

Abstract

Title of dissertation: REASON AND FAITH: A STUDY OF INTERWAR
CHILEAN EUGENIC DISCOURSE, 1900-1950

Sarah Irene Walsh, Doctor of Philosophy, 2013

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This dissertation examines how social reform discourse that rationalized gender difference allowed Chilean Catholics to play a critical role in the development of eugenic science between 1900 and 1950. Building on scholarship relating to the development of a modernized, patriarchal system during the 1920s and 1930s and the rise of eugenics among scientists during the same period, this dissertation posits that eugenic science in Chile was the result of a complex interaction between Catholic and secular intellectuals vying for dominance in the reconstruction of the modern Chilean social order. Political liberals characterized the Catholic Church as a dogmatic monolith that was antithetical to social progressivism and disconnected from the realities of modern life. At the same time, Chilean Catholics used the social disruptions caused by capitalist industrialization to

assert their social, moral, and scientific superiority. The dissertation asserts that anti-clerical discourse popular among progressive actors served to obscure the scientific and social contributions, both conservative and progressive, of the Catholic Church and its supporters in Chile. Each chapter in this dissertation examines how Catholics responded to secular efforts to oust them from their traditional places of social influence – hospitals, orphanages, schools, charities, and family life – through the application of eugenic science. Secular reformers contrasted their own presumably rational, scientific responses to social problems while feminizing religious practice and Church or Catholic perspectives. Chilean Catholics responded by asserting the compatibility of science and religion, particularly in the field of eugenics. Catholic scholars suggested, for instance, that they had to be involved in eugenic practices to ensure the most ethical application of scientific principles.

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DISCOURSE, 1900-1950

by

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The process of writing a dissertation can be a very isolating one. Days spent alone in archives or in front of the computer stretch together into an indecipherable block of time that seems to have no beginning or end. I feel especially fortunate to have so many people who have contributed to this dissertation and protected me from what could have become a very bleak period of my life. The best parts of this dissertation are the result of their combined support; the shortcomings are entirely mine.

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Introduction

“La raza chilena” and the Social Question Catholicism, Gender, and Eugenics in Chile, 1900-1950

“Our race was born as all those called historic races should be: from the combination of the vanquishing male element with the vanquished female [one], complying with the biblical sentence that woman will avenge her race, perpetuating the blood of the conquered lineage. The birth of the Chilean race realized that virgin tribute to which poets who sing of the origins of peoples refer.”¹

-Nicolás Palacios, *La raza chilena*, 1904

“Science and Faith are sisters, because both are emanations and glimmers of the infinite light, which is God.”²

-Bernardo Gentilini, *Fe y ciencia*, 1916

“Human capital, that which is the fundamental base of economic prosperity of a country, has been underestimated and abandoned to its own fortune.”³

-Salvador Allende, *La realidad medico-social chilena*, 1939

This dissertation traces the development of eugenic science in Chile from 1900 to 1950 to demonstrate the complex interconnections between Catholic and secular social reformers in the construction of a Chilean discourse regarding social welfare. It illuminates how these seemingly disparate historical actors came together by using eugenic science to maintain and expand male privilege by emphasizing work as a key to political agency while circumscribing female social roles to those of reproducers and

¹ Nicolas Palacios. *Raza chilena: Libro escrito por un Chileno i para los Chilenos*. Valparaiso, Chile: Imprenta i Litografía Alemana, 1904. 21. “Nació pues nuestra raza como deben haber nacido todos los grupos humanos llamados razas históricas: de la conjuncion del elemento masculino del vencedor con el femenino del vencido, cumpliéndose así la sentencia bíblica de que la mujer vengara a su raza, perpetuándose por ella la sangre de la estirpe vencida. En el nacimiento de la raza chilena se realizó aquel tributo de vírgenes que refieren los poetas que cantan el oríjen de los pueblos.”

² Bernardo Gentilini. *La Fe y la Ciencia*. Santiago de Chile: Librería y Casa Editorial de la Federación de Obras Católicas, 1916. 22.

³ Salvador Allende. *La realidad medico-social chilena*, Hernán Soto, María Angélica Illanes and Mariano Requena (eds). Santiago, Chile: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 1999 (1939). 276-277. “El capital humano, que es la base fundamental de la prosperidad económica de un país, ha sido subestimado y ha estado abandonado a su propia suerte.”

nurturers, whether as wives and mothers or as social workers. Eugenics was used as a means to naturalize and modernize gender difference in order to create a modern patriarchal social order considered vital to Chile's economic progress. Eugenics was so important to resolving the social question because virtually all doctors, lawyers, reformers and other experts believed that it was the premiere discipline that dealt with managing human interaction. While sociology, psychology and anthropology would become more popular as the twentieth century progressed, eugenics combined those social sciences with the physical science of biology to claim preeminence. Social reformers wanted to reacquaint Chileans with their natural imperatives and moral duties to better prepare them for economic competition in a globalized, capitalist marketplace.

Nicolás Palacios's description of the birth of the Chilean race combined a eugenic vision of the past infused with religious symbolism, demonstrating how the themes of Catholicism, eugenics, and gender were intertwined. He also represented a growing trend in Latin American understanding of race. A number of Latin American eugenicists, anthropologists, sociologists and ethnologists agreed that the region stretching from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego was marked by a specific ethnic identity based on the mixture of European, indigenous, and (sometimes) African racial characteristics.⁴ Uniquely,

⁴ A fuller discussion of José Vasconcelos's *La raza cósmica* will come later in the chapter. For now, discussions of Latin American racial character can be found in: Nancy P. Applebaum, Anne S. Macpherson and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt. *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. Peter M. Beattie. *Tribute of Blood: Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil 1864 – 1945*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001. Herman Bennett. *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. Alejandra Bronfman. *Measures of Equality: Social Science, Citizenship, and Race in Cuba, 1902-1940*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. R. Douglas Cope. *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994. Greg Grandin. *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. Deborah Poole. *Vision, Race and Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997. Diego A. Von Vacano. *The Color of Citizenship: Race, Modernity, and Latin American/Hispanic Political Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

however, Palacios located Chilean European heritage not in Spain, but in the Germanic tribes of Northern Europe. He contended that the conquistadors who came to Chile, though Spanish subjects, were actually descended from Germanic stock, the Goths. For him, it was vital to state that very little Latin blood formed the basis of the Chilean racial identity.⁵ Palacios argued against Chileans cultivating a Latin identity and discouraged French, Italian, and Spanish immigration to Chile as a means of civilizing the nation. His book went on to prove and support this contention of racial purity of the Goths in Spain and the Araucanians in the new world.

This origin story also reflected the profoundly gendered nature of Chilean eugenic discourse. Palacios contended that the Chilean race was founded on male aggression and female submission. These roles were natural, mutually exclusive, and necessary for a strong people. As I will show in this dissertation, this idea set the tone for Chilean eugenicists and social reformers until the mid-twentieth century. They posited that men should lead the nation toward economic and social modernization. Women should follow their lead by raising healthy children in clean, orderly homes. Women of all social classes should get married and defer to their husbands. While they were important to the resolution of the social question, this was only as vessels of social reproduction and modernity. Reformers of all types were deeply committed to resolving the “social question,” a term widely used to discuss the multifaceted ways capitalism affected social development. This debate encompassed issues such as illegitimacy, personal hygiene, and prostitution among others.

⁵ Palacios 5-27.

This concern about the Chilean people found expression in a wide array of documents between 1900 and 1950. Salvador Allende's notion of human capital that appeared in *La realidad medico-social* (1939) elaborated his belief that a state had a responsibility to its citizenry. He conceptualized this responsibility in eugenic terms. The 2005 publication of Victor Fariás's *Salvador Allende: Antisemitismo y eutanasia* explained Allende's eugenic past in terms of a nascent predilection for fascism which ignited a lengthy controversy.⁶ However, this approach does not recognize that eugenics was popular among historical actors of all political stripes. Instead, I argue that recognizing Allende's eugenically-inspired past does not cheapen his contribution to the development of the Chilean welfare state nor his commitment to Socialism. Rather, both he and Palacios demonstrate the pervasiveness and adaptability of eugenic thinking among Chilean intellectuals in the first half of the twentieth century.

On the other hand, Bernardo Gentilini's description of the symbiotic relationship between science and religion illustrated a contemporary strand of Catholic thought during the first half of the twentieth century. This dissertation explores how Chilean Catholic social reformers incorporated science into their assessment and treatment of the social question. Historians have paid less attention to this discourse and Catholic science generally in Latin American. As such, some scholars might interpret Gentilini's assertion that science and religion revealed the same truth as naïve and disconnected from lived reality. However, this dissertation shows that secular social reformers popularized negative portrayals of Catholic reform. Instead, Chilean Catholics engaged with eugenic discourse as easily as their secular counterparts.

⁶ Victor Fariás. *Salvador Allende: Antisemitismo y euthanasia*. Chile: Editorial Maye, 2005.

Sources, Periodization, and Terminology

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed an important shift in the conceptualization of Latin American social welfare. While mostly Catholic charitable organizations, had been in charge of dealing with issues as they arose during the nineteenth century, the twentieth century saw the attempt to anticipate social problems in order to eliminate them completely. All historical actors also agreed that the state should be in charge of a large part of this programming. However, in Chile and throughout Latin America, the state apparatus was not capable of providing the personnel required to manage such a large system. In fact, even the Catholic Church had a relatively small network of agents outside the major urban centers. In this way, both groups had to come together to achieve their goals.

Between 1900 and 1950, Chile's urban populations also grew tremendously. Men and women from throughout the country came to urban centers Santiago, Valparaíso, and Concepción, to find work. In 1895, the urban population living in cities of more than 20,000 in Chile was 34%. By 1930, that number was closer to half of the entire country's population.⁷ This new urban working class demanded new services and protections. Their numbers also made the social issues such as poverty, disease and infant mortality even harder to ignore. The fact that the average Chilean had a life expectancy of only thirty years by 1920 demonstrates how unhealthy the population actually was.⁸ Cities were teeming with men, women, and children who had no access to proper housing or clean

⁷ Elizabeth Quay Hutchison. *Labors Appropriate to Their Sex: Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900-1930*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001. 22.

⁸ Simon Collier and William F. Sater. *A History of Chile, 1808-2002*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 177.

water. The very real health threats to this population caused both Catholic and secular reformers to consider how to address them.

The period is also notable for a political landscape that became increasingly liberal and democratic. While the parliamentary period began in 1891 with President José Manuel Balmaceda's defeat by the Chilean military, the political structure this war left behind functioned with relative ease. However, growing political dissatisfaction with the parliamentary system ushered in a new presidential era in 1924 when General Carlos Ibañez del Campo seized government control in order to turn it over to President Arturo Alessandri Palma in 1925. While the political situation between 1925 and 1932 was especially precarious, this strengthened executive style of government remained in place until the September 11, 1973 coup against President Salvador Allende.⁹ The emphasis on presidential power ushered in the era of coalitions between political parties, such as the Frente Popular and the Falange Nacional. Over the course of all of these political changes, social reform remained a key point of agreement between a variety of historical actors on both the right and left.

The Catholic and secular social reformers in this dissertation took this challenge seriously. I use the term "social reformers" because all the documents they produced were inspired by efforts to resolve the social question, a phrase that was used by intellectuals the world over as shorthand to discuss the various dislocations, disruptions, and distractions the capitalist economic system had caused. Chilean social reformers were no different. Using the social question as a lens, the intellectuals I study authored papers, pamphlets, articles, and theses about how to resolve the myriad of problems they saw

⁹ Ibid 147-148.

facing a modernizing nation. Unlike their contemporaries in the North Atlantic, Chilean social reformers were dealing with social problems caused by modernity and the growing pains of a developing nation. This made their work all the more urgent. This urgency is palpable in the documents they have left behind. As such, the intellectuals I discuss here were social reformers, whether they actually took part in legislative efforts to create state-sponsored social welfare programs or not.

The sources analyzed are primarily monographs and periodicals. I specifically use popular scientific and medical literature produced by both secular and religious actors – including journal articles, hygienic instruction manuals or pamphlets and medical theses or dissertations produced by both Catholic and secular actors – giving special attention to scientific contributions of religious actors that historians have not yet analyzed. Focusing on Catholic social reformers allows for a new perspective on the creation of a discourse of social welfare. It also demonstrates the similarities between Catholic and secular reformers of the period. Finally, it shows that the Chilean Catholic Church was still an important factor in the day to day lives of many Chileans of both the upper and lower classes.

Chapter Overview

To show the various layers that formed the discourse about Chilean welfare, I begin by discussing how social reformers understood and constructed the social question in Chile. In chapter one, I compare the writing of Catholic and secular social reformers to demonstrate that most of what they identified as social problems were similar. Not only that, but they recommended similar courses of action to resolve those problems. In particular, science was considered to be the most reliable means of effectively changing

Chile's fate while simultaneously encouraging social modernization. The second chapter continues on to explore the relationship between Catholicism and science generally. While most secular social reformers argued that Catholics had no business or place in Chile's social renewal, Catholics vehemently objected to their exclusion. They did so by arguing that Catholicism and science were mutually beneficial. Chapter three focuses exclusively on the relationship between Catholicism and eugenics. I demonstrate how Chilean Catholics were able to contribute to the development of eugenics by accepting certain aspects of the science while also modifying the most problematic issues. Finally, in the fourth chapter, I demonstrate how modernization of Chilean social roles depended upon a naturalization of male and female gender difference. In this way, Catholic and secular social reformers were able to agree, even if their official positions were in opposition.

Historiographical Review

Catholic social reformers actively engaged in the creation of a Chilean welfare discourse in the first half of the twentieth century, though the current literature might suggest otherwise. The historiography regarding social reform and welfare program development in this period focused on the contributions of historical actors on the left. As a result, the contributions of social conservatives, Catholic or otherwise, were overlooked in the creation of a historical narrative that privileges Chile's socialist and politically liberal past. This was, in no small part, the result of the importance of Salvador Allende's election to the presidency and his subsequent ousting by Augusto Pinochet. *La via chilena*, the democratic transition to Socialist government that made Chile famous, and

its precursors dominated Chilean historiography of the twentieth century.¹⁰ My work builds on the historical accounts of well-studied network of progressive individuals and groups working for social reform in Chile to demonstrate that historical actors in politically conservative groups were equally important to the creation of a eugenic social welfare discourse that shored up and modernized patriarchy.

Many scholars who study the first half of the twentieth century in Chile focus on the increasing secularization of the nation as a key to the development of social progressivism. Patrick Barr-Melej's *Reforming Chile: Cultural Politics, Nationalism, and the Rise of the Middle Class* (2001) pointed out that the 1920 Law of Obligatory Primary Instruction was used by political liberals as a means to get Chilean children out of Catholic-operated schools into state-run institutions.¹¹ This argument combined with his larger one about the relatively widespread acceptance of political radicalism on the part of Chileans. Throughout his monograph, Barr-Melej demonstrated how various political parties on the left compromised with each other to make larger and larger political gains. He argued that the Partido Radical became the "dominant interest group in national affairs by the end of the 1930s."¹² My work does not ignore the importance and influence of leftist political parties and coalitions like the Partido Radical or the Frente Nacional,

¹⁰ Brenda Elsey. *Citizens and Sportsmen: Fútbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011. Hutchison 2001. Thomas Miller Klubock. *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1951*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998. Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1920-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. Heidi Tinsman. *Partners in Conflict: the Politics of Gender, Sexuality, and Labor in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1950-1973*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002. Mary Kay Vaughan. *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997. Peter Winn. *Weavers of Revolution: the Yarur Workers and Chile's Road to Socialism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

¹¹ Patrick Barr-Melej. *Reforming Chile: Cultural Politics, Nationalism, and the Rise of the Middle Class*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. 142.

¹² Ibid 3.

but shows that these groups were not the only important actors in social reform efforts during the first half of the twentieth century.

Some Chileanist scholars have pointed out that social conservatives were equally dynamic in the period between 1900 and 1950. For example, Simon Collier noted the development of two conservative political groups in the 1930s. He argues that the influence of German fascism fostered the growth of the National Socialist Party in Chile. Additionally, “a group of dissident young Conservatives inspired by the ‘social’ encyclicals of the Papacy and by the thoughts of the French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain” formed the Falange Nacional in 1938.¹³ While these groups are not the focus on my dissertation, their influence and existence speak to a variegated political culture that included a variety of historical actors on both the right and left. Unfortunately, the extremism of conservative groups like the National Socialist Party has caused historians to shy away from important political actors such as the Falange. The Falange was a conservative coalition of various political parties designed to counter the Frente Nacional. Both the Falange and the Frente Nacional were integral to the political culture in Chile between 1938 and 1950. However, the Falange has received much less scholarly attention.¹⁴

¹³ Collier 227.

¹⁴ Some exceptions to this oversight are: Fernando Castillo Infante. *La Flecha Roja: Relato histórico sobre la Falange Nacional*. Chile: Editorial Francisco de Aguirre, 1997. Sandra McGee Deutsch. *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. Carlos Gonzalez Cruchaga. *Historia de una polémica: monseñor Manuel Larraín y los orígenes de la Democracia Cristiana en Chile*. Chile: Fundación Eduardo Frei, 1997. Alejandro Silva Bascuñán. *Una experiencia social cristiana: Formación de la Falange*. Santiago: Ediciones CESOC, 2008. Studying the Falange Nacional seems to be mostly a Chilean endeavor at this point. The titles here represent attempts by scholars on both the right and left to examine the legacy of the Falange.

Though more studies of political parties on the right are needed, this dissertation examines the institution of the Chilean Catholic Church alongside Chilean Catholic intellectuals and their contributions to the discourse of social welfare. This is motivated by a desire to explore the social relevance and political influence of Catholicism in the first half of the twentieth century, especially Catholicism inspired by social movements such as Catholic Action, in a country that many scholars have characterized as secular. Hannah Stewart-Gambino argued that, “the post-1930s Chilean church did not wield the same degree of political power as did some other Latin American churches. The pattern of economic and political modernization in Chile resulted in a process of secularization and rationalization more common to Europe than to other Latin American countries.”¹⁵ Many historians agreed with Stewart-Gambino and treat the Chilean Catholic Church as an anachronistic institution with virtually no social influence in the twentieth century. However, the special relationship between the Chilean state government and the Catholic Church did not come to an official end until 1925. This belied the supposed political irrelevance of the Chilean Catholic Church prior to 1925. I also demonstrate that the Church did not lose its political capital immediately after disestablishment. The international Catholic response to social problems as evidenced by papal encyclicals such as the *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), Pope Pius XI’s establishment of the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archeology (1925) and the Pontifical

¹⁵ Hannah Stewart-Gambino. “Redefining the Changes and Politics in Chile,” in *Conflict and Competition: The Latin American Church in a Changing Environment*, Edward L. Cleary and Hannah Stewart-Gambino (eds). Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992. 23.

Academy of Sciences (1936) all show that Catholics were actively engaging in the important social and scientific developments of the period.¹⁶

Beyond arguing that the Chilean Catholic Church retained much of its social power and influence, this dissertation also explores the origins of Catholic progressivism in Latin America. In the 1970s, with the rise of liberation theology, scholars such as Ivan Vallier began to recognize that the Latin American Catholic Church played an important role in speaking out against authoritarian regimes. These scholars started to question the idea that Catholicism only bred political and social conservatism.¹⁷ In his monograph, *Catholicism, Social Control, and Modernization in Latin America* (1970), Vallier contended that, “Far from being a static and settled system, the Church is actually one of the most innovative and experimental of large-scale organizations, being continuously engaged in the process of sociological construction.”¹⁸ Vallier was one of the first historians to recognize there existed potentially progressive elements functioning in the Latin American Catholic Church as an institution.

However, Vallier was skeptical of the motivations of Catholic actors. He pointed out that the political influence the Church did wield in Latin America was about making

¹⁶ Phillip M. Thompson. *Between Science and Religion: the Engagement of Catholic Intellectuals with Science and Technology in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Lexington Books, 2009. 144.

¹⁷ This is particularly informed by the literature on liberation theology: John Charles Chasteen. *Born in Blood and Fire: a Concise History of Latin America*. New York: Norton, 2001. Enrique D. Dussel. *Politics of Liberation: a Critical World History*. London: SCM Press, 2011. Hannah Stewart-Gambino. “Introduction: New Game, New Rules” in *Conflict and Competition: The Latin American Church in a Changing Environment*, Edward L. Cleary and Hannah Stewart-Gambino (eds). Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992. 3.

¹⁸ Ivan Vallier. *Catholicism, Social Control, and Modernization in Latin America*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970. 17-18.

short-term gains and overlooking inconsistencies between behavior and dogma.¹⁹ Finally, Vallier argued that, “the Church gains its greatest strength in situations where it is required to rely on mass fear to defend itself. This defense, of course, reinforces traditional values, conservative extremism, and irrational leadership styles.”²⁰ Much like other authors who have examined the role and development of social conservatism in Chile and Latin America, Vallier ultimately argued that the Catholic Church and its representatives were inherently traditional. While aspects of Catholic theology might be vehicles for social change, the Church still clung to an ideal past in which religion trumped all other forms of social control.

Unfortunately, this rather bleak estimation of conservative historical actors continued to pervade scholarly attempts. Sandra McGee Deutsch’s *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939* (1999) defined the right as a reactionary response, “to the egalitarian and liberating political tendencies of the moment—whatever these may be—and other factors it believes are undermining the socioeconomic order.”²¹ She contended that the bureaucratic authoritarianism that characterized Argentina, Brazil and Chile in the 1960s and 1970s had its roots in the extreme rightist movements of the 1930s.²² Though shining a light on political developments that had been previously overlooked by historians, McGee Deutsch’s monograph oversimplified Latin American conservatism, sharpening the difference

¹⁹ Ibid 25-26.

²⁰ Ibid 40.

²¹ McGee Deutsch 3.

²² Ibid 331.

between the right and left. This position made it difficult for her to adequately recognize some of the contributions of social conservatism in the development of Latin American political culture.

Underestimating the potential for social change in conservative institutions is not surprising, primarily because historical actors on the right often wrote about avoiding social disorder.²³ However, avoiding disorder is not equivalent to avoiding social change. For example, Margaret Power's *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende, 1964-1973* (2002) explained why so many Chilean women supported the Pinochet regime. Power illustrated how women on the right were powerful political agents and played a critical role in the development of Chilean authoritarianism.²⁴ Though the transition to authoritarianism could hardly be characterized as positive, it was still a meaningful social change that Chilean conservative women helped to usher into existence. However, she argued that historical actors on the right only took innovative action to maintain their version of the status quo.²⁵ Yet, the Pinochet regime was markedly different from previous governments in Chile, both progressive and conservative, not least because it was an undemocratic one. Power also pointed out that women lost their political influence once the Pinochet regime came to power. She also notes that both progressives and conservatives had strong

²³ “La derecha de la década del treinta no tenía un proyecto de ‘desarrollo’ sino un proyecto de ‘orden’, estaba obsesionada por evitar la vuelta a las situaciones de caos: la inestabilidad política de 1924-1932, el desorden provocado por la crisis económica, los gobiernos débiles o complacientes frente a los huelguistas o a los ‘instigadores de la agitación’, fue así como vieron en Alessandri un restaurador de la ‘paz civil’ y saneamiento económico.” Tomas Moulian and Isabel Torres Dujisin. *Discusiones entre honorables: las candidaturas presidenciales de la derecha, 1938-1946*. Chile: FLACSO, 1988. 62.

²⁴ Margaret Power. *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende, 1964-1973*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002. 3, 11.

²⁵ Ibid 49.

misgivings about the authoritarian turn of Chilean politics, as evidenced by the almost immediate objections made by political parties like the Christian Democrats. By examining how an earlier group of Catholics engaged with social reform, I connect anti-Pinochet efforts by the Christian Democrats and Catholic Church in the 1970s to an earlier tradition of social justice.

Another critical component of this project is a closer look at the relationship between Catholicism and science. One of the most influential Catholic intellectuals who wrote about the relationship between science and religion in the first half of the twentieth century was French philosopher and Jesuit priest, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955). Teilhard wrote *Christianity and Evolution* in 1920 and contended that the divine operated through nature, so scientific findings had to be reconciled to religious truths.²⁶ This was the dominant position of most Catholic intellectuals and scientists for much of the twentieth century. As such, Catholics renewed their interest and efforts in scientific pursuits. In fact, this approach effectively ushered in a Catholic intellectual renaissance that, according to Phillip M. Thompson, “provided a coherent alternative to the culture of modernity.”²⁷ Catholics made their own version of modern life based on scientific principles that aligned with religious practice. While this dissertation examines this intellectual renaissance, I use Thompson’s argument to move away from discussing Catholic intellectual discourse as alternative. Instead, I argue that treating Catholic discourse as alternative overlooks the fact that it was similar to the discourse of the center-left in Chile. Building on both Teilhard and Thompson, this dissertation situates

²⁶ Thompson 57.

²⁷ Ibid 20.

the renewed Catholic interest in the natural sciences during the early twentieth century in the context of addressing social problems considered to be the result of capitalist economic expansion.

My work also problematizes how we understand secularism. I show that whether the Chilean state was completely secular or still secularizing did not preclude Catholic influence in social reform debates. As James Gilbert wrote for the American case, “How does [religion] renew its force and energy inside a dynamic, pluralistic, and largely secular society? Part of the answer, I believe, is implicit in the dialectical interaction between science and religion throughout the twentieth century.”²⁸ Studying how scientific and religious reformers interacted with each other in Chile, allows me to elucidate how Chilean Catholic social reformers remained relevant, even in a society that increasingly disparaged their efforts as self-interested and divorced from reality.

My work demonstrates that Catholic social reformers adopted and used the same scientific terminology as their secular counterparts. Many historians of science and religion have pointed out that by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, religious figures made every effort to show that they were equally engaged in scientific developments. In fact, in Chile, “The Church was concerned with, as much in its discourse as in its educational practice, demonstrating that its opposition to secularization did not mean its opposition to scientific knowledge nor to technological advances.”²⁹ Fighting

²⁸ James Gilbert. *Redeeming Culture: American Religion in an Age of Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. 3.

²⁹ Sol Serrano. *Universidad y nación: Chile en el siglo XIX*. Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1993. 90. “La Iglesia se preocupó, tanto en su discurso como en su práctica educacional, de demostrar que su oposición a la secularización no significaba su oposición al conocimiento científico ni a los avances tecnológicos.” Many Catholic intellectuals spent a great deal of time and energy demonstrating that science and religion were their own separate realms that did not interfere with each other. As early as

secularization did not necessarily imply an anti-modern point of view. In fact, I show that most Chilean Catholics believed that renewed religious faith was vital for healthy modern living.³⁰

Catholic positions regarding social reform were not simple alternatives to secular programs. Both Catholic and secular Chilean social reformers advocated for similar types of programs to resolve the social question which shows that Catholic reforms were not alternative. All social reformers agreed that the family was the foundation to an orderly Chilean nation and, as such, the family had to be protected at all costs. They agreed that the way to do this was through the application of eugenic principles to gender behavior for both Chilean men and women. Not only did they agree that maintaining and reinforcing gender difference was critical to this project, but they also agreed that controlling female sexuality was by far the most effective way to address social problems. In this way, both groups illustrated the similarity that Gilbert found when studying the role of Protestantism in scientific development in the post-WWII United States. “From the position of both big science and mainline of Fundamentalist religion, the participants in this discussion believed themselves to be strikingly different in origin,

1893, Pope Leo XIII recognized that science and religion could coexist together for the mutual glory of God in the encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* as discussed in Peter M.J. Hess, “Evolution, Suffering, and the God of Hope in Roman Catholic Thought after Darwin,” in *The Evolution of Evil*, Gaymon Bennett, et al (eds). Gottingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008. 242. Thompson 181.

³⁰ This also fits with the call for studies of Catholicism and science outside Europe and the United States made by Lawrence M. Principe in *Galileo Goes to Jail*. He argues that anti-Catholic histories of science is partially the result of the field still being very much influenced by Anglocentric fields of study and source materials. Lawrence M. Principe, “Myth 11-That Catholics Did Not Contribute to the Scientific Revolution,” in *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, Ronald L. Numbers (ed). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. 101.

social position, and belief. Yet from the standpoint of those excluded from the conversation, they could appear very similar.”³¹

One of the critical components to this similarity was the shared belief that Chilean men and women had to modify their behaviors to fit with natural dictates that strengthened gender difference. This was primarily because social reformers understood national order and social relations to be based on the nuclear family as the fundamental unit of a modern society.³² In other words, to be modern, Chilean people had to conform their activities to fit increasingly inflexible ideas about natural male and female behavior. Conservatives were not the only ones who used discursive tropes that privileged nature to legitimize their position. This dissertation will demonstrate how eugenicists in both camps understood male and female interactions and behavior as being dictated by biological imperatives. Not only that, but these social reformers all believed that Chileans had to align their behavior even more strictly to natural ideals implied in evolutionary theory and eugenic science.

The overwhelming popularity of eugenic science in the first half of the twentieth century, not only in Latin America but internationally, allowed many different kinds of social reformers to play an important role in the creation of the Chilean welfare state. Many historians have noted the hegemonic influence of eugenics in the first half of the twentieth century.³³ Matthew Connelly stated that, “the idea of improving the genetic

³¹ Gilbert 6.

³² Thomas C. Holt. “Foreword,” in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. Macpherson and Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt (eds). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. “Gender provided the most powerful language to describe national and racial relations. Whether invoked as metaphor, metonym, or allegory, the very idea of nation and national belonging is more often than not expressed in familial metaphors.” xii.

makeup of humankind counted adherents all over the world, including everyone from W.E.B. Du Bois to John Maynard Keynes. Eugenics was invoked to justify everything from free day care to forced sterilization.”³⁴ The malleability of eugenics allowed for historical actors from a wide swath of political, social and cultural positions to use it as a tool.

The Chilean Catholic response to eugenics was varied, but generally positive especially prior to 1930. In 1930, the papal encyclical *Casti Connubii* officially rejected the use or application of eugenics by Catholics.³⁵ However, up until this point (and even afterward) Catholic social reformers accepted eugenics as the most useful means of resolving the social question, even when they disagreed with some of the more radical

³³ Gunnar Broberg and Nils Roll-Hansen (eds). *Eugenics and the Welfare State: Sterilization Policy in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996. Susan Currell and Christina Cogdell (eds). *Popular Eugenics: National Efficiency and American Mass Culture in the 1930s*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006. Daylanne K. English. *Unnatural Selections: Eugenics in American Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Paul A. Lombardo. *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008. Christine Rosen. *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Marius Turda. *Modernism and Eugenics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

³⁴ Matthew Connelly. *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008. 8. See also: “La eugenesia fue pensamiento hegemónico durante la primera mitad del siglo XX. De hecho la filiación ideológica de sus defensores abarca todo el espectro posible: nazis, fascistas, anarquistas, socialistas, progresistas y conservadores,” in Héctor A. Palma, “Consideraciones historiográficas, epistemológicas y prácticas acerca de la eugenesia,” in *Darwinismo social y eugenesia en el mundo latino*, Marisa Miranda and Gustavo Vallejo (eds). Buenos Aires, Argentina: Siglo XXI de Argentina Editores, 2005. 127. “Posteriormente, en los años veinte y treinta, veremos que personajes importantes, profesionales e intelectuales siguen luchando por lo mismo, aunque, además, tienen que enfrentarse a una moral sexual tradicional tan estrecha y tan absurda, tan retrógrada, que incluso siendo católicos se hacen adeptos a la eugenesia, dentro de ciertos límites,” in Armando García González and Raquel Álvarez Peláez, “Eugenesia e imperialismo: Las relaciones Cuba-Estados Unidos, 1921-1940,” in *Darwinismo social y eugenesia en el mundo latino*, Marisa Miranda and Gustavo Vallejo (eds). Buenos Aires, Argentina: Siglo XXI de Argentina Editores, 2005. 103.

³⁵ Papal Encyclicals Online. “Casti Connubii: Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on Christian Marriage,” by Pope Pius XI, December 31, 1930, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius11/P11CASTI.HTM>.

elements of eugenic science.³⁶ This rejection of negative eugenics did not prevent Latin American Catholics from engaging in the discipline as a whole. Nancy Leys Stepan's *"The Hour of Eugenics": Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (1991) explored how eugenic science developed in a number of Latin American countries and contended that Latin Americans created their own, unique discipline. Part of the reason for the uniqueness of Latin American eugenics was the social and political influence of the Catholic Church in the region. In fact, Stepan contended that it was because of this influence that the most heinous aspects of negative eugenics (forced sterilization, abortion and euthanasia) were not a part of mainstream eugenic practice in any Latin American country. Building on Stepan's work, this dissertation examines the relationship between Catholicism and eugenics more closely to better understand how Chilean eugenicists created a modern, patriarchal gender order to resolve issues that were identified as widespread social problems.³⁷

Stepan identified the preference for Lamarckism as central to the development of a uniquely Latin American eugenic science.³⁸ Lamarckism, especially before the mid-1930s, was still a widely accepted scientific theory outside Latin America as well. Recognizing the international appeal of Lamarckism combined with the scientific obstacles to a functional evolutionary theory until the 1930s helps to show that Latin American scientists and social reformers were not isolated from larger, transnational

³⁶ Nancy Leys Stepan. *"The Hour of Eugenics": Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991. "From the beginning, and alone of the major institutions of the West, the church opposed an extreme reproductive eugenics, for it took human reproduction as a sphere within its own rightful authority and did not cede that authority easily to secular science." 111.

³⁷ Alexandra Stern. *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

³⁸ Ibid 74.

scientific trends. Darwinian evolutionary theory presented rather stubborn and alarming problems for biologists and eugenicists. Jean Gayon wrote,

The long initial crisis of Darwinism was not only the result of external factors such as ‘resistance’ or the existence of rival evolutionary paradigms; it was also a consequence of a range of problems that were intrinsic to Darwin’s central hypothesis. These difficulties, most of which were linked to the concept of heredity, could not be resolved by the biology of the time.³⁹

Because Darwinism still could provide no proof of how favorable traits were passed from parent to offspring, Lamarckism remained appealing for many scientists. Gayon argued that Darwin’s own theory of evolution, until improved by the work of later biologists, was more accurately described as an extreme form of Lamarckism.⁴⁰ Using Gayon and Stepan’s works as guides, the Catholic involvement in the development of eugenics as a social reform tool, especially before 1930, is no longer seen as an unusual occurrence.

Studying eugenic discourse brings up the question of race. In the North Atlantic, eugenic science was typically designed around an understanding of whiteness as racially and physically superior to all other racial categories.⁴¹ As a result, most of the work of Northern Atlantic eugenicists focused on bolstering white birth rates and limiting non-white fertility. In Latin America, the purpose of eugenics was quite different. While whiteness was still understood to be superior, most Latin American eugenicists believed that a process of cultural whitening would be enough to ensure the fitness of Latin American bodies. Some Latin American eugenicists, like José Vasconcelos in Mexico,

³⁹ Jean Gayon. *Darwinism’s Struggle for Survival: Heredity and the Hypothesis of Natural Selection*, Matthew Cobb (trans). New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 3.

⁴⁰ Ibid 397.

⁴¹ Laura L. Lovett. *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890-1938*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

even posited that the mixture of European, African, and indigenous ancestry made Latin Americans the superior race by incorporating all the best aspects of the three founding races.⁴² While not everyone accepted Vasconcelos's position, most Latin American eugenicists did believe that the region was characterized by a racial mixture that could be whitened with the application of social welfare tools. This was, in no small part, reflective of the influence of Lamarckian evolutionary concepts. In this way, environmental changes manifested physical ones.

