic, racial and domestic factors; and graduates of Instituto Nacional de Biotipología y Materias Afines and Escuela Argentina de Eugenesia were in charge of transmitting that education. This eugenic sexual education was oriented towards the instruction about moral, and, in that context, to civilize libido, to hierarchize sexuality and to preserve the purity and sexual energy. At the same time, that education was focused on preventing a normal progeny, to turn love into a decent thing, to save home, to give prestige to family and to prepare youth to their genetic marriage management and, finally, struggle against immorality and vice. Therefore, it was necessary to lead the behaviour integrally considering that eugenic sexual education consisted in psychological and pedagogical actions to submit any sexual impulse of the child, the teenager or the adult, in order to regulate desire, under the control of a nurtured, aware and responsible intelligence.<sup>21</sup>

In that context, it was the State and educators' duty to teach male youth a clear principle: performances like chastity, sexual continence and embarrassment are not harmful but they are advisable from the eugenic and moral point of view, the strength of the lineage and mental and physical hygiene. As a consequence of this, the prolificacy after an eugenic marriage (imbricated, of course, from its origins in the Catholic Church), involved the exaltation of the previous sexual continence; and, the public rule had to watch around the "moral and environmental sanitation habits" of the youth who would find in chastity bigger benefits, even biological ones, which produced at that age "the semen retained into seminal vesicles".<sup>22</sup>

These ideas were in parallel to the struggle against low birth rates, and, in the meanwhile, with a discourse that tended to impose a sexual moral beyond the "patriotic work" to increase the population of the country. And, in that orientation, we notice as well, the excessive eugenic literature that was published with an attempt to defeat female contraception, characterized as a pre-genocide period.<sup>23</sup> Thus procreation, as eugenic goal, had to be preceded by some kind of particular education, which had responsibility as a highest value. In this case, chance or misfortune should not decide procreation; but it ought to be a result of conscious love arising from intelligently controlled behaviour by both genitors. In such way, so as not to give birth to an underestimated and unfortunate offspring, child of vegetative expression of sexual hunger, with biological, social, economic and moral defects.<sup>24</sup>

However, the Argentinian eugenic orthodox, with its conservatism, highlighted

<sup>20</sup> See: Miranda, Marisa and Vallejo, Gustavo: "Iglesia, eugenesia y control de la moral sexual: apuntes para una historia del onanismo, 1930-1970", in Dora Barrancos, Donna Guy, Adriana Valobra (eds.): *Moralidades y comportamientos sexuales. Argentina (1880-2011)*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2014, pp. 251-272.

<sup>21</sup> Ministerio de Salud Pública de la Nación: *Eugenesia y Derecho*, Buenos Aires, imprenta oficial, 1950, pp. 81-84.

<sup>22</sup> Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: *Bases y principios para padres e hijos*, Buenos Aires, Legión Blanca, 1960 a, p. 105.

<sup>23</sup> Nasio, Juan: "Los contraceptivos y el sentido moral en la investigación médico-científica", *Estudios Eugenesicos*, V (117), (1966), pp. 211-214 (p. 213).

<sup>24</sup> Ministerio de Salud Pública de la Nación: *Eugenesia y...*, p. 83.

the need to establish public and private sexuality controls. This situation was clearly opposed to the contemporary cultural *aggiornamento*, which had the text of Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe* [The Second Sex], published in 1949, as an emblematic icon.<sup>25</sup> In fact, from this moment, the concept of gender was introduced in the popular discourse as a culturally announced construction in the sex of the new born.<sup>26</sup> As a consequence of this, sex-gender determinism was breaking up and, as a result, both terms were dissociated, staying apart definitely in the future.

Meanwhile, taking all these factors into account, even if we accept that sex is “given”, gender is “constructed” (and, of course, independent from biological elements) and the justification of the existence of strong gender roles associated to biological sex is dissonant. Therefore, the social and transcendent function which endowed maternity and breeding had to be reevaluated; and, the identity of women became a subject of inevitable debate. That identity demanded, obviously, the parallel recognition of female genitalia, now separate from procreation. However, as sex-genitality, gender and procreation, were increasing as autonomy spheres, Argentinian Late-Eugenics put more emphasis on the traditional concept. This sustained that sexuality implied, necessarily, genitality and, at the same time, sex and gender were part of the same reality that, defined by its biological side was only justified by procreation.<sup>27</sup>