Chilean eugenics did include this concept of cultural whitening combined with a more pernicious racism. The work of Palacios, and others like him, demonstrated that some Chileans believed that their mixture of European and indigenous qualities was superior to other Latin American nations. Palacios's specific vision of Chilean racial origins was steeped in the scientific racism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He took pains to show that Araucanian indigenous peoples were civilized to some extent prior to the European conquest and shared some cultural characteristics with the Germanic Spanish conquerors. Palacios was also quick to point out that very few slaves were ever brought to the region, making Chileans even more pure.⁴³ By erasing racial difference between the European and indigenous peoples that comprised the majority of the Chilean population's ancestry, he was able to discuss Chilean racial degeneration in relatively race-neutral terms. The *roto chileno*, or broken Chilean, who he pointed to as the cause of Chile's current social and racial degeneration – here “race”

⁴² José Vasconcelos. *La raza cósmica: Misión de la raza iberoamericana*. Madrid: Agencia Mundial de Librería, 1925.

⁴³ Palacios 27-28. This opinion was not unique among Latin Americans. Brazilian historian and sociologist, Alfredo Ellis Jr., wrote similarly in his books *Populações paulistas* (1934) and *Os primeiros troncos paulistas e o cruzamento euro-americano* (1936).

meant “people” – was neither mestizo nor black. Chileans were already white. Eugenics, as practiced and envisioned by Palacios, was not about whitening Chileans. It was about teaching them to behave in a manner that corresponded to their inherent, civilized nature.

The relative lack of interest in whitening and overtly racist terminology in Chilean eugenic science is notable. While poverty and disease were pathologized, Chilean eugenicists were not terribly interested in weeding out racial traits that in other Latin American countries were characterized as “indigenous” or “African.” This is an important distinction when examining the development of eugenic science as a discipline in Chile in comparison to Latin America generally. In Chile, the overwhelming belief that Chileans were already white (enough) on the part of most eugenicists, public intellectuals, and politicians meant that eugenics was about instructing people about hygiene and their natural place in the modern nation. A social reform program with these principles still falls under the category of whitening because it cannot be ignored that Chileans of more indigenous backgrounds were either excluded or pathologized according to this rubric.

Because poverty, class, and disease were pathologized, but not racialized, I posit that this very much affected the overall aims of eugenics as a discipline in Chile. This, in turn, affected the kinds of social reform programs Catholic and secular intellectuals advocated for the nation. Chileans were not to use eugenics to lighten their complexions (though products for this did exist). Rather, I use the ideas of Karin Alejandra Roseblatt who argues that, “The populist elites of the [1920s and beyond] created gendered discourses of racial mixing and national unity that partially reversed previous forms of exclusion – even as they persisted in positing the historical trajectory of the North

Atlantic nations as a model.”⁴⁴ This notion of eugenics was specific to Chile and deserves a more profound exploration, which I hope to provide.

The final component of this dissertation is an examination of the modernization of the patriarchal social structure in Chile. While a number of scholars have discussed this development in Latin America, my work demonstrates how eugenic science was critical to this process and how gendered concepts allowed for liberal and conservative social actors to come to a consensus about Chilean women’s sexual behavior in particular. Eugenic science was used to naturalize traditional gender roles, much as Judith Butler aptly pointed out that, “gender fables establish and circulate the misnomer of natural facts.”⁴⁵ Chilean social reformers, both Catholic and secular, saw eugenics as a means to rationalize the social order by contending that women were meant to stay in the home and men were meant to be breadwinners. This social model, according to these actors, would ensure healthy and happy workers that would contribute to the overall economic success of the nation.

Aligning gender behavior with natural paradigms meant an increased vigilance over Chilean women. Ericka Verba explains this by arguing that,

⁴⁴ Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt. “Sexuality and Biopower in Chile and Latin America,” *Political Power and Social Theory*, Vol. 15 (2002): 229-262. 232. “In repudiating promiscuity, these medical experts reinforced the assumption that men—whether national leaders or male family members—needed to protect women sexually while also avoiding diseases that threatened the nation’s moral integrity, racial vigor, and biological and demographic strength. The teaching of domestic economy and puericulture, both of which drew on Lamarckian eugenics, made women’s domestic and childrearing activities crucial to the future of the nation. Prescriptions for proper sexual and domestic conduct thus persistently associated virtue with whiteness.” See also: “Introduction,” in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. Macpherson and Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt (eds). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. 17.

⁴⁵ Judith Butler. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990. xiii. “In their attempts to illustrate how capitalism had denaturalized human social relations, Chilean anarchists punctuated their appeals for radical sexual equality with references to prior utopian moments of harmonious, ‘natural’ relations between men and women.” See also: Elizabeth Quay Hutchison. “From ‘La Mujer Esclava’ to ‘La Mujer Limón’: Anarchism and the Politics of Sexuality in Early-Twentieth-Century Chile,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81:3-4 (August-November 2001): 519-554. 521.

Catholic social critics defined the crisis of the slackening of social customs to be primarily a female problem. This was because of their gendered concept of the distribution of attributes; since this placed woman above man in her powers of persuasion in the moral realm, the critics consequently held woman accountable for the morality of the social customs reigning within any given society.⁴⁶

However, my research shows that Catholics were not the only ones to believe women held the key to social renewal. As mothers, workers, wives, and (occasional) workers, Chilean women had specific obligations to their nation. Even more so because the expansion of capitalism meant that more and more women were working outside the home, which disrupted the vision of a patriarchal Chilean working class.⁴⁷ Women needed to be protected from and provided for by men in order to maintain natural gender boundaries, inside the home and factory.

A particular example of this was the renewed efforts to control female sexuality. While many social reformers lamented the sexual promiscuity of Chilean men, their behavior was seen as natural and difficult to control. As a result, much more ink was spilled on ideas about how to get women to be the gatekeepers to Chilean sexual responsibility.⁴⁸ This resulted in the development of a number of social reform programs aimed at women in a variety of social positions. Young women, unwed mothers and married women all saw renewed and increasingly rigid attempts to restrict their sexuality.

⁴⁶ Ericka Verba. *Catholic Feminism and the Social Question in Chile, 1910-1917: the Liga de Damas Chilenas*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003. 34.

⁴⁷ Ibid 103. "In particular, they argued that when matrilineality was overthrown by patrilineality and the monogamous marriage, women were finally and rightfully protected and supported by individual men. Women were thus able to give up unseemly productive labor and overt sexuality in the public domain and retreat to their "natural," socially valued domestic functions." Linda Marie Fedigan. "The Changing Role of Women in Models of Human Evolution," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol 15 (1986): 25-66. 31. "...the state sought to legitimize marriage and the nuclear family as biologically natural and socially necessary institutions for all social classes and thereby to ensure the continued subordination of women's individual interests in collective interests." Susan K. Besse. *Restructuring Patriarchy: the Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. 6.

⁴⁸ Roseblatt, "Sexuality and Biopower," 248.

And, while the sexual double standard was an issue that female social reformers decried over and over, it became an increasingly accepted reality.⁴⁹ The result of this approach meant that legal and political inequalities between men and women expanded while also being naturalized, giving women very little ability to question the status quo either by conservative or progressive political means.

Though Palacios had it wrong in terms of the origins of the Chilean people, he captured the fears and hopes of many Chileans in his writing, just as Allende and Gentilini did. Their fears were not without reason. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Chilean populace was unhealthy and ill-prepared for competing economically in a modern world in comparison to other countries in Latin America and elsewhere. Many Chileans believed they were the *rotos chilenos* that Palacios considered them to be. Yet, there was hope. Palacios pointed out the illustrious past of both the Gothic and Araucanian strands of the Chilean race, as a sign post for the future. Allende believed that hope lay in changing social relationships. Gentilini felt that a return to religious living was the means of modernizing. All of these men, and their counterparts, agreed that Chile was at a crossroads. They agreed that social reform was the only way to resolve the social question. Social reform was daunting but not impossible. But, the first step was identifying what the most pressing social problems facing the nation were.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Dore. "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Gender and the State in the Long Nineteenth Century," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, Elizabeth Dore & Maxine Molyneux (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. 23.

Chapter One

“La pureza del alma con el aseo corporal” Approaching the Social Question in Chile

On May 15, 1891, Pope Leo XIII wrote in the papal encyclical, “*Rerum Novarum* on Capital and Labor,”

That the spirit of revolutionary change, which has long been disturbing the nations of the world, should have passed beyond the sphere of politics and made its influence felt in the cognate sphere of practical economics is not surprising. The elements of the conflict now raging are unmistakable, in the vast expansion of industrial pursuits and the marvelous discoveries of science; in the changed relations between masters and workmen; in the enormous fortunes of some few individuals, and the utter poverty of the masses; in the increased self-reliance and closer mutual combination of the working classes; as also, finally, in the prevailing moral degeneracy. The momentous gravity of the state of things now obtaining fills every mind with painful apprehension; wise men are discussing it; practical men are proposing schemes; popular meetings, legislatures, and rulers of nations are all busied with it -- actually there is no question which has taken a deeper hold on the public mind.⁵⁰

The pope was especially concerned about the social results among the working classes of capitalist industrialization. In this encyclical, he set the stage for Catholic intervention into social reform movements to address these concerns over the next fifty years.⁵¹ In the first half of the twentieth century, Catholics believed that social issues such as poverty

⁵⁰ Papal Encyclicals Online. “*Rerum Novarum*: on Capital and Labor,” by Pope Leo XIII, May 15, 1891, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo13/113rerum.htm>.

⁵¹ On the effects of the *Rerum Novarum* on social movements, eugenics and reform: María Luisa Aspe Armella. *La formación social y política de los católicos mexicanos: La Acción Católica Mexicana la Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos, 1929-1958*. Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, A.C., 2008. Michael Fleet and Brian H. Smith. *The Catholic Church and Democracy in Chile and Peru*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997. Christine Rosen. *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Patience A. Schell. “An Honorable Vocation for Ladies: The Work of the Mexico City Unión de Damas Católicas Mexicanas, 1912-1926.” *Journal of Women's History* 10:4 (Winter 1999): 78-103. Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino. *The Church and Politics in the Chilean Countryside*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

and worker exploitation contributed to catastrophic social and moral degeneration caused by capitalist economic expansion. This chapter explores how Chilean Catholics responded to these issues by using eugenics in order to rationalize a modern, patriarchal social structure while maintaining their political relevance in an increasingly secular political culture.

At the opening of the twentieth century, capitalist economic development had produced a variety of seemingly new social issues in Chile such as widespread poverty, growing urban populations and increased opportunities for sexual contact between men and women. These developments were unsettling to historical actors as diverse as parish priests, social anarchists and women's activists. Social reformers of all political stripes agreed that Chile's social problems were the results of a capitalist economic system that put profit ahead of all other concerns, especially the well being of workers. This chapter explores how Chilean intellectuals and reformers discussed the social question in Chile between 1900 and 1950 to demonstrate that both Catholic and secular intellectuals identified the same social repercussions of capitalism as problems for Chile's national progress. Additionally, these intellectuals all concurred that the best way to resolve these issues was the application of eugenic science. Studying the connection between eugenics and social reform in Chile elucidates how Catholic reformers were connected to the development of that discipline.

Managing the populace with eugenics was vital to Chile's national modernization project in the early twentieth century. In the cartoon, "La viruela en Valparaíso," (see Figure 1) which appeared in the popular pictorial magazine *Zig-Zag*, the social nature of disease was portrayed as both dangerous to all levels of Chilean society and virtually

uncontrollable by traditional means.⁵² The cartoon depicted concerns about the uncontrollable spread of disease that characterized the gendered debates about social disease and reform. Men carried disease home to their wives and families, which would spread through the unhygienic behaviors in which women with no eugenic education partook. Virtually all Chilean social reformers, regardless of religious affiliation, advocated the application of eugenic social welfare reforms to resolve the problems capitalism had caused.



⁵² Moustache, "La Viruela en Valparaíso," *Zig-Zag*, no. 24 (July 30, 1905).



Figure 1: Moustache, “La Viruela en Valparaíso,” *Zig-Zag*, no. 24 (July 30, 1905). One artist’s rendering of how disease could easily spread from one individual to an entire family, exemplifying Chilean concerns about the spread of disease. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

While the history of Chilean secular social reform has been well studied, the Catholic intellectuals who formed part of this dialogue have not been. As such, I discuss how Chilean Catholics believed their solutions to social crises differed from, and sought to improve upon, the work of their secular counterparts. While it is true that, at its most basic level, Catholics believed that their solutions were better because they were informed by religious beliefs, this conviction arose from a sense that their faith provided them with a unique ability to better appreciate the gravity of the social problems afflicting the country. To illustrate this Catholic intellectual position, I will first discuss the secular approaches to the social question that were most prevalent in Chile during the first half of the twentieth century. I divide the secular ideology into four distinct discourses: social problems, modernity, education and Catholic involvement. These four issues illuminate how secular reformers in Chile conceptualized social problems and their solutions. Next, I examine the Catholic approach to these four issues. This analysis illuminates how often and to what degree secular and Catholic social reformers agreed on the scope of the social question.

The secular intellectuals who argued that Catholics were socially backward based this argument on the fact that modern life was complicated and always changing, in contrast to the constant and unchanging character of a monolithic Church. However, most of these same secular intellectuals had trouble adjusting to modern living and mostly advocated for the modernization of patriarchal social structures that had been in place for decades to stabilize the social order and the persistence of gender difference. Nonetheless, they argued that Catholics were even less prepared, or able, to adapt to a modern, capitalist society. Catholic reformers strongly disagreed with this estimation. An anonymous author writing for *La Revista Católica (LRC)*, a widely circulated Catholic periodical published in Santiago and meant for Catholics of all social classes, wrote that secularists, “tried to present the Church as an enemy of progress and the welfare of the people.”⁵³ Progress, social welfare, and modernity were intimately linked for both secular and Catholic actors. This writer was correct in his assessment that secular efforts to portray the Catholic Church as anti-progressive also served to characterize it as against the working classes, a central tenet of secular reform discourse. The writer then pointed out that the Church and Catholics were not against modernity. Instead, the author argued that modernity was an illusion. The seemingly new liberal ideas been popularized by secularists such as free love and scientific knowledge had foundations in the Christian past going back to Adam and Eve.⁵⁴ This approach showed that Catholics were not disconnected from modern social issues because modernity was not really a new phenomenon.

⁵³ “Un nuevo peligro para los católicos,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 124 (September 15, 1906): 256-265. 260. “para poder así presentar á la Iglesia como enemiga del progreso y bienestar de los pueblos.”

⁵⁴ *Ibid* 261.

Nonetheless, one of the larger controversies within the Chilean Catholic community during the first half of the twentieth century was how to be a modern Catholic. In 1910, Father Samuel de Santa Teresa examined this issue in his article, “El Católico de Hoy.” He argued, “Therefore, today’s Catholic has to develop his behavior today, in the day in which he lives, in the century in which he lives and in the country in which he lives, exactly the same as those Catholics of all days, centuries and countries.”⁵⁵ In other words, Santa Teresa believed that it was a Catholic’s duty to participate actively in the age in which he lived; pining for an idyllic, bygone era served no purpose. This chapter explores how Catholic reformers who took Santa Teresa’s message to heart discussed the Chilean social question.

Another commonality that both secular and Catholic Chilean intellectuals shared was their belief that women played a special role in the process of social renewal. Appearing in the 1913 article, “Instrucción religiosa de la mujer” in *El Eco de las Damas Chilenas (EDC)*, “Une Vieille Fille” or “An Old Maid” wrote, “It is she who makes the home, exercising powerful influence in the ideas and habits of her husband, educating her children, influencing her employees or servants. In the society she frequents, she has a role no less important to play, that which the poor, invalid and needy have assigned her.”⁵⁶ This demonstrates that Catholics were equally committed to the idea that women were integral to the resolution of the social question as wives and mothers, just as secular

⁵⁵ Samuel de Santa Teresa. “El católico de hoy,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 214 (June 18, 1910): 834-840. 836. “Por tanto, el católico de hoy tiene que desarrollar su acción hoy, en el día en que vive, en el siglo en que vive y en el país en que vive, lo mismo exactamente que los católicos de todos los días, de todos los siglos y de todos los países...”

⁵⁶ Une Vieille Fille. “Instrucción religiosa de la mujer,” *El Eco de Las Damas Chilenas*, no. 30 (November 15, 1913). “Es ella quien forma el hogar, ejerciendo poderosa influencia en las ideas y costumbres de su marido, educando los hijos, influyendo en sus empleados o servidores. En la sociedad que frecuenta, tiene un rol no menos importante que desempeñar, que el que le está asignado entre los pobres, desvalidos y menesterosos.”

reformers did. By focusing on women's role as homemakers, the difference between men and women was naturalized and reinforced modernizing the patriarchal social system and avoiding any discussion of female emancipation or equality as a part of social progress.

Secular Conceptualizations of Social Reform

Social Question

Dr. Lucas Sierra Mendoza's *Bases de la Higiene Moderna* (1916) is an example of how secular intellectuals understood, and proposed to solve, the social question. As an accomplished surgeon, he contended that the main professional objective of the modern doctor was preventing disease by familiarizing patients with the latest information about hygienic behavior. For Sierra, "Hygiene is the last base of all prosperity and should be the primordial objective of all government men, in that *national health signifies prosperity and national wealth.*"⁵⁷ Sierra believed that doctors served as the hands of government public health efforts. He also explicitly linked economic prosperity to the health of the Chilean population, an opinion shared by most of his contemporaries both secular and Catholic. To be productive, workers had to be healthy. And, as Sierra points out, the government was responsible for creating salubrious conditions for its citizens. This model, popular with both secular and Catholic social reformers, popularized the concept of the citizen-worker.⁵⁸ To play an active role in the political future of the

⁵⁷ Lucas Sierra. *Bases de la Higiene Moderna: Papel que en la difusión de sus principios debe desempeñar la mujer (Conferencia dictada en el Club de Señoras el 11 de Noviembre de 1916)*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Universitaria, 1916. 6. "La higiene es la base última de toda prosperidad y debería ser el objetivo primordial de todo hombre de gobierno, ya que *salud nacional significa prosperidad y riqueza nacional.*"

⁵⁸ Rolando Alvarez Vallejos and Antonio Aravena C. *Los trabajadores y la nueva cuestión social: repensando la realidad laboral y sindical en Chile*. Santiago: Grupo de Investigaciones del Trabajo, Instituto de Ciencias Alejandro Lipschutz, ICAL, 2004. Patrick Barr-Melej. *Reforming Chile: Cultural Politics, Nationalism, and the Rise of the Middle Class*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,

country, one had to play an economic role. Labor is what defined national belonging. This would have a special impact on Chilean women, as eugenic solutions to the social question insisted on their importance as mothers rather than workers. In fact, female work was pathologized.

Sierra's biography plays an important role in explaining how he arrived at his conclusions. Born in the province of Concepción in 1866, he came to Santiago in 1883 to study at the Facultad de Medicina at the Universidad de Chile.⁵⁹ When he completed his study under physician Manuel Barros Borgoño in 1888, he began to work in venereal diseases. His professional life was characterized by the combination of research, teaching, and actual medical practice. In 1892, he went on a tour of Europe to further his skills and familiarize himself with new medical techniques. Upon the death of his mentor, Barros Borgoño, Sierra was named the head of surgical staff at the hospital of San Borja.⁶⁰ He continued to travel between Europe, the United States, and Latin America over the course of his professional life. He also briefly served as the Director General de Sanidad between 1925 and 1927.⁶¹ With this background, Sierra represented one of the most elite Chilean doctors of the period. Nonetheless, his extensive travels speak to the

2001. Jorge I. Barria Serón. *El movimiento obrero en Chile: Síntesis histórico-social*. Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad Técnica del Estado, 1971. Iñigo L. García-Bryce and Elizabeth Quay Hutchison. *Worlds of Labor in South America: Class, Gender, and Political Culture*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003. Fernando Ortiz Letelier. *El movimiento obrero en Chile*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2005. Elizabeth Quay Hutchison. *Laborers Appropriate to their Sex: Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900-1930*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.

⁵⁹ “Algunos datos biográficos del Prof. Sierra,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 8 (October 1928): 920-922. 920.

⁶⁰ *Ibid* 921.

⁶¹ Museo Nacional de Medicina, “Dr. Lucas Sierra (1866-1937),” <http://www.museomedicina.cl/home/index.php/historia-de-la-medicina/125-dr-lucas-sierra-1866-1937.html>.

connections that Chilean intellectuals made to larger transnational scientific trends.

Returning to his *Bases de la Higiene Moderna*, Sierra also linked economic progress to a gendered concept of public health. He argued that the latest efforts at preventing disease were primarily motivated by economic factors. “Of the three great motives that have compelled hygienic advances in the world philanthropy and panic more directly impact women; the third factor—*economic interests*—is more the sphere of man.”⁶² This statement is intriguing in the assignment of roles that men and women played in the resolution of the social question. Women were the conservators of philanthropy and panic, while men were more concerned with the economic ramifications of social problems. Sierra aptly captured an attitude shared by his peers. Virtually all of the authors discussed below consistently argued that women could play a role in the modernization of the social order, but they were subject to emotional whims. As such, female participation in resolving the social question could only go so far. Those reformers who privileged economic causes of the social question, like Sierra himself, rarely considered women capable of the rationality required to play an active role in the reform efforts designed to address social progress.

That being said, Sierra made a point to stress that women were especially fitted to some aspects of social reform. They were better able to popularize new hygienic methodology and understanding.⁶³ He wrote, “In good terms, ladies, in your home, where you are the true queens, force yourselves to maintain conformity to the principles of

⁶² Sierra 6. “De los tres grandes móviles que han impulsado los adelantos de la higiene en el mundo el de la *filantropía* y del *pánico* impresionan más directamente a la mujer; el tercer factor—los *intereses económicos*—es más netamente del resorte del hombre.”

⁶³ *Ibid.*

modern hygiene.”⁶⁴ As wives and mothers, women were in a position to control the cleanliness of their homes. They could also instruct their family members in proper personal hygiene practices. While for Sierra the ultimate goal of public health efforts was to make a stronger national economy by making healthier workers, a hygienic private space traditionally controlled by women was integral to this becoming a reality.

Most striking, Sierra points out that encouraging improved social hygiene was a Christian mission.⁶⁵ He made it clear that the best way to ensure that hygienic practices take hold was by encouraging women to find spiritual advisors who were aware of the latest developments in the field.

Be sure, ladies, that your spiritual guides, that the priest you seek out for Christian missions, be at the same time instructed and proficient in the fundamentals of hygiene, the art of staying healthy, useful and good. Associate, by all accounts, the purity of the soul with the cleanliness of the well understood body; your work is doubly useful, serving God and country.⁶⁶

This demonstrates the complicated relationship between Chilean Catholicism and social reform. Many reformers believed that women were critical to the improvement of the Chilean race while at the same time they worried that women remained in the thrall of the Catholic Church. Both of these assumptions were based on entrenched ideas about gender roles and behavior. Women were understood to be the caregivers for their families, so they were in a special position to impart eugenic knowledge to their children. However,

⁶⁴ Ibid 30. “En buenos términos, señoras, en vuestro hogar, donde sois las verdaderas reinas, esforzaos por mantenerlo en conformidad a los principios de la higiene moderna...”

⁶⁵ Ibid 31. “Proteged la salud de los que os rodean; es hasta económico sin contar el lado mucho más noble, humanitario y cristiano.”

⁶⁶ Ibid. “Haced, señoras, que vuestros directores espirituales, que el sacerdote que buscáis para las misiones cristianas, sea a la vez un hombre instruído y difunda las bases de la higiene, el arte de conservarse sano, útil y bueno. Asociad, en buenas cuentas, la pureza del alma con el aseo corporal bien entendido;--haréis obra doblemente provechosa, sirviendo a Dios y a la patria...”

they were also thought to be more swayed by emotion than reason, making them more connected to religious practice which was a potential disruption to eugenic instruction. Sierra wanted to use and modernize this trait. Thus, Chilean women had to be instructed in public health practices by men who were sensitive to their religious predilections.

Women were often seen as non-secular agents in an increasingly secular Latin American political culture. Charles A. Hale argues that this was the result of Enlightenment principles that were popularized over the nineteenth century that privileged individual thought and freedom from religious influence.⁶⁷ In the context of new republics, men were understood to be citizens and had a part to play in the public sphere. Women, according to K. Lynn Stoner, were identified with tradition and antiquated religious fervor.⁶⁸ In this way male and female gender roles, even before the twentieth century, were bifurcated to associate men with secularism and women with Catholicism. This also conveniently meant that women could be written out of debates about the citizen-worker because they did not engage with the public sphere. Early twentieth century social reformers wanted to maintain this separation.

Women were especially important to the resolution of the social question in Chile because most intellectuals identified infant mortality rates as the number one issue affecting economic prosperity. Javier Rodríguez Barros's article "Hacia la despoblacion,"

⁶⁷ Elizabeth Dore. "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Gender and the State in the Long Nineteenth Century," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, Elizabeth Dore & Maxine Molyneux (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. 22-23. Charles A. Hale. "Political Ideas and Ideologies in Latin America, 1870-1930," in *Ideas and Ideologies in Twentieth Century Latin America*, Leslie Bethell (ed). New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 143.

⁶⁸ K. Lynn Stoner. *From the House to the Streets: The Cuban Woman's Movement for Legal Reform, 1898-1940*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991. 131.

was an example of this position.⁶⁹ He wrote, “The high infant mortality rate presents us with a problem of national interest that needs a rapid solution, if we do not want to see in short time, the disappearance of our race, and depopulation, the true punishment that threatens the future of civilized nations.”⁷⁰ Rodríguez Barros was especially interested in improving the infant mortality rate by encouraging more healthy births. This was a strategy that was recommended by variety of reformers during the period. However, rather than focusing on improving prenatal care, Rodríguez Barros argued that the primary cause of infant death was illegitimacy.⁷¹ Families with absent fathers, or working mothers, created unhealthy living conditions for children. This was due to the fact that parents in those situations did not have the time, or inclination, to inform themselves regarding proper childcare and nutrition. As such, Rodríguez Barros’s main advice was to encourage formalizing sexual unions with marriage because it would ensure a stable family unit able to care properly for children. Emphasizing marriage as a solution for social problems was a reform measure that was not far from that of Catholic intellectuals.

In addition to his surprising lack of interest or awareness regarding pre- and post-natal healthcare affecting infant mortality, Rodríguez Barros also added that Chilean women had increasingly used birth control and abortion to the detriment of the nation’s progress. He wrote, “The voluntary restriction of fertility, that results from the adoption of anti-conceptive practices, or from provoked abortion, constitutes in our country an

⁶⁹ Javier Rodríguez Barros. “Hacia la despoblacion,” *La Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 11-12 (November-December 1923): 788-805. 789.

⁷⁰ Ibid 792. “La alta mortalidad de niños se nos presenta como un problema de interés nacional que necesita una solución rápida, si no queremos ver en poco tiempo más, la desaparición de nuestra raza, y la despoblación, verdadero flagelo que amenaza el porvenir de las naciones civilizadas.”

⁷¹ Ibid 795.

exceptionally serious evil, it can bring us to depopulation.”⁷² For a man like Rodríguez Barros, any form of birth control was tantamount to race suicide. In the Chilean context of high infant mortality, to avoid having children was unthinkable.⁷³ Needless to say, he considered women to be exclusively responsible for the increased use of birth control and incidence of abortion. He could not conceive of the idea that Chilean men also benefited from these reproductive technologies as well.

As a result, he urged women to fulfill their natural duty of having children while ignoring the role men played in the formation of nuclear families. “The highest calling for woman is to be a mother; her most sacred task is to have and raise children, form with them a home and continue the work of life and civilization that nature has assigned her.”⁷⁴ Much as Sierra did seven years earlier, Rodríguez Barros placed women squarely in the position of being able to address the social question through their natural role as reproducers. Additionally, both men supported the contention that being a woman meant one was naturally compelled to have children, care for the family and make a home. What was new in both cases was the childcare and hygiene methods women were

⁷² Ibid 802. “La restricción voluntaria de la fecundación, que se traduce por la adopción de prácticas anti-concepcionales, o por el aborto provocado, constituye en nuestro país un mal excepcionalmente grave, puede traernos la despoblación.”

⁷³ For discussions of race suicide and pronatalism see: Gisela Bock and Pat Thane. *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of European Welfare States, 1880s-1950s*. New York: Routledge, 1991. Laura L. Lovett. *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890-1938*. Stepan 1991. Alexandra Stern. *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

⁷⁴ Barros 804. “La misión más alta de la mujer es ser madre; su tarea más sagrada es tener y criar hijos, formar con ellos un hogar y continuar la obra de vida y de civilización que la naturaleza le ha encomendado.”

expected to familiarize themselves with to be responsible, modern mothers.⁷⁵ These new expectations recognized a minimal female engagement with the public sphere, but this was mitigated by reform efforts that focused on programs based on in-home visits or one-off public lectures.

Most secular and Catholic Chilean intellectuals feared that women were not aware of the most modern personal hygiene methods. Some even doubted whether or not women were capable of living up to these standards. However, most agreed that the first step was to popularize new hygienic practices. In a series of twelve lectures entitled, “*Medicina social y progreso nacional*,” René Sand extolled new hygienic practices. A Belgian doctor trained in social medicine, Sand traveled to Chile in 1924 and helped to develop the field of Chilean social work. Some of his lectures were then published in the *Revista de la Beneficencia Pública* shortly after. Sand argued in his first lecture that, “education and hygiene are the foundations on which the building of the future society must be constructed.”⁷⁶ Sand, Sierra and others typically discussed Chilean society as a building that needed the proper foundation to stand.⁷⁷ Some said this foundation was the

⁷⁵ This was an opinion that was mirrored in the mainstream press of the time. For example, in an article appearing in *El Mercurio* in 1925, Dr. Cora Mayers gave a lecture to popularize new hygiene techniques. Mayers held women exclusively responsible for the maintenance of the Chilean race. “Conferencia sanitaria popular,” *El Mercurio*, no. 8843 (July 13, 1925): 3. 3.

⁷⁶ René Sand. “*Medicina social y progreso nacional: 1a Conferencia*,” *Revista de la Beneficencia Pública*, no. 1 (March 1925): 1-122. 5. “la educación y la higiene son las bases sobre las cuales debe construirse el edificio de la sociedad futura.”

⁷⁷ This attitude is mirrored in another article published in *Servicio Social* in 1935. According to J. Delagrangé, “La familia, sociedad en miniatura, no puede, no debe desaparecer.” J. Delagrangé. “El servicio social y la familia como unidad económica, espiritual y moral,” *Servicio Social*, no. 2 (April-June 1935): 90-100. 90. The family was the cornerstone of society as a whole; virtually all of the intellectuals in this era felt the same way. Families had to be organized to ensure that modern, Chilean society would properly function. As Delagrangé wrote, “Una familia en estado de crisis es una carga y peligro para la sociedad: no sólo su propia existencia no produce ninguna satisfacción a los suyos, sino que su actuación social es deficiente, la crisis que sufre influencia el estado general de la colectividad de que forma parte.” *Ibid* 91. Here, the importance of the individual’s health and social formation to the whole was made

family while others argued that it was the practice of public health itself. Conceptualizing Chilean society as an architectural project allowed for the management of people and bodies as though they were tools, which fostered the growing interest in eugenics. Eugenics approached human interaction in mechanistic terms, which allowed for people to become cogs in the larger societal machine.

Sand also articulated the position that hygienic efforts needed to apply to everyone, but in different ways. For example, public hygiene efforts such as border patrols, clean water and food programs, and the control of infectious diseases were advantageous to all Chileans. However, another level of social hygiene reform and programming was necessary for those members of the population that could not care for themselves.⁷⁸ While Sand did not clarify who this category of people might be, women, children and the poor were the most common groups identified by secular reformers as in need of government assistance and intervention.

Like his secular counterparts, Sand also linked hygienic efforts to national economic strength. “It is proclaimed that the principal care for Public Powers must be to ensure instruction and health, supreme riches and unending sources of new wealth.”⁷⁹ It seems that this was the ultimate, and most important, goal of public health for him. Creating a healthy population was the key to ensuring a bright economic future, the primary objective of national development and progress. Governments, he argued, were

apparent. All members of a family had their appropriate roles to fulfill: father as breadwinner, mother as caregiver and homemaker, children as future workers. When these roles broke down, it threatened the stability of society as a whole.

⁷⁸ Sand 6.

⁷⁹ Ibid 8. “Se proclama que el cuidado principal de los Poderes Públicos debe ser el de asegurar a la población la instrucción y la salud, riquezas supremas y fuentes inagotables de nuevas riquezas.”

designed to provide for their citizens economically. In order to do that, governments also had to provide the proper working conditions to keep those citizens healthy (and working).

However, Sand discussed social medicine somewhat differently than Sierra or Rodríguez Barros. According to him, “Social Medicine is, not a humanitarian aspiration without an objective base, but rather a science based on impartial observation, on systematic experimentation, on the patient and contradictory analysis of the observed facts, that is, the only methods capable of arriving at the discovery of the truth.”⁸⁰ Sand emphasized the importance of scientific practice of social medicine. While all of the intellectuals discussed in this chapter agreed that social medicine and public health were scientific pursuits, they did not necessarily all agree they were exclusively scientific or that they should be. Sand, however, believed that scientific methodology was critical to the effectiveness of public health both in Chile and back in his home country of Belgium.

In the second lecture, Sand connected the social question even more to economic changes in Chile. He made clear that social medicine should not be confused with class warfare. He wrote, “We see, this way, the scientific demonstration of that which daily life teaches us: the inequality of social classes from the physical and mental perspective, and the profound influence of social factors on health.”⁸¹ His opinion was important in light of the fact that Sand believed the most important result of public health efforts was

⁸⁰ Ibid 19. “...la Medicina Social es, no una aspiración humanitaria sin base objetiva, sino que una ciencia fundada en la observación imparcial, en la experimentación sistemática en el análisis paciente y contradictorio de los hechos observados, es decir, sobre los únicos métodos capaces de conducir al descubrimiento de la verdad...”

⁸¹ Rene Sand. “Medicina social y progreso nacional: 2a Conferencia,” *Revista de la Beneficencia Pública*, no. 1 (March 1925): 1-122. 33. “Vemos, así, la demostración científica de lo que nos enseña la vida diaria, a saber: la desigualdad de las clases sociales desde el punto de vista físico y mental, y la influencia profunda de los factores sociales sobre la salud.”

economic strength. This strength depended on having a healthy working class, not upon eliminating class distinctions. While some secular reformers believed that class difference was the cause of the social problems afflicting Chile, Sand attributed class difference to the natural variation found in all species. This variation was not cause for concern and need not be corrected. In fact, if there were no class difference, there would be no workers to engender Chile's national progress. As will be demonstrated below, Chilean Catholic intellectuals shared this opinion regarding social medicine as well.

Sand also argued that the Chilean mortality rate should be addressed by encouraging women to have more children, while overlooking the role of men in this issue. In his sixth lecture he wrote, "On the other hand, the number of abortions, the percentage of miscarriages and infant mortality are more elevated; the size and weight of newborns is less when a mother works outside the home."⁸² This statement was a mixture of pejorative concepts about both class and gender, demonstrating that Sand attributed a low birth rate to those women who chose to work outside the home. Unlike other intellectuals who lamented the fact that the lower classes were reproducing at a much higher rate than their social betters, he believed that working outside the home prevented women from pursuing their natural calling to be wives and mothers and affected their ability to get pregnant.

Leo Cordemans, European founder and director of the Escuela de Servicio Social, agreed that women had a special place in the resolution of the social question. However, she emphasized that women could address these issues as *visitadoras* or social workers,

⁸² Rene Sand, "Medicina social y progreso nacional: 6a Conferencia," *Revista de la Beneficencia Pública*, no. 1 (March 1925): 1-122. 96. "Por otra parte, el número de abortos, el porcentaje de la mortinatalidad y de la mortalidad infantil son más elevados la talla y el peso de los recién nacidos son inferiores cuando la madre trabaja fuera de la casa..."

not only as cultural reproducers. In fact, she argued that *visitadoras* served just as important a purpose as the doctors with whom they typically worked. She wrote, “Analyzing the documents obtained by her own detective perspicacity, the Social Worker can establish and determine after her diagnostic the most adequate treatment. Her method is that of the doctor and there exist social diagnostic rubrics just as precise as those of medical diagnostics.”⁸³ Most female intellectuals who wrote about the social question shared Cordemans’s opinion. Unlike their male counterparts, these women argued that they could contribute to Chilean social progress and reformation not only as wives and mothers but also as active members of political and social movements in their own right.⁸⁴ Cordemans added to this by emphasizing that *visitadoras* used scientific techniques that were equivalent to those practiced by doctors.

Cordemans highlighted the scientific nature of social medicine and social work much like Sand. She argued that, “Social Service is today a science that each person serves with the faculties of the brain, but in spite of everything it has maintained its character of service work that requires the giving of the heart.”⁸⁵ Social work was a scientific pursuit but it needed to be administered with emotion and care, making it the ideal discipline for women who wanted to help Chile’s national progress. Though Cordemans did not elaborate on this point in her article, *visitadoras* were usually young,

⁸³ Leo Cordemans. “Algunas características del servicio social,” *Servicio Social*, no. 1 (March 1928): 1-9. 4. “Analizando los documentos obtenidos merced a su perspicacia de detective, la Visitadora Social puede establecer después su diagnóstico y buscar el tratamiento más adecuado. Su método es el del médico y existen reglas de diagnóstico social tan precisas como las del diagnóstico médico.”

⁸⁴ María Angélica Illanes. *Cuerpo y sangre de la política: La construcción histórica de las Visitadoras Sociales (1887-1940)*. Santiago, Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2006.

⁸⁵ *Ibid* 9. “El Servicio Social es hoy día una ciencia que cada uno sirve con las facultades de su cerebro, pero ha conservado a pesar de todo su carácter de obra al servicio de la cual cada uno se entrega con todo su corazón.”

single women or women with grown children. As such, their social mothering would not conflict with their actual duties as mothers. Even according to a more expansive view of women's ability to contribute to social progress, being a wife and mother took precedence for women in the modernization and reorganization of the Chilean social structure.

Author J. Delagrangé, however, noted that the responsibility for a well-managed family did not lie solely with the wife and mother. Unlike many of his/her counterparts, he/she argued that women could not be expected to resolve the social question by mothering alone. "The woman cannot sustain the moral weight of the social edifice herself; she, just like the man, agrees to elevate the standard of living of the collective; the situation is always abnormal when one must make up for, with only their energies, the insufficiencies of the other."⁸⁶ Women were not capable of replacing a father figure in the education and instruction of their children. This position diverged from the dominant opinion that women should take charge of the home environment while men were only responsible for providing financially for their families. This statement also implied that women should not be left to their own devices when making decisions regarding their children, allowing room for intervention either on the part of a husband or father as well as the state itself if a woman was raising her children alone. It was vital that the family

⁸⁶ J. Delagrangé. "El servicio social y la familia como unidad económica, espiritual y moral," *Servicio Social*, no. 2 (April-June 1935): 90-110. 105. "La mujer no puede soportar ella sola el peso moral del edificio [social]; ella concurre, tanto como el hombre, a elevar el nivel de la vida de la colectividad; la situación es siempre anormal cuando el uno o la otra debe suplir, con sus solas energías, las insuficiencias de uno de ellos."

function as a viable and stable unit because, “the family is the most effective means for the regeneration of the human being.”⁸⁷

Women were not the only group that was vital for the Chilean modernization project. Many Chilean doctors were equally concerned about their own role in this social drama. Luis G. Middleton C. argued that the state was responsible for dealing with economic issues, not medical professionals. He went on to say that a strong central authority was necessary for addressing social problems, though it was unclear whom or what would comprise that authority.⁸⁸ Middleton C. was of the opinion that doctors should not meddle in social issues because it might foster a lack of neutrality in the medical profession, “We understand that it is strange to many people that a doctor might intervene in problems that are the domain of politics and the economy.”⁸⁹ This statement demonstrates that by the mid- to late-1930s, the public discourse about the social question had become mired in political debates in Chile. For Middleton C., focusing exclusively on medical problems and treatments, rather than on social problems, was the way to avoid incendiary political issues. This protected medicine and science as objective forces capable of providing the necessary proofs required for social reform efforts.

Middleton C.’s writing illustrates that there were a variety of opinions amongst secular intellectuals in Chile regarding the relationship of Socialism to the social question. Middleton C. represented a relatively conservative opinion. In contrast,

⁸⁷ Ibid 109. “...la familia es el medio más favorable para la regeneración de ser humano...”

⁸⁸ Luis G. Middleton C. “El medico ante las realidades del problema social y sus soluciones,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 1 (January 1938): 50-58. 52.

⁸⁹ Ibid 53. “Comprendemos que ha de extrañar a muchas personas el que un médico intervenga en problemas que son del resorte de la política y de la economía.”

Salvador Allende and Jorge Palma Cereceda's article, "Panorama bio-demográfico, económico y cultural de Chile" in a 1944 edition of the *Boletín Médico Social (BMS)* argued that socio-economic conditions affected medical conditions.

The enormous number of deaths and the increased morbidity quota that register on our demographic indices, aside from determining the stagnation of the population, influence the volume of production and greatly affect the general economic possibilities [of Chile], because of the lost work hours and the diminished consumption they represent, they indicate a considerable reduction in national wealth.⁹⁰

At this time, Allende was already a well-established member of the Chilean Socialist party and had served as Minister of Health since 1938. Therefore, it is not surprising that he linked material conditions to physical ailments. What is more interesting is the fact that, even as late as 1944, the importance of the social question was being discussed in mostly economic terms by an advocate of greater social equality demonstrating that national progress was still understood as economic strength. More, this emphasis on economic strength privileged male work over female reproduction.

Additionally, Allende and Palma Cereceda's article supported the idea that a return to family order was necessary for Chile's economic renewal. They argued, "A growing disintegration of proletariat families and the middle classes has [been] a result of the uncontrolled participation of women and children in economic toils."⁹¹ Women and children had to return to their proper places in the home in order to assure Chilean

⁹⁰ Salvador Allende G. and Jorge Palma Cereceda. "Panorama bio-demográfico, económico y cultural de Chile," *Boletín Médico Social*, no. 117-119 (July-September 1944): 181-202. 181. "El enorme número de muertos y la subida cuota de morbilidad que registran nuestros índices demográficos, aparte de determinar el estancamiento de la población, influyen en el volumen de la producción y afectan, grandemente, las posibilidades económicas generales [de Chile], porque las horas del trabajo que se pierden y la disminución de consumo que representan, significan una merma considerable en la riqueza nacional."

⁹¹ Ibid 197. "Una creciente desintegración de las familias proletarias y de las clases medias como resultado de la incontrolada participación de niños y mujeres en las faenas económicas."

economic strength. This depended on men making a family wage that would allow for women and children to return to their natural places: home and school. This shows that even more politically liberal reformers believed in a patriarchal social structure.⁹² My examination of these intellectuals has demonstrated that, on the one hand, there was a relative uniformity of opinion regarding the social question among secular intellectuals. Most of these men (and women) identified the same issues as being important and suggested the same means of correcting them. However, within that consensus, there was disagreement in terms of who was to administer these programs and what their ultimate goals were. This was mostly debated in terms of who owned science and scientific expertise in the field of eugenics.

Modernity

The intellectuals and reformers who wanted to address the social question also invariably reflected on how modern life had changed the Chilean social structure. This went beyond simply attributing the changes to capitalist expansion, though this was considered a deciding factor. These individuals most often referred to issues regarding health and growing class disparity when discussing the social question. These were certainly the results of modern economic developments such as factories and assembly lines, but modern living brought with it a new set of problems that did not necessarily appear economic. After all, none of them suggested that a return to pre-industrial living

⁹² “On the other hand, the obsession with women’s roles, behavior, and consciousness reflected deep and widespread anxieties among the rising urban elites over the rapidity and disorderliness of socioeconomic change.” Besse 2. Sueann Caulfield. *In Defense of Honor: Sexuality Morality, Modernity, and the Nation in Early-Twentieth Century Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. Roseblatt 2000. Mary Kay Vaughan. “Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940,” in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, Elizabeth Dore & Maxine Molyneux (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

was the way to resolve the social question. Instead, they wanted to modernize social relationships in Chile while preserving patriarchal social structures that ensured stability. As a result, their reflections upon modernity demonstrated an anxiety regarding gender confusion among a variety of social groups such as women, youths and criminals. These were fears that were shared by Catholic reformers as well.

In a brief article appearing in a 1918 edition of *El Mercurio*, the author lamented the fact that the Chilean upper classes were not marrying enough.⁹³ The author, identified only as “Merlin,” placed the blame for this situation squarely on gender confusion, “The man cowers; the girl calls and is not pursued.”⁹⁴ In this case, men were the ones who were not behaving properly. They were expected to pursue women in order to produce a family. However, upper class men had become too retiring and timid according to Merlin.

This was further supported by the example Merlin used of a thirty-year-old single man who was going bald from both hereditary causes and Chile’s poor environmental conditions.⁹⁵ This description demonstrated that the man in question was already losing his virility at thirty, the age when most experts agreed that men were at their prime for having and raising children. The article went on to say that this man was not interested in getting married because, “the girls are pretty and mature; but very badly raised, they spend a lot on clothes, they want cars, they are all the same, and they do not know one useful thing.”⁹⁶ Merlin did not disagree that modern women were frivolous and too

⁹³ Merlin. “Un problema social,” *El Mercurio*, no. 6401 (January 12, 1918): 3. 3.

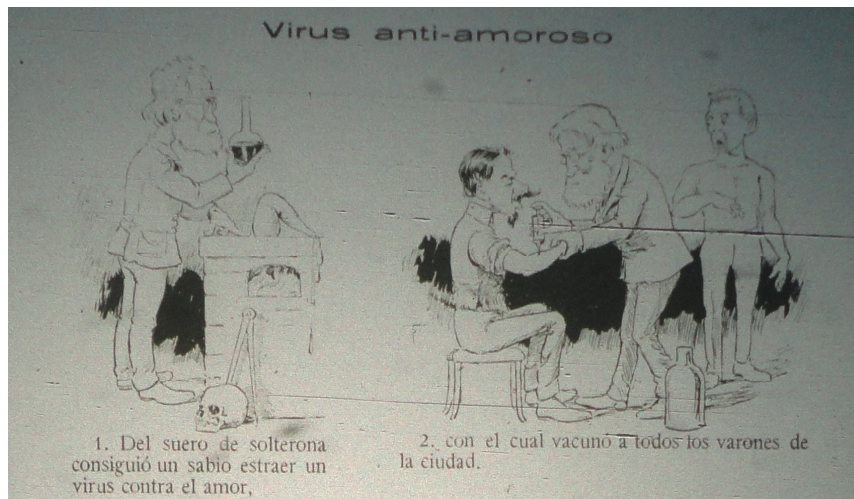
⁹⁴ Ibid. “El hombre retrocede; la niña llama y no es seguida.”

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid. “...las chicas están bonitas y maduras; pero muy mal criadas, gastan mucho con vestirse, quieren automóvil, son todas iguales, y no saben ninguna cosa útil.”

concerned with clothes and luxury, but he also blamed this man for committing crimes against the nation. The single man had not accepted his duty to find a woman, train her out of her frivolity, and become a husband; he was too lazy. Rather, the man had chosen to live as a bachelor and avoid his societal obligation of producing the Chilean race. Merlin believed that young Chileans had very little interest in family life, which threatened the stable social order required for increased economic prosperity.

Male inability or disinterest in pursuing women and making families was bemoaned throughout the Chilean popular press as early as 1905. Another example of this attitude was illustrated in the cartoon, “Virus anti-amoroso,” in *Zig-Zag* (see Figure 2).⁹⁷ The most important image from this cartoon was that of a woman standing on her balcony, waiting for suitors who would never come.



⁹⁷ Moustache. “Virus anti-amoroso,” *Zig-Zag*, no. 28 (August 27, 1905).



Figure 2: Moustache, “Virus anti-amoroso,” *Zig-Zag*, no. 28 (August 27, 1905). Another cartoon by the artist Moustache, this time demonstrating how men and women needed each other to fully realize their potential. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

In 1925, another article appearing in *El Mercurio* stated, “Excessive work in a mother brings with it as a consequence floods of pain and physical misery and the degeneration of the future citizens of the Republic.”⁹⁸ Taking a different approach than Merlin, Agustin Ortuzan E. argued that women of all classes were the ones who were increasingly losing interest in forming families. He contended that political radicals gave

⁹⁸ Agustin Ortuzan E. “Protección a la madre y al niño,” *El Mercurio*, no. 8841, (July 11, 1925): 3. 3. “El trabajo excesivo en la madre trae como consecuencia raudales de dolor y de miseria física y la degeneración de los futuros ciudadanos de la República.”

out birth control information to women, damaging Chile's potential economic development by diminishing the size of the workforce. Providing birth control information implied that Chilean men and women would limit the size of their families. What Ortuzan E. most feared was that upper class families would choose to have fewer children in order to preserve the lifestyle to which they were accustomed when they should be trying to out-reproduce the lower classes.⁹⁹

Growing disinterest in family life continued to be perceived as a problem by most secular reformers. María Besa de Díaz, whose article appeared in *El Mercurio* in 1933, wrote, "Anti-family ideas float in the air like miasmas over swamps."¹⁰⁰ She contended that social and political radicals were trying to make Chileans believe that modern life required the rejection of family and obligation in favor of a life of individualism and indulgence. In this article, she argued that proposed divorce legislation in Chile was an example of this trend and actually represented a step backward in terms of social progress.¹⁰¹ Like Ortuzan E., Besa de Diaz also stipulated that it was up to women to correct this error.

Finally, the woman that knows society's conscience, feels the weight of that high calling of saving it upon her, lending it her quiet experience of centuries, her honor and sincerity to help man untangle the complicated skein of life, of the call of modern civilization, and putting her generous breast before the assaults of that insolent barbarity that tries to destroy her familial reign, complies with the providential mission that this hour of the world has signaled to her.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ María Besa de Díaz. "Ideas que vivifican, ideas que matan," *El Mercurio*, no. 17,747 (June 22, 1933): 7. 7. "Las ideas antifamiliares flotan en el aire como las miasmas sobre los pantanos."

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid. "Finalmente, la mujer que se sabe conciencia de la sociedad, siente que pesa sobre ella el altísimo deber de salvarla prestando en la hora crítica su callada experiencia de siglos, su honradez y sinceridad para ayudar al hombre a desenredar la embrollada madeja de la vida, de la llamada civilización

Education

In order to navigate the difficulties presented by the social question and modern life, most Chilean intellectuals saw primary education as the means of rectifying social problems. They advocated for a new type of education, infused with scientific principles, which would prepare young children for their future responsibilities as citizens, workers and reproducers. Secular intellectuals often placed the responsibility for this education squarely in the hands of the state. However, there was still quite a lot of debate about what this education should include and how to best impart it to young Chileans. In addition, most of these intellectuals insisted on an educational program that cultivated in children a moral code of behavior that was informed by Judeo-Christian principles, even if it was ostensibly secular. What is most striking is that the ultimate goal of this education was to teach children to recognize their obligation, as individuals, to the collective good. As such, it did not greatly differ from Catholic educational goals.

Dr. Cora Mayers, founder of the Escuela de Enfermería at the Universidad de Chile, argued that the best place to instruct children in hygiene was in school.¹⁰³ She wrote, “But of all these centers that contribute to hygienicizing the masses, none realizes a work more solidly educational and of the most sure fruits than does *the school*.”¹⁰⁴

Mayers believed a state institution was the best place for children to be instructed in their

moderna, y que poniendo su pecho generoso ante las embestidas de esa insolente barbarie que pretende arrasar con su reinado familiar, cumple con la misión providencial que esta hora del mundo le tiene señalada.”

¹⁰³ Museo Nacional de Medicina. “Dra. Mayers, Cora (1895-1931),” <http://www.museomedicina.cl/home/index.php/historia-de-la-medicina/180-dra-cora-mayers-1895-1931.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Cora Mayers. “La educación higiénica de la nación,” *Revista de la Beneficencia Pública*, no. 3 (September 1924): 199-202. 199. “Pero de todos estos centros que contribuyen a higienizar las masas, ninguno realiza una obra más sólidamente educativa y de más seguros frutos que la que realiza *la escuela*.”

obligations as citizens. This was primarily because she believed imposing proper habits and behavior could counteract any deficiencies caused by a child's heredity. In fact, the main objective of any scholastic hygiene program was to create children that were, "strong individuals and aware of their responsibilities to society."¹⁰⁵ Mayers's own history bears mentioning. As a pioneer in social medicine and pediatrics, she traveled extensively between France, Great Britain, Germany and Chile. Even more sobering and telling, she died in 1931 the victim of a "crime of passion" perpetrated by her colleague Dr. Alfredo de María.¹⁰⁶ This macabre anecdote shows how women, even the most professional and lauded, remained subject to the whims of men.

Using education as a means of teaching responsibility to the collective good was a common trope among secular intellectuals. Madame M. Mulle, the director of Central School of Social Service of Brussels where René Sand had also taught, explained this as the result of the natural self-preservation instincts of the species. "Primitive human societies, surely also had rules of conduct for their members, instinctively, unconsciously admitted by themselves and which are the foundation for the moral development of humanity."¹⁰⁷ Mulle portrayed educating children for the national collective good as a natural imperative without which human civilization, and the species itself, would devolve. By linking this argument to the larger discourse of evolution, Mulle was able to

¹⁰⁵ Ibid 200. "...individuos fuertes y penetrados de sus responsabilidades para con la sociedad."

¹⁰⁶ "Dra. Mayers," <http://www.museomedicina.cl/home/index.php/historia-de-la-medicina/180-dra-cora-mayers-1895-1931.html>.

¹⁰⁷ M. Mulle. "La educación moral y social de niño," *Servicio Social*, no. 1 (March 1930): 25-33. 25. "Las sociedades humanas primitivas, seguramente tenían también reglas de conducta para sus miembros, instintivamente, inconscientemente admitidas por ellos mismos y que son la base del desarrollo moral de la humanidad."

portray education reform as both inevitable and necessary. However, though she was concerned with the moral instruction of young Chileans, she still held the state responsible for education. For her, education was a secular project and was not under the purview of religious instructors.

What was most interesting about Mulle's approach to education was that its primary function was to teach "morality," or the awareness and acceptance of one's obligation to the collective good. "All that wakes the cultivation of free will, all that forms and tempers character, it is the base of moral culture. If the educator has his attention focused on the possible social value from these elements, his action will be doubly happy and fertile."¹⁰⁸ Mulle referred to a moral culture that tempered the individual's characteristics in favor of the group stability. Thus, for secular intellectuals, morality was not necessarily based on religious dogma but on understanding one's obligations as a citizen and worker. In particular, this might include forfeiting your own desires for the good of the group. While this was not a strictly Catholic ideology, the idea of self-sacrifice in the name of others was certainly informed by the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Catholic Involvement

In terms of defining the social question, problems caused by modernity, and educational goals, secular Chilean intellectuals did not differ greatly from their Catholic contemporaries. The major difference between these groups was how, or if, Catholic people would be involved in the resolution of the social question. For most secular intellectuals, the answer was a resounding, "no." To them, Catholicism represented not

¹⁰⁸ Ibid 29. "Todo aquello que despierte el cultivo de la voluntad, todo lo que forma y temple el carácter, es la base misma de la cultura moral. Si el educador, tiene su atención puesta en el valor social posible de estos elementos, su acción será doblemente feliz y fecunda."

only staunch political anti-progressivism but also a slavish adoration of the past that would only hamper national economic progress. Catholicism represented the antithesis of free thinking. Most secular reformers also presumed that Catholicism prevented innovative and scientific thought. Because the resolution of the social question depended on the application of eugenic science, Catholics were considered unable to engage in this project.

An example of this anti-Catholic sentiment appeared in a 1916 article in *El Mercurio* entitled, “Democracia y cristianismo.” Senator Luis Malaquías Concha Ortiz was quoted saying, “Christian charity funds patrons in order to enslave men and the Democratic Party [in order] to free them.”¹⁰⁹ Concha Ortiz believed that Christian charitable organizations were designed to bind individuals to the antiquated institution of the Catholic Church that preferred to live in the past. His words left very little room for interpretation. Even though the author who quoted him wrote this article to demonstrate that there was no contradiction between Christianity and democracy by illustrating how men like Concha Ortiz were incorrect, the latter’s statement illustrated the type of hostility Catholics faced when engaging in debates about the social question.

Concha Ortiz’s opinion of the Church was especially negative, but he was not alone. Many Chilean secular intellectuals believed that Catholic charity had served its purpose and was no longer relevant to addressing modern social ills. In another article by Cordemans, “De la caridad al servicio social,” she wrote, “Assistance has evolved from *Charity*, which is an immediate donation, without worrying about tomorrow, calming the call of hunger, cold, pain, *Philanthropy* which has an organization and a defined

¹⁰⁹ “Democracia y cristianismo,” *El Mercurio*, no. 6509 (December 24, 1916): 3. 3. “...la beneficencia cristiana funda patronatos para esclavizar a los hombres y el Partido Demócrata para libertarlos.”

purpose... and, finally, *Social Assistance* whose purpose is the most perfect adaptation possible of the individual to his environment.”¹¹⁰ This was a fairly common position among social service professionals. They recognized that their work shared many similar characteristics with charity, but stipulated that it was informed by scientific methods.¹¹¹ As Cordemans argued, social work did not simply relieve an existing problem but anticipated and attempted to solve that problem. She believed that social work when properly applied would eradicate social problems, something charity could never do.

Cordemans repeatedly pointed out that social work was a scientific practice, further distinguishing it from Catholic charity. “The system that demands this assistance is *Social Service*, a true science that encapsulates the rubrics of social diagnosis, those of treatment based on preventative and curative measures, with the exception of procedures that are simply palliative.”¹¹² This was important because it garnered much more respect for the burgeoning field of social work while, at the same time, depicting Catholic efforts to resolve the social question as simple charity. Cordemans clearly believed that charity did have its place, but that modern social problems called for modern tools. Like other secular intellectuals of the era, she did not believe that anything Catholic could provide modern solutions to modern social issues.

¹¹⁰ Leo Cordemans. “De la caridad al servicio social,” *Servicio Social*, no. 1-2 (March-June 1927): 3-7. 7. “La asistencia ha evolucionado de la *Caridad*, que es la dádiva inmediata, sin preocuparse del mañana, calmando el grito del hambre, del frío, del dolor, a la *Filantropía* que supone una organización y un fin definido... y, en fin, a la *Asistencia Social* cuyo fin es la adaptación la más perfecta posible del individuo a su medio.”

¹¹¹ Illanes 2006. María Emma Mannarelli. *Limpias y modernas: Género, higiene y cultura en la Lima del novecientos*. Lima: Ediciones Flora Tristán, 1999.

¹¹² Ibid. “El sistema que reclama esta asistencia es el *Servicio Social*, verdadera ciencia que encierra las reglas del diagnóstico social, las del tratamiento basadas sobre las medidas preventivas o curativas, con exclusión de los procedimientos simplemente paliativos citados más arriba.”

Concha Ortiz and Cordemans both advocated a strict separation of religious and secular efforts to resolve the social question, but this was not the only position among secular reformers. Judge Samuel Gajardo supported a mixture of private and state welfare programs. He argued that these programs could actually complement each other.¹¹³ As a judge in the juvenile court system, Gajardo saw that both emotional and scientific methods had to be brought to bear in order to help young delinquents. It is true that protecting an abandoned child is a problem of love, that requires brotherly sentiments, but it is also essentially a political problem.”¹¹⁴ Gajardo went on to suggest that a variety of institutions be used to try and curb juvenile delinquency. He represented a middle ground position for secular intellectuals. He recognized a space for private charity in the resolution of the social question, even as he recommended that the state be primarily responsible for the administration of social reform programs.

Catholic Conceptualizations of Social Reform

Catholic Action

While most secular reformers repeatedly argued against any sort of Catholic involvement in resolving the social question, Catholics responded to this with equal fervor. An example of this was the development of Acción Católica throughout Latin America in response to the *Rerum Novarum*. This social movement within the Catholic Church proved to be a variegated response to the social question, but still provided a framework within which Catholic reformers could work. As a result, many different social programs fell under the umbrella of Catholic Action. Another way Catholics and

¹¹³ Samuel Gajardo. “Caridad y asistencia social,” *El Mercurio*, no. 17,782 (July 27, 1933): 3. 3.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. “Cierto es que la protección al niño abandonado es un problema de amor, que requiere sentimientos fraternales, pero es también un problema esencialmente político...”

social conservatives responded to the social question was the creation of the Falange Nacional. Founded in 1935 as a political coalition of various conservative parties, this group wanted to respond to the increasingly Socialist developments in Chile's political culture. One of the most important parties in this group was the Christian Democrats.¹¹⁵ It was their political platform that most closely aligned with Catholic social reformers positions regarding the social question. The following documents explore the various opinions about how Chilean Catholics should engage in social reform.

A short booklet summarizing the final decisions made regarding social work at the Congreso Social Católico which took place in September 1910 stated, "The Catholic Social Congress convinced of the absolute necessity of a solid instruction in Christian social science, as an indispensable condition of being able to exercise Christian social action with good results demands of all Catholics that wish to take a part in this action (especially the leading element) to procure with all possible means this knowledge."¹¹⁶

This group of Catholics thought that creating their own field of social work was critical to actively engaging with social reform. Not only that, but they advocated for the most powerful Chilean Catholics to be mindful of these efforts which shows that the entire Catholic community in Chile was needed to effectively combat social problems.

This booklet then explained that all social work programming organized by the Church needed to be well planned. "The works must be based on a firm foundation, legal

¹¹⁵ José Díaz Nieva. *Chile: de la Falange Nacional a la Democracia Cristiana*. Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2000. Roseblatt 2000. Winn 1986.

¹¹⁶ *Conclusiones aprobadas por la Sección "Obras Sociales" del Congreso Social Católico*. Santiago: Imprenta "La Ilustración," 1912. 12. "El Congreso Social Católico convencido de la absoluta necesidad de una sólida instrucción en la ciencia social cristiana, como condición indispensable de poder ejercer con provecho la acción social cristiana exhorta a todos los católicos que deseen tomar parte en esta acción (especialmente al elemento dirigente) a procurarse con todos los medios posibles este conocimiento."

and economic... So that first and foremost the people see that the best friends of even their material well being, are Catholics.”¹¹⁷ Showing the people that Catholics were the best at anticipating, and resolving, their social needs made sense in the context of the attacks Catholic reformers suffered at the hands of secular detractors. Catholic reformers believed that the working classes were slowly turning against them because they thought Catholicism supported the upper classes and because it was oriented toward spiritual, rather than material, gains. To combat this, the booklet called for the creation of youth centers to teach civic and moral obligations along with promoting literary explorations. It also called for scientific centers to be opened to promote science among Catholics.¹¹⁸

Another tactic Catholics used to demonstrate that they were integral to the resolution of the social question was by exploring the relationship between charity and social work. In Luisa Jorrisen’s 1931 article, “El concepto de caridad en la Asistencia Social,” she argued that, “Before all, that which we have to make clear is that there is *no charity that exists that does not have a religious background.*”¹¹⁹ Jorrisen was the director of the Escuela de Servicio Social «Elvira Matta de Cruchaga», the school of social work housed at the Universidad Católica. As such, it was not surprising that she supported Catholic charity as a part of social work. By positing that there was no social work that did not have, at its core, a religious motivation struck squarely at naysayers who argued that Catholics had no business in matters of social reform. To further prove this

¹¹⁷ Ibid 18. “Las obras deben ser fundadas sobre base firme, legal y económica....Que principalmente el pueblo vea que los mejores amigos de su bienestar aún material, son los católicos.”

¹¹⁸ Ibid 22.

¹¹⁹ Luisa Jorrisen. “El concepto de caridad en la Asistencia Social,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 699 (April 11, 1931): 321-327. 322. “Ante todo, lo que hemos de dejar en claro es *que no existe caridad que no tenga un fondo religioso.*”

connection, Jorrissen pointed out that in Chilean hospitals, orphanages and other welfare institutions there was almost always a mix of government and religious personnel. She even argued that, “Even though [religious] personnel are allowed to realize their charitable ideals, generally these institutions, as they are, are not linked to that ideal.”¹²⁰ This is an intriguing point to make. While highlighting the complementary nature of secular and religious social programming, she noted that religious personnel in secular institutions did not press their religious opinions on those seeking the service. This suggests that there were at least some Catholic reformers who were not interested in proselytizing while dealing with social problems.

Chilean Catholics continued to believe that a religious renewal would spark a social renewal through the 1940s. As late as 1949, Eduardo Leon Bourgeois wrote that without morality all efforts at social action would fail.¹²¹ What had changed since the turn of the century, however, was a more marked anti-Socialist and anti-Communist position on the part of Catholics. Bourgeois argued that encouraging the working classes to focus on religious life would show them their individual worth and produce real social change, unlike socialism.¹²² He wrote that a return to Christian principles would, “reintegrate the

¹²⁰ Ibid 326. “A pesar de que a este personal [religioso] se le permite realizar su ideal de caridad, generalmente esas instituciones, como tales, no están vinculadas a dicho ideal.”

¹²¹ Eduardo Leon Bourgeois. “La acción social cristiana a la luz de la teología,” *Estudios*, no. 191 (January 1949): 38-56. 38-39.

¹²² Ibid 47-48. For relationship between Catholicism and Socialism see: Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway (eds). *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918-1965*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Hugh McLeod. *Piety and Poverty: Working-class Religion in Berlin, London, and New York, 1870-1914*. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1996. Adam Michnik. *The Church and the Left*, David Ost (trans and ed). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. George Weigel. *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and The Collapse of Communism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. The emphasis on Europe in these books is not coincidental. There are very few attempts to understand the relationship between Catholicism and Socialism in Latin America. Nonetheless, a noble attempt is: José Aldunate Lyon, et al. *Crónicas de una Iglesia Liberadora*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2000.

masses with Christ, which is a much more profound thing than the solution to the social question, because it supposes a growth in faith, and a moral purification and an end of the total prostration of the people.”¹²³

Education and Secularism

Just as secular intellectuals argued that education was a vital component to resolving the social question, so too did their Catholic contemporaries. Both groups agreed that education was the most important component of forming fit and healthy citizens. However, the Catholic approach to education also included another element. Most of the literature about educational improvements in the name of national progress addressed the increasing governmental attempts to secularize education. Chilean Catholics strongly disagreed that the state needed to control education in order to ensure its quality. They argued that parents had the right to educate their children as they saw fit, either in a public or private educational institution. The state could not compel parents to send their children to secular schools. This was not only out of a desire to protect the Catholic legacy of education in Chile but also because Chilean Catholic intellectuals believed that Catholic education provided a better set of tools to deal with social problems.

In 1901, Martin S. Rucker wrote an article entitled, “Estudios Sociales: La Juventud Católica,” for *La Revista Católica*. In this article, Rucker argued that secular institutions favored a specific type of education. “If the work of intellectual and moral formation were to be reduced to creating only good family men, without taking into

¹²³ Bourgeois 54. “...del reintegro de las masas a Cristo, que es cosa mucho más profunda que la solución de la cuestión social, porque supone robustecimiento en la fe, y depuración moral y salir al pueblo de la postración total.”

consideration Christian public life, without working to prepare useful citizens, that later in social and political circles they would exert strong and healthy influence, the Church would have little to complain against impiety.”¹²⁴ In other words, Rucker felt that secular institutions did not really foster proper behavior among young Chileans. If secular instruction could make responsible individuals who recognized their social obligations, the Church would have no complaints. But Rucker’s statement also illuminates that forming public individuals was a part of the larger Catholic mandate. As a result of the popularity of Catholic Action and the *Rerum Novarum*, a practicing Catholic was no longer someone who only attended mass. Rather, one must become part of the larger network of Catholics engaging in the public sphere.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Chilean secular efforts to establish a Ley de Instrucción Primaria Obligatoria had begun to coalesce, effectively ousting Catholic education in favor of state education. Though the actual legislation was not successful until 1920, Catholic educators and reformers in Chile saw these efforts as direct attacks on one of their primary social functions. In a 1902 article, Catholic writer L.R.L. argued that the state wanted to prohibit religious education, but did not have the necessary resources to replace the schools that would be lost.¹²⁵ This was clearly a misguided choice, according to L.R.L. If education was so important, what would be accomplished by closing schools?

¹²⁴ Martin S. Rucker. “Estudios Sociales: La Juventud Católica,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 3, (September 1, 1901): 127-131. 127. “Si el trabajo de la formación intelectual y moral se redujera a formar hombres buenos sólo para el hogar de la familia, sin que se tomara en cuenta para nada la vida pública cristiana, sin que se trabajara por preparar ciudadanos útiles, que después en los círculos sociales y políticos ejercieron benéfica y saludable influencia, poco tendría la Iglesia que pelear con la impiedad.”

¹²⁵ L.R.L. “Cuestiones de actualidad: á propósito de la ley sobre instrucción: primaria obligatoria,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 25, (August 2, 1902): 9-17. 10.

L.R.L. also pointed out that this legislation was anti-religious and circumscribed the rights of parents. “Finally, if the law of obligatory instruction is anti-religious in its tendencies and inopportune for current circumstances in the country, it is also contrary to the sacred right that fathers have to give their children the education that most conforms to their beliefs.”¹²⁶ Parents had the right to control the type of education that their children received. The state could mandate that all children attend school, but L.R.L. argued that it could not legislate what type of education all children received. Instead, he/she argued that the state should address the economic conditions that caused children to work rather than attend school.¹²⁷

“Education and the instruction of the people are the most important factors in progress and civilization.”¹²⁸ Written in 1903, this statement exemplified what both Catholic and secular reformers believed education could accomplish. This statement represented a somewhat unusual combination of both secular and religious feeling. The article, “Los Maestros,” appeared in *El Diario Popular (EDP)*, a newspaper aimed at the working class which also professed to serve the spiritual needs of that community. As such, *EDP* was a hybrid of the discursive tropes being used by both camps. It therefore supported the idea that education was the key to national progress. However, it also argued that, “And this religious education is today even more necessary when we think of

¹²⁶ Ibid 11. “Finalmente, si la ley de instrucción obligatoria es antirreligiosa en sus tendencias é inoportuna por las circunstancias actuales del país, es también atentatoria del sagrado derecho que tienen los padres de familias de dar á sus hijos la educación que sea más conforme á sus creencias.”

¹²⁷ Ibid 14.

¹²⁸ Ego Sum. “Los maestros,” *El Diario Popular*, no. 114 (January 19, 1903): 1. 1. “La educación y la instrucción de un pueblo son los factores más importantes de su progreso y de su civilización.”

the largest social revolution we have seen in centuries.”¹²⁹ Clearly, religious instruction was important to the author, Ego Sum or “I Am.” However, he/she argued that this religious instruction was important in light of the social revolution resulting from modern life and capitalist economic expansion. Unlike other Catholic thinkers, Ego Sum did not necessarily seem to think this revolution was all bad. Not to say that he/she supported communism or socialism, but rather, saw that the change in society was much more than class warfare. In fact, these same social changes required a return to Christian teachings.