In that way, beyond the social change generated by Beauvoir’s book and, the significant increase in the use of contraceptive methods and practice of reproductive freedom, the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia insisted on the role of the “women as housewives” or “decent women”, who should only focus their lives on their home and “female jobs”, such as teaching, nursing and social service.<sup>28</sup> This position would strengthen, since their childhood, that rule of subordination.<sup>29</sup>

This subordinate relationship was expressed around the idea of women as object, where their maternity social role was subordinated by demographics needs of the country and also by her husband’s authority. So, going between two figures of clear parental filiation (the State and the husband) their sexual pleasure was not visualized. And, at the same time, their essence was bifurcated into their “natural” function as “producers” of citizens, on the one hand, and obedience to their husband, on the other hand. Both roles were present in several aspects, from their own sexual pleasure to their own decision about such an important subject as procreation.

<sup>25</sup> Beauvoir, Simone de: *Le Deuxième Sexe*, Paris, Gallimard, 1949.

<sup>26</sup> Femenías, María Luisa: *Sobre sujeto y género: (re)lecturas feministas desde Beauvoir a Butler*, Rosario, Prohistoria, 2012, p. 25. As it is well known, this text survived its prohibition in dictatorship periods, for instance in Spain. In addition to this, *El Segundo sexo*, was included in the Catholic Church’s Index as well as *El matrimonio perfecto* years before, book which was ironically named in Argentina “matrimonio depravado” (véase Ochoa, Javier: “Después de la Casti Connubii. Pornografía y falsa ciencia”, *Criterio*, 200, (1931), pp. 475-476 (p. 475).

<sup>27</sup> About the tensions between sexuality and reproduction during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, see: Barrancos, Dora: “Contrapuntos entre sexualidad y reproducción”, in Susana Torrado (comp.): *Población y bienestar en la Argentina del primero al segundo Centenario. Una historia social del siglo XX*, Tomo I, Buenos Aires, Edhasa, 2007, pp. 475-499.

<sup>28</sup> Miranda, Marisa; Bargas, María Luján: “Mujer y maternidad: entre el rol sexual y el deber social (Argentina, 1920-1945)”, *Locus*, 17 (2), (2011), pp. 75-101. For further material about motherhood, see: Duby, George; Perrot, Michelle (dirs.): *Historia de las mujeres en Occidente*, Madrid, Taurus, 2000; Knibiehler, Yvonne: *Historia de las madres y de la maternidad en Occidente*, Buenos Aires, Nueva Visión, 2001.

<sup>29</sup> For a broader view: Seoane, José B.: *El placer y la norma. Genealogía de la educación sexual en la España contemporánea. Orígenes (1800-1920)*, Barcelona, Octaedro, 2006.

Alongside this, the local eugenicists said that creation and nature had given women a sex, a shape, a size, a weight, a nature, a force, a resistance, an intuition, a psychology, a metabolism, a feeling, a sensibility, a life sense, a goal, a destination and certain kind of genitalism, vitality, moodiness, spirituality, different to men.<sup>30</sup> Although they found it hard to recognize that women had the same rights as men, it was frequently assumed that women, in their spare time, approximately eight hours per day, were very busy with fashion, outings, cinema and sports. And, for that reason, they left their original and spiritual “projects” aside, and resigned their eugenic biology.<sup>31</sup>

That worldview about family and sexual system was extended in Argentina near the decade of 1970; when, in parallel, the prescriptive of the Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae*, written by the Pope Paulo VI in 1968 as main opponent to contraceptive methods, was well installed in this country.<sup>32</sup>

## 2. From “the ideal wife” towards “the ideal mother”

The high visibility gained by the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia exceeded local places to be projected in an international context. So, its main magazine, *Estudios Eugenésicos*, was well known in foreign countries. It was shown, for example, in an important French edition that, in 1951, Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós and Alfredo Saavedra’s papers were analysed there.<sup>33</sup> In that occasion, and making an epistemological link between both eugenicists, that Argentinian institution was much-vaunted.