Ego Sum did agree that the main purpose of education was to instruct young Chileans in how to live up to their social responsibilities. “I have here, then, the great mission of those who teach children. They must be inculcated to see that their future depends on them, and they can achieve, without great difficulties, comfort and wealth by means of saving and good habits.”¹³⁰ Smart and healthy living was the key to a productive life. Teachers should spend their time giving their students the necessary tools to accomplish this goal. Notably, this conceptualization of education spoke to the growing emphasis on economic disparity between the classes. For Ego Sum, religious education was valuable because moral health encouraged not only physical health but also fiscal responsibility. He saw this type of moral education as capable of truly transforming social and economic relationships in Chile, an opinion his secular counterparts shared.

¹²⁹ Ibid. “Y esta educación religiosa es hoy día tanto más necesaria cuanto que presenciamos la revolución social más grande que han visto los siglos.”

¹³⁰ Ibid. “He ahí, pues, la gran misión de los que enseñan á los niños. Deben inculcarles que su porvenir depende de ellos mismos, y que pueden conquistar, sin grandes dificultades, por medio del ahorro y de las buenas costumbres la comodidad y la riqueza misma.”

Social Question

Chilean Catholic intellectuals disagreed that they were incapable of understanding and addressing the social question, but they were very aware that many Chileans agreed with Concha Ortiz and Cordemans. As a result, most of the Catholic literature regarding the social question first explained why a Catholic solution to the social question was needed at all. In most cases, Catholic intellectuals argued that they were better able to resolve the social question because their methods were more complete. Catholic solutions did not focus solely on economic issues, but rather sought to understand the profundity of the various social ills affecting Chile. They also argued that the Catholic Church represented the longest-standing charitable institution in the country. It had experience dealing with social problems that newer social welfare organizations did not have. Finally, Catholics identified themselves as the most prepared to resolve the social question because their religious beliefs best fit with the self-sacrifice advocated by social reformers of the period. They pointed out that they were the traditional guardians of the exact moral attitudes championed by secular reformers.

A very early example of this position appeared in a 1901 edition of *La Revista Católica*. The author, “N.N.,” argued that the social question was more than an economic issue.¹³¹ N.N. argued that attempting to push Catholics out of debates regarding the social question was detrimental to Chile’s progress. Instead, he/she actively encouraged Chilean Catholics to take part in the social question by stating, “There is no one who does not see how far from this pernicious falsehood Catholics are and must consider and make this

¹³¹ N.N. “Estudios Sociales: Indicaciones prácticas para la acción social de la juventud Católica,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 7 (November 1, 1901): 316-317. 316.

issue be considered primarily as a moral one.”¹³² Much like Mulle or Mayers, N.N. commuted the social question into a question of morals. By framing the social question as a moral issue, as had many secular reformers, Catholics were able to integrate themselves in dialogues about how to improve the country.

Chilean Catholic efforts to take part in the social modernization project were not the result of self-interest and self-preservation alone. While it is tempting to explain Catholic involvement in these issues as a last-ditch effort to maintain whatever remaining social cache they had, Catholic intellectuals of the period discredited this belief. Ricardo Cox Méndez, writing in *El Mercurio* in 1909, argued that changes in Catholicism at the turn of the century were not the result of self-preservation but rather Chilean Catholic interest in the social question grew out of the fact that the Church was a dynamic and vibrant social institution.¹³³ “But the Church lives in the world and lives in history, that is, lives between the waves of human generation and the vicissitudes of events: and in the midst of this perpetually agitated sea, as all boats on the move, it inclines to one side, and then the other; more, with the prow always pointed to the far horizon, where the sun of eternal justice shines.”¹³⁴ Cox Méndez felt that Catholic involvement in the social question was actually the result of a social demand for that involvement. The Church was born of the people that it served and they implored that the social question be resolved.

¹³² Ibid. “No hay quien no vea cuán lejos deben estar los católicos de esta perniciosa falsedad y han de considerar y hacer que esta cuestión sea considerada *principalmente* como una cuestión moral.”

¹³³ Ricardo Cox Méndez. “Orientaciones contemporáneas del catolicismo,” *El Mercurio*, no. 4323 (September 17, 1909): 5. 5.

¹³⁴ Ibid. “Pero la Iglesia vive en el mundo y vive en la historia, es decir, vive entre el oleaje de la jeneracion humana y de las vicisitudes de los acontecimientos: y en medio de este mar perpetuamente ajitado, como toda nave en marcha, ya se inclina de un lado, ya del otro; mas, con la proa enderezada siempre hacia el horizonte lejano, donde brilla el sol de la eterna justicia.”

Therefore, Catholic interest in the social question was not the result of self-serving preservation but grew from an authentic desire to serve and help the people the Church was obligated to protect.

Catholic intellectuals did not believe that the social question was the result of economics alone. For most Chilean Catholic intellectuals, the causes of social degeneration were individual laziness, inclination toward luxury, and general lack of faith. These behaviors had to be stamped out of children from a young age by their parents. “There is no doubt that for parents it is much easier and more comfortable to let children do what they please, and this motive is why in our times, in which reigns well being, and with it egotism, there is so much indulgence and so much laziness in the vigilance and subjection of the family.”¹³⁵ For this writer, modern parents had become lazy and disinterested in properly disciplining their children. Catholic reformers held both men and women responsible. Children needed to be taught obedience and to control their passions. After all, it was control that was needed to improve society; control when choosing a fit marriage partner, finding an appropriate job, and managing the cleanliness of his or her person and home. Only Catholic instruction could teach the self-sacrifice that such control necessitated for the social question to be resolved.

This parallels secular thought of the period. For both groups, the family was the epicenter of social turmoil. If the family could be regulated and monitored, then Chilean society as a whole would improve. As Carlos Solís de Ovando B. wrote in his book, *La iglesia y el obrero*, “The corruption of the family would bring as a consequence the

¹³⁵ “La liga y la educación de los niños,” *El Eco de la Liga de Damas Chilenas*, no. 5 (November 1, 1912). “No hay duda que para los padres es mucho más fácil y más cómodo el dejar que los niños hagan lo que quieran, y es ese uno de los motivos porque en nuestros tiempos, en que reina el bienestar, y con él el egoísmo, hay tanta indulgencia y tanta flojedad en la vigilancia y la sujeción de la familia.”

corruption of society and that which derives from the first could not survive.”¹³⁶ The family was the foundation of Chilean society. All the interested parties in the debate regarding the social question agreed. What they disagreed about was to what degree any institution, state or private, should intervene into family life.

The possibility of intervention was complicated by the fact that many Catholics believed that the first step toward resolving the social question was a return to traditional religious practices, something secular intellectuals roundly disavowed. In the 1915 monograph, *¿Cuál es nuestra situación?*, the writer pointed out that men and young people had started coming to mass less and less regularly.¹³⁷ While women were also mentioned in this statement, the loss of men was more troubling. Without adult men demonstrating the proper amount of religious dedication, young men and women had no example to follow. The Church and its religious practices would then become socially irrelevant because the most powerful members of society were no longer actively participating.

This writer then suggested that the way to garner more social prominence was to turn to the women who still attended regular services. Women could serve as a valuable resource to the Church in its time of need. “Thanks be to God, the great majority [of women] still remain true to the Church and their faith. And the woman is the mother, the wife, the daughter, the home, she is selflessness and virtue, she is the heart that knows

¹³⁶ Carlos Solís de Ovando B. *La iglesia y el obrero: Conferencia a los socios de San José de Buin en 25 de Agosto de 1912*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta y Encuadernación Lourdes, 1912. 22. “La corrupción de la familia traería por consecuencia la de la sociedad y ésta que se deriva de aquélla tampoco podría subsistir.”

¹³⁷ *¿Cuál es nuestra situación? ¿Qué hemos de hacer? A la obra!* Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Chile, 1915. 6-7.

how to love.”¹³⁸ Like other writers, this anonymous author placed women at the center of the home and family. They shaped the foundational unit of Chilean society, the family. Therefore, women had a vital role to play in Chilean social renewal. In fact, this writer believed that the Church had not fully utilized women’s power to its advantage. He/she wrote, “It is a force that has remained practically inactive or very little taken advantage of, for God’s cause. And the times demand the cooperation of all.”¹³⁹ Of course this position assumed and accepted the notion that women had a special relationship with the Church, a notion that secular intellectuals were quick to use against Catholic and female reformers.

While many Catholic intellectuals pointed to moral causes of the social question, many also agreed with secular reformers that the solution needed to be scientific. M. Rucker S., the same Martin Rucker S from previous discussion and also the Rector of the Universidad Católica, approached the social question in much the same way as his secular counterparts did, even though his article appeared in *La Revista Católica* and was designed for a Catholic audience. He argued that, “The Encyclical ‘*Rerum Novarum*’ provoked an enormous scientific movement. The largest social issues were studied with determination; the principles were set in a precise way and the notable document commentators immediately enlightened the mind in order to penetrate the teachings

¹³⁸ Ibid 15. “Gracias a Dios, su gran mayoría se conserva todavía fiel a la Iglesia y a su fe. Y la mujer es la madre, es la esposa, es la hija, es el hogar, es la abnegación y la virtud, es el corazón que sabe amar...”

¹³⁹ Ibid. “Es una fuerza que ha permanecido casi inactiva o muy poco aprovechada, para la causa de Dios. Y los tiempos exigen el concurso de todos.”

emanating from the Papal See.”¹⁴⁰ Rucker S. combined common secular discursive tropes with that of Catholic ones. He believed that scientific solutions to the social question were the most effective. Therefore, he argued that the *Rerum Novarum*’s call for social justice inspired the scientific study of poverty and social degeneration. This was not simply applying hindsight to historical events. For many Catholics, the *Rerum Novarum* did create a new, socially conscious era of Catholicism.

Rucker S.’s suggested solutions to various social problems were no different from secular reformers at the time. He advocated for a minimum wage, arguing, “Touching on the theory of minimum wage that consists of what a sober worker and his wife, with three or four children and with the possibility to be able to have a small savings for the future of the family, one could bring before our consideration the testimony of eminent sociologists, profound theologians and illustrious Princes of the Church.”¹⁴¹ Here, he used the expertise of sociologists, theologians and clergy members to support his point. While the latter two categories might not be terribly convincing to secular Chileans, sociologists often claimed purely scientific methodology and training. Rucker S. recognized that this was equally as important as religious training when dealing with social problems.

A longer treatise on the subject of the social question was Bernardo Gentilini’s 1919 monograph, *Nuevas orientaciones sociales*. Gentilini was a prolific writer and

¹⁴⁰ M. Rucker S. “Orientaciones de acción social con motivo del XXV aniversario de la encíclica *Rerum Novarum*,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 371 (January 20, 1917): 93-108. 95. “La Encíclica ‘*Rerum Novarum*’ provocó un enorme movimiento científico. Las grandes cuestiones sociales se estudiaron con empeño; se fijaron los principios de un modo preciso y los comentadores del notable documento dieron luz inmensa a la mente para penetrar en las enseñanzas emanadas de la cátedra pontificia.”

¹⁴¹ *Ibid* 97. “Tocante a la teoría del salario mínimo que consiste en lo que necesita un obrero sobrio con su esposa, con tres o cuatro hijos y con la posibilidad de poder hacer algún pequeño ahorro para el porvenir de la familia, podría traer ante nuestra consideración el testimonio de eminentes sociólogos, de profundos teólogos y de ilustres Príncipes de la Iglesia...”

Catholic public intellectual, actively working between 1910 and 1940. The amount of his publications and their inclusion in a wide variety of mediums, speaks to his importance as a central voice among Chilean Catholic social reformers. Gentilini agreed with the previous writers that the social question was the result of non-Christian living.¹⁴² However, unlike some of the more conservative elements in the Catholic camp, he argued that the social problems affecting Chile were the result of a complex interaction between a variety of forces. “The social question is the acute crisis, of a religious-moral character, political and especially economic, because the whole world experiences it, and in particular the proletariat.”¹⁴³ Much like his contemporaries, both Catholic and secular, he recognized that the biggest contributor to social problems was the explosion of an exploited working class. He also linked this to a global phenomenon of capitalist development. This belied the argument secular intellectuals made that Catholics buried their heads in the sand and did not see social problems as they were. Gentilini was clearly aware of global trends and local issues affecting Chilean society that were unrelated to religion per se.

That being said, Gentilini still argued that Catholicism was the only road to social renewal for Chile. “Only religious morality possesses the principles of individual and social reform that we have been discussing...In other words, there must be *imperatives*,

¹⁴² Bernardo Gentilini. *Nuevas orientaciones sociales*. Santiago de Chile: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1919. 12.

¹⁴³ Ibid 13. “La cuestión social es la crisis aguda, de carácter religioso-moral, político y especialmente económico, por que atraviesa el mundo, y en particular el proletariado.”

taxes for the conscience that recognizes the sanction of a superior justice.”¹⁴⁴ Because the primary problem was worker exploitation, Gentilini argued that a higher power was necessary to combat human greed. While he did not disagree with human measures to address this problem, such as government legislation, he believed that the most effective tool for combating social ills was a return to religious living through personal reflection. The reason was simple, “The simple imperatives of reason, of human solidarity, of science and all those imperatives that form the base of *lay morality*, are not able to have dominion over an atheist or materialist conscience that does not recognize either divine law nor sanction.”¹⁴⁵ Encouraging people to follow divine law would ultimately solve and prevent all social problems. If this seems hopelessly naïve, secular reformers believed that education had the same transformative power.

Another example of religious writer sharing the same opinions as secular reformers appeared in *La Revista Católica* in 1920. In his article, “Deberes de los Católicos en los momentos actuales,” Gilberto Fuenzalida G. argued that to correctly address the social question, it was first necessary to know the causes of social problems.¹⁴⁶ Much like other reformers of the period, he believed that knowing the cause of the social disease was integral to ultimately finding its cure. However, Fuenzalida G. also argued, like Gentilini did, that the root cause of social degeneration was an

¹⁴⁴ Ibid 68. “Sólo la moral religiosa posee los principios de la reforma individual y social de que venimos hablando... En otras palabras, han de ser *imperativos*, impuestos por una conciencia que reconoce la sanción de una justicia superior.”

¹⁴⁵ Ibid 69. “Los simples imperativos de la razón, de la solidaridad humana, de la ciencia, y todos esos imperativos que forman la base de la *moral laica*, no pueden tener imperio sobre una conciencia atea o materialista que no reconoce ni la ley ni la sanción divina.”

¹⁴⁶ Gilberto Fuenzalida G. “CRÓNICA NACIONAL-Deberes de los Católicos en los momentos actuales,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 462 (November 6, 1920): 688-709. 691.

increasing distance from God and religious practice on the part of Chileans.¹⁴⁷ This provided the Church with the key to true resolution of all the social problems afflicting Chilean society. Returning to Catholicism was a more assured way of dealing with social ills than science or social work could ever be. “We have an immensely more secure teaching than that of sociologists and philosophers, [we have] that of our sacred Mother Catholic Church, which, illuminated with the light of heaven, guides us through the social question, just as it does for all the other moral questions, to the only possible solution.”¹⁴⁸

Fuenzalida G. then outlined how Chilean society had moved away from Catholic teachings. He first pointed out that civil marriage had caused, “the relaxation of familial ties, the corruption of the home, the illegitimacy of children, the abandonment of wives, the moral and physical ruin of the family.”¹⁴⁹ This was one place where Catholics felt privileged to intervene because marriage was a religious sacrament. Some Catholic intellectuals disagreed with civil marriage, believing that it permitted informality in terms of male-female sexual relationships which fostered male irresponsibility to the children of those unions. Some argued that civil marriage required too much paperwork and, as a result, couples chose not to formalize their unions. Others argued that couples needed to be encouraged to have both religious and civil ceremonies because, with the current system, men often ended up with two wives; one from a civil ceremony, one from a religious one. Finally, there were those who agreed with Fuenzalida G. and felt that only

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. “Tenemos un magisterio inmensamente más seguro que el de esos sociólogos y filósofos, el de nuestra santa Madre la Iglesia Católica, que, iluminada con la luz del cielo, nos señala para la cuestión social, así como para todas las demás cuestiones morales, la única solución posible.”

¹⁴⁹ Ibid 692. “...la relajación de los lazos familiares, la corrupción del hogar, la ilegitimidad de los hijos, el abandono de las esposas, la ruina moral y física de la familia.”

a religious ceremony was necessary. Regardless of these opinions, however, Catholic intellectuals felt that marriage was within their purview and a specific site they could manage to resolve the social question.

Though Fuenzalida G. was unhappy about state intervention into marriage, this did not extend to other facets of the social question. He argued that capitalist economic models had not helped the working classes and state regulation and intervention was necessary to correct this imbalance.¹⁵⁰ Fuenzalida G. attributed these economic problems to a loss of religious feeling. “To resolve the social question, that is, to remedy this profound discontent that today society suffers and which carries it quickly to its ruin, requires that men forget their hatreds and begin again to love each other as brothers.”¹⁵¹ As men and women moved away from Catholic teachings, they forgot their obligations to each other. For him, this explained why capitalist businessmen exploited their workers. While the only true solution to this situation was a renewal of Catholic piety, state intervention could be used in the interim. Fuenzalida G. recognized that the current reality meant that government involvement would probably be more effective than advocating a strictly religious solution. This demonstrated a pragmatism that secular opponents chose not to recognize about their Catholic contemporaries.

Finally, this article also explained who was important to the resolution of the social question. Fuenzalida G. wrote, “In this War all are soldiers...Men and women, young and old, rich and poor, priests and parishioners, currently all have a sacred duty to

¹⁵⁰ Ibid 698.

¹⁵¹ Ibid 698-699. “Para resolver la cuestión social, es decir, para remediar este hondo malestar que hoy padece la sociedad y que la lleva precipitadamente a su ruina, se requiere que los hombres olviden sus odios y comiencen de nuevo amarse como hermanos...”

perform.”¹⁵² Because his ultimate solution to the social question was a return to Catholic traditions, it stood to reason that Fuenzalida G. held all members of Chilean society equally accountable. However, he conceptualized this accountability within a patriarchal framework. Men and women were not expected to contribute to the social renewal in the same way. Nor were rich and poor. Instead, each group had their own social place and role to fulfill.

Though most Catholic intellectuals were quick to point out that the social question arose from more than economic conditions, and required more than economic solutions, they still agreed with secular intellectuals that capitalist economic development needed to be controlled. Carlos Labbé M. wrote, “if we do not frankly approach the problem of the differences between capital and labor, the workers will refuse to hear us, the workers will repudiate us, telling us to our faces that we do not care for their well being.”¹⁵³ This was a very important issue for Catholic reformers and intellectuals. With the growing popularity of socialism, communism, and anarchism among the working classes in Chile, religious practice had begun to severely dwindle. The loss of the confidence of the working classes was a common trope in Catholic literature of the time. Many Catholic intellectuals argued that workers had originally trusted in the Church to care for them, but had since lost confidence in the institution.¹⁵⁴ Workers now turned to unions and politics

¹⁵² Ibid 700. “En esta Guerra todos son soldados...Hombres y mujeres, ancianos y niños, ricos y pobres, sacerdotes y fieles, todos tienen actualmente un sagrado deber de cumplir.”

¹⁵³ Carlos Labbé M. “VARIEDADES-CUESTIÓN SOCIAL,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 502 (July 1, 1922): 67-70. 68. “...si no abordamos francamente el problema de las diferencias entre el capital y el trabajo, los obreros se negarán a oírnos, los obreros nos repudiarán, echándonos en cara que no nos interesamos por su bienestar.”

¹⁵⁴ Ibid 69. “No es posible pensar que se ha de resolver la cuestión social sólo con enseñar el catecismo y predicar en las iglesias, puesto que el primer trabajo de los enemigos de la fe y del orden ha sido alejar de las iglesias al obrero e inspirarle repulsión y odio a la sotana y al ministerio.”

as a means of alleviating their suffering. As such, Labbé M. strongly recommended that Catholic reformers take an interest in the plight of the working classes, implicitly critiquing political liberalism much like many progressive Chilean intellectuals.

Labbé M. then recommended that priests take an active role in helping the working classes, with certain limitations. “You must leave the sacristy; but not abandon it.”¹⁵⁵ He believed that priests had to work to improve social conditions in Chile. However, they had to maintain their role as priests. They were not working men themselves. This was a noteworthy bifurcation of the social roles of the parish priest. On the one hand, Labbé M. expected him to make efforts to address social problems resulting from capitalist expansion. On the other, he was not to confuse this struggle with his larger mission of religious instruction. This position demonstrated the variety of conservative thought among Chilean Catholic intellectuals.¹⁵⁶

While some intellectuals puzzled out the role of the priest in resolving the social question, Chilean doctors were also trying to determine their role in the new social order. Alfredo Bowen H.’s 1936 article in *Estudios*, “La Acción Médica en el Problema Social,” sought to understand the relationship between doctors and the social question. Bowen H. argued that the social question was only tangentially related to the practice of medicine. “It is logical that up until a point the Social Question looks at the bodily health of individuals, collectively considered, but it does not demand medical techniques for the

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. “Hay que salir de la sacristía; pero no hay que abandonarla.”

¹⁵⁶ Labbé M.’s opinion can be found in a variety of other texts from the period. One especially good example is Bernardo Gentilini’s 1925 monograph, *La restauración religiosa y social*. He argues that true civilization is inherently Christian and it is the loss of this Christian civility that has caused trouble in Chile. Bernardo Gentilini. *La restauración religiosa y social*. Santiago de Chile: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1925.

integral solution of the Social Question, considered it in all its aspects and causes.”¹⁵⁷

Bowen H. stated that issues such as marriage, abortion, venereal disease and prostitution, though they all related to the practice of medicine, could not be resolved by medical treatments alone.¹⁵⁸ In fact, he argued that it was inappropriate for medical practitioners to get overly involved in social issues.

Bowen H. argued that those doctors who made overly zealous efforts in the name of public health or social hygiene were, at best, misguided. At worst, they were class warriors, “This materialist [Marxist] concept has infiltrated into the younger generations of professional Chileans due to errors in our elementary, secondary and higher education. Thus the vast majority of new doctors consider the problems of ‘man’ as problems of the ‘body.’”¹⁵⁹ He suggested that some Chilean doctors were overstepping their professional boundaries. Rather than focusing their attention on what they had been trained to do, treat the body for its ills, they were being drawn into debates about how human beings should interact with each other and their environment. These were clearly not questions that ought to interest doctors, but rather philosophers and theologians. Since this article appeared in *Estudios*, a Catholic publication, it seems likely that Bowen H. separated medicine from the social question to allow Catholics a place in the latter debate.

¹⁵⁷ Alfredo Bowen H. “La Acción Médica en el Problema Social,” *Estudios*, no. 39 (February 1936): 17-21. 17. “Ello es lógico hasta aquel punto en que la Cuestión Social mira a la salud corporal de los individuos, colectivamente considerados, pero no lo es al exigir tecnicismo medico para la solución integral de la Cuestión Social, considerándola en todos sus aspectos y causas.”

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid* 19.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid* 20. “Este concepto materialista [Marxista] se ha infiltrado en las generaciones jóvenes de profesionales chilenos por errores de nuestra educación fiscal, secundaria y superior. De ahí que la inmensa mayoría de los nuevos médicos considere los problemas del ‘hombre’ como los problemas del ‘cuerpo.’”

By as late as 1938, Chilean Catholic understanding of the causes and solutions of the social question remained the same. In an article written for *Estudios* entitled, “Posición del médico católico ante el problema social,” Roberto Barahona Silva wrote, “The social problem is the modern form of the results of sin and particularly Christian sin.”¹⁶⁰ Similar to the opinions of Labbé M. and Fuenzalida G., Barahona Silva believed that the social problems facing Chile were the result of increasing laxity in terms of religious observance. Unlike Labbé M., however, Barahona Silva encouraged Catholic doctors to move beyond their strictly professional training to resolve the social question. “Technically, a Catholic doctor is just a doctor. His Catholic specification modifies his extraprofessional network and, in this sense, he is purely and simply a Catholic.”¹⁶¹ They had a special duty, as both Catholics and doctors to resolve these social issues.

Another important development in this debate was that Catholics began to employ the term “social justice” to discuss the social question, a trend that began in the late 1930s. Alejandro Hunneus C. argued that authentic social order could only come from social justice.¹⁶² “Many aspects of the current economic and social organization do not respond to the true concept of Christian social order: the current distribution of riches allows grave injustices to fester; present civilization can only defend itself with that

¹⁶⁰ Roberto Barahona Silva. “Posición del médico católico ante el problema social,” *Estudios*, no. 68 (July 1938): 10-17. 10. “El problema social es la forma moderna de los resultados del pecado y particularmente del pecado de los propios cristianos.”

¹⁶¹ Ibid 15. “Técnicamente, un médico católico es sólo un médico. Su especificación de católico modifica el radio extraprofesional de su persona y, en este sentido, es pura y simplemente un católico.”

¹⁶² Alejandro Hunneus C. “CRÓNICA NACIONAL-Alocucion sobre ‘La iglesia y la cuestión social,’” *La Revista Católica*, no. 858 (June 1939): 385-390. 385.

which is just and true in it. The rest demands reorganization.”¹⁶³ Like his predecessors, Hunneus C. believed that loss of faith was the primary cause of social degeneration. However, he discussed this loss of faith in a new way. This was not about encouraging both workers and employers to attend mass more regularly. Rather, Hunneus C. felt that Chilean society had to fundamentally change to become more just. Using the language of social justice even allowed for non-Catholics living in Chile to actively agitate for their freedom from exploitation in the workplace.

Hunneus C. was also adamant in his defense of the Church against those who argued that it was one of the contributors to this exploitation. “Those who see in the Church a protector of the abuses of the present age, which it has been the first to condemn, gravely err. And those that try to consider it only a force for conservation, under whose shadow injustices can prosper, also equally err. To both the Church repeats that it only accepts and seeks out sincere, complete and full social justice.”¹⁶⁴ Clearly, Catholic reformers were still confronting secular contemporaries that saw their efforts to resolve the question as little more than thinly veiled attempts to hold onto whatever remaining social capital they had. Hunneus C. wanted to show that this was not the case. For him, the Catholic Church was a source of social change, not stagnation. In this moment, it is possible to see the stirrings of a more liberal Catholic consciousness in Chile that would come to fruition decades later.

¹⁶³ Ibid 387. “Muchos aspectos de la actual organización económica y social no responden al verdadero concepto del orden social cristiano: la actual distribución de las riquezas adolece de graves injusticias; sólo puede defenderse, de la civilización presente, lo que en ella existe de justo y verdadero. Lo demás exige reorganización.”

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. “Y erran, pues, gravemente los que quieren ver en la Iglesia un amparo a los abusos de la época presente, que ella ha sido la primera en condenar. Y erran, igualmente, los que pretenden considerarla solo una fuerza de conservación, a cuya sombra puedan prosperar las injusticias. A ambos la Iglesia repite que sólo acepta y busca una sincera, íntegra y plena justicia social.”

What did Hunneus C. mean exactly when he talked about social justice? He argued that, “its doctrine [Christian justice] takes as its base the eminent dignity of the human person, that materialist economy tries to forget.”¹⁶⁵ This definition of social justice, or Christian justice, was particularly telling when considered in conjunction with the increasing influence of eugenics in public health and hygiene programs. By articulating that social justice protected the dignity of the human person, this implicitly protected the integrity of the human body, soul and psyche as well. Therefore any sort of government intervention into the individual’s private life or body, spaces traditionally controlled by the Church, was not permissible. This argument specifically objected to the increasingly use of sterilization and negative eugenics as a means of addressing social problems.

The previous article demonstrated a new phase in the development of Chilean Catholic thought regarding social welfare and the problems facing Chile. While the earlier articles illustrated that Catholics believed that a lack of faith was the cause for social ills, later intellectuals began to take a more nuanced approach. These later authors discussed social injustice, rather than sin per se, as the cause of social problems. What this shows is that Chilean Catholic intellectuals were engaged in the larger social debates of their age and incorporated the methodology, terms and concerns of the secular social welfare system into their own work. This approach to the social question anticipated the direction of Catholic thought for the remainder of the first half of the twentieth century and beyond. As late as 1948, Eduardo Leon B. wrote in *Estudios*, “It is a well known thing that social discontent, fruit of injustice, comes from sin, and at its root, from

¹⁶⁵ Ibid 388. “...su doctrina [justicia cristiana] toma como base la eminente dignidad de la persona humana, que la economía materialista pretende olvidar.”

original sin.”¹⁶⁶ While their secular contemporaries preferred to mock or overlook their genuine attempts to address social problems, the fact remains that Catholics would continue to be actively engaged in these debates.

The Chilean social question comprised a variety of issues and social problems, but both Catholic and secular intellectuals approached them in similar ways. Therefore, Catholic reform efforts should not be overlooked when examining the history of Chile’s social welfare programming. These documents also illustrate that both groups shared similar views about how society should be ordered in modern times. This vision was based on a notion of progress being economic production capacity that called for productive (male) workers who remained in good health for their entire working lives. To achieve this, both groups argued that women had to play the roles of wife and mother in a new, more hygienic way. While this gave women in Chile more agency and political power than they had had previously, it still privileged their socially reproductive roles over any other. Finally, these reformers believed in the transformative power of science and education as the means to resolving the social question. For Catholics, this belief required a formal discourse that addressed the relationship between Catholicism and science.

¹⁶⁶ Eduardo Leon B. “Catolicismo y evolucion social,” *Estudios*, no. 189 (October-November 1948): 41-57. 41. “Es cosa muy sabida que el malestar social, fruto de injusticia, viene del pecado, y en su raíz, del pecado original...”

Chapter Two

“Las Dos Verdades” Catholic Characterizations of the Relationship between Religion & Science

NO EJERCE DEPRESIÓN SOBRE EL CORAZÓN

Tabletas de Antikamnia

OPUESTA AL DOLOR

30 Centigramos cada una
UN SOLO TAMAÑO

ANALGÉSICO, ANTIPIRÉTICO, ANODINO

Facsimile

Distinguiéndose de otros productos del Alquitrán de Carbón, ejerce una acción estimulante sobre los centros nerviosos y las funciones vitales, y con especialidad sobre el centro cardíaco.

Ha sido clínicamente ensayada y ha resultado superior á cualquiera de las muchas preparaciones analgésicas y antipiréticas que hoy se emplean con tanto éxito en el tratamiento de Neuralgia y Myalgia, Influenza, Ciática, Reumatismo, Hemicránea, en todas las Fiebres; también en Dolores Neuríticos, Dolores Ováricos, etc.

En la seguridad y celeridad de su acción se le ha encontrado superior á cualquiera de sus antecesores en

este género de medicina.

Los excelentes resultados que ha dado como aliviador de las afecciones neurálgicas y reumáticas, y como sedativa, anodina, antipirética ó febrífuga nos hacen fijar la atención del público sobre las virtudes de las "Tabletas de Antikamnia."

La dosis para los adultos es una ó dos "Tabletas de Antikamnia" cada tres ó cuatro horas, acompañadas de un trago de agua ó vino. Proporcionalmente para los niños. La dosis, la frecuencia y la administración deben ser siempre determinadas por el Médico.

Toda Tableta Genuina Tiene el Monograma AK

Figure 3: “Tabletas de Antikamnia,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 1 (January 1915). This advertisement explains what symptoms Antikamnia tablets could relieve and how to ensure that you had purchased legitimate pills. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

The advertisement above (see Figure 3), which appeared regularly in the *Revista Médica de Chile* during 1915, exemplifies the complex relationship between religion and science in Chile between 1900 and 1950. The distributors of Tabletas de Antikamnia

were trading on the cultural esteem of nuns to present their product as reliable and effective. The nun, an attractive woman looking off into the distance, symbolized the consumer verifying that she had bought the authentic product. “All genuine tables have the monogram AK,” the ad states.¹⁶⁷ The nun’s piety implies that the pills’ efficacy is reliable. Using an image of a nun to sell American-made analgesics in Chile elucidates how a variety of historical actors conflated Catholicism and science. Chilean Catholic social reformers used this ambiguity to their advantage to engage with debates regarding the social question.

The social question galvanized social reformers internationally and, in many historical contexts, paved the way for the modern welfare state.¹⁶⁸ In Chile, Catholics were engaged in local debates about eugenic science precisely because they perceived it was linked to the potential resolution of the social question. They felt obliged to combat these social ills, because their religiosity rendered them uniquely prepared for this challenge. The Chilean Catholic intellectuals discussed in this chapter did not believe that their religious identity precluded them from original scientific exploration and understanding. Nonetheless, there were a variety of opinions regarding how Catholicism was designed to work with science. Some of these intellectuals believed that science and religion rarely interacted. Many others believed that science and Catholicism worked

¹⁶⁷ “Tabletas de Antikamnia,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 1 (January 1915).

¹⁶⁸ Katherine Bliss. *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001. Sueann Caulfield. *In Defense of Honor: Sexual Morality, Modernity, and Nation in Early-Twentieth-Century Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. Donna Guy. *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991. Karin Alejandra Roseblatt. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures & the State in Chile, 1920-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. Mary Kay Vaughan. “Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940,” in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, Elizabeth Dore & Maxine Molyneux (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

together to allow human beings to make the best practical use of the natural world and resources that surrounded them.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the social question became important in the historical context of rapidly expanding capitalist industrialization and was specifically used by political progressives to diminish the social influence of the Catholic Church. This chapter explains how this situation gave rise to the development of a Chilean Catholic scientific discourse that posited a symbiotic relationship between religion and science by focusing on gender and eugenics as a means of improving social conditions. The Catholic acceptance of eugenics also illuminates how scientific expertise was often deployed to modernize patriarchal gender systems in Latin America in the twentieth century.

Latin America and Scientific Inquiry: Historiographical Considerations

Histories of science in North Atlantic nations have focused on the increasing popularity of eugenics among secular scientists and intellectuals during the 1920s and 1930s, while social histories of Latin American gender have charted the contemporaneous development of a modernized, patriarchal social system based on eugenic principles.¹⁶⁹ Building on these two frameworks, I posit that both Chilean

¹⁶⁹ On eugenics: Peter J. Bowler. "Scientific Attitudes to Darwinism in Britain and America," in *The Darwinian Heritage*, David Kohn (ed). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. 650. Pietro Corsi and Paul J. Weindling. "Darwinism in Germany, France, and Italy," in *The Darwinian Heritage* David Kohn (ed). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. 701. William B. Provine. "Adaptation and Mechanisms of Evolution after Darwin: a Study in Persistent Controversies," in *The Darwinian Heritage*, David Kohn (ed). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. On gender: Thomas Miller Klubock. "Morality and Good Habits: The Construction of Gender and Class in the Chilean Copper Mines, 1904-1951," in *The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers: From Household and Factory to the Union Hall and Ballot Box*, John D. French & Daniel James (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 1997. 238. Karin Alejandra Roseblatt. "Domesticating Men: State Building and Class Compromise in Popular-Front Chile," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*. Elizabeth Dore & Maxine Molyneux (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

Catholic and secular doctors, scientists and public intellectuals used eugenic science to rationalize a new patriarchal social order for the specific purpose of addressing what they considered to be an increasing social disorder that resulted from the social dislocations caused by the rise of capitalism. Shoring up gender difference and encouraging select heteronormative social behavior was central to this effort. What is intriguing is that Catholics turned to eugenics, a science that supported selective human breeding and in some of its North Atlantic variations championed euthanasia, abortion and forced sterilization all of which were anathema to Catholic ideology, as the most effective means of modernizing these social roles. This was possible due to the articulation of a specifically Catholic eugenic science in Chile that supported different types of social and sexual control.