Then, a few years later, in the discourse given by Saavedra on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia (founded by him in 1931), we can see another sign of admiration towards Bernaldo de Quirós and his Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia. In this respect, Saavedra happily pointed out his intellectual connections with influential Argentinian personalities in the areas of Medicine and Law. Therefore, he specially named the eugenicists Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós, Enrique Díaz de Guijarro, Alfredo Fernández Verano and Lázaro Sirlin.<sup>34</sup> At that time, the Mexican eugenicist explained the goals wanted by his Sociedad and highlighted that, through this organization he would be able to make some educational work, based on the moral concept of procreative responsibility. He proceeded to say that every day in the social environment it was noticed that evil prejudices were disappearing, and, in this way, the creation of an atmosphere of sanity, of moral cleaning, having an influence on the conscious of family parents, especially Mexican women, physicians,

<sup>30</sup> Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: “Los medios desesperados, la ‘integración social’ y la vida eugenésica de la mujer”, *Estudios Eugenésicos*, IV (86), (1960 b), pp. 319-322 (p. 319). Highlight in bold is ours.

<sup>31</sup> Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: “Los medios desesperados...”, p. 321.

<sup>32</sup> About the reception of this Encyclical in the local eugenic field, see: Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: “La Iglesia de Roma y la regulación de la natalidad”, *Estudios Eugenésicos*, VI (128) (1968), p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> S J: “Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia”, *Population*, 6(2), (1951), pp. 340-341. Alfredo Saavedra (1893-1973) physician who played an essential role in eugenic orthodox in Mexico where he founded the Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia para el Mejoramiento de la Raza, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1931 (Suárez y López Guazo, Laura: *Eugenesia y racismo en México*, México D.F., UNAM, 2005, pp. 120-121). His work was widely distinguished by Bernaldo de Quirós (see: Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: *La degradación cosista...*, p. 30).

<sup>34</sup> Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: “Bodas de Plata de la Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia”, *Estudios Eugenésicos*, IV (65) (1957 a), p. 156.



teachers, nurses and social workers.<sup>35</sup>

As it is well known, his thinking survived in his country until the '60s, and kept important similarities with Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós ideas.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, in the framework of deep cultural exchanges between those eugenicists, we can remember the erratic letter, written by Saavedra, and published in *Estudios Eugenésicos*, the main Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia's magazine. In this letter, the Mexican researcher reflected about a crucial issue inside Latin-Eugenics: the marriage of his daughter. Precisely, the title of the paper was highly significant: "Eugenic Letter for a daughter who marries", and may be considered as an example of the conceptual viscosity of the word "Eugenics", as expression of its ideological survival.<sup>37</sup> In fact, the word "Eugenics" involves a future scale that is into the procreative process that, by definition, had to be managed by authority. So, we can conclude that the legitimacy effect of Eugenics was so significant in these countries that only its invocation was functional to situations which were not related to present and future procreation. In fact, under the adjective "eugenic", Saavedra -a loving father- wrote a letter to his daughter in which he did not give predictable reproductive pieces of advice. He was concentrated, instead, in reinforcing stagnant gender roles.

After that publication, and only two years later, the same Argentinian magazine, brought back the advice -written by Saavedra, too- addressed to "Young (Smart) Ladies". In that occasion, he said that women were permanently at risk of being "assaulted": in the street, at the cinema, in the country, at work. For this reason, the author recommended there that they should be careful with the upstart boyfriend, because he might be ill; and they should not listen only to the first word said by men because it could be false; and they should not believe in men who offer them money, travels, jewels or dresses. Finally, Saavedra advises on the possibility of believing in false promises which could make children future victims. He also remarks that alcoholism, drugs and venereal diseases may spoil women lives and, in that case, nobody would be by their side; they would stay alone; and they would be discriminated by society. In this context, Saavedra strongly recommended not accepting such things as they would eventually make women go into hospital, as he considered that illness, misery, abandonment and social contempt may be hidden behind credulity. The Mexican ended his speech saying that it was necessary to listen and think before starting a relationship.<sup>38</sup>

Among those pieces of advice, Saavedra, who was highly recognized by Argentinian eugenicists, provided an explanation of the reason why some women remained unmarried. Certain causes for that state were attributed to some curious aspects, such

<sup>35</sup> Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: "Bodas de Plata..."

<sup>36</sup> Suárez y López Guazo, Laura: *Eugenesia y racismo...*, pp. 114-115. About Saavedra it is possible to see: Suárez y López Guazo, Laura: "La influencia de la Sociedad Eugénica Mexicana en la educación y en la medicina social", *Asclepio*, LI (2), (1999), pp. 51-84; Stern, Alexandra Minna: "From Mestizophilia to Biotypology: Racialization and Science in Mexico, 1920-1960", in Nancy Appelbaum, Anne Macpherson, Karin Roseblatt, (eds.): *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America*, North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press, 2003, pp. 187-210.