Max Weber's *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* argued, "Only in the West does science exist at a stage of development which we recognize today as valid."¹⁷⁰ He went on to recognize the scientific contributions of Indian, Chinese and Egyptian cultures, but did not feel that they shared the rigor of Western science. Weber linked scientific advancement and enquiry with the rise of capitalism and the modern nation-state. For him, the symbiosis of religion, capitalism and science in the West was obvious. The existence of one, proved the other. Ascetic Protestantism fostered capitalism in the West that, in turn, was fostered by a burgeoning community of scientists and technocrats. Though Weber first penned these words in 1904, many scholars tacitly accepted this premise without much difficulty. Science could only be authentically produced in the rational, Protestant cosmovision. While newer histories of science have

¹⁷⁰ Max Weber. *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003 (1905). 13.

problematized this assumption, the belief that authentic science was not made in Latin American persists. However, this chapter illustrates that Chilean Catholics were equally committed to using science as a tool to resolve the social question. This was precisely because they also linked capitalism, religion, and science as Weber did.

The history of science in Latin America is a relatively new field among North Atlantic scholars. Many of these scholars have overlooked scientific developments in Latin America because of its Catholic religious heritage, which presumably discouraged rational, scientific thought. In the Chilean case, this historiographical predisposition was influenced by a specific historical context that privileged anti-clericalism as the means by which to modernize Chilean society. Chilean historian Sol Serrano demonstrated that the founding of the Universidad de Chile was based on growing anti-clericalism and secular efforts to oust the local Church from a position of political power.¹⁷¹ The university was founded in 1842, during the heyday of political liberalism in Latin America, with two central tenets: social mobility based on democracy and the use of science and technology to advance social progress. As such, Chilean education and nationalism were predicated on anti-clericalism as essential to political freedom and progress.

The emphasis on secularism and anti-clericalism has served to obscure the social and political contributions, both conservative and progressive, of the Chilean Catholic Church during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries while also unintentionally supporting the idea that Latin America was too bogged down in religious conflicts to produce original scientific knowledge. Instead, I argue that Catholicism played a fundamental role in the development of the field of eugenics in Chile. While the impact

¹⁷¹ Sol Serrano. *Universidad y nación: Chile en el siglo XIX*. Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1993.

that secular, progressive movements had on Chilean social and political history cannot be denied, it has overshadowed the equally vibrant developments amongst contemporary Catholic, conservative actors.¹⁷² Examining the contributions of liberal political actors is clearly important to understanding Chilean history, but does not capture the variegated influence of the Catholic Church during the same period.

The most recent scholarship regarding Latin America and science has primarily focused on how the imperial relationship between Spain (and Portugal) and its colonies affected the growth and development of particular scientific disciplines. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra's collection of essays, *Nature, Empire, and Nation: Explorations of the History of Science in the Iberian New World* (2006), investigates Spain's role in the development of botany as a discipline in the Early Modern period. Specifically, he argues that the contribution on the part of Spanish botanists represented new and original scientific work illustrating how the Iberian world did indeed contribute to the development of science during the colonial period.¹⁷³ However, neither Cañizares-Esguerra nor most of the other monographs of this type discuss how Latin America continued to contribute to original

¹⁷² During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Chileans sought to modernize their political systems by cutting official ties with the Catholic Church culminating in the disestablishment of the Church in 1925. Patrick Barr-Melej argues in his monograph, *Reforming Chile: Cultural Politics, Nationalism, and the Rise of the Middle Class* (2001), that anti-clericalism, especially in the early twentieth century, was an increasingly common feature among progressive social movements. Charles A. Hale. "Political Ideas and Ideologies in Latin America, 1870-1930," in *Ideas and Ideologies in Twentieth Century Latin America*, Leslie Bethell (ed). New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Lawrence M. Principe. "Myth 11-That Catholics Did Not Contribute to the Scientific Revolution," in *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, Ronald L. Numbers (ed). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures & the State in Chile, 1920-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

¹⁷³ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra. *Nature, Empire, and Nation: Explorations of the History of Science in the Iberian New World*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006.

scientific developments past 1850.¹⁷⁴ The unintended result of this approach is that scholars of Latin America themselves support the argument that twentieth century science was the purview of scientists working in North America, Europe and Asia. It seems that as Spain's imperial power diminished over the course of the nineteenth century, so too did its claim for a place as a scientific innovator. This begs the question of the relationship between science and empire, which a number of scholars have examined.¹⁷⁵ But most of these authors have looked at how imperial forces have brought or created new science to subdue the people they encounter, very few discuss how those sciences are used or applied by the local communities.

While the history of science in Latin America might be in its formative stages in the North Atlantic academy, the historiography exploring the relationship between gender and social welfare and reform programs points to a much more complex picture.¹⁷⁶ This literature often examines how the relationship between women of different classes affects gendered behavior. In the context of the social question, this is especially useful to my work. Elizabeth Quay Hutchison wrote that, "Aristocratic ladies and the Catholic Church

¹⁷⁴ Daniela Bleichmar, et al (eds). *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009. Thomas F. Glick, et al (eds). *The Reception of Darwinism in the Iberian World: Spain, Spanish American, and Brazil*. Boston: Kluwer Academic, 2001. Juan José Saldaña (ed). *Science in Latin America: a History*, Bernabé Madrigal (ed). Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006.

¹⁷⁵ Looking outside the Spanish Empire, the relationship between science and empire has been studied in a variety of different ways, see: Brett M. Bennett and Joseph Morgan Hodge. *Science and Empire: Knowledge and Networks of Science across the British Empire, 1800-1970*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. James Delbourgo and Nicholas Dew. *Science and Empire in the Atlantic World*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Sujit Sivasundaram. *Nature and Godly Empire: Science and Evangelical Mission in the Pacific, 1795-1850*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

¹⁷⁶ Susan K. Besse. *Restructuring Patriarchy: The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Ann Farnsworth-Alvear. *Dulcinea in the Factory: Myths, Morals, Men and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

were long at the forefront of efforts to address social problems by setting up private initiatives to combat what they understood as an increasingly explosive social condition.”¹⁷⁷ The alliance between the Catholic Church and upper class women to control lower class women might seem unsurprising. However, if we look more closely at this relationship, we begin to understand how the nexus between gender and eugenics created a specific historical circumstance in which Chilean Catholics, particularly Catholic women, could enter into scientific debates with authority equal to that of their secular counterparts. This helps to both contextualize the continuing political relevance of the Chilean Catholic Church in the twentieth century and the Latin American engagement with science generally. Additionally, we see that women’s involvement in the resolution of the social question was not incidental. Rather, the relationship between wealthy charity women, middle class social workers and poor mothers was central to the process of Chilean social renewal.

Chilean Catholic Characterizations of the Relationship between Religion and Science

Chilean Catholic intellectuals felt that the connection between Catholicism and science was both historically based and vital for responsible, social progress. Most of these individuals wrote in response to a vast amount of international literature that was both critical and suspicious of Catholic (or religious) involvement in not only the debates regarding the social question, but also the application and administration of social welfare projects. While the Chilean Catholic intellectual characterization of the relationship between science and religion was perhaps naive, it was a logical response to the

¹⁷⁷ Elizabeth Quay Hutchison. *Labors Appropriate to Their Sex: Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900-1930*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001. 173.

staunchly anti-clerical positions they encountered. The Catholic intellectuals here typically took the position that Catholicism was critical to the appropriate application of science to resolve social problems by characterizing the relationship between religion and science as complementary. Both science and religion illuminated how to best live according to the laws of nature that God had created.

Most historians of science point to John William Draper's *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (1874) and Andrew Dickson White's *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1896) as foundational texts that characterized the relationship between religion and science as one of conflict. Both writers were exceptionally critical of conceiving of this relationship as being positive in any way. Draper wrote, "The history of Science is not a mere record of isolated discoveries; it is a narrative of the conflict of two contending powers, the expansive force of the human intellect on one side, and the compression arising from traditionary faith and human interest on the other."¹⁷⁸ Contemporary historians of science recognize that these texts were especially vitriolic in their estimation of religion and religious thinking, however, they also note that these opinions filtered into both common and academic thinking with pervasive strength.¹⁷⁹ Though Draper and Dickson White's works were first

¹⁷⁸ Ronald L. Numbers (ed). *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. 1.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. Peter J. Bowler and Iwan Rhys Morus. *Making Modern Science: A Historical Survey*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. 18. James Gilbert. *Redeeming Culture: American Religion in an Age of Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. 46. David C. Lindberg and Ron L. Numbers. "Introduction," in *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986. 3. Richard Olson. "Series Forward," in *Religion and the Physical Sciences*, Kate Grayson Boisvert (ed). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008. xiv. Anti-Catholic portrayals are partially the result of the fact that Anglo-centric experience and sources are emphasized in the field. Lawrence M. Principe. "That Catholics Did Not Contribute to the Scientific Revolution," in *Galileo Goes to Jail: and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, Ronald L. Numbers (ed). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. 101.

published in the United States (and in English), seemingly quite far from the Chilean context of this study, their opinions formed part of a transnational anti-clerical movement that permeated Catholic thought in many nations. In fact, by the turn of the twentieth century, both of these works were housed in the Biblioteca Nacional de Chile.

The works of Draper and Dickson White also formed part of a growing, local canon of anti-clerical opinions regarding the relationship between Catholicism and science. An example of this can be found in the minutes from the Congreso Científico Internacional Americano held in Buenos Aires in 1910. At that conference, the Chilean delegate, Paulino Alfonso, noted that, “Science is the necessary condition for the complete emancipation of the body and spirit which promote the progress and abundance of the faculties.”¹⁸⁰ While certainly more mild in approach than Draper or Dickson White, Alfonso still made clear in this statement that religious thought had no place in science. In fact, it was antithetical to the scientific process. Alfonso stated that religious intervention into matters that he saw as strictly scientific would be detrimental to the progress that was so badly needed not only in Chile but throughout Latin America.

Female writer, Clara de la Luz, shared this opinion. In her *La mujer y la especie* (1913), de la Luz writes, “With a woman who only knows La Historia Sagrada [a selection of Bible stories], the Lives of the Saints and only goes to mass, leaving abandoned her duties as housewife, one cannot make a nation, nor form a family.”¹⁸¹ This

¹⁸⁰ Santiago E. Barabino and Nicolás Besio Moreno (eds). *Congreso Científico Internacional Americano*, Vol. 1. Buenos Aires: Imprenta de Coni Hermanos, 1910. 194. “De todas las emancipaciones del cuerpo y del espíritu conducentes al desarrollo y plenitud de las facultades, es condición necesaria la ciencia.”

¹⁸¹ Clara De la Luz. *La mujer y la especie (trabajo leído en el Centro Demócrata de Santiago el 3 de Mayo de 1913)*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Lee y CA., 1913. 20. “con una mujer que sólo sepa la

particular statement speaks to the very real difficulties Chilean Catholics faced when trying to engage in debates regarding the social question. Secular or progressive political actors consistently argued that religious education, preparation, and instruction was not related to the vicissitudes of daily life and, thus, not a solution to material problems. While not all of these actors agreed with de la Luz that women who read scripture would leave their wifely duties undone, most did feel that religious inclination, at best, distracted people from the very real, pressing needs of social improvement that were vital to Chilean progress.

To combat these anti-clerical opinions, Chilean Catholic intellectuals mainly described the relationship between religion and science in two ways. Some argued that science and religion revealed two separate truths that were equally important though unrelated to each other. This position addressed the critiques from the harshest anti-clericalists who believed that religion was a distraction from real life while still arguing for the social importance of religious ideals. The other, more common trope posited that religion and science worked together to illuminate the same truth, one that could be applied to resolve social problems. This latter position was by far the most popular, and longest lasting, among Chilean Catholic intellectuals. It discredited anti-clericalism by arguing that religion was the most fundamental component to solving the social question. Catholic intellectuals argued that Chilean society had suffered at the hands of uncontrolled capitalist expansion and that the best way to address concomitant social problems was through the application of new social science methods, such as social work and eugenics, combined with moral instruction. Without the moral compass that

Historia Sagrada, la <Vida de los Santos> e ir a misa dejando abandonado sus deberes de dueña de casa, no se puede hacer patria, ni formar una familia.”

Catholicism provided, the social restoration of Chilean society would be incomplete and doomed to failure.

This position first appears early in the twentieth century in Rodolfo Vergara Antúnez's 1910 article, "Materialism and the Origin of Things." He argued that social degeneration was the result of secularist efforts to separate Catholicism from social issues based on the flawed notion that religion and science were opposing forces. This article appeared in *La Revista Católica*, a religious periodical published by the Archdiocese of Santiago. With a run lasting from 1901 to 1951, this periodical was popular and designed to appeal to both laypeople and clergy members who were already engaged in debates about the social question. Strict materialist philosophy posited that the interaction of matter was the *only* fundamental building block for all natural life and phenomena on Earth. In the materialist cosmogony, life resulted quite by accident from a series of random matter interactions. Thus, for materialists, the divine played no role in the creation of life or the evolution of human life. Nor did they believe that religion should intervene in the contemporary debates regarding improving human living conditions. In contrast, Catholics believed that human life was created for a divine purpose and the creation of life was part of a God-given plan. Objecting to this thinking, materialists argued against religious involvement in social reform programs.

Catholics rejected the notion that their religious belief prevented them from accurate interpretation of scientific facts. For them, emphasizing the materiality of nature only further demonstrated the existence of the divine. Vergara Antúnez, Presiding Bishop's Officer and Rector of the Universidad Católica at the time of this lecture,

agreed.¹⁸² “Materialism has accorded to matter divine attributes, and has made matter divine. But nature, indignantly refusing the undeserved honor that [the materialists] try to bestow upon her, proclaims the name and grandeur of her Author.”¹⁸³ Vergara Antúnez showed that scientific study ultimately revealed the existence of religious truth, making science and religion intimately connected and discrediting materialist thinkers who portrayed Catholics as reactionary traditionalists.

When Vergara Antúnez turned his attention to discussing the origin of life, he again stipulated how religious thinking and scientific theory worked together. He wrote, “but, if everything begins with the atom, that was supposedly the beginning; and, if it had a beginning, it is not eternal; and, if it is not eternal, someone had to create it.”¹⁸⁴ This was a common anti-materialist trope amongst Chilean Catholics. They argued that human reason did not support the belief that life could arise from nothing. As such, the existence of an intelligent creator was implicit. The proof of a Divine Creator, for Vergara Antúnez was the natural world itself. Natural laws, the existence of human life, and the seeming order of nature spoke to this reality. Human reason, or common sense, could not support the supposed randomness inherent in the materialist understanding of nature. The question for Vergara Antúnez was: Why believe that the world was randomly organized

¹⁸² As university rector, Vergara Antúnez was head of the Universidad Católica from 1898-1914. As leader of the university, he made decisions regarding faculty and curriculum. Notably, he put the pieces in place for the agriculture program during his tenure. In this position, he represented not only an upper level of the Chilean clergy, but also of the educational community. Office of the President, “Monsignor Rodolfo Vergara Antúnez,” http://rectoria.uc.cl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=85%3Amonsenor-rodolfo-vergara-antunez&catid=9&Itemid=59.

¹⁸³ Rodolfo Vergara Antúnez. “El materialismo y la origen de las cosas,” *La Revista Católica* May 21, 1910 632-642. 639. “El materialismo ha puesto en la material los atributos divinos, y con esto ha hecho de ella una divinidad. Pero la naturaleza, rehusando indignada el honor inmerecido con que pretenden ensalzarla, proclama á voces el nombre y la grandeza de su Autor.”

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid* 635. “...pero, si todo empieza por el átomo, éste ha debido tener principio; y si ha tenido principio, no es eterno; y si no es eterno, alguien ha debido criarlo.”

when there was so clearly an organizing force or principle at work? While this line of reasoning was more rhetorical than other arguments regarding the relationship between Catholicism and science, it spoke to the Catholic belief that nature had a divine order and that lesser beings played a role in that order. Lesser beings might include animals but it could also be understood to mean unfit individuals. They too were part of God's plan and were able to exercise free will. As such, stabilizing the social order should be achieved through the application of reform efforts and not left to the "survival of the fittest." Materialist approaches implied that certain individuals were not fitted to survive in a modern society and no amount of intervention could change that fact. Chilean Catholics did not accept this absolution of responsibility for the lower classes or "less fit."

Vergara Antúnez illustrated this point by arguing that religiously-informed scientific exploration was vital to solving growing social problems. According to him, Chile was experiencing a social degeneration and denouement on par with the fall of the Roman Empire. In particular, he pointed to the increasing indulgence and greed of the upper classes (read wealthy industrialists) as retarding the improvement of society.¹⁸⁵ Vergara Antúnez believed that Chilean Catholics might play a critical role in the advancement of Chilean society; not just because religion and science were meant to function in tandem but also because only morality could fight indulgence. Application of scientific principles alone was not enough. Indulgence and greed were, after all, character flaws. By so doing, Vergara Antúnez was able to carve out a space into which Chilean Catholic scientists could pour their energy. This was also a clever way to use the same discursive tools of Communism and Socialism to his ends. By highlighting the

¹⁸⁵ Ibid 632.

exploitative relationship between worker and employer, Vergara Antúnez made his version of social reformation fit into an already popular discourse among the working classes while still differentiating Catholic social programs from potentially dangerous Socialist movements.

For Vergara Antúnez, and others like him, only hard work, prayer and a renewal of faith could adequately resolve the social question. Materialism, so popular among secular reformers, was not equipped to resolve these issues. “[M]aterialism, arrogant and boastful, claims to represent the sciences, and presumes to dazzle the unlearned multitudes with the vain apparatus of scientific formulas.”¹⁸⁶ Materialism promised easy results with the simple application of science. This implied that materialism was actually more dogmatic than Catholic thought because it proposed a rigid set of natural laws that were immutable. To Vergara Antúnez, relying on science alone to solve social problems was using a simple rubric that did not recognize the complexity of real life nor the importance of moral instruction. Chilean Catholics, while they accepted that science was a valuable tool in addressing what they perceived to be social problems did not believe that it was the only, or best, tool. “To hear [the materialists] talk, they would say only they possess science’s secrets, or that it is a patrimony that is exclusively their own.”¹⁸⁷ Statements like this highlight Chilean Catholic efforts to maintain their own scientific identity in the increasingly secular political climate of turn-of-the-century Chile. In his denunciation of materialism, Vergara Antúnez implied that Catholics were equally

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. “...[E]l materialismo, que, altanero y jactancioso, se arroga la representación de las ciencias, y pretende deslumbrar á las indoctas muchedumbres con el vano aparato de formulas científicas.”

¹⁸⁷ Ibid 633. “Al oírlos [los materialistas], se diría que solo ellos poseen los secretos de la ciencia, ó que ésta es un patrimonio exclusivamente suyo.”

capable of using and creating scientific knowledge. While it seems clear that he expected that Catholic science would differ from materialist science, he certainly did not feel it would be lesser.

This was based on Vergara Antúnez's contention that materialists were actually practicing a different faith. This was one of the more common counter-arguments of the period among Chilean Catholic intellectuals. He stated that materialists believed the universe created itself but could not provide proof of their claim. Rather than leaving his assessment of their position at that, he continued to say that Christians could not prove the existence of God, just as materialists were not able to substantiate their *belief* about the beginning of life.¹⁸⁸ This opened the door for a common argument of the period: that those who placed all their hope in science were actually practicing a new faith. Materialists, according to Vergara Antúnez, accepted a theory about the origin of life based on belief alone. Neither side had categorical proof of its position. This shows that Chilean Catholic intellectuals saw themselves as equal, if opposing, forces in the creation of a modern scientific community. Their faith was simply different than that of other actors in that community. Vergara Antúnez called for materialists to recognize the fact that they were equally motivated by faith, rather than logic. The faith was simply in science, as opposed to religion.

Materialist thought was often linked, in the minds of Catholic social reformers, with liberal philosophy stemming from the Enlightenment. This emphasis on the Enlightenment also served to highlight the gendered roles that men and women were meant to play in Chilean society. Combined together, this illuminated how Catholics had

¹⁸⁸ Ibid 634.

been written out of scientific pursuits. In his article, “La mujer de la mañana,” Catholic writer Esteban Lamy blamed the expansion of Enlightenment thinking for the loss of both female and Catholic political power. He argued that Enlightenment philosophy privileged secularism, a male ideal, pushing women and Catholics even further away from social influence. In addition, it also weakened the role of religious orders and their charitable work, places where women were equals to men in some cases. Enlightenment philosophers, and political progressives in general, believed that trained experts should replace religious charitable organizations. It comes as no surprise that those trained experts were typically men, while many of the religious orders involved in charity work were run by women.¹⁸⁹ Lamy’s argument was not wholly incorrect. Enlightenment thinking did stress rationalism and anti-clericalism, ideologies that many felt did not mesh with feminine characteristics.¹⁹⁰ It is unclear whether Lamy lamented this development because he was actually upset by women’s diminishing social power or because this signified a loss of power on the part of the Catholic Church. Just like the secular reformers he accused, he presumed a close relationship between women and

¹⁸⁹ Esteban Lamy. “La mujer de mañana,” Article 3, *La Revista Católica*, no. 263 (July 20, 1912): 153-166. 161.

¹⁹⁰ While some scholars argued that women were not included in Enlightenment sentiments, others have shown that it was far more complex. The notion of the feminine had a role in natural philosophy that informed Enlightenment thinkers, even while actual women were overlooked, see: Bruce Burgett. *Sentimental Bodies: Sex, Gender, and Citizenship in the Early Republic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Sarah C. Chambers. *From Subjects to Citizens: Honor, Gender and Politics in Arequipa, Peru, 1780-1854*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999. Arlene Diaz. *Female Citizens, Patriarchs, and the Law in Venezuela, 1786-1904*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor. *Women, Gender, and Enlightenment*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Londa Schiebinger. *Nature’s Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993. Theresa Ann Smith. *The Emerging Female Citizen: Gender and Enlightenment in Spain*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

Catholicism that meant a diminishing of women's power affected the social influence of the Catholic Church.

He believed in this close relationship because he contended that women were naturally moral beings. In the final article of his series, he wrote, "But it is necessary to do justice to those philosophers that tried to suppress religious faith conserving at the same time the old morality: when they had succeeded the result was irreligion, they had the decency to feel afraid."¹⁹¹ He believed that secular intellectuals had so long advocated for scientific social reform to create a modern social order that they did not recognize the risks this posed until it was too late. The result, according to Lamy, was a society without any sort of moral compass that was collapsing in sin, poverty and disease, a situation he believed Chile was experiencing in the 1910s. He called for a return of women's social influence to restore Chilean society to its former glory. "Now then, the woman is the natural enemy of disbelief and the new morality. The cult of materialism, the weakening of the family, the reign of force, they err in death the intellectuals, the heart and the interests of the woman."¹⁹² By reintegrating women, and the Catholic Church, into modern Chilean political culture, the various social problems that resulted from immorality and capitalist economics would resolve themselves.

A brief article that appeared in *La Revista Católica* four years later supported this contention. In the section detailing various foreign events, the anonymous author

¹⁹¹ Esteban Lamy. "La mujer de mañana," Article 4, *La Revista Católica*, no. 265 (August 17, 1912): 310-326. 317. "Pero es preciso hacer justicia a los filosóficos que habían pretendido suprimir la fe religiosa conservando a la vez la moral antigua: cuando lograron por todo resultado la irreligión, tuvieron el valor de sentirse atemorizados."

¹⁹² Ibid 319. "Ahora bien, la mujer es natural enemiga de la incredulidad y de la nueva moral. El culto a la material, el debilitamiento de la familia, el reinado de la fuerza, hieren de muerte la inteligencia, el corazón y los intereses de la mujer."

discussed the attempts by an English physiologist, Henry Charlton Bastian, to prove the spontaneous generation of life. Bastian had submitted a paper to the Royal Society, but that institution had rejected the paper's findings.¹⁹³ Nonetheless, the findings "had been accepted, without the benefit of consideration, by our colleague 'El Mercurio', which has made its own the frightful news to impress upon its readership as the last word in science."¹⁹⁴ The author's implication was clear. Bastian labored to disprove a point that had been well settled among the scientific community since at least the 1860s in order to support his own materialist position. In addition, the secular leaning newspaper *El Mercurio* accepted Bastian's results even when his own scientific colleagues would not. Together, this shows that Chilean materialists were equally committed to their ideological positions as their Catholic counterparts. Indeed, they even had their own scientific proof to support their opinions.

Alejandro Vicuña's *The Harmony of Science and Religion: Scientific-Religious Conferences* (1915) held much the same opinion regarding the symbiotic relationship between science and Catholicism. As a Presiding Bishop's Officer, he had a similar pedigree to Vergara Antúnez and was interested in similar issues. Originally delivered as a lecture and then turned into a monograph, this text was clearly popular amongst the Catholic intelligentsia in Chile and represents the upper echelons of clerical thought on the relationship between religion and science. Vicuña stated that, "For all time and amongst all peoples they have always distinguished two orders of knowledge: the one

¹⁹³ "De nuevo la generación espontánea," *La Revista Católica*, no. 305 (April 18, 1914): 634-635. 635.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid 634-635. "ha sido aceptada, sin beneficio de inventario, por nuestro colega de 'El Mercurio', el cual ha hecho suya la espantable noticia para propinarla a sus lectores como la última palabra de la ciencia."

attributed to heavenly revelations or coming from old traditions of religious character; the other, product or conquest of the individual force of human reason.”¹⁹⁵ Though dividing knowledge into sacred and profane categories, Vicuña did not argue that those categories were mutually exclusive or damaging to each other. This was because he believed all scientific activities fell under the latter category of human reason. While some materialists might argue that science was more than human reason alone, Vicuña believed that human initiative and activity working in tandem with reason served as one type of knowledge. The other, more mystical knowledge was the result of pure philosophical debate and development.

Vicuña argued that while scientists insisted on the infallibility and uncompromising nature of scientific discovery, Catholics were better equipped to interpret facts arising from both fields. As a result, unlike what secular social reformers often proposed, Catholics had a more accurate and realistic picture of the social problems affecting capitalist society because of their religious identity.¹⁹⁶ For Vicuña, then, Chilean Catholics were the obvious group to address social problems, as they were uniquely capable of understanding both the moral and physical implications of any social issue. This was complicated by the fact that he did not provide any concrete discussion of what sorts of interventions Catholics should make into the social question. Rather, he supported Catholic involvement in these issues on a broad scale.

¹⁹⁵ Alejandro Vicuña. *Armonía de la ciencia y la fe: Conferencias Científico-religiosas*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta de San José, 1915. 9. “En todo tiempo y entre todos los pueblos se han distinguido siempre dos órdenes de conocimientos: el uno atribuido a revelaciones del cielo o proveniente de antiguas tradiciones de carácter religioso; el otro, producto o conquista del esfuerzo individual de la razón humana.”

¹⁹⁶ Ibid 59.

The similarity of religion and science was also manifested in their communal natures. Vicuña noted that religious and scientific “truths” were only settled upon after thorough examination and consensus on the part of a community of experts. “[T]he conduct of science and religion appear identical to me. Before admitting any truth, both are subject to rigorous examination which, when passed, begins to shape the patrimony of philosophical or religious reason.”¹⁹⁷ Both religion and science were portrayed as being the result of communal examination and acceptance on the part of the intellectual communities that created them, showing that Catholic doctrine and scientific theory in Chile were both the result of knowledge production that privileged consensus. Many intellectuals understood this to be true for scientific communities, but Vicuña extended this to apply to Catholic ones as well illustrating that Catholics were not dogmatists who blindly followed Church hierarchy. Rather, Catholic philosophy grew out of a meeting of the minds, just as scientific practices did.

Not only that, but for Vicuña both religion and science served the same purpose. They were designed to better acquaint humanity with Truth. “[I]t is clear, then, that religious truth has the same characteristics as scientific truth; it is universal, immutable, firm, impersonal... The cult of truth, in a word, is served by two worshippers: Religion and Science.”¹⁹⁸ Rather than positing that either science or Catholicism was the more reliable means of understanding reality, Vicuña stated that both were equally important to

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. “[M]e parece idéntica la conducta de la ciencia y de la religión. Antes de admitir cualquier verdad, ambas sometén a la demandante a un severo examen, librado el cual, entra a figurar en el patrimonio de la razón filosófica o de la razón religiosa.”

¹⁹⁸ Ibid 63. “Es claro, entonces, que la verdad religiosa tiene los mismos caracteres de la verdad científicas; es universal, inmutable, firme, impersonal.... El culto de la verdad, en una palabra, es servido por dos adoradores: la Religión y la Ciencia.”

the difficult task.¹⁹⁹ To truly understand human experience and the natural world, Vicuña believed individuals needed both scientific and philosophical understanding. Failing that, one's perception of reality would be skewed.

This position was popular throughout the first half of the twentieth century, but became increasingly more scientific and anti-capitalist over time as both the discursive power of scientific tropes increased and as Socialist movements garnered more political power in Chile. Victor Depassier's *The Death of Materialism: A Conference Dedicated to the Upper-Classes and the Students of Both Universities* (1919) actively linked the popularity of materialist social movements like Socialism to the harsh economic realities of capitalist industrialization. "Thus, it is explained why our workers and day laborers believe that religion symbolizes ignorance, deceit, misery, and how science implies the progressive concept of impiety, meaning the right to all sorts of grievances."²⁰⁰ Depassier believed that the working classes were being fed the argument that religious leaders, and the Catholic Church generally, supported a status quo that exploited their labor. As such, they had become increasingly intransigent and disinterested in Catholic efforts to address these social issues. This quote illustrated Depassier's concern that the working classes were looking for new, politically progressive leaders while the leaders of those groups

¹⁹⁹ This is an opinion shared by Giovanni Noé as well. "Fue un error de los pensadores liberales del siglo pasado creer que la escuela podría subsistir a la religión en la tarea moralizadora de las masas." "It was an error of the liberal thinkers of the last century to believe that school could substitute for religion in the moralizing task of the masses." Giovanni Noé. *La ciencia i los sentimientos humanitarios: conferencia leida en el Club de Señoras el Sábado 25 de Noviembre de 1916*. Santiago: Imprenta Universitaria, 1916. 25.

²⁰⁰ Victor Depassier. *La muerte del materialismo: Conferencia dedicada a las clases dirigentes y a los estudiantes de ambas Universidades*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta de San José, 1919. VI. "Así se explica que nuestros obreros y jornaleros creen que la religión significa ignorancia, engaño, miseria, y que la ciencia implica el concepto progresista de la irreligiosidad, o sea el derecho a toda clase de reivindicaciones."

(read materialists and/or secularists) painted religion as the cause of increasing social disruption and discontent.²⁰¹

According to Depassier, however, religion was not the issue. Social difference was a biological fact, as evidenced in the works of Darwin and others, but capitalist industrialism had perverted the natural social order. Materialists who proposed that social difference was the result of capitalism alone were misinterpreting scientific facts.

“[W]hen teaching the Darwinist doctrine, professors are obligated to implicitly recognize that the differences of all types that they observe in both organic and inorganic materials, are things that are necessary and natural to the social organism, just as bread and water are to the individual organism.”²⁰² Depassier argued, however, that the acceptance of biological differences in human beings did not justify the exploitation of the lower classes. Growing social differentiation was caused by capitalist economic development that encouraged the gross exploitation of the lower classes in the interest of profit alone. While he did not propose that class difference itself was unnatural, the lower classes did have a natural role to play in Chilean society, Depassier felt that unfettered capitalist expansion had exaggerated this difference. Only a Catholic social reform program focused on a return to social responsibility and public morality on the part of the upper classes could improve this situation.

As a philosophical text, Depassier did not offer much in the way of concrete recommendations for how Catholics could address this problem. Yet he did note that,

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid 4. “Sin embargo, al enseñar la doctrina darwinista, los profesores se ven obligados a reconocer implícitamente que las diferencias de todo género que se observan así en lo orgánico como en lo inorgánico, son cosas tan necesarias y naturales al organismo social, como lo son el agua y el pan al organismo individual.”

“The principal object of this lecture is precisely to make young people understand that science is practiced to serve religion and between the two reigns a perfect harmony.”²⁰³ Thus, involving young people in Catholic efforts to resolve social ills appeared to be an important factor. This was most likely born of a desire to maintain the Catholic Church’s political relevance. Depassier’s concerns about losing young people to the allure of politically progressive leaders touting scientific social reform as a panacea for all social problems prompted him to mitigate the differences between religion and science.

Depassier, like Vergara Antúnez before him, also asserted that materialism was a new faith. “In Europe the philosophers, the thinkers and the politicians have received the discovery [of materialism] like a new Messiah, that comes to direct them down the [correct] path that humanity should follow in terms of political, economic and social issues.”²⁰⁴ This imagery spoke volumes about how Catholics in Chile viewed materialism. They applied their own religious experience to explain the popularity of materialism. By doing so, Catholics could actually engage with materialists on the same terms, as faithful believers. To do otherwise would have presented real difficulties in determining a Catholic course of action to respond to this new threat.

As a counterpoint to these arguments in favor of religious and scientific symbiosis, Carlos Charlin’s 1934 article, “The Two Truths,” represented the relatively unusual opinion that science and religion shared no common features. He wrote:

²⁰³ Ibid IX. “Precisamente el objeto principal de este trabajo es hacer comprender a la juventud que la ciencia se ha puesto al servicio de la religión y que entre ambas reina una perfecta armonía.”

²⁰⁴ Ibid III. “En Europa los filósofos, los pensadores y los políticos han recibido el descubrimiento [del materialismo] como a un nuevo Mesías, que viene a señalar el camino verdadero que debe seguir la humanidad en materia de orientaciones políticas, económicas y sociales.”

The scientific man looks at the world with open eyes, with eyes that are amplified and multiplied through the use of the microscope; he is an observer. The philosopher looks at the world with spirit, he sees the Earth through closed eyes; he does not study it, he considers it; he does not observe, he meditates; his mind does not take note or speculate. The one is a realist, only the fact and its immediate cause and its relationship to other facts interest him; the other is contemplative and lives in abstraction.²⁰⁵

For Charlin, philosophers and scientists were not meant to share similar interests; their social functions were inherently different, if not in opposition. Philosophers pondered life without being able to provide definitive answers. Scientists could provide definitive answers about *how* natural laws worked, but they could not explain *why* those laws existed. Recognizing and respecting these spheres of influence was paramount. This opinion might be at least partially the result of the article being published in *Estudios*, a periodical strictly for Catholic study and contemplation produced by the Centro de Estudios Religiosos in Santiago. Though it represented some of the most conservative elements in the Chilean Catholic Church network, it was published from 1932 to 1957 speaking to its longevity and popularity.

Charlin's staunch belief in the separate influence and value of religion and science created a situation in which Chilean Catholic involvement in the social question was problematic. However, he explained how Catholics could engage in science using French entomologist Jean-Henri Fabre (1823-1915) as an example. Fabre was an intellectual contemporary of Darwin, mostly active between 1862 and 1913, well known for studying insects and observing their behavior. However, he never proposed why insects behaved

²⁰⁵ Carlos Charlin. "Las Dos Verdades," *Estudios*, no. 15 (February 1934): 3-14. 4. "El hombre de ciencia mira el mundo con sus ojos muy abiertos, con sus ojos amplificadas, multiplicados por el microscopio; es un observador. El filósofo mira el mundo con el espíritu, mira la tierra con los ojos cerrados; no la estudia, la considera; no observa, medita; su mente no anota, especula. El uno es realista, le interesan sólo el hecho y su causa inmediata, su relación con otro hecho; el otro es especulativo, vive en la abstracción."

as they did.²⁰⁶ To do so would mean that Fabre had stepped out of his role as a scientist and had become a philosopher. Philosophers, according to Charlin, were not equipped to practice science. This was a unique opinion. Most Catholic intellectuals connected the work of early natural philosophers, mostly men of faith, to current scientific work in an effort to demonstrate the symbiotic and historical relationship between religion and science.

Charlin, on the other hand, argued that if Fabre had attempted to move beyond explaining how insect behavior worked, he would have compromised his position as a scientist. Instead, he recognized his scientific limitations precisely *because* he was Catholic. As such, he served as a model of an ideal Catholic scientist. His experiments and findings were beyond reproach in their methodology and exactitude, but they did not veer into ideological territory. Thus, Charlin was able to support Catholic involvement in science by arguing that Fabre's Catholic identity did not prevent his entering into scientific investigation. Rather, this belief informed his practice of science to ensure that it was done properly; recognizing its limitations. Though the divorcing of natural philosophy from the history of science was unusual in Charlin's case, Chilean Catholics argued that this type of limited, moral science needed to be infused into the social sciences to resolve the social question.

Even though Charlin professed to argue for the separateness of religion and science, he used a variety of examples that troubled this approach. First, he recognized that religious truth and scientific truth shared some similarities. "Religious truth has been revealed over the passing of thousands of years, and it reveals itself to us day by day, if

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

you observe spiritual life, like the wise man observes material life.”²⁰⁷ Here, both science and philosophy were developed over thousands of years of human experience. It seems that Charlin was influenced by previous scholarship on the complementarity of science and religion just enough to offer this small reprieve from his overall argument. This statement implied that both explained human experience to some degree. However, Charlin still ultimately argued that neither religion nor science could fully explain that experience.

Charlin also specifically engaged with the debate surrounding evolution to prove this point. When discussing the continued existence of a type of fern in southern Chile, in the face of multiple efforts to exterminate it, he argued that the fern thrived in southern Chile because it had adapted to that environment. Its ability to adapt, according to Charlin, was the result of intelligent design; mixing both religious and scientific concepts. “These small facts are the manifestation of a fundamental truth, of a first principle, of the great truth, of the divine phenomenon, just as the small truths of the biological sciences are the manifestation of a first principle, the vital phenomenon.”²⁰⁸ Using biological facts to support the existence of a Divine Creator was an approach that was common amongst Chilean Catholic scholars. After all, the seeming immortality of this type of fern, combined with the natural laws of Darwinism that explained this phenomenon, seemed to work in tandem to support that contention. In fact, Charlin continued to say that being Christian allowed one to see the relationship between scientific findings and

²⁰⁷ Ibid 7. “La verdad religiosa ha sido revelada en el curso de miles de años, y se nos revela día a día, si se observa la vida espiritual, como el sabio observa la vida de la materia.”

²⁰⁸ Ibid 13. “Estos pequeños hechos son la manifestación de una verdad fundamental, de un principio matriz, de la gran verdad, del fenómeno divino, así como las pequeñas verdades de las ciencias biológicas son la manifestación de un principio matriz, del fenómeno vital.”

philosophical ideas more easily.²⁰⁹ Thus, even Charlin's article that began by stating that religion and science had no relationship with each other, concluded on a more ambiguous note. This demonstrates the discursive power of the complementarity trope among Chilean Catholic intellectuals in the first half of the twentieth century.

Catholic Scientists as Role Models

Charlin's article is useful in another way as well. His discussion of Jean-Henri Fabre formed part of another discursive trend amongst Chilean Catholic intellectuals. Many writers illustrated the symbiotic relationship between Catholicism and science by profiling Catholic scientists who served as role models. These profiles were meant to counterbalance secularist rhetoric that denied Catholic contributions to scientific development. Louis Pasteur, French chemist and microbiologist, was the most popular example of this type. This was first and foremost because his work in epidemiology and vaccination was groundbreaking on an international scale for the entire scientific community in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Even more important, Catholics argued that Pasteur's work was specifically motivated by his Catholic desire to better the lot of humanity.

Appearing in the *El Diario Popular (EDP)*, a daily newspaper designed for working class Catholics, a brief 1902 article stated that Pasteur, "Infinitely piteous of the weak, for those who suffer; [his] genius was stimulated by the thought of diminishing, through his works, the miseries and the pains of humanity, that made him say one day: 'It will be truly beautiful and useful to use this part of my heart in the progress of

²⁰⁹ Ibid. "Los hombres con vida religiosa, con vida cristiana, están adaptados al mundo tal cual es, tal cual se nos ofrece a los hombres en esta tierra."

science.”²¹⁰ Pasteur’s Catholic obligation to do good works motivated him to study disease in order to ease human suffering. For Catholic intellectuals, both inside and outside Chile, this was the best example of how the marriage of science and Catholicism could benefit humanity at large and solve the social question. While Catholics could appreciate scientific experimentation simply for the sake of discovery, science designed to help the Catholic mission to resolve the social question was all the more warmly received.

In addition to Pasteur’s altruism in scientific experimentation, this author appreciated his reliance on “common sense” in his experiments.

[Pasteur’s experimental] hypotheses are modest, laborious, humble. And much later, when he makes his discoveries—is it for the grandeur of the unexpected illumination? No, all his work is nothing more than the application of a method that is within everyone’s reach, that does not boast of being [newly] invented, and which honors the great experimenters of centuries past.²¹¹

Pasteur combined the best qualities of Catholic science. His work could be attributed to the power of human reason, his experiments could be easily repeated by the common man, and they were tied to a long tradition of Catholic science and scholarship. Not only that, but both Catholic and secular scientific communities equally lauded Pasteur’s achievements. He was the model exemplar of contemporary Catholic science at the turn of the century. And, like Fabre before him, he recognized his limitations. He knew that he

²¹⁰ “Estatua de Pasteur,” *El Diario Popular*, no. 17 (September 22, 1902): 2. 2. “Infinitamente piadoso para los débiles, para los que sufren; [Pasteur] sentía su genio estimulado con el pensamiento de disminuir, con sus trabajos, las miserias y los dolores de la humanidad, lo que le hacía decir un día: «Será muy hermoso y útil hacer esta parte del corazón en el progreso de las ciencias.»”

²¹¹ *Ibid.* “«Los principios [de Pasteur] son modestos, laboriosos, penosos. Y más tarde, cuando hace sus descubrimientos--¿es por efecto de iluminaciones repentinas? Nó, toda su obra no es sino la aplicación de un método que está al alcance de todos, que no se jacta de haberlo inventado, y del cual hace honor á los grandes experimentadores de los siglos pasados.»”

could not elucidate the origins of life or humanity through scientific experimentation and he did not try.²¹²

Another example of a Catholic scientist as role model appeared in *La Revista Católica* the same year. A two-paragraph article mentioned the growing scientific interests of Pope Leo XIII. People throughout Vatican City initially thought that the Pope might be ill because his doctor was seen entering his chambers with a large microscope and a variety of surgical equipment. However, it turned out that the Pope wanted to be acquainted with the most recent scientific discoveries of the day. “In the Italian dailies they mention...how interested the old Pontiff is in the advancements of modern science.”²¹³ This article was meant to connect Chilean Catholics to current scientific developments by showing how even the Pope himself, the highest officer of the Church, was both interested in and aware of scientific discoveries. Instead of portraying the Pope as the arbiter of Catholic tradition, this article described him as a curious, modern potentate interested in new ideas.

This trend continued in much the same way throughout the first half of the twentieth century, though there was a notable emphasis on Catholics working in the life sciences. Appearing in a September 1926 issue of *La Revista Católica*, an article entitled “Scientific Chronicle—The Works of Fr. Wasmann, SJ” highlighted the work of Austrian Jesuit entomologist, Erich Wasmann. The author, identified as “A.F.L.” but who was

²¹² Pasteur was, however, able to disprove the theory of spontaneous generation. This was very much motivated by his religious beliefs, but has typically been discussed in terms of his work with fermentation. See: Patrice Debré. *Louis Pasteur*, Elborg Forster (trans). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998. Gerald L. Geison. *The Private Science of Louis Pasteur*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

²¹³ “Leon XIII y los progresos de la ciencia,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 30 (October 18, 1902): 384. 384. “En los diarios italianos se refiere un hecho que manifiesta todo el interés del anciano Pontífice por los progresos de la ciencia moderna.”

most likely Arturo Fontecilla Larraín, credited Wasmann with providing convincing proof against materialist monogenism; in other words, the premise that all life on Earth arose from one, original single-celled organism. “Thus refuted absolute evolution, that from a single cell all forms of life arose, as says Haeckelian monism, Father [Wasmann] constructed his system, that is also evolutionist to a point, in that it admits the possibility of transformism that is not in conflict with sane philosophy.”²¹⁴ Wasmann was able to discredit materialism while still providing Catholic intellectuals with an acceptable form of evolutionary theory. Not only that, but this form was first mentioned in *La Revista Católica* as early as 1904.²¹⁵ This allowed for Catholics to enter into the field of biology, and related disciplines, with relative ease and paved the way for later Catholic scientific exploration into evolution, a theme that will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Wasmann himself characterized his scientific work in the following way, “I lend my skills as a naturalist, for God, for his love I do the smallest things as best as I am able; I would not dare to offer him anything poorly done.”²¹⁶ Much like Vergara Antúnez, Vicuña and Depassier, this quote shows that Wasmann himself believed that his Catholic identity was integral to his scientific explorations. In fact, he argued that his Catholic dedication held him to a professional scientific standard above and beyond that of secular

²¹⁴ A.F.L. “Crónica científica-Los trabajos de P. Wasmann SJ,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 599 (September 18, 1926): 446-449. 448. “Rechazada así la evolución absoluta, que parte de una célula única para todos los seres vivos, como dice el monismo haeckeliano, construyó el padre su sistema, que es también evolucionista en parte al menos, pues admite lo aceptable que tiene el transformismo y que no esté en pugna con la sana filosofía.”

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid 449. “Yo presto mis servicios como naturalista, por Dios, por su amor hago las cosas más menudas lo mejor que me es posible; no me atrevería a ofrecerle algo mal hecho.”

scientists. Fontecilla Larraín's choice to include this quote showed that Chilean Catholics not only believed in the mutually beneficial relationship between religion and science but that they saw themselves as part of a larger Catholic scientific community that was international in scope. As such, their scientific community was as rich and diverse as that of their secular detractors. To prove this point even further, Fontecilla Larraín's concluded this article by listing the various professional organizations Wasmann was a part of during his lifetime.

Chilean Catholic social reformers did not engage with science to merely maintain their social cache. The examples above demonstrate that most of them believed that science and religion were fundamentally intertwined and mutually reinforcing. As such, they could not sit by and let scientific debates about social reform occur without them. In fact, they contended that their presence was central to the proper functioning and application of scientific principles. The opinions articulated by Vergara Antúnez, Depassier, Charlin and others provided new ways of looking at the relationship between Catholicism and science that provided new opportunities for Catholic charity and social reform with a specifically scientific character. This foundational literature was critical for Chilean Catholics who wanted to use eugenics to address social problems. By establishing their membership to the larger scientific community in a general way, Chilean Catholics could then specifically engage with eugenic social reform discourse.

Chapter Three

Man, the Monkey without a Tail? Eugenics, the Social Question and Catholicism in Chile

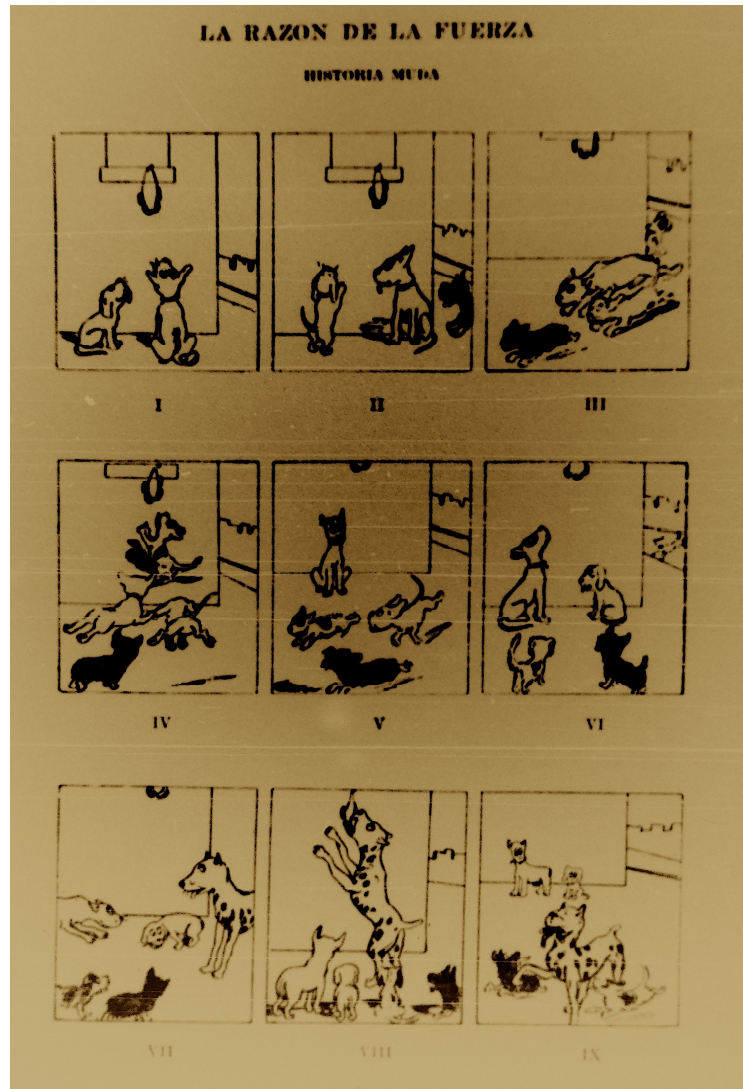


Figure 4: “Razón de la fuerza,” *Zig-Zag*, no. 220 (May 8, 1909). This cartoon illustrates the “rule of force” as many Chileans understood it. However, it also demonstrates how competition for resources was based on eugenic concepts of evolution and fitness. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

The cartoon above (see Figure 4), published in the popular pictorial magazine *Zig-Zag* in 1909, speaks to the widespread acceptance and deployment of eugenic

concepts in early-twentieth-century Chile.²¹⁷ Most intellectuals, reformers and scientists who supported eugenics as a means of resolving the social question in Chile understood social problems, or degeneration, through the prism of either Darwinian or Lamarckian evolutionary theory. Latin Americans, Chileans included, generally preferred the Lamarckian evolutionary model that emphasized the role of the environment in the acquiring of characteristics in contrast to Darwinian evolution which emphasized competition for resources as the catalyst for speciation and trait development. Accepting Lamarckism allowed for the possibility of gradual population improvement over time with the application of eugenic social reform, rather than encouraging the separation of unfit individuals from the rest of society by negative eugenic measures. Lamarckism was widely popular during the interwar period among scholars not only in Latin America, but in Great Britain and the United States as well.²¹⁸ Focusing on the interwar period in Chile illuminates why Lamarckism was more appealing to certain scientists. Lamarckism, after all, allowed for forms of intervention that a strict Darwinian approach would not.

Regardless of theoretical preference, Chilean social reformers understood the purpose of eugenics to be the encouragement of natural selection for desirable traits through competition and access to resources. Those who were better adapted for this competition got access to better resources and were therefore more fit. The cartoon illustrates the popular reception of this conceptual framework. It shows dogs competing to eat a sausage link hanging from an open window. Each tableau has a bigger dog

²¹⁷ "Razón de la fuerza," *Zig-Zag*, no. 220 (May 8, 1909).

²¹⁸ Peter J. Bowler. "Scientific Attitudes to Darwinism in Britain and America," in *The Darwinian Heritage*, David Kohn (ed). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. 650. Pietro Corsi and Paul J. Weindling. "Darwinism in Germany, France, and Italy," in *The Darwinian Heritage*, David Kohn (ed). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. 701. William B. Provine. "Adaptation and Mechanisms of Evolution after Darwin: a Study in Persistent Controversies," in *The Darwinian Heritage*, David Kohn (ed). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. 854.

scaring off its competition. In the end, the biggest dog goes home with the sausage. While this cartoon's treatment of evolutionary competition might be trite, it demonstrates the diffusion of evolutionary and eugenic concepts into popular culture and elucidates the way popular Chilean culture understood competition for resources in nature worked. Finally, this cartoon shows Chileans that only the strong survive in the struggle for life.

This attitude flew in the face of Catholic teaching and practice. Catholics did not believe that being ill suited for competition indicated a lack of eugenic fitness. Instead cooperation, through charitable works, was central to Catholic recommendations for resolving the social question. This emphasis on charity was one of the most important divides between Catholic and secular social reformers who wanted to use eugenics to address social problems. In the first half of the twentieth century, some secular Chilean eugenicists began to argue that Darwinian evolutionary theory proved that charity was not only useless, but verged on cruel. This position not only served to discredit Catholic charitable organizations such as hospitals, orphanages, and schools that had existed in Chile for almost a century, it also sought to curtail Catholic influence in the political debates about the social question. Catholic reformers countered these arguments, stating that while Darwinian evolutionary theory was faulty, Lamarckian evolutionary principles were sound. Thus, the field of eugenic science in Chile was turned into a battleground between experts who ultimately agreed that eugenics must be used to modernize the social order, but disagreed in their scientific ideologies.

Skepticism regarding the possibility of evolutionary theory was not restricted to the upper echelons of Catholic intellectuals. The popular classes in Chile also were aware of this debate. The photo below, which also appeared in *Zig-Zag*, demonstrated the

incredulity many Chileans felt at the idea that humans and primates shared a common ancestry (see Figure 5). Both children respond to the spider monkey in animal-like ways themselves. Their faces mirror that of the monkey. The photograph alone might be interpreted to suggest that evolution was a valid scientific theory by showing the facial similarities of the children and the monkey. However, when combined with the caption, “Could this be our cousin?” it implied the absurdity of evolutionary theory. These children bare no actual resemblance to the monkey that they are, in all likelihood, tormenting. Rather, their exaggerated mugs only point out the vast difference between humans and primates. The fact that the title of the photo was a question, rather



Figure 5: F. de N. Krizwan, “Este será nuestro primo?” *Zig-Zag*, no. 7 (April 2, 1905). The children aping the monkey are meant to emphasize the absurdity of premising that humans evolved from lesser animals. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

than a statement, contributed all the more to the idea that evolution was not a creditable

scientific theory.²¹⁹ Therefore, it is clear that the anti-evolution position of some Chilean intellectuals was also understood on a popular level. It is important to remember that the elite debates regarding evolution and eugenics were intimately linked to real world issues such as hunger, poverty, and venereal disease. As such, popular notions of eugenics affected what social phenomena were identified as problems by both elite reformers and the people they sought to help.

Chilean Eugenics: Local and Transnational Ideologies

Debates about eugenic expertise often focused on what eugenic science actually was or the terminology that experts used. Both secular and Catholic Chilean social reformers typically cited Francis Galton's definition of eugenics as the most accurate. This definition was available in the English-language text, *An Introduction to Eugenics* (1912), by the British scientists William Cecil Dampier Whetham and Catherine Durning Whetham. Galton defined eugenics as, "the study of agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations either physically or mentally."²²⁰ This definition did not mention competition for resources as a part of eugenic considerations. Rather, it focused on the social institutions that had an effect on human development. Whetham and Whetham continued on to say that,

As thus defined, the subject [eugenics] includes the study of all agencies which have racial importance, whether those agencies are concerned with nature or with nurture, that is, with the natural qualities and gifts implanted in mankind by heredity, or with the development or suppression of those qualities or gifts by the outward circumstances of the life either of the individual or his parents. In other

²¹⁹ F. de N. Krizwan. "Este será nuestro primo?" *Zig-Zag*, no. 7 (April 2, 1905): 16. 16.

²²⁰ W.C.D. Whetham and C.D. Whetham. *An Introduction to Eugenics*. London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1912. 1.

words, it includes the study of the influence on race both of heredity and environment.²²¹

This definition was especially important for Chilean Catholic involvement in, and acceptance of, eugenics. Because eugenics was concerned with environment as well as heredity, Catholics felt that they had a place in debates regarding how to improve Chilean society. After all, they had been responsible for alleviating environmental factors in eugenic development for centuries through their charitable institutions. The focus on the environment also better fit with Lamarckian evolutionary theory, to which Catholics were more open.

Whetham and Whetham's work, however, was also problematic for eugenicists who favored environmental reform efforts. The authors did not value the impact of environment in the same way that they did heredity. They argued that, "Galton satisfied himself that heredity was far more powerful than environment...Hence Eugenics is concerned chiefly, though not exclusively, with the study of heredity and its bearing on social problems."²²² For them, heredity was far more important to eugenics than was the environment. However, Whetham and Whetham recognized that the connections between inheritable traits such as intelligence or dependability and social problems like poverty were complicated. In this concession, they allowed space for eugenicists who focused on environmental factors to play a role in the discipline. This illuminates how, even among more hard-line eugenicists, the boundary between environment and heredity was blurry. In Chile, this meant Catholics had space to use eugenic arguments to weigh in on the social question.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

Perhaps most important to the development of a Catholic eugenics in Chile was Whetham and Whetham's own recognition that some religious development was necessary for the, "successful evolution of human society."²²³ This admission demonstrated that religion and morality still mattered greatly to hard-line eugenicists, even if they believed that the environment was not terribly important to eugenic progress. A society with no moral compass whatsoever gave them pause. They were not alone in this. Many eugenicists who advocated a strictly secular approach to science and government welfare programming did not go so far as to condemn religion outright. They believed religious thinking was important to general social order. Not only that, but religious instruction encouraged a belief in the collective good that was vital to the success of any eugenic program in Chile or elsewhere.²²⁴ In this grey area, Chilean Catholic intellectuals flourished.

While Chilean eugenicists created their own form of eugenic science, this was in conversation with developments in the North Atlantic eugenic community. Lothrop Stoddard's *The Revolt Against Civilization: The Menace of the Under Man* (1922) arrived in Chile (as *La amenaza del sub-hombre*) in 1923. It was translated by Dr. Lucas Sierra to acquaint Chileans with foreign eugenic trends.²²⁵ Foreign eugenic monographs were available in Chile and to the Chileans who were interested in foreign eugenic discourse. Specifically, Stoddard's book was originally published in the national daily newspaper, *El Mercurio*, making it available for widespread public consumption on the part of the

²²³ Ibid 61.

²²⁴ Nathan Hallanger. "Eugenics and the Question of Religion," in *The Evolution of Evil*. Gaymon Bennett, et al (eds). Gottingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008. 307.

²²⁵ José María Caro R. "Conferencia sobre el origen del hombre dada por el Sr. Obispo D. José María Caro R.," *La Revista Católica*, no. 370 (January 6, 1917): 5-19. 16.

Chilean populace as well.²²⁶ Even the most extreme forms of negative eugenic science were available for Chilean scientists and intellectuals to debate, illuminating how transnational eugenic discourse circulated in the country. The fact that negative eugenics was not practiced in Chile shows how Catholicism at the local level influenced the reception of North Atlantic texts and ideologies.

One of the ways that Stoddard's book was unsuccessful in popularizing negative eugenics in Chile was his emphasis on whiteness. Stoddard's argument was influenced by his belief in the protection and supremacy of whiteness as central to the practice of eugenic science, "the inconvenience that we encounter at effecting, thanks to the advancements and progress of modern medicine, a social, charitable and pious selection,--without permitting nature to affect it, as it did in previous times, natural selection,--that which drives us in many cases to not protect the most fit but the contrary."²²⁷ Stoddard was not unusual in his belief that social welfare programming did not solve social problems. What is striking is that Sierra tacitly agreed to this assessment by translating Stoddard's work. As a surgeon and government worker who proposed government social welfare programs to resolve this social question, this seems out of character. Sierra's translation and dissemination of this work showed that he was not necessarily convinced that social reform would fix all of Chile's social problems. However, Sierra's opinion on this matter was not popular among other Chilean social reformers.

²²⁶ Ibid 15-16.

²²⁷ Lothrop Stoddard. *La amenaza del sub-hombre*, Lucas Sierra (trans). Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1923. 11. "...el inconveniente que afrontamos al estar efectuando, merced a los adelantos y progresos de la medicina moderna, una selección social, caritativa y de piedad,--sin permitir que la naturaleza efectúe, como en tiempos pretéritos, la selección natural,--lo que nos conduce en muchísimos casos no a conservar al más apto sino por el contrario..."

Stoddard's work was also important because, though he was a relatively traditional eugenicist, he believed in the power of environment to affect change. "The environment has much less importance to man than it does to inferior animals. This fact is of enormous importance."²²⁸ As a strict Darwinist, he should not have posited that the environment affected animals differently than it did humans. Rather, the environment ought to have had the same influence for all living organisms. Stoddard's argument illuminated how, even among hard-line eugenicists, ideas about the impact of the environment on evolution were muddled, allowing a wider interpretation of evolutionary proofs.²²⁹ His statement also shows that he believed there was an important difference between humans and animals, even if evolution applied to them both. This meant Catholic eugenicists who preferred Lamarckism could comfortably enter into debates about social reform with equally meaningful scientific data to back their position.

By the 1930s, the foreign texts that arrived in Chile were mostly concerned with what North Atlantic eugenicists considered to be Latin American confusion about how evolution and heredity actually worked together. Leonard Darwin's *¿Qué es la eugenesia?* was designed to address this concern. One of Charles Darwin's sons, Leonard Darwin spent his early life as a soldier and then became a politician in the 1890s. In 1911, he succeeded his cousin Francis Galton as the Chairman of the British Eugenic

²²⁸ Ibid. "El medio ambiente tiene mucho menos importancia en el hombre que en los animales inferiores. Este hecho es de una enorme importancia."

²²⁹ Stoddard also mentions how important scientific proofs are to modern times. "En otras edades se buscó la verdad en los labios de los visionarios y de los profetas; en nuestra época se la busca en la prueba científica." 38.

Society and remained in that position until 1928.²³⁰ *What is Eugenics?* was originally published in London in 1928 and was published in Santiago in 1930. Swiss anthropologist Eugene Pittard wrote the introduction for the version that issued in Chile. Pittard was a professor at the University of Geneva and became famous for his study of skulls from a variety of European cultures. In his introduction, Pittard stated that, “This little book by Darwin is simple, clear and well organized, therefore, accessible to everyone, even the least informed reader. My wish would be that it amply diffuse among Latin peoples, where eugenic concerns have been less established.”²³¹ From Pittard’s perspective, Latin eugenics was not developing properly. By introducing Darwin’s book to Latin scholars, Pittard hoped to correct this problem by explaining how heredity, evolution, and eugenics worked together.

In the book, Darwin first approached the problem regarding a lack of evidence supporting evolutionary theory. “We accept the facts [of evolution] as evident, though doubts and difficulties constantly present themselves when one tries to apply to man the knowledge we possess about animals.”²³² While he recognized that the application of laws governing animal development to human development might be difficult, he argued that this was the truth. The growing evidence that did exist and the undeniable logic of

²³⁰ A.W.F. Edwards. “Darwin, Leonard (1850-1943),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

²³¹ Eugene Pittard. “Introduction,” in Leonard Darwin, *¿Qué es la eugenesia? Modo de mejorar la Raza Humana*. Madrid: Ediciones Morata, 1930. 13. “Este librito de Leonard Darwin es sencillo, claro y bien ordenado; por tanto, accesible a todo el mundo, aun al lector menos informado. Mi deseo sería que se difundiera ampliamente entre los pueblos latinos, por ser donde las preocupaciones eugenésicas han arraigado menos.”

²³² Leonard Darwin. *¿Qué es la eugenesia? Modo de mejorar la Raza Humana*. Madrid: Ediciones Morata, 1930. 37. “Nosotros aceptamos estos hechos [de la evolución] como evidentes, si bien se presentan constantemente dudas y dificultades cuando se trata de aplicar al hombre los conocimientos que poseemos acerca de los animales.”

evolutionary theory were enough to counteract any doubts one might have regarding its validity. After all, accomplished and well recognized scientists accepted evolution as fact, once again demonstrating that science was increasingly seen as a discipline controlled by a small group of experts. When those experts reached a consensus, the debate was considered resolved. Whether common people understood, or accepted, the scientific findings was irrelevant to Darwin.

Darwin shared the opinion of Whetham and Whetham that eugenics indicated that social reform and welfare programs were useless. “If we accept the scientific truth we cannot agree with the opinion that care and education given to man constitute a practical method of improving the race.”²³³ Allowing undesirables to continue to survive on government handouts did nothing to help them, nor did it help the race. Rather, it allowed unfit individuals to thrive, ultimately weakening the race. To combat this, Darwin recommended two methods of discouraging undesirables from having children. The first was moral suasion; the second, legislation. He argued that persuasion was always preferable to imposing upon the rights of individuals.²³⁴ However, he was not completely opposed to the use of legal force if it were necessary.

This of course raised issues about what was appropriate intervention into the private lives and reproductive decisions of individuals. Darwin responded by writing, “It is clear that locking up a human is repugnant to us at an instinctive level, because of the fact that all of us aspire to be free; but, in reality can we really call a mental defective

²³³ Ibid 42. “Si aceptamos la verdad científica no se puede estar de acuerdo con la opinión de que los cuidados y educación dados al hombre constituyen un método práctico de mejora de la raza.”

²³⁴ Ibid 80.

free?”²³⁵ Though he was writing about the incarceration of mentally challenged individuals, this premise could be expanded to apply to any unfit individuals. By virtue of one’s status as unfit Darwin argued that one was not truly free to make his or her own decisions. In these cases, then, it ought not be a concern that government experts compelled individuals to accept eugenic intervention into their private lives. After all, stipulated Darwin, “Each and every one of us suffers the consequences that derive from the presets of *incapables* and *inferiors*.”²³⁶ Social problems and unfit individuals affected the whole nation in a negative way. Thus, it was the responsibility of the government to monitor these individuals.

Secular Chilean scientists were also confronted with how to resolve eugenics, which focused on the comparison and competition of individuals, with social reform, which focused on improving the lives of all Chileans collectively. Bernardino Quijada Burr, a professor of the natural sciences, who served as director of the zoology and botany division of the Museo Nacional, and was a self-proclaimed Darwinist, explored these issues in two books, *Curso de Zoolojía* and *La teoría de la evolución*.²³⁷ *Curso de Zoolojía* (1913) included humans in the same table as primates and other mammals, showing that he believed humans were a part of the evolutionary process.²³⁸ However, it

²³⁵ Ibid 117-118. “Claro está que el encerrar un ser humano nos repugna de manera instintiva, por el hecho de que todos aspiramos a la libertad; pero ¿es que en realidad puede darse el nombre de *libre* a un débil mental aun cuando esté en libertad?”

²³⁶ Ibid 161. “Todos y cada uno de nosotros sufrimos las consecuencias que se derivan de la presencia de *incapaces* e *inferiores*.”

²³⁷ Carlos Pinto Duran (ed). *Diccionario Personal de Chile*. Santiago de Chile: Imp. Claret, 1921. 210-211.

²³⁸ Bernardino Quijada Burr. *Curso de Zoolojía*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Universitaria, 1913. 115.

was clear that humans were the pinnacle of that process and held a special place in the natural world. Considering humans to be *special animals* allowed Quijada Burr to straddle the supposed divide between eugenics and social reform. While animals were always subject to the Darwinian laws of selection, Lamarckian laws could apply to humans. This conceded that environment did seem to play a role in how humans developed more than it did for animals.

Quijada Burr argued that Darwinian evolutionary theory was supported by the numerous morphological similarities between certain species and an increasingly complete fossil record.²³⁹ Yet, he recognized that there were certain obstacles standing in the way of general, popular Chilean acceptance of evolutionary theory. One such difficulty was the, “Impossibility of explaining with natural selection, the differentiation of purely morphological characteristics.”²⁴⁰ While environmental factors might explain the development of certain forms and structures in biology natural selection did not. Quijada Burr noted that it was easy to find morphological similarities between organisms that developed in similar environments, but that did not necessarily guarantee that those similarities arose from natural selection. In fact, the similarities of organic structures might actually imply that environment played a more important role in deciding how new traits emerged than natural selection or heredity.

Another problem facing Quijada Burr when trying to popularize Darwinism in Chile was that it was very hard to find visible proof of evolution at work. “It is impossible to prove by *direct* observation, the certainty of evolutionary theory of *wild*

²³⁹ Bernardino Quijada Burr. *La teoría de la evolución*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Universitaria, 1917. 7.

²⁴⁰ Ibid 8. “Imposibilidad de explicar mediante la selección natural, la diferenciación de los caracteres puramente morfológicos...”

animals, because for the transformation of organic forms under the natural conditions of life, one needs time lapses that do not allow man to confirm the variations that have happened in organisms.”²⁴¹ Darwinian evolution required thousands of years for a new trait to develop and even longer to differentiate a new species. Therefore, there was no direct observable data that scientists could collect to prove evolution was occurring at all. Lack of observable proof went against standard scientific practice in the period, which lauded the scientific method of experimentation and direct observation.²⁴² Quijada Burr was not the only scientist to accept Darwinism without this sort of proof, but his acceptance of Darwinian evolutionary theory demonstrates how the practice of science itself had begun to change. Common sense and direct observation that any person could do (theoretically) were starting to lose ground to the belief that scientific expertise was specialized and limited to a select few.

Quijada Burr also felt that too many Chileans disagreed with Darwinian evolution on religious grounds. But he explained that religion and evolution were not mutually exclusive. He wrote, “This idea that an *evolution* or gradual progressive development of the species in the diverse paleontological ages, is a very ancient philosophical concept and it has never invaded religious terrain nor has it ever pretended to alter the essence of

²⁴¹ Ibid 78. “Imposible es comprobar por la observación *directa*, la certeza de la teoría de la evolución de los *seres silvestres*; porque para la transformación de la formas orgánicas bajo condiciones naturales de la vida, se exigen lapsos de tiempo de que no dispone el hombre para constatar las variaciones que en los organismos se han operado.”

²⁴² Edward J. Larson. *Summer for the Gods: the Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion*. New York: Basic Books, 1997. Larson argues that William Jennings Bryant was ultimately unsuccessful in his case against John Thomas Scopes because he did not recognize that the practice of science had changed. He contends that Jennings Bryant clung to the scientific method, while the scientific community and the American people had increasingly accepted that science was meant for experts.

the sacred books, as is generally believed.”²⁴³ Quijada Burr argued that the idea that species became more complicated over time was one that had existed long before Darwin. It was proven in the fossil record and the historical record that species had changed or gone extinct. For him, this bore no relation to religious faith or practice. As such, he felt Chilean Catholics could accept Darwinian evolutionary theory with no difficulty.

He specifically noted that the work of Saint Augustine of Hippo connected religious thinking to evolutionary theory. Quijada Burr argued that Saint Augustine posited that the word “day” in Genesis was meant to imply an incalculable amount of time. This allowed for Catholic cosmologies to include evolutionary theory. He also argued that Saint Augustine believed that life on Earth evolved from “original germs” which were created by God.²⁴⁴ According to Quijada Burr, Christian thinkers already accepted that evolution from simple to complex life forms occurred. He felt contended that religious objections to evolution were misplaced. In fact, he stated, religious men had actually been arguing for centuries that something like evolution existed, Chilean Catholics simply needed to be reminded of what their own thinkers wrote. This was a rather unusual position among secular scientists, but it suggests that there was enough flexibility in the science to allow for religious interpretations of the same facts.

While Quijada Burr believed that Catholics did not accept evolutionary theory, many Chilean Catholic intellectuals of the period did believe in evolution and discussed it

²⁴³ Quijada Burr, *Evolución*, 9. “Esta idea de una *evolución* o desarrollo progresivo gradual de las especies en las diversas edades paleontológicas, es un concepto filosófico muy antiguo i nunca ha invadido el terreno religioso ni jamás ha pretendido alterar el sentido de los libros sagrados, como se cree generalmente.”

²⁴⁴ *Ibid* 10.

in much the same terms he did. In an article in *La Revista Católica* appearing in the same year as Quijada Burr's book, José María Caro R. wrote, "we do not reject an evolutionary movement that has God at its origin, Supreme Being, independently intelligent, *we do not reject that living organisms have been born from inorganic material, but obeying the creative will of God.*"²⁴⁵ Caro R.'s argument was almost exactly that of Saint Augustine's original germs. His article demonstrates that some Chilean Catholics accepted the premise that life arose from inert material, much like scientists of the period did. However, Catholic scientists attributed evolution to the power of God, whereas secular scientists believed evolution was the result of a random series of events.