<sup>37</sup> Saavedra, Alfredo M: "Carta Eugenésica a una hija que se casa (de Méjico)", *Estudios Eugenésicos*, V (118), (1967), p. 226. The concept of "viscosity" applied to Eugenics was approached in: Miranda, Marisa: "La tar-do-eugenesia en Argentina: un enfoque desde la *longue durée*", *Arbor*, 189 (764) a088, 2013 [doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3989/arbor.2013.764n6011>].

<sup>38</sup> Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia, A. C: "Para las jóvenes (inteligentes)", *Estudios Eugenésicos*, VI (133), (1969), p. 48.

as: because they were (or believe they were) pretty women; because they were vain and they were waiting for Mr. Right; because they were proud and indifferent; because if they were really pretty women, they were unfriendly; because if they were moody women then they were not attractive; because if they were ostentatious women, they were usually coquettish; because if they were sardonic women, they were aggressive; because they did not wear make-up or they made up too much; because they dressed up or not; because they were either too silent or too talkative; because they wore too much perfume or they did not perfume at all; because some of them were either rich or poor; because some of them were dull and because others were pestering; because they were loved or hated by their mothers-in-law.<sup>39</sup> Instead, other women got married because they knew how to give hope, who to stare at and how to smile; and they were sensitive to their boyfriend's preferences; they spoke little but they said too much; and, finally, when they understood that men were little boys who were easily driven by them.<sup>40</sup>

Those gender imperatives and their eugenic validations were also asserted in a paper published in 1967 by the Argentinian Bernaldo de Quirós. In this article, the author suggested that women should not work outside home, except in case their husbands could not do it because of illness or death; or in case of extreme economical need; or, if women had a profession or social function according to her sex (for example, as physician of ladies, teacher, domestic service or dressmaker). In these cases, Bernaldo de Quirós wondered how to solve the problem generated by an intelligent wife working outside home; if she had to divide the household chores with her husband and if the latter had to behave as a woman he would forget, in consequence, his duties and rights in marital, paternal, cultural and social issues. The founder of the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia discouraged women from working outside their homes. He put emphasis on the disadvantages of physical and psychic separation between couple's members; and was in favour of true soul amalgamation, and their intimate collaboration, essential, sacred, as a creative and lovely complementation of their hearts, ideas, wishes and spirits. Considering all these aspects, Quirós concluded that both men and women were provided with a superhuman character and their union had to follow deep, moral and metaphysic goals, to preserve, in this way, the first and most important thing: human happiness before material reality. Thus, intimate life, was considered by the Argentinian lawyer as a systematic, ethic, lovely and transcendent marital life, dedicated to family happiness with creativity, order and harmony. In this way, solidarity, deep moral and spiritual unity were cause but not effect of that and, for that reason wives should neither be managed by another person nor have any interest outside their home.<sup>41</sup>

Beyond the analogies between this discourse and the pieces of advice provided to women written in Spain, in the late '50s by Pilar Primo de Rivera, we can see that, from a strong gender determinism, associated to sex-genitality "given", the local orthodox made women reinforce some characteristics, with the goal of contributing towards a cultural construction of an "ideal wife" as an "ideal mother".

This point of view could be considered in line with the theory of an emphatic

<sup>39</sup> Saavedra, Alfredo M: "Temas de Eugenesia", *Estudios Eugenesicos*, VI (136), (1970), pp. 70-71.

<sup>40</sup> Saavedra, Alfredo M: "Temas de..."

<sup>41</sup> Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: "¿Debe trabajar la esposa fuera del hogar?", *Estudios Eugenesicos*, V (123) (1967), p. 262. Highlight in bold is ours.

disseminator of eugenics sterilizations and developer of the California Sterilization Law, Paul Popenoe,<sup>42</sup> who kept close intellectual relations with Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós. With respect to Popenoe, we could point out that his suggestions had much credibility in the United States until the '60s and '70s when they were heavily criticised by liberation movements for his defence of eugenic sterilizations. By then, a considerable number of radical feminists broke into the *Ladies' Home Journal* office, claiming for a long list of demands, such as asking him to stop writing his column "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" which he had been publishing for almost two decades.<sup>43</sup>