To combat this latter belief, Caro R. argued that believing in a rational form of evolution actually proved God's existence.²⁴⁶ After all, if one accepted that humans were the ultimate expression of evolutionary development, as Quijada Burr seemed to, then there had to be some sort of ordering force or principle to the evolutionary process. Humans were so clearly the pinnacle of the evolutionary process, this could not have happened at random. Human reason affirmed humanity's uniqueness among the various forms of life on Earth and this implied the existence of a divine plan and creator. Human exceptionalism created common ground because very few intellectuals, secular or religious, could accept the idea that humans were not the ultimate and intended goal of evolution.

Though secular and Catholic scientists agreed that humans were special, there was still disagreement about the mechanisms of evolution. Materialism, the belief that the

²⁴⁵ Caro R. 6. "...no rechazamos un movimiento de evolución que tiene por principio a Dios, Ser Supremo, soberanamente inteligente, *no rechazamos que los organismos vivientes hayan nacido de la materia inorgánica, pero obedeciendo a la voluntad creadora de Dios...*"

²⁴⁶ Ibid 7.

universe was the result of random and unpredictable interactions between matter, was not something Catholic intellectuals could accept. Returning to evolutionary theory, Caro R. used the term “materialist” to discuss those individuals who believed evolution was the result of random chance. This terminology was widely used among Catholic intellectuals at the time in denouncing strict Darwinian evolution and the eugenic reforms growing from it. Materialists were often the reformers who favored the most uncompromising negative eugenic measures to resolve the social question. Caro R. disagreed with materialist philosophy most strongly on this point. Materialism proposed that all matter in the universe was subject to the same laws, making human beings not unique and thus incapable of truly managing social problems. This went against the religious ideal that all humans are inherently free and can make choices based on rational thought.²⁴⁷ Though Catholics believed in a divine plan, they also stressed that the free will of the individual and the dignity of the human person were central to this larger plan. This explains the potential for confrontation between eugenics and Catholic thinking. Eugenics proposed that no one was free from their hereditary make-up and, as a result, people should be monitored and controlled by outside parties in order to reproduce effectively. This was in conflict with virtually all Catholic teachings regarding free will, family and marriage.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ Ibid 12.

²⁴⁸ For an analysis of free will in relationship to marriage partners, see: Patricia Seed. *To Love, Honor, and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts Over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988. Ann Twinam. *Public Lives, Private Citizens: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. For general discussions of how Catholicism conceptualized human agency in relationship to God’s plan see: Margaret Chowning. *Rebellious Nuns: The Troubled History of a Mexican Convent, 1752-1863*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Jacques Maritain. *The Rights of Man and Natural Law*. New York: Scribner, 1943. Pamela Voekel. *Alone Before God: the Religious Origins of Modern Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002.

Additionally, secular and Catholic social reformers disagreed about who these outside parties would be.

Most Chilean Catholic social reformers placed a premium on the role environment played in the development of the individual and the race. Julio Restat C. wrote in his 1924 article, “El evolucionismo frente a la existencia de Dios demostrada por el origen de la vida,” “Lamarckism considers the organism as active; Darwinism, merely passive; Lamarckism is vitalist; Darwinism materialist.”²⁴⁹ Appearing in *La Revista Católica*, this series of articles showed that Catholic thinkers did not object to evolutionary ideas outright. Instead, they believed that the primary factor in evolutionary development was environment, not heredity. The emphasis on vitalism, or the ideology that all living things are inherently different from non-living things based on the possession of a special energy that some argued was the soul, also further proved that human and animal life was the result of a divine plan. Finally, emphasis on the environment allowed for the existence of charitable social institutions and, in fact, supported the idea that they were necessary to the advancement and perfection of the race.

To support this, Restat C. wrote that heredity was not important to the evolution of traits but, rather, was only the means by which traits were transmitted from parent to offspring.²⁵⁰ This meant that environment was much more important to the evolution and progress of the human species. Yet he also cautioned against believing that environment

²⁴⁹ Julio Restat C. “ESTUDIOS FILOSÓFICOS-El evolucionismo frente a la existencia de Dios demostrada por el origen de la vida,” Article 2 *La Revista Católica*, no. 550 (July 5, 1924): 24-37. 25. “...el Lamarckismo considera el organismo activo; el Darwinismo, meramente pasivo; el Lamarckismo es vitalista; el Darwinismo materialista.”

²⁵⁰ *Ibid* 26.

alone could affect human evolution. “But to no one is it hidden that the environment alone is enough and it is not capable of developing existing aptitudes and far from producing them. It is to exaggerate the influence of the environment to believe them capable of creating species.”²⁵¹ While the environment played an important role in human evolution, it was God that ultimately controlled this process. Restat C. argued that an organ as complex as the human eye could not develop from the random process of use and disuse of organs that Lamarck proposed.²⁵² Nor could Darwin’s natural selection be held responsible for the creation of an entirely new species.²⁵³ These developments and the apparent perfection of organisms in nature proved the existence of a divine creator.

In addition to championing the role of the environment, Restat C. specifically attacked Darwinian evolutionary theory. He argued that the theory was flawed because the strong did not always survive. Dinosaurs, seemingly quite strong animals, did not survive.²⁵⁴ This indicated that natural selection, as envisioned by Darwin, did not function. Second, Darwin stated that the variations in a given individual trait were very small. If they were so small, then how could they be said to offer any advantage at all?²⁵⁵ In this light, natural selection could not possibly occur because there was no new trait to select. Finally, he mentioned that there was still no observable proof of natural selection

²⁵¹ Ibid 29. “Pero a nadie se le oculta que el ambiente por sí solo no basta y no es capaz sino de desarrollar aptitudes ya existentes lejos de producirlas. Es exagerar la influencia de los medios creerlos tan poderosos para atribuirles la creación de las especies.”

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid. “La selección o elección de los procreadores y otros diferentes factores han producido una nueva variedad o raza; pero jamás se ha logrado constituir una nueva especie.” 31.

²⁵⁴ Ibid 32.

²⁵⁵ Ibid 35.

at work.²⁵⁶ Restat C. argued that those who did believe in Darwinian evolution had misinterpreted the evidence available to them. “The important thing is, as said Lamarck, the father of Evolutionism, not to confuse the watch with the watchmaker, nature with its author, the effect with its cause.”²⁵⁷ The apparent perfection of nature did not prove the existence of a set of natural laws, but the existence of a divine order created by a supernatural force.

Secular Chilean eugenicists were not concerned about proving the existence of God. In fact, they often blamed the relative failure to institute or legislate eugenic programs and measures on Catholic preoccupation with religious issues. Luis Hernández Alfonso’s *Eugenesia y Derecho a Vivir* (1933) argued against what he perceived to be Catholic opposition to eugenic legislation. “We are not, nor can be we enemies of Eugenics; but we are supporters of justice; and as both are compatible... We believe the Church’s (or better said its ministers) opposition to the eugenic campaign is stupid.”²⁵⁸ This statement implied that Catholic clergy members were wrong headed in their active blocking of eugenic legislation efforts. Hernández Alfonso’s statement showed how secular intellectuals used Catholic objections to certain aspects of negative eugenics as a heuristic tool to discredit all Catholic efforts at eugenic social reform. Secular writers

²⁵⁶ Julio Restat C. “ESTUDIOS FILOSÓFICOS-El evolucionismo Frente a la existencia de Dios demostrada por el origen de la vida,” Article 3, *La Revista Católica*, no. 552 (August 2, 1924): 163-172. 163.

²⁵⁷ Julio Restat C. “ESTUDIOS FILOSÓFICOS-El evolucionismo Frente a la existencia de Dios demostrada por el origen de la vida,” Article 4, *La Revista Católica*, no. 553 (August 16, 1924): 250-257. 257. “...lo que interesa es, como decía Lamarck, el padre del Evolucionismo, no confundir el reloj con el relojero, la naturaleza con su autor, el efecto con su causa...”

²⁵⁸ Luis Hernández Alfonso. *Eugenesia y Derecho a Vivir*. Madrid: Ediciones Morata, 1933. 16. “No somos, no podemos ser enemigos de la Eugenesia; pero somos partidarios de la justicia; y como ambas cosas son compatibles... Creemos estúpida la oposición hecha por la Iglesia (o mejor dicho por sus ministros) a la campaña eugenista.”

argued that Catholics categorically opposed all eugenic science and the corresponding social renewal and progress it would foster.

Hernández Alfonso was sensitive to certain difficulties eugenic reform efforts presented. He candidly discussed the challenges in controlling sexual contact between people. He argued that eugenicists typically discussed sex only in terms of reproduction and that many political liberals discussed sex as a purely pleasurable encounter. Hernández Alfonso argued, “Both interpretations are unacceptable...To suggest that the sexual act is, simply, a function to perpetuate the species, is to negate the quality that distinguishes man from beast; to affirm that the only objective of sex is pleasure, is to consider man a being apart, without being subject to the biological principles of reproduction.”²⁵⁹ He recognized that there were other factors involved in human sexual behavior than the desire for procreation or pleasure. Treating humans like animals did not recognize the complexity of human interaction and behavior. Treating sex as only a means of getting pleasure freed humans from their eugenic reproductive responsibilities. Only an awareness of the emotional and physical sexual impulses could hope to inform a responsible eugenic program. A comprehensive eugenic sexual reform program had to see and accept the complexities of human sexual behavior.

He also argued that if and when eugenicists did address the issue of sexual impulses, they discussed them in terms of trying to stamp out the spontaneity of the sexual encounter to encourage responsible reproduction. Hernández Alfonso had a very dim view of this approach. “It is a fatal error to proceed as though instincts and desires do

²⁵⁹ Ibid 53-54. “Ambas interpretaciones son inaceptables...Sostener que el acto sexual es, simplemente, una función para perpetuar la especie, es negar al hombre cualidad alguna que lo distinga de los irracionales; mas afirmar que el objetivo único de lo sexual es el placer, equivale a considerar al hombre como ser aparte, sin sometimiento a los principios biológicos de la reproducción.”

not exist...It is and will always be stupid to think that suppressing the symptoms suppresses the disease. If instinct exists, the natural thing [to do] is to adequately satisfy it.”²⁶⁰ He advocated for better understanding sexual impulses, so that they could be properly and eugenically controlled. Discussing sex only in terms of reproduction ignored the fact that most human beings engaged in sexual activities for a myriad of reasons. For Hernández Alfonso, to discuss sex only terms of reproduction actually made eugenicists no better than religious figures who advocated the same thing though for different reasons.

Where secular and Catholic social reformers fundamentally disagreed was the subject of sterilization to achieve eugenic goals. The secular academy’s position regarding sterilization and eugenics generally was somewhat open to sterilization in theory.²⁶¹ Ernesto Hechenleitner Trautmann’s undergraduate law thesis for the Universidad de Chile, *Herencia morbosa y su correctivo eugenésico* (1936), represented a favorable attitude toward sterilization. He argued that, “sterilization, is the product not of a unique principle but the consequence of scientific, social, religious, political and economic ideas of the era and current societies. It is the law of evolution that all change,

²⁶⁰ Ibid 67. “Es un error funesto proceder como si no existiesen instintos y deseos...Es y será siempre estúpido pensar que suprimiendo los síntomas se suprime el mal. Si el instinto existe, lo natural es alcanzarlo adecuadamente.”

²⁶¹ Sterilization in Chile can be contextualized in a growing global effort to manage population size. In fact, it was often a part of debates about birth control and responsible motherhood, see: Laura Briggs. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002. Matthew Connelly. *Fatal Misconception: the Struggle to Control World Population*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008. Jadwiga E. Pieper Mooney. *The Politics of Motherhood: Maternity and Women’s Right’s in Twentieth-Century Chile*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009. Rosen 2008. However, sterilization also has a negative eugenic context that was informed by the popularity of fascism and Nazism in Chile, see: P. Baccheta and Margaret Power. *Right Wing Women: From Conservatives to Extremists around the World*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Stein Ugelvik Larsen. *Fascism Outside Europe: the European Impulse against Domestic Conditions in the Diffusion of Global Fascism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

modify or transform.”²⁶² He believed that sterilization was a tool that ought to be used to improve the quality of Chilean citizens. With judicious application of sterilization, unwanted traits would be effectively weeded out much more quickly than by positive eugenic measures alone. And, as such, the need for sterilizations would subsequently diminish in a corresponding manner.²⁶³ Hechenleitner Trautmann’s thesis was primarily an analysis of the effectiveness of the German sterilization law, passed in July 1933. He contended that sterilization was the highest form of humanitarianism because it would not condemn unfit individuals to a life of hardship.²⁶⁴ Those who were unfit were not capable of adapting to modern life and its demands. Their only options were to live in poverty or die as a result of disease. Why curse them to a future of reproduction to only make more people who would suffer the same fate? For Hechenleitner Trautmann, it was more humane to prevent them from having children who would only continue this cycle of misery. This perspective was the most extreme among secular Chilean eugenicists and the most distasteful to Chilean Catholics.

Guillermo Millas Parada’s *Eugenesia y Derecho*, a thesis to receive his bachelor’s degree in law and social science from the Universidad de Chile, was more conservative regarding negative eugenic measures. He stated that eugenics (of a sort) had been practiced for thousands of years by various cultures, specifically mentioning ancient Spartan traditions as examples to demonstrate that eugenics was not a new phenomenon

²⁶² Ernesto Hechenleitner Trautmann. *Herencia morbosa y su correctivo eugenésico*. Santiago: Universidad de Chile, 1936. “...la esterilización, es un producto no resultante de un principio único sino consecuencia de las ideas científicas, sociales, religiosas, políticas y económicas de la época y sociedades actuales. Es la ley de la evolución que todo lo cambia, modifica o transforma.”

²⁶³ Ibid 55.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

and should not be considered amoral.²⁶⁵ Rather, he argued, modern eugenics was the scientific application of the principles of natural selection proven by the work of both Darwin and Lamarck to human beings.²⁶⁶ This position was striking for a number of reasons. First, Millas Parada combined the theories of Darwinian and Lamarckian evolution. Most Chilean eugenicists favored one theory or the other. Millas Parada's mixture of Lamarck and Darwin was unique among Chilean eugenicists. This position allowed him to pick and choose certain aspects of eugenics as viable in the Chilean national context.

Overall, Millas Parada did not support negative eugenics. In fact, he argued, "But reality also imposes on one the negative action of Eugenics...having to then employ energetic and cruel measures, like sterilization. On this point, without fortunate Eugenics, one easily runs the risk of failure, but one cannot reject its general aim."²⁶⁷ He believed that the end result of eugenics was too promising to shy away from potentially uncomfortable actions. Nonetheless, he considered it a failure of eugenic programming if negative eugenic measures got out of control. Negative eugenics was a tool that ought to be used only when all other positive eugenic measures had failed. The utility of negative eugenic measures, especially sterilization, could not be denied but they were distasteful to Millas Parada and many other Chilean eugenicists because of their obvious disregard for an individual's rights or well being. He felt that most effective eugenic practices relied on

²⁶⁵ Guillermo Millas Parada. *Eugenesia y Derecho*. Santiago de Chile: Empresa Periodistica <La Nacion>, S.A., 1936. 11-12.

²⁶⁶ Ibid 13.

²⁶⁷ Ibid 16. "Pero la realidad le impone también la acción negativa de la Eugenesia...teniendo entonces que emplear medidas enérgicas y cruentas, como la esterilización. En este punto, menos afortunada la Eugenesia, llega con facilidad a correr el riesgo de un fracaso, pero no por esto puede renunciar a su fin general."

individuals integrating positive eugenic teachings into their lives. As a result, he advocated for sex education for young adults.²⁶⁸ Sterilization would be unnecessary if sex education programs instructed people how to effectively select eugenic partners.

Like all secular Chilean eugenicists, Millas Parada argued that the state should intervene in the private sphere to administer positive eugenic programs. “It is a juridical axiom that in all Legal conflicts that which represents the most general interest must triumph. It is therefore evident that the interests of society in this case, must take precedence over the interests of each defective individual.”²⁶⁹ While expressed in a more diplomatic way, this position is not far from those of Leonard Darwin, Stoddard and Hechenleitner Trautmann. The threat that an unfit individual posed to the rest of society made it the responsibility of the Chilean state to manage that person. This created a situation in which state intervention into the private sphere of the family to monitor the reproductive health and choices of all people, but especially women, became the ideal goal of eugenics. After all, Millas Parada stated that marriage was not just between a man and woman but was also about the children they would produce.²⁷⁰ To this end, he argued that the best way to ensure that offspring would be protected was by requiring a medical examination prior to getting married for both parties.²⁷¹ While Millas Parada was hesitant to support negative eugenic reforms, his acceptance and encouragement of government

²⁶⁸ Ibid 17.

²⁶⁹ Ibid 19. “Es un axioma jurídico el de que en todo conflicto de Derecho debe triunfar aquel que representa un interés más general. Resulta entonces evidente que el interés de la sociedad en este caso, debe colocarse por encima del interés de cada individuo tarado.”

²⁷⁰ Ibid 55.

²⁷¹ Ibid 69. Allende also proposed legislation requiring a prenuptial certificate of health in November of 1939 This was designed to decrease the spread of venereal disease. Stepan 1991.

oversight of domestic life and sexuality demonstrated how many secular eugenicists in Chile felt the social question would be resolved with the application of eugenic principles.

The hostility secular eugenicists had for Catholic eugenics was palpable. As a result, most Catholics who believed that eugenics could renew Chilean society had a hard time convincing popular audiences of their commitment to eugenics. Appearing in *Estudios* in 1936, Roberto Barahona's "Los Católicos ante el problema científico de la Eugenesia" tried to address this issue. "This is not a capricious affirmation on my part: I do not believe I err if I maintain that in more than 95% of the books, magazines and conferences that exist in Santiago, on eugenics, the Catholic Church appears as the receptacle of obscurity, stubbornness and wickedness."²⁷² Barahona was displeased by the image of the Church being propagated by secular detractors. He made an effort to show that the Church did not object to eugenics as a whole, but rather select aspects of it, "the Church is the best help to Eugenics, in that, it defends the familial institution, it oversees the economic-social rights of the lower classes and it consecrates the activity of many of its best men for the healthy education of the youth, it makes Eugenics true, solid and disinterested."²⁷³ For Barahona, the Church was the only institution capable of making eugenics work effectively in Chile. It already had centuries of experience dealing with the private lives of Chileans and running the necessary social programming. Most

²⁷² Roberto Barahona. "Los Católicos ante el problema científico de la Eugenesia," *Estudios*, no. 47 (October 15, 1936): 35-45. 36-37. "No es ésta una afirmación antojadiza de mi parte: creo no equivocarme si sostengo que en más del 95% de los libros, revistas y conferencias que se conocen en Santiago, sobre la [eugenesia], la Iglesia Católica aparece como el receptáculo del obscurantismo, la testarudez y la maldad."

²⁷³ Ibid 37. "...la Iglesia es la mejor ayuda de la Eugenesia, por cuanto, al defender la institución familiar, al velar por los derechos económico-sociales de las clases desvalidas y al consagrar la actividad de muchos de sus mejores hombres a la educación sana de la juventud, hace Eugenesia verdadera, sólida y desinteresada."

importantly, eugenics was a science that required a moral guide to properly apply its principles.

Barahona believed that the duty of Catholic eugenicists was to ensure that negative eugenics was never practiced. “Instead, the Church intervenes and is obligated to do so, when certain eugenic methods try to be applied, that signify a loss of human freedom. And this does not mean that she negates the foundations of Eugenics nor its utility.”²⁷⁴ Barahona stipulated that it was up to the Church to protect the free will and bodily integrity of its followers above all else. As such, Catholic eugenicists spoke out against abortion, birth control and sterilization because they were artificial interventions into natural, God-given bodily processes.²⁷⁵ This was wrong because it was the responsibility of governments and social institutions, like the Church, to provide the means for all individuals to realize their full hereditary potential.²⁷⁶ Barahona meant that if an individual wanted to have a child then that person was allowed to, regardless of their eugenic fitness. It was their God-given right. No force, particularly legal force, could change this.

I believe, instead, that robust Eugenics is born from a conscientious nation, patriotic and Christian; from a nation that has renewed internally, by the perfecting of each individual. I believe in Eugenics that results in the millionaire that complies with his duties, not just of charity, but of social justice also... I believe in Eugenics of honorable governments, whose sobriety and justice make the people believe in the existence of virtue; finally, I believe in priestly Eugenics,

²⁷⁴ Ibid 40. “En cambio, la Iglesia interviene, y está obligada a hacerlo, cuando se trata de aplicar determinados métodos eugénicos, que significan una pérdida de la libertad humana... Y esto no quiere decir que ella niegue las bases de la Eugenesia ni su utilidad...”

²⁷⁵ Ibid 40.

²⁷⁶ Ibid 44.

which upon drawing the sign of the Cross in absolution, uplifts the fallen man and launches to the world a New son of God.²⁷⁷

This was Barahona's summation of what the Catholic approach to eugenics should be in Chile. Eugenics was a valid science that complemented Catholic doctrine to restore man from his fallen position. As such, neither could function without the other. In fact, both were necessary so that the Church could administer to the fallen responsibly. The discourse surrounding the social question had been so imbued with scientific language, even Catholic reformers used it to support their position.

Barahona rejected the idea that the Church was anti-science. "Those hordes do not have, then, scientific or moral authority to say that the Church opposes scientific advancement, much less when they owe to Mendel, Augustinian friar from Moravia, the discovery of the laws of genetics."²⁷⁸ He felt it was entirely unfair that secular eugenicists touted Mendel as an impeccable scientist while they ignored the fact that he was a monk. According to Barahona, these secular individuals were being disingenuous with themselves and their intellectual acolytes. Christianity had always been linked to scientific developments, particularly the field of eugenics, which depended on the work of religious men like Mendel.

By the early 1940s, intellectuals who favored eugenics had not drastically changed their opinions. In Amanda Grossi Aninat's monograph, *Eugenesia y su*

²⁷⁷ Ibid 45. "Creo, en cambio, en la Eugenesia robusta que nace de una nación consciente, patriota y cristiana; de una nación que se ha renovado interiormente, por el perfeccionamiento de cada individuo. Creo en la Eugenesia que realiza el millonario que cumple con sus deberes, no sólo de caridad, sino también de justicia social...creo en la Eugenesia de los gobiernos honrados, cuya sobriedad y justicia hacen creer al pueblo en la existencia de la virtud; creo, finalmente, en la Eugenesia del sacerdote, que al trazar el signo de la Cruz en la absolución, levanta a un hombre caído y lanza al mundo un Nuevo hijo de Dios."

²⁷⁸ Ibid 38. "Esas hordas no tienen, pues, autoridad científica ni moral para decir que la Iglesia se opone al avance de las ciencias; mucho menos cuando se deben a Mendel, fraile agustino de Moravia, el descubrimiento de las leyes de la genética..."

legislación (1941), we see a recapitulation of arguments that had been made since the 1910s. She argued against the idea that eugenics was only negative, “For many Eugenics is just about the elimination of the unfit (negative eugenics), but it is not like that, even in its eagerness for perfection of the race, it tries to encourage unions under the prism of the species, seeking to protect the physical integrity of the fruit to benefit the collective by a conscious and directed selection (positive eugenics).”²⁷⁹ It is likely that Grossi Aninat had to remind her readers about the positive aspects to eugenics because by 1941 information about Nazi abuse of eugenic legislation had started to leak out of Germany. Due to this news, she recognized many potential weaknesses in evolutionary theory and eugenics. These weaknesses were most often the ones mentioned by Catholic eugenicists as well. “However, in spite of his fascinating theory, Darwin did not manage to explain why selection does not always produce new and set forms and, how once the selective action is over, many times the [trait] returns to the starting point.”²⁸⁰ Grossi Aninat accepted the fact that natural selection did not seem to explain all the developments in the animal kingdom. In addition, “No constituye, en ningún caso, la herencia una concepción ideal, matemática, complicándose su desenvolvimiento a medida que ascendemos de los seres más simples a los más complicados como es el hombre.”²⁸¹ Grossi Aninat demonstrated that heredity as a concept was probably not enough to explain all the

²⁷⁹ Amanda Grossi Aninat. *Eugenesia y su legislación*. Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1941. 12. “Para muchos la Eugenesia sólo lleva por fin la eliminación de los incapaces (eugenesia negativa), pero no es así, pese en su afán de perfeccionamiento de la raza, procura alentar las uniones bajo un prisma de especie, buscando de resguardar la integridad física del fruto en beneficio de la colectividad por una selección consciente y hasta dirigida (eugenesia positiva).”

²⁸⁰ Ibid 19. “Sin embargo, a pesar de la fascinación de su teoría, Darwin no conseguía explicar por qué la selección no produce siempre formas fijas y nuevas y que, una vez cesada la acción selectiva, se volvía muchas veces al punto de partida.”

²⁸¹ Ibid 23.

developments of an individual human being. While she supported eugenics herself, she was well aware of the various objections raised by Catholic intellectuals and shared some of these concerns.

Grossi Aninat also shared typical opinions secular eugenicists held. This was best illustrated by her belief in innate racial characteristics that placed white races at the top of a racial hierarchy. For example, black skin protected individuals from the strong tropical sun; sebaceous glands in Eskimos protected them from harsh cold; intelligence allowed Europeans to take part in commerce and adventure.²⁸² This was a typical opinion because it reads racist conceptions of the differences between races into a scientific register. It also demonstrated a strong belief in the idea that even humans adapted to their environments.

What was new in Grossi Aninat's monograph was an attempt to reconcile eugenics with morality. "Upon analyzing the foundations of eugenic laws, we must touch a very delicate and debated point: Morality. The law and morality pursue the same objective, injustice, or, the conforming of our will or actions with the natural or written law."²⁸³ While she did not necessarily mean that the Catholic Church should intervene in eugenics, a certain level of morality needed to be maintained for Chileans to progress responsibly. Eugenic social reform depended on morality, particularly continence and self-sacrifice on the part of the individual, in order to properly function. As a result, Grossi Aninat was reluctant to completely write off the utility of moral thinking and institutions.

²⁸² Ibid 30-31.

²⁸³ Ibid 74. "Al analizar los fundamentos de las leyes eugénicas, tenemos que tocar un punto muy delicado y discutido: la Moral. El derecho y la moral persiguen un mismo objeto, la justicia, o sea, la conformidad de nuestra voluntad o de nuestras acciones con la ley natural o escrita."

She did, however, disagree with the Catholic Church's position regarding sterilization. "The Roman Church has pronounced itself against the imposition of a practice of this kind [sterilization] in the encyclical 'Casti Connubii' in which it explicitly manifests that the German sterilization law is contrary to the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church."²⁸⁴ It is telling that Grossi Aninat had it backwards. *Casti Connubii* was published in December 1930, while the German sterilization law was passed in 1933. In no way was the Catholic Church responding to German actions. The Church had already assessed eugenic reproduction and found it to be against the tenets of Catholic faith. This oversight by Grossi Aninat aptly shows how secular critics of Catholic social reform would shift the discourse of eugenics to their advantage. She argued that Catholics had made a blanket statement against eugenic reproduction control and that this position did not correctly interpret the variety of sensitive issues resulting from allowing unfit individuals to procreate. Instead, she felt that if Chile chose to institute a sterilization law, it ought only be used in very specific cases to prevent abuse in contrast to what had occurred in Germany.²⁸⁵ This position regarding eugenics represents a fairly typical secular Chilean interpretation of how eugenics could be used in the Chilean context to further progress. It mixed religious and secular ideals to make eugenics palatable to almost all secular Chilean social reformers.

²⁸⁴ Ibid 149. "La Iglesia romana se ha pronunciado en contra de la imposición de una práctica de esta naturaleza en la encíclica 'Casti Connubi' en que manifiesta explícitamente que la esterilización introducida por la ley alemana es contraria a los dogmas de la Iglesia Católica Romana."

²⁸⁵ Ibid 156.

Anti-Eugenic Responses in Chile

The previous section demonstrates that both secular and Catholic intellectuals interpreted evolution and eugenics in a variety of different ways. That said, the previous actors all supported the contention that eugenics was the only way to resolve the social question in Chile. This was not, however, a unanimous opinion among Chilean social reformers. A number of intellectuals responded with vitriol and skepticism to the new science. In virtually all cases, the objections to eugenics resulted from a disbelief in Darwinian evolution and a rejection of the idea that humans and animals shared any similar traits. The following documents, all anti-eugenic, represent a variety of thinkers just as the previous section did. That is to say, not all of the following anti-eugenic writers were Catholic. Some secular authors did not support eugenic methods to resolve the social question.

One of the earliest Catholic examples of this response was Alfredo Gumucio's *El transformismo darwiniano* (1904), published by *La Revista Católica's* press. The purpose of this monograph was to discredit evolutionary theory. "But, does the materialist concept of the universe and Darwinian theory really have true scientific foundations? To demonstrate that they do not is the objective of this present work, and I hope to be able to produce in he who reads me the conviction that science will never break the bonds of nature, nor overthrow the need to believe in the mysterious."²⁸⁶ Materialist theories of evolution rid the world of its mystery by proposing to explain all natural processes in

²⁸⁶ Alfredo Gumucio. *El transformismo darwiniano*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta de la Revista Católica, 1904. np-III. "Pero, ¿tienen verdadero fundamento científico la concepción materialista del universo y la teoría darwiniana?...Demostrar que no lo tienen es el objeto del presente trabajo, y espero poder producir en quien me lea el convencimiento de que la ciencia nunca romperá los sellos de la naturaleza, ni suprimirá la necesidad de creer en lo misterioso."

terms of scientific laws. To discredit Darwinian evolutionary theory, Gumucio sought to prove that the workings of nature were more complicated and mysterious than scientists chose to believe, reflecting the role of the Divine in nature and its creation. Gumucio rejected the premise that humans were in any way related to primates by providing copious osteological measurements comparing various primates to human beings. From these findings, he argued, “Between the most uncultured man and the most elevated monkey, enormous differences exist, even considering nothing more than the absolute weight and mass [of the brain].”²⁸⁷ Gumucio noted that there was no correlation between the skulls of even the most brutish human being and the most sophisticated primate. His work suggests that even though he disagreed with evolutionary theory he had some notion of a natural order that went from least complicated to most complicated, including between different groups of human beings.

One of the ways Gumucio sought to discredit intellectuals who supported evolutionary theory was by demonstrating that it proposed a set of coincidences verging on the absurd. “This theory, I will call it for now, contains the absurd idea that the appearance of life in the world is a phenomenon of the same order as the production of any compound mineral...and makes God a useless hypothesis...whose intervention is replaced with the hypothesis, in all lights absurd and inadmissible, of spontaneous generation.”²⁸⁸ His choice of spontaneous generation as a concept was not accidental. Spontaneous generation had been a popular theory to explain how the natural world came

²⁸⁷ Ibid 14. “Entre el del hombre más inculto y el del mono más elevado, existen enormes diferencias, aun considerándolas nada más que desde el punto de vista de la masa y el peso absoluto.”

²⁸⁸ Ibid 80. “Esta teoría, lo diré de paso, contiene la absurda idea de que la aparición de la vida en el mundo es un fenómeno del mismo orden que la producción de cualquier mineral compuesto...y á convertir á Dios en una hipótesis inútil...cuya intervención reemplaza con la hipótesis, á todas luces absurda é inadmisibile, de la generación espontánea.”

into being throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. This theory was so popular, in fact, that it inspired French Catholic microbiologist Louis Pasteur to test it. Pasteur successfully demonstrated that life could not arise out of pure air in 1859.²⁸⁹ By mentioning a debunked theory, disproven by an ardent Catholic, Gumucio wanted to demonstrate the absurdity of those secular intellectuals that accepted the world was the result of a random series of events.

Central to the Chilean anti-evolution discourse was the contention that the fossil record did not support Darwinian claims. Arturo Fontecilla L. “El Hombre Fossil” for *La Revista Católica* was written in 1909 to contest the fossil proofs of a connection between primates and humans. “It is, then, confirmed by the discoveries of our own human remains, the existence of man before the flood...it shows that modern scientific investigations are in perfect agreement and concordance with biblical tradition.”²⁹⁰

Fossils demonstrated that humans existed prior to an ancient flood, which proved that the Bible’s rendering of creation was true. Thus, there was no reason to suppose that human beings were connected to primates at all because the Bible did not explicitly say so. God created all life on earth, including human beings, but that did not mean that a common ancestry connected them. If they were connected, it was by divine, intelligent design.

Primates and, by extension, all animal life were not connected to human beings.

²⁸⁹ On spontaneous generation and Pasteur see: Patrice Debré. *Louis Pasteur*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. Iris Fry. *The Emergence of Life on Earth: a Historical and Scientific Overview*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000. Gerald L. Geison. *The Private Science of Louis Pasteur*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

²⁹⁰ Arturo Fontecilla L. “El hombre fossil,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 194 (August 21, 1909): 141-146. 142-143. “Resulta, pues, confirmada por los descubrimientos de los propios despojos humanos, la existencia del hombre con anterioridad al diluvio...resulta que las investigaciones científicas modernas están en perfecto acuerdo y concordancia con la tradición bíblica.”

Fontecilla L. contended that the fossil record provided no proof of the connection between primates and humans. This was used to discredit evolutionary theory entirely. However, the fossil record had already shown that evolution was the most likely explanation for the development and disappearance of traits in animals. It was debatable whether there was enough fossil evidence to prove the human-primate connection in the first half of the twentieth century. By 1900, nine instances of early human species had been discovered. By 1950, that number had increased to forty-four. While it might be true that fossils discovered prior to 1900 might not have been understood to be early human remains, evidence continued to pile up favoring evolutionary theory for animals, supporting the idea that there was a link between humans and primates. The problem facing evolutionary theory that Fontecilla L. and other anti-evolutionists used to their advantage was that, as convincing as Darwin's theory was, no matter how well it seemed to explain a variety of relationships in the natural world, there was virtually no testable proof that this was how nature worked. The fossil record could be debated since there was no observational test to prove evolution through natural selection or survival of the fittest was actually taking place.

Appearing shortly after Fontecilla L.'s article, also in *La Revista Católica*, "Mono sin cola," was a series of articles that denied evolutionary theory. One article in particular denounced the possibility of a relationship between heredity and evolution. The author, identified only as "L.C.Pbo.," or a member of the Presiding Bishop's Office, argued that heredity could not possibly contribute to the evolutionary process. Heredity was responsible for forming the most basic and primal characteristics of each individual in a species. In other words, heredity ensured that all species retained their identifying

characteristics; chickens would always look like chickens. Heredity did not, however, explain the development of *new* traits or speciation.²⁹¹ If heredity contributed to evolutionary change, then the changes between parent and child ought to be noticeable. However, experience and evidence seemed to prove the opposite. Based on this logic, eugenic programs that focused on improving hereditary traits alone served no purpose in the improvement of the human race or resolution of the social question. From this it is clear that L.C. was not necessarily against social reform, but did object to its commodification by scientific trends.

To further prove this point, L.C. attacked Darwinism by arguing that it did not meet the requirements of scientific inquiry. In fact, it was anti-scientific because it did not adhere to any of the accepted rules regarding scientific knowledge production. First, to be considered legitimate, scientific disciplines needed to have a firm evidentiary base, such as fossil proof. He believed Darwinism did not. Second, the scientific community must agree on the theory and *all* of its particulars. Evolutionary scientists did not. Third, devotees all had to use the same teaching method. Finally, evidence had to be the result of the application of the scientific method or thorough experiments of observable phenomena. Darwinism failed to comply with this last expectation in particular. In all these ways, L.C. argued, Darwinism did not meet the rigors of legitimate scientific research.²⁹² This was another way many Catholic intellectuals fought against evolutionary theory, and eugenics in particular. Since neither evolution nor eugenics could demonstrate observable proof of their claims, anti-eugenicists argued that these

²⁹¹ L.C. Pbo. "CHARLAS CIENTÍFICAS - Mono sin cola," *La Revista Católica*, no. 234 (May 6, 1911): 532-536. 534.