As we have anticipated, this eugenicist was considered admirable in Argentinian scientific contexts; fundamentally, taking into account his relationship with the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia, which was in activity until the '70s. In fact, and although this country refused eugenic sterilizations based on scientific uncertainty,<sup>44</sup> we could indicate that Popenoe's authority had a great recognition in Argentina since 1940. By then, the Uruguayan obstetrician, Juan Pou Orfila, evoked with great pleasure the emblematic text written by Popenoe and Johnson, *Applied Eugenics* published in 1918.<sup>45,46</sup> That particular text gave Pou grater possibilities of teaching the eugenic feeling in Latin American populations. From here, he could satisfy his deep wish, "Everybody is eugenicist!"<sup>47</sup> In this respect, and leaving eugenic sterilization aside, each person had to be aware of their own eugenic or disgenic capacity. According to Pou, it was all "truly human" men and women's duty to bear in mind that marriage may be a way of generating new humans; and these, fundamentally, should be superior to their parents. All that implied collecting popular slogans, such as: "choose the daughter of a good mother"; "look for your future wife into a good family" "marry a healthy and educated woman when you are young".<sup>48</sup>

Several years later, Popenoe was invited by Bernaldo de Quirós to attend the meeting Terceras Jornadas de Humanismo Eugenésico Integral, which was organized in Buenos Aires in 1970.<sup>49</sup> Even when we cannot prove that the North American researcher effectively travelled to our country, in that opportunity he published a paper, entitled "La pregunta olvidada" [The forgotten question]. In his work, Popenoe proposed performing a test to asses the changes in family life and in relationships between sexes. He claimed that the tendency to tolerate social destruction went against progress. Among those abnormalities, Popenoe mentioned homosexuality and divorce. Now, the answer to the question which was title of his

<sup>42</sup> Paul Popenoe (1888-1979) was a North American biologist who was part of Anglo-Saxon Eugenics. He defended eugenic sterilizations and then, over time, he oriented his research work to marital counselling. He was a prominent figure in the Argentinian Late-Eugenics (see, for instance, Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos: *La degradación cosista...*, pp. 29-30).

<sup>43</sup> Stern, Alexandra Minna: *Eugenic Nation...*, p. 26.

<sup>44</sup> See: Miranda, Marisa: "Eugenesia, esterilización compulsiva y liberalismo constitucional: sobre las razones de un debate ausente en Argentina", in *VI Coloquio Internacional sobre Darwinismo en Europa y América*, 2015 (in press).

<sup>45</sup> Pou Orfila, Juan: "Reflexiones sobre la Eugenia en la América Latina", *Obstetricia y Ginecología Latino-Americanas*, I (1), (1943), pp. 50-65 (p. 58).

<sup>46</sup> Popenoe, Paul and Johnson, Roswell Hill: *Applied Eugenics*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1918.

<sup>47</sup> Pou Orfila, Juan: "Reflexiones sobre la Eugenia...", p. 57.

<sup>48</sup> Pou Orfila, Juan: "Reflexiones sobre la Eugenia...", p. 60.

<sup>49</sup> Some papers which were presented in this event (including Popenoe's) and the conclusions introduced by the Review Comission were published in *Estudios Eugenésicos*, VII, 1971.

piece of research work, “La pregunta olvidada” [The forgotten question], was intended to reinforce family life, as it involved the survival and progress of the race and, of course, the survival and progress of the Nation.<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, and going beyond this particular episode, the relationship between Bernaldo de Quirós and Popenoe, and the influence of this researcher over the Argentinian lawyer, may be noticed in the analogies between the consulting room founded by Bernaldo de Quirós in Argentina with Popenoe’s consulting room founded in the United States. In fact, the North American had created in Los Angeles in 1930, the American Institute of Family Relations that was dedicated to give advice about gender rules and sexuality to “white and middle class” couples. The eugenicist work was aimed at achieving successful (long-lasting) marriages. Popenoe’s institution was praised by Argentinian late-eugenicists, who defined it as the first organization in the United States in charge of giving help to achieving optimal marriages.

In this context and with those antecedents, Bernaldo de Quirós would found in 1966 the first consulting room of that kind in Argentina.<sup>51</sup> The patients’ examination in these consulting rooms was preceded by a careful distinction made by a professional (the Licenciado Eugénista Humanólogo) according to the characteristics of each patient. They were classified into three different categories in ascending order, “homínido”, “ente” or “humanido”. For a start, the professional had to complete an updated biotypological card which required detailed information about the patients such as social, eugenic, eutenic and cultural data. After filling in the form, seven eugenicists -including Bernaldo de Quirós- made an evaluation of the patient (always over 6 years old) to detect their active humanization and ethical improvement skills. In those consulting rooms, the professionals were supposed to study the nature of the human being, not in its individual state -as psychologist did-, but in its innate, genetic, hereditary and acquired aptitudes and patterns; and, once they had a result, they would determine their degree of “living humanization” and would provide, in consequence, a good preparation to the struggle for life.<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, the interest manifested by Argentinian Late-Eugenics in the selection of couples may be understood in the framework of marital indissolubility, proclaimed with great emphasis by that orthodox group. In this point, Popenoe’s philosophy seemed to differ slightly from that thinking. It was shown, for example, in the title of his works, “Can this marriage be saved?” where, obviously, he implied the underlying possibility that the answer was no and, of course, the solution was divorce.<sup>53</sup> In contrast with this was the opinion of Bernaldo de Quirós, who did not believe in divorce as a solution.

### 3. Orthodox and heterodox eugenicists: the same thing?

Until this moment, we have presented central aspects of Argentinian late-eugenic orthodox; and now we will show here some aspects of heterodox Eugenics. In this

<sup>50</sup> Popenoe, Paul: “La pregunta olvidada”, *Estudios Eugénicos*, VII, (1971), pp. 8-12 (p. 12).

<sup>51</sup> *Estudios Eugénicos*, (1966), V (16), p. 210.

<sup>52</sup> *Estudios Eugénicos*, (1966)....

<sup>53</sup> Popenoe warned of divorce effects in different texts, for instance: Popenoe, Paul and Disney, Dorothy Cameron: *Can this marriage be saved?* New York, The Macmillan Company, 1953.

respect, the heterodox of the late-eugenic period had as its main character an anarchist, Juan Lazarte, who was incorporated at the time to Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia, the most orthodox example of Eugenics in the period.<sup>54</sup> Before that, Lazarte managed the Eros Collection, published by Partenón, an editorial situated in Buenos Aires and where he founded a gap to disclosing, since 1945, different texts about sexuality written by personalities such as Havelock Ellis or Augusto Forel.<sup>55</sup> In this way, we will concentrate here particularly on two of them, published in Argentina in 1949: *Historia del amor*, written by Marguerite Crépon, and the second edition of the *Manual del Matrimonio*, by Hannah and Abraham Stone. In both books, however, it is possible to observe real distances with the orthodox pattern. *Historia del amor*, for instance, noted the victory of wives over lovers consistently arguing that over time wives would behave like lovers. Hence, the difficulties to find domestic service, being keen on sports and the need to pursue their studies turned the wife into housewife, party friend and female spiritual partner of her husband, all at the same time.

Thus, the idea that the man should look for another funny woman instead of the boring and honest housewife he was married to was now useless.<sup>56</sup> This access to women to their professional and public lives was not considered a goal, but the means to open the female world; and, since then, husband and wife would give each other “bread and love”.<sup>57</sup> From this perspective the Catholic Church teaching about the unthinking marriage was relegated; in fact, that strategy had created, in the past, a model of women absolutely distant from reality. And, in that sense, there was an imperative need of change.<sup>58</sup> Crépon attempt included a preaching against strongly affianced behaviour in the orthodox field.<sup>59</sup> In fact, the traditional point of view questioned the unmarried maternity and the known thinking about the female private world, considering it as a false prevalence of oppositions required by her “natural function”: love, maternity and kitchen.<sup>60</sup>

In contrast, the author’s rhetoric expressed valid questions which were, at the time, ineffable in the local environment. So, there appeared different questions like which is the meaning of freedom to a person who is property of men? Which is the meaning of fraternity between two rivals? Which is the meaning of justice to a person dedicated to a casual sentimental meeting? Which is the meaning of truth to a domestic animal? Which is the meaning of intelligence, if it is shown as an enemy of love? Which is the soul’s meaning, if she will be judged by her body? Which is the meaning of the spirit to a person destined to material jobs? And then, the most

<sup>54</sup> About this physician, see: Ledesma Prietto, Nadia: *La revolución sexual de nuestro tiempo (1931-1951)*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2016. Jiménez-Lucena, Isabel and Molero-Mesa, Jorge: “Una dialógica desestabilizadora del orden social y sexual: el médico argentino Juan Lazarte en la revista anarquista” *Estudios* (1932-1936), *Asclepio*, 66 (2), (2014) [doi:10.3989/asclepio.2014.20]. Another anarchist, the Italian physician and pharmaceutical Bartolomé Bosio (1877-1956) also played an important role in the Argentinian eugenic heterodox. See: Miranda, Marisa: “Medicina y eugenesia en la Argentina de entreguerras: apuntes en torno a un pensamiento heterodoxo”, *Cuadernos del Sur-Historia*, 40 (2011), pp. 177-194.

<sup>55</sup> Cámpora, Magdalena: “El intérprete imprevisto. Modos de inclusión de la literatura francesa en colecciones argentinas de la década del 40”, *Primer Coloquio Argentino de Estudios sobre el Libro y la Edición*, La Plata, UNLP, (2012), p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> Crépon, Marguerite: *Historia del amor*, Buenos Aires, Partenón, 1949, p. 39.

<sup>57</sup> Crépon, Marguerite: *Historia del...*, p. 143.

<sup>58</sup> Crépon, Marguerite: *Historia del...*, p. 164.

<sup>59</sup> Crépon, Marguerite: *Historia del...*, p. 179.

<sup>60</sup> Crépon, Marguerite: *Historia del...*, p. 180.



transcendental question: Has humanity reflected seriously about those injustices?<sup>61</sup>

In her book, Crépon made reference to the existence of evident and implacable sexual injustice that collided with gender stratification, which was well affianced around the Argentinian orthodox Eugenics even after the World War II.

At the same time, the Stones' *Manual del Matrimonio* and its simulated conversation among a physician and a young couple also gave wife and husband eugenic marital counselling. In this context, the Stones considered highly necessary to determine the capacity for marriage and, for that reason, the couple had to be examined under different eugenic patterns, as, the present and past of their family health.<sup>62</sup> In spite of all these facts, here is a differential characteristic between orthodox and heterodox Eugenics: the central ideas about Eugenics. In relation to this, the Stones said that the usual eugenic mankind classification into people who belonged to high level or low level groups, into desirable or undesirable classes, should be strongly rejected.<sup>63</sup> The Stones changed the anachronistic concept of "ideal wife" to "ideal couple" which meant the confluence of friendship, trust, sexuality and the desire of starting a family.<sup>64</sup>

So, this perspective tried to achieve the equality treatment between the spouses, although requiring the "good in birth" (or "healthy birth") as a proof of their love, it also meant a greater gap with the symbiotic link between sex and gender, as intended by the Argentinian late-eugenic orthodox whose recommendations were functional to political local authoritarian governments from the '70s.

#### 4. Conclusions (or final reflections as a synthesis)

As we have said, the purpose of this work was looking over sex-genitality from the point of view of the Argentinian eugenic biopolitics which was, during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, significantly influenced by Liberal-Conservative ideas and, at the same time, conjugated with a profound prominence of the Catholic Church. From this mixture -a typical sign of Latin-Eugenics- we could see certain issues which would result essential at the moment of proving our goal.

In fact, during that Century, the central female sexuality paradigm was characterized in this country by a symbiotic approach among sex, gender and genitality concepts which were, in turn, culturally associated to an unavoidable procreative role. Therefore, in this context, apart from the quoted role of the Catholic Church, that imperative about sexuality was consolidated by the symbolic capital of medical and juridical discourses which contributed to reinforce it.

So, gender roles, hierarchized and well differenced, involved the "scientific" imposition of opposite behaviour, even under sheets. However, as we know, that paradigm began to show numerous fissures which were better noticed towards the decade of '60s. These changes were determined, in part, by the diffusion of female contraceptive methods through the use of contraceptive pills.

In spite of that, the effects of "conceptual viscosity" of Eugenics linked to a special

<sup>61</sup> Crépon, Marguerite: *Historia del...*, p. 185.

<sup>62</sup> Stone, Hannah, Stone, Abraham: *Manual del Matrimonio*, Buenos Aires, Partenón, 1949, pp. 9-10.

<sup>63</sup> Stone, Hannah, Stone, Abraham: *Manual del...*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>64</sup> Stone, Hannah, Stone, Abraham: *Manual del ...*, p. 232.

Eugenics return after Holocaust gave an unusual resistance to those changes, gaining force, then, the Humanismo Eugenésico Integral, as a reformulation of Eugenics into the late-eugenic period. This eugenic version would extend in time until the decade of 1970 when professionals offered counselling in the choice of couple, considering it as a guarantee of family consolidation and traditional motherhood. Thus, if we take into consideration the activity about Eugenics developed by the Argentinian Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós, the Mexican Alfredo Saavedra and the North American Paul Popenoe, it could be highlighted that the old differences the eugenicists had in the past lost entity after World War II. In this sense, it is well known that Paul Popenoe, in parallel with his proposal about eugenic sterilizations was a staunch defender of fecund marriages structured under the thesis that “men and women were made for marriage, biologically and psychologically”.<sup>65</sup> So, it was pointed out that the foundation of American Institute of Family Relations did not mean the replacement of the sterilizing Eugenics (usually named “negative”) by the non-sterilizing Eugenics (or “positive”). In fact, on the contrary, Popenoe remained firm with his conviction linked to sterilizations virtues, and, for example, his articles were reprinted in the German journal *Archiv für Hygiene und Demographie*, during the Nazi period.<sup>66</sup>

In the Third International Congress of Eugenics (New York, 1932) Alfredo Saavedra, on his part, agreed with the Sterilization Law sanctioned in Veracruz (México). One year later, on the Segunda Semana de la Eugenesia, from the Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia para el Mejoramiento de la Raza, the Nazi legislation was strongly criticized.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, we can underline that these three eugenicists shared different environments in the international context where strategies of racial betterment were discussed, such as their activities as Honorary Members of the Segunda Jornada Peruana de Eugenesia, celebrated in Lima in May 1943.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, the three personalities shared other key places in regional late-eugenicism: Bernaldo de Quirós and Popenoe were honorary members of the Sociedad Mexicana de Eugenesia para el Mejoramiento de la Raza, chaired by Saavedra; and, also, Popenoe and Saavedra were referents of the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia.

These sought and consensual coincidences make us think about certain theoretical hybridization in the local late-eugenicism, which favoured harmony and collaborative work between sterilization defenders and detractors. In this way, the “explanatory words” which begin the aforementioned Actas of the Tercera Jornada Argentina de Humanismo Eugenésico Integral, the last important event organized by the Sociedad Argentina de Eugenesia must be interpreted.<sup>69</sup> In that event, it was emphasized the harmonious coexistence among distinct issues approached by those two Eugenics types, such as genetic, hereditary, biological, marital, family, social, demography, sexual, racial, ethics and political factors. And, in this framework it was stressed that those aspects had never been taught, neither at home, nor at schools or

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in: Stern, Alexandra Minna: *Eugenic Nation...*, p. 167.

<sup>66</sup> Quoted in: Stern, Alexandra Minna: *Eugenic Nation...*, p. 162.

<sup>67</sup> Suárez y López Guazo, Laura: *Eugenesia y racismo...*, pp. 114-115.

<sup>68</sup> See: *Segunda Jornada Peruana de Eugenesia. Lima 25 a 29 de Mayo de 1943*: Lima, s/d, 1943.

<sup>69</sup> Before this, that institution had organized two similar events: the Primeras Jornadas Argentinas de Eugenesia Integral, in 1955, when the authoritarian government which called itself Revolución Libertadora was just established; and then, the Segundas Jornadas de Eugenesia Integral, in 1961.

universities.<sup>70</sup>

By way of conclusion, Carlos Bernaldo de Quirós, Alfredo Saavedra and Paul Popenoe came together on one late-eugenic expression rather distanced of eugenic sterilizations, but oriented towards the idea of emphasizing, with special insistence, the need to save marriage to reinforce motherhood and, on these bases, save the Nation. And this is, perhaps, one of the most interesting topics in their special point of view about State, society and population after World War II, when, perhaps, the differences between Latin-Eugenics and Anglo-Saxon Eugenics were visibly attenuated. And, in this sense, we think that the present work offers the main materials for subsequent research works which deepen into the central issue approached here: the point being that in the late-eugenic period there were no longer two different eugenic versions but, instead, both versions were unified in the same Eugenics, nearest to marital counselling before eugenic sterilizations. This characteristic weakens the usual assert about the “death of Eugenics” in our days.

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<sup>70</sup> “Introito”, *Estudios Eugénicos*, VII, (1971), pp. VII-X (p. X).