²⁹² L.C. Pbo. "CHARLAS CIENTÍFICAS - Mono sin cola," *La Revista Católica*, no. 238 (July 1, 1911): 873-877. 874-876.

were not sciences at all. That being the case, the opinions of eugenicists were no more important or valid than those of anti-eugenicists when it came to the resolution of the social question. In fact, the Catholic intellectuals in the anti-eugenics camp argued that their teachings were more important because they were steeped in tradition and common sense, rather than nonsensical jargon.

As time passed, anti-evolution writers began to change their approach. This might suggest that denying the existence of a fossil record was increasingly difficult. Alejandro Vicuña's 1918 publication, *La teoría de la evolución*, pointed out a variety of failings that evolutionary theory had. Most importantly, he contended that evolutionary theory had fallen out of favor in Europe while it was still being taught in Chile.²⁹³ His approach, unique among anti-evolutionists, hinged on the idea that the most cutting edge science was taking place in Europe and that Chile was behind in its development. Vicuña also argued that the strength of evolutionary theory was only on its acceptance among a foreign scientific community. As such, Vicuña effectively dismissed the Chilean scientific community while arguing for its survival.

But this was not his main objection to evolutionary theory. The main thrust of Vicuña's article was that evolution was primarily a means of discrediting Catholic social authority. In a footnote, he wrote, "Do not doubt that Evolutionism, disproven on any serious basis, has however made the world passionate [about it], because the materialists have made from it a flag, removing it from purely scientific terrain, to throw it to the field of philosophical religious struggle."²⁹⁴ For him, evolution was not so much a scientific

²⁹³ Alejandro Vicuña. *La teoría de la evolución (Conferencias dictadas en el "Liceo de Aplicación")*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Chile, 1918. np.

theory as it was a rallying cry for those who opposed the Catholic Church's social influence. Therefore, it stood to reason that Vicuña would question the scientific validity of the theory itself. By discussing an evolutionary model to explain how to address social problems, secular reformers could write the Church out of one of their most important social functions, providing charitable support to individuals deemed unfit by eugenic standards. However, "Fortunately evolutionist morality does not keep up; charity still delivers inexhaustible treasures, and everything makes us respect more and more the poor and sick fallen in the struggle for life."²⁹⁵ Vicuña believed that charity played too important a role in social progress to ever be completely stamped out. Though he objected to Darwinian evolution, his use of the term "fight for life" shows that Darwinian notions of competition had permeated even the most conservative Chilean Catholic intellectual circles.

A later example of a similar approach was Teodoro Drathen's 1934 article "El pretendido origen simio del hombre," appearing in *Estudios*. In a series of articles, Drathen explained exactly how and why evolutionary theory was mistaken. Like Vicuña, he argued that instructors in Chile had clung to evolutionary theory for the wrong reasons, "naturally many professors teach their students those doctrines just as they bring texts and books that are generally not serious and rather sectarian that, exclusively, are valuable for their information."²⁹⁶ Just as Vicuña did, Drathen argued that people who

²⁹⁴ Ibid 38. "No ya duda que el Evolucionismo, desprovisto de cualquier base seria, ha apasionado sin embargo al mundo, porque los materialistas han hecho de él una bandera, sustrayéndose del terreno puramente científico, para arrojarlo al campo de la lucha filosófico religiosa."

²⁹⁵ Ibid 60. "Afortunadamente la moral evolucionista no se abre paso; la caridad reparte aún sus inagotables tesoros, y todo nos lleva a respetar más y más a los pobres y enfermos caídos en el combate de la vida."

continued to teach evolutionary theory were more sectarian than they were scientific; they were more interested in opposing Catholic interests than they were in science itself. To close, he argued, “In sum we could leave each person with his opinion; but we cannot permit that they propagate opinions, probably hypotheses as certain knowledge, as proven facts, overall this can cause damage.”²⁹⁷ Eugenics most certainly had a potentially lethal and dangerous outcome, so it could not be accepted as a panacea to all social problems.

In addition to questioning the validity of evolution as a theory, the 1930s also saw an increase in objections to eugenics in its own right. Waldemar E. Coutts, a longtime government functionary and doctor, opposed forced sterilization in the *Revista Médica de Chile*. In the article, “El problema de la esterilización desde el punto de vista bio-social” he wrote, “we cannot accept that the individual, depends exclusively on heredity, if it were that way, we would have to accept the existence of superior men, castes or races.”²⁹⁸ This might be considered a somewhat surprising position for a secular government official to take. After all, previous secular documents would suggest that Coutts ought to support eugenic sterilization, and other eugenic programming, precisely because he wanted to encourage the development of better quality Chileans. However, Coutts was

²⁹⁶ Teodoro Drathen. “El pretendido origen simio del hombre,” Article 1, *Estudios*, no. 20 (July 1934): 9-12. 9. “...naturalmente muchos profesores enseñan a sus alumnos tales doctrinas como las traen los textos y los libros generalmente poco serios y bastante sectarios de que, exclusivamente, se valen para su información.”

²⁹⁷ Ibid. “En fin podríamos dejar a cada uno con su opinión; pero no podemos permitir que se propaguen opiniones, construcciones probables hipótesis como conocimientos ciertos, como enunciaciones de hechos, sobre todo si pueden causar daños.”

²⁹⁸ Waldemar E. Coutts. “El problema de la esterilización desde el punto de vista bio-social,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 7 (July 1934): 391-405. 392. “...no podemos aceptar que lo individual, dependa exclusivamente de la herencia, pues si así fuere, tendríamos que aceptar la existencia de hombres, de casas o de razas superiores.”

leery of eugenics precisely because he anticipated some of its negative social outcomes and he firmly believed in the power of environment to play an integral role in the development of an individual. Negative eugenic measures might result in creating new social problems. If the social question was caused by class conflict and capitalist expansion, creating a new way for men to divide themselves was counterproductive.

For all his secular veneer, Coutts seemed to be a fairly religious man. In this article, he argued, “ ‘Be fruitful and multiply,’ Genesis commands and it does not set limits, nor signal restrictions for complying with its mandate. The sexual nature, biologically one has the right to reproduce, obeying the impulse of the interior world, which for perpetuation, it needs to be.”²⁹⁹ Clearly, he believed that all people should be allowed to procreate if they so chose. After all, it was God-willed and a product of inward-looking spirituality and communion with God. He particularly argued this because he contended that geniuses often arose out of dysgenic unions.³⁰⁰ One could not anticipate what the result of all sexual unions would be. If mandatory, state-controlled sterilizations and negative eugenic programs took effect then the Chilean race would not produce the highest form of intellectual, the genius. This presented a much greater threat to Chilean development than continued births of unfit individuals. However, Coutts did allow that voluntary sterilization should be permitted. If an individual recognized that he or she would not produce fit offspring, then it was his or her choice and responsibility to

²⁹⁹ Ibid 396. “ ‘Creced y multiplicaos,’ ordena el Génesis y no fija límites, ni señala restricciones para cumplir con su mandato. En la naturaleza sexual, tiene biológicamente el derecho de reproducirse, obedeciendo al impulso de su mundo interior, que para perpetuarse, así lo necesita.”

³⁰⁰ Ibid 404.

be sterilized.³⁰¹ He was not against sterilization per se, but he wanted individuals to be free of state coercion when making these choices.

The documents above show that the debates about eugenics and its application to the social question in Chile was not strictly a debate between secular intellectuals on the pro-eugenics side and Catholic intellectuals on the other. Rather, both secular and Catholic writers accepted eugenic science in a variety of ways. Most Catholics accepted principles of eugenics such as the environmental improvement of individuals. They did not accept forced sterilization, euthanasia or evolutionary theory as applied to humans. Many secular intellectuals objected to these same things. Some secular intellectuals were virtually indistinguishable from their Catholic counterparts. There were even a small number of both groups of reformers that did not believe that eugenics was the way to resolve the social question. However, what all interested parties did agree upon was that Chile was suffering a major social change resulting from capitalist economic changes that needed to be managed. These changes had disrupted the natural patriarchal social order and eugenics was the way to restore it. This meant that social reform had to focus on the Chilean family and especially women's roles in it.

³⁰¹ Ibid 405.

Chapter Four

Natural Partners *Eugenics and the Modernization of Chilean Patriarchy*



Figure 6: C. Zozzi, “Entre conyuges,” *Zig-Zag*, no. 544 (July 24, 1915). The caption below husband and wife reads as follows, “El marido (leyendo) – Debemos mucho a la ciencia. La mujer (distráida) - ¿Y a quién no debemos nosotros?” From the Biblioteca Nacional.

Chilean eugenicists disagreed about many aspects of eugenic science; however, their beliefs regarding the purpose of a eugenic social reform program were much more uniform. Virtually all of the historical actors discussed in this chapter, Catholic and

secular, believed that the key to resolving social problems in Chile was the modernization of patriarchal gender models to rationalize the Chilean social order. Experts understood gender role modernization as the organization of male and female behavior around the workplace and the home respectively. Chilean social reformers used eugenics to naturalize this gendered separation of duties. Though Catholics further stipulated that this natural order was God-given, they still maintained that eugenic science was the means of modernizing gender roles. These social reformers also agreed that female sexuality was the most manageable means of achieving social order. This approach rested on the belief that modern life had disrupted natural gender relationships. Therefore, those relationships needed to be modernized, while still being aware of the natural abilities of men and women.

Most social reformers believed that the family was the building block to an orderly society. As such, they spent a lot of their time explaining how both Chilean men and women should act within the family structure. They used eugenics as a tool to support a deterministic approach to gender that argued that women were naturally designed to be homemakers and nurturers while men were best suited to work outside the home. Historians have pointed out that the early twentieth century in Latin America was characterized by modernizing patriarchal social structures.³⁰² I add to this literature by showing the integral role that eugenic science played in the development of Chilean gender roles. However, I add to this an examination of how this interacted with other

³⁰² Susan K. Besse. *Restructuring Patriarchy: the Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Sueann Caulfield. *In Defense of Honor: Sexuality Morality, Modernity, and the Nation in Early-Twentieth Century Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1920-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. Mary Kay Vaughan. "Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, Elizabeth Dore & Maxine Molyneux (eds). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

gendered discourses about women and the practice of Catholicism. As a result of the combined sexism of Catholic and secular social reformers, Chilean social reform efforts were a critical component in undercutting the social influence of Catholics and women in the construction of the modern, Chilean welfare state.

Chilean intellectuals described natural gender roles to be mutually exclusive and complementary, as shown in the cartoon above (see Figure 6). When the husband absent-mindedly looks up from his newspaper and mentions how much humanity owes to science, his wife replies, “And to whom don’t we owe?”³⁰³ The dialogue makes clear that the wife is distracted and not really paying attention to her husband, presumably because she is busy with the female task of arranging flowers. On the face of it, this cartoon reinforced the idea that a woman’s proper place was in the home and the husband’s was interacting with the larger world. However, the cartoon also carried another message. It illuminated the common assumption that women were not a part of the public sphere, which included not only the scientific community, but the political, legal, and financial sectors as well. As such, women were characterized as passive agents in the resolution of the social question. Nor were they conceptualized as a citizen-worker. Instead, they were managers of the household. Finally, this cartoon demonstrated that men and women were expected to share responsibilities as married partners, though they played different roles in Chilean society. Men and women were naturally designed to have different skills. The intellectuals discussed in this chapter believed that the application of eugenic social programs to help Chilean men and women to return to their natural gender roles would restore the necessary social order vital to economic progress. Reorganizing society

³⁰³ C. Zozzi, “Entre conyuges,” *Zig-Zag*, no. 544 (July 24, 1915).

according to a patriarchal system that was portrayed as both natural and modern would resolve the social question.

Problems Facing the Chilean Family

Catholic and secular social reformers were first and foremost concerned with the creation of stable Chilean families, the foundation of the larger society. They imagined the ideal Chilean family as a husband and wife raising eugenic children. As such, these intellectuals wanted to better understand and control how sexual relationships between Chilean men and women were conducted. Both sets of intellectuals were concerned about the fact that individuals from the upper classes seemed less interested, and less capable, of having children. This was often discussed in concert with concerns about how lower class individuals seemed to be disproportionately fertile. Therefore, many Chilean intellectuals tried to address how to encourage “better” people to have more children. Most intellectuals agreed that this ideal was achieved by encouraging heterosexual marriage with a social equal or better that followed eugenic gender norms: where women stayed home to ensure hygienic care of both the home and the children while men worked.

There were a variety of difficulties that hampered the creation of eugenic families. One of the biggest concerns among Chilean eugenicists, Catholic and secular, was the supposed infertility of the higher classes. Dr. Van Lennep, member of the Sociedad Médica de Valparaíso, discussed this in his 1917 article, “Esterilidad del matrimonio.” Appearing in the *Chilean Medical Review (CMR)*, this article was written for a professional, medical community and did not include any religious references. In addition, Van Lennep did not divulge anything that indicated his own personal sentiments

regarding religion or eugenics. Instead, this article was strictly concerned with the issue of infertility in married couples. He argued that most physicians typically blamed women for fertility problems though men were equally prone to having them.³⁰⁴ He contended that a common cause of infertility in women, problems affecting the fallopian tubes, were, “generally acquired by infections caused by the husband, which it is important to communicate to him, the wife being many times treated poorly, being accused of being useless, while the first cause [of the issue] is in him, even though his sperm may appear normal.”³⁰⁵ More often than not, Van Lennep believed, men caused infections in their wives’ reproductive organs without presenting any symptoms themselves. As such, he felt they should not be allowed to accuse their wives of infidelity or blame them for difficulty conceiving. Van Lennep also implied that it was a poorly trained doctor who only looked at female patients as the cause of infertility. The most important issue was resolving the infertility so that the couple could conceive successfully, most likely because this would foster proper gender and familial relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children. While holding men accountable for their sexual indiscretions, this approach still placed a premium on female health as strictly reproductive. A woman’s only real value to society was as a mother while a man might work to contribute to society.

Many eugenicists believed that women’s behavior was the most threatening to family creation. Bernardo Gentilini, a Catholic public intellectual, wrote a book for young women to inculcate them in proper behavior. *El libro de la joven, O sea:*

³⁰⁴ Dr. Van Lennep. “Esterilidad del matrimonio,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 9 (September 1917): 340-347. 340.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid* 343.

Preparación moral de la joven para la vida (1920) was for an audience of young, single women. It stressed obedience to one's parents above all. "[The daughter] should be an angel, not by attractive exteriors, almost always ephemeral, but rather due to her interior beauty that endows her with innocence, purity, virtue. She must be docile, obedient and submissive."³⁰⁶ Gentilini felt that young women were no longer being encouraged to cultivate desirable traits like fidelity. Rather, young women were prone to being flighty and irresponsible. Parents should teach their daughters that a young woman's looks were not important. Her moral fiber and virtue were but, even more so, was her obedience to the rules and guidance of her parents.

This was because obedience was not only prized in young women. It was a trait that all women were expected to possess. In Alejandro Vicuña's 1922 *La Revista Católica* article, "Reflexiones acerca del hogar," he wrote, "natural law gives the male preeminence and authority over the woman."³⁰⁷ This opinion was certainly not new. Social reformers historically argued that women must submit to the authority of men for a more orderly society. What was new in Vicuña's article was the fact that invoking the concept of natural laws had a new scientific authority that had not previously existed. A patriarchal society as the natural social order was no longer a heuristic tool intellectuals used to talk about social structures, but a reality proven by eugenics, biology, and evolutionary theory. Women had a specific place in the social structure below men and their obedience to men was required for the survival and good of the species as a whole. Pointing to scientific proofs of the importance of patriarchal social roles helped Catholic

³⁰⁶ Bernardo Gentilini. *El libro de la joven, O sea: Preparación moral de la joven para la vida*. Santiago de Chile: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1920. 104.

³⁰⁷ Alejandro Vicuña. "Oratoria sagrada-Reflexiones acerca del hogar." *La Revista Católica* no. 509 (October 21, 1922): 598-605. 599.

intellectuals to demonstrate they were far from old fashioned.

However, Vicuña felt that Chilean daughters were far from obedient. Rather, they had a privileged place in the family unit, which encouraged indulgent and flighty behavior. The relationship between mothers and daughters was too close and daughters benefited from this closeness. Sons, however, lacked a close relationship with either parent. “The tenderness of mothers finds an obsession in their daughters... While the sons are abandoned...to their own fortunes, the daughters are treated like queens of the home and no sacrifice is avoided to please them and place them well in society.”³⁰⁸ This favoritism toward daughters had consequences. On the one hand, daughters were the future mothers of Chilean citizens, so they *were* special members of society and had to be treated accordingly. They had to have good marriage partners and parents had to be involved in those choices.³⁰⁹ However, according to Vicuña, this gave daughters the false impression that their own decisions and whims were more important than the obedience they owed to their parents. They were not required to marry men their parents might choose for them. This situation also left sons without any sort of parental guidance when choosing a marriage partner. As a result, both young men and women compromised the Chilean social order by not fully understanding or accepting their duties to society. Parents could not raise small princesses and delinquents. They had to discipline their daughters and pay attention to their sons.

³⁰⁸ Ibid 601.

³⁰⁹ Vicuña also stated, “En el Exódo, se prohíbe a los judíos casarse con personas de inferior condición social; y esta legislación hebrea tiene en su favor la experiencia de cuatro mil años.—No soy partidario de las clases privilegiadas, pero tengo fe en un hecho indiscutible: la sangre es el más poderoso elemento de los que constituyen la moral del individuo.” 604. This demonstrates that even he had some notion that blood carried character traits.

Another obstacle to creating eugenic Chilean families was the use and availability of birth control. “If the [betrothed] only look to marriage for the satisfaction of their sensual appetites, they will fall into the very sad practice of neo-Malthusianism and anti-conceptive precautions.”³¹⁰ Pierre Barbet’s 1924 monograph, *Preparación del Joven al Matrimonio*, lamented the use of birth control methods among Chilean married couples. Barbet was a French physician who became most known for his authentication of the Shroud of Turin.³¹¹ His monograph, translated and published by the Liga Chilena de Higiene Social, did not equate birth control usage with a greed for maintaining material wealth. Rather, Barbet argued that birth control methods allowed a couple to enjoy the physical pleasures of sexual intercourse without the responsibility of bearing children. Using birth control would encourage an indulgent and immoral attitude, which Barbet believed to be dangerous to the social order. In particular, a casual attitude about sex would result in the use of prostitutes among men, further threatening the health of Chilean citizens.³¹² Barbet believed in sexual continence for all people, both men and women, as the solution to this problem. However, his book was directed at men, suggesting that he believed they had more difficulty with this task than women.

Sexual promiscuity was not the only issue affecting the Chilean family. Another problem men faced was the use and abuse of alcohol. Some social reformers mentioned

³¹⁰ Pierre Barbet. *Preparación del Joven al Matrimonio*. Santiago: Liga Chilena de Higiene Social, 1924. 28.

³¹¹ Frederick T. Zugibe. *The Crucifixion of Jesus: a Forensic Inquiry*. New York: M. Evans & Co., 2005.

³¹² Ibid 30. “El número de abortos es muy elevado entre nosotros, constituyendo un problema digno de la mayor atención, por lo que socialmente significa y porque origina una mortalidad y una morbilidad muy altas.” This was a similar argument to that of Salvador Allende in *La realidad medico-social chilena*, Hernán Soto, María Angélica Illanes y Mariano Requena (eds). Santiago, Chile: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 1999 (1939). 117. It also matches what Susan Besse wrote about the supposed marriage crisis of the 1910s and 1920s. 39.

alcohol consumption in the context of men visiting bars and brothels as the real problem, while others made it the centerpiece of their reform efforts. These intellectuals agreed that alcohol was a poison to which the lower classes in particular were susceptible.³¹³ An example of this type of thinking can be found in a 1931 cartoon published in the *Revista de la Cruz Roja Chilena*. Appearing on the back pages of the magazine, the proper fatherly behavior was contrasted with inappropriate behavior caused by alcoholism.³¹⁴ The first cartoon, depicts a family being terrorized by an alcoholic father. The children cling to their mother as their father breaks a bottle over the table (see Figure 7). The table, a meager affair, has only one loaf of bread on it.

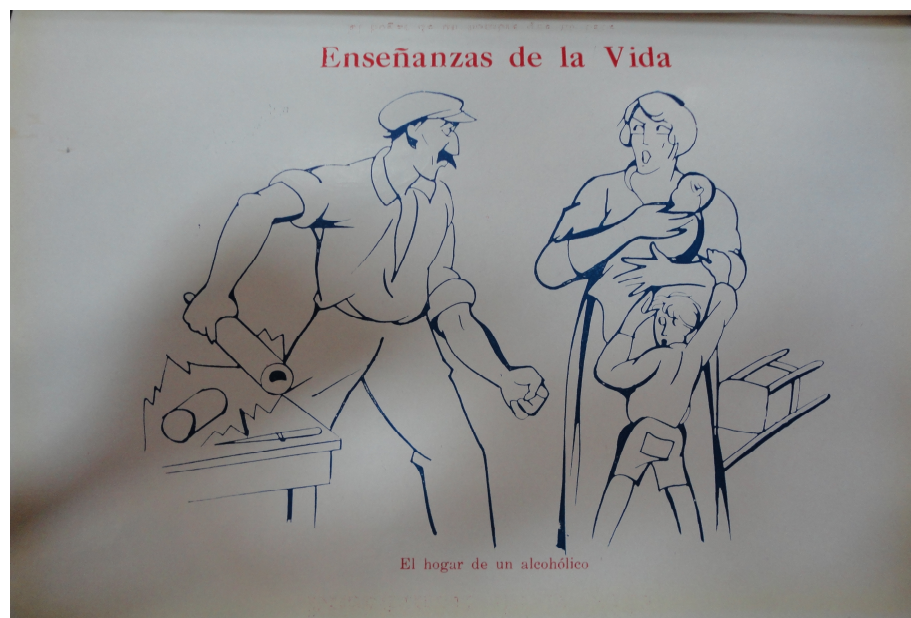


Figure 7: “Enseñanzas de la vida,” *Revista de la Cruz Roja Chilena*, no. 4-5 (April-May 1931). This image depicts the unhappy outcome of male alcoholism for the people that depend on him. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

The second cartoon shows a similar family group, but in very different circumstances (see Figure 8). This family has a comfortable home and a table with a variety of foods on

³¹³ See Stepan’s discussion regarding racial poisons in “*The Hour of Eugenics*.” 63-101.

³¹⁴ “Enseñanzas de la vida,” *Revista de la Cruz Roja Chilena*, no. 4-5 (April-May 1931).

it. The implication is clear: alcohol takes money that could be used for the family, making it a threat to the Chilean social order.



Figure 8: “Enseñanzas de la vida,” *Revista de la Cruz Roja Chilena*, no. 4-5 (April-May 1931). This cartoon shows what families can expect of sober fathers and providers. From the Biblioteca Nacional.

The father who could not control his alcohol consumption was unable to perform his masculine duty to provide. Finally, these cartoons also depicted the common trope that alcoholism was a strictly male disease. To combat these social problems, Chilean eugenicists targeted the inappropriate gender behavior of both men and women by characterizing misbehavior as unnatural.

Obstacles to Ideal Masculine Behavior

While both men and women had to change their behavior, men presented specific challenges to social reformers and eugenicists. Men were perceived to be free and sexually indiscriminate by nature. Presumably, they would object to state or religious intervention into their lives, especially their sexual lives. Catholic and secular social

reformers responded to this issue in different ways. In *El Diario Popular (EDP)*, a 1902 article, “Los que son hombres,” argued that men were quite capable in the world of business, finance, and politics but were helpless in domestic settings. The anonymous, “North American” author wrote, “[The man] is valiant as a lion, in the face of real danger, but a simple headache... frightens him in an extraordinary way.”³¹⁵ Statements like this naturalized men and women’s roles both in the home and outside it. Men were strong when it came to their own areas of expertise in the public sphere. When at home, however, they were no more than an additional child that the woman of the house had to manage. In fact, the author went on to say that men could not even care for the children that they fathered. He or she did not consider this to be a failure on the part of men. Their natural skills did not include care giving. Instead, the men who were not able to help at home were the best suited to survival in the public sphere. Because *PN* was aimed at the working classes, the author’s position is not surprising. Most working class activists were interested in shoring up male laborers as heads of household at this time.³¹⁶

Catholic reformers, however, argued that Chilean men did have social and familial obligations that they were expected to perform beyond their public duties as citizens and workers. Catholic eugenicists all agreed that men were responsible for more than economically providing for their families. Father Samuel de Santa Teresa wrote that

³¹⁵ “Lo que son hombres.” *El Diario Popular* no. 33 (October 11, 1902): 1.

³¹⁶ Klubock 1998. Roseblatt 2000. Most masculinity studies, for both the right and left, focus on men as workers and not fathers. However, there are a few that try and demonstrate how fatherhood was important to masculinity in the early twentieth century, see: Norma Fuller. “The Social Construction of Gender Identity among Peruvian Males,” in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, Matthew Gutmann (ed). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. José Olivarría, “Men at Home? Child Rearing and Housekeeping among Chilean Working-Class Fathers,” in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, Matthew Gutmann (ed). Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

a man's chief duties as a father were comprised of the task of educating his children and encouraging them to live moral lives.³¹⁷ While de Santa Teresa was unclear about how fathers might encourage this behavior, one of the most important ways was through religious instruction. Catholicism, according to him, instilled the ability to tell right from wrong and make choices based on one's estimation of a given situation. Unfortunately, however, being Catholic was not always a guarantee of appropriate behavior. "[T]here are all sorts of Catholics, good Catholics and Catholics who practice little, very little, and, there are Catholics and Catholicism, which are very different things."³¹⁸ Simply being born Catholic was not enough. Parents, particularly fathers, had to raise their children in the proper Catholic tradition. Unlike secular reformers who argued that only women were the conduits of Catholic faith, de Santa Teresa posited that men played an equally important role in the religious instruction of their children.

His position was important for three reasons. First, it recognized that there were a wide variety of opinions regarding the practice of Catholicism among Catholics in Chile. Second, this variation was because Chileans were culturally Catholic. For de Santa Teresa, anyone born into the Catholic tradition was also Catholic whether they practiced their faith or not. Treating Catholicism as an ethnicity implied that there was an inheritable Catholic character that encouraged a certain set of moral behaviors such as charity, sexual continence, obedience, and piety. Even as de Santa Teresa realized that there was a wide variety among Chilean Catholics, he also argued that Catholicism was

³¹⁷ Samuel de Santa Teresa. "El católico de hoy día también es el hombre de hoy día." *La Revista Católica* no. 218 (August 20, 1910): 101-108. 103.

³¹⁸ *Ibid* 106.

the only means of instructing men in their proper domestic roles.³¹⁹ Without the emotional and moral message of Catholic instruction, men would believe that their only responsibility to their families was a financial one. Catholic men were supposed to be engaged parents, ensuring not only that the financial security of their children but their moral and scholastic instruction.

Gentilini, as a Catholic reformer, shared this opinion. In his *El libro del hombre varonil: Como Cristiano y Caballero, Esposo, Padre y Educador, Hombre de profesión y de negocios, Ciudadano y Apóstol social* (1918), he argued that men were the masters of the house and, as such, should be examples of Catholic devotion for their households and pray often.³²⁰ However, Gentilini noted that there were some challenges to this ideal. The first, and perhaps most important, was the problem of male sexual desire. “Otherwise passions will dominate reason, and man would practically become a beast.”³²¹ He believed that in the face of sexual desire, men were not able to use reason just as secular reformers did. Gentilini contended that combating this weakness was the responsibility of women. He considered all-male spaces like bars and clubs to be concepts popularized by foreigners that were dangerous for Chilean men’s sexual continence.³²² Therefore, Chilean women had to make their homes welcoming enough to keep their sons and

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Bernardo Gentilini. *El libro del hombre varonil: Como Cristiano y Caballero, Esposo, Padre y Educador, Hombre de profesión y de negocios, Ciudadano y Apóstol social*. Santiago de Chile: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1918. 35.

³²¹ Ibid 56. “De otro modo las pasiones dominarían la razón, y prácticamente volverían al hombre una bestia.”

³²² Ibid 84-85.

husbands in them.³²³ Men depended on women's natural homemaking skills to protect them from their own natural failing, sexual promiscuity.

Many secular reformers also contended that men were naturally compelled by their sexual urges and were virtually incapable of controlling them. In a 1921 book, Alfred Fournier argued that, "from the instant that [puberty] arrives, a new preoccupation has taken over you. A hope agitates you: pure or impure, a desire solicits you. Let's be frank: the woman has been born for you."³²⁴ As a French dermatologist specializing in the treatment of syphilis, Fournier was not interested in whether or not male sexual desire was sinful, but he noted that it was a biological fact that had to be addressed. He also stated that his interest in talking about sexual education for young men was born of a strictly medical background.³²⁵ Fournier believed that a doctor would have a very different opinion regarding male sexual behavior than a religious figure. He also stated that his interest in talking about sexual education for young men was born of a strictly medical background. "The woman! How little I would have to discuss with you about her if I were a moralist, philosopher, religious educator, etc.! But I am no more than a doctor, and as such, I am in charge of talking with you."³²⁶ Fournier therefore saw the doctor as confessor and counselor and sought to replace Catholic influence with medical influence in resolving the social question. His opinion would be based on medical facts, not moral judgments or attempts to shame young men and this was vital to providing them with the

³²³ Ibid 88.

³²⁴ Alfred Fournier. *Para nuestros hijos cuando tengan 18 años: Algunos consejos del Profesor Fournier*, Emilio R. Coni (trans). Buenos Aires: Liga Argentina de Profilaxis Social, 1921. 4.

³²⁵ Ibid 4-5.

³²⁶ Ibid. "¡La mujer! ¡Cuánto no tendría que hablaros sobre ella si fuera moralista, filósofo, educador religioso, etc.! Pero no soy más que médico, y como tal, he recibido encargo de hablaros."

information they needed to control their lust.

Fournier advocated for a new social position for doctors. He created this new territory by discussing venereal disease. He argued that young men should have all the medically relevant facts about sexually transmitted diseases in order to avoid contracting them. He even went so far as to say that he was not interested in scaring young men from engaging in sexual activity outside marriage. After all, their urges were naturally compelled, but they deserved to know the unadulterated medical truths about the risks sex outside marriage entailed.³²⁷ He then provided his readers with a variety of specific descriptions about sexually transmitted diseases, focusing mostly on syphilis. Syphilis was by far the most popularly discussed sexually transmitted disease at this time. While other sexually transmitted diseases were unfortunate, syphilis was considered to have the power to alter an individual so much that it was a threat to the future of the species.

Syphilis was initially thought to be hereditary. While a child might not be born with syphilis, doctors attributed certain birth defects such as blindness, rickets, and body sores to the fact that one or both parents suffered from syphilis. This was especially true if the mother had any syphilitic lesions on, or around, her vaginal canal at the time of birth.³²⁸ “In sum, recent investigations show that syphilis can constitute, due to hereditary consequences, a factor in the bastardization and degeneration of the species, giving birth to inferior, decadent, dystrophic, degenerate beings.”³²⁹ Syphilis had the power to

³²⁷ Ibid 6.

³²⁸ Carmela Katz M. *Distrofias congénitas*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta y En. "Victoria" 1910. E. Prado Tagle. “Sifilis congénita tardia,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 12 (December 1915): 440-445.

³²⁹ Fournier 38. “En fin, resulta de recientes investigaciones que la sífilis puede constituir, por sus consecuencias hereditarias, causa para bastardear y degenerar la especie, dando nacimiento a seres inferiores, decadentes, distróficos, degenerados.”

transform an individual as well as his or her offspring, making it a serious threat to the healthy development and progress of the Chilean people.

As such, men had to be instructed in proper sexual conduct. This was especially important because, “syphilis, *with all its consequences*, even the most serious, arises not from repeated, reiterated, accumulated exposures, but from just one contact, from one *only*.”³³⁰ Men needed only to engage in sex with a questionable partner once and they jeopardized their future offspring forever. Syphilis was such a serious threat to the health of the Chilean population at large that Fournier also argued that young people should not hide if they contracted the disease. Nothing was gained by waiting until it was too late to receive effective treatment.³³¹ Fournier’s approach was straightforward and privileged the idea of honesty in educating young men about sex to prevent disease, while still implying that sex within the confines of marriage was best. He also avoided discussing sex education for women.

Barbet’s *Preparación del Joven al Matrimonio* agreed with the work of Fournier, though from an explicitly Catholic perspective. In it, Barbet wrote, “We have, in essence, the advantage, as doctors and as Catholics, the ability to approach the sex issue with complete knowledge in its dual aspects, scientific and moral.”³³² This statement mirrored what Fournier argued, but also added a Catholic element. Barbet felt that, as a doctor *and* a Catholic, he would be able to provide both truthful medical advice and interpret it into proper moral behavior. One of the first differences in his approach from that of Fournier

³³⁰ Ibid 42. “...la sífilis, *con todas sus consecuencias*, aun las más graves, deriva no de contagios repetidos, reiterados, acumulados, pero sí de un contacto único, de un *solo*.”

³³¹ Ibid 51.

³³² Barbet 6. “Nosotros tenemos, en efecto, la ventaja, como médicos y como católicos, de poder abordar la cuestión [del sexo] con pleno conocimiento de causa en su doble aspecto científico y moral.”

was that Barbet believed young men were not physically mature enough for sexual intercourse until they were twenty-one years old; three years older than Fournier. Additionally, Barbet believed sexual contact should *only* occur within the confines of marriage while Fournier understood that this might not always happen.³³³ Here, though both men privileged their medical expertise, the difference between Catholic and secular understandings of sexuality become apparent.

Though all eugenicists discussed reproduction within marriage as the ideal sexual encounter, many eugenicists knew this ideal did not often match reality. Waldemar E. Coutts, a government official and doctor, approached the reality of sexual relationships between men and women in his 1926 book, *El instinto sexual y la vida contemporánea: Su influencia en los actos delictuosos*. Coutts explored how a primordial instinct could be adapted to fit a modern world that demanded more care in choosing eugenic sexual partners. First, he argued, “The daily struggle for life, is the struggle for the conservation of the species. All manifestations of human power are subordinated to sexual tyranny.”³³⁴ Coutts was not the only intellectual to discuss the sexual impulse as a natural tyranny. This was considered to be especially true for men. The rationality that typically controlled male behavior was lost in the pursuit of sexual satisfaction and conquest. While Coutts recognized the evolutionary purpose of male sexual desire to perpetuate the species, he believed that this urge no longer properly aligned with the nature of modern living. Male sexual urges needed to be domesticated to fit the new social reality. Men could not simply engage in sexual intercourse with any woman they wanted; this

³³³ Ibid 11.

³³⁴ W.E. Coutts. *El instinto sexual y la vida contemporánea: Su influencia en los actos delictuosos*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Talleres Gráficos de la Penitenciaría Nacional, 1926. 5.

behavior spread disease and produced dysgenic individuals. Proper, eugenic matches needed to be made between social equals and sexual encounters needed to be restricted to heterosexual marriage. According to Coutts, this was the only way to control sexual behavior, a position that could hardly be considered very different from that of Catholic social reformers of the period.

Coutts's monograph also gendered sexual desire by not recognizing it as a feminine characteristic. In a series of statements about how sexual desire played a role in the evolution of all species, he noted that females were important as catalysts to and objects of male sexual desire, but not as sexual beings themselves. Whether among animals or humans, females demonstrated no strong desire for sexual intercourse. Coutts wrote, "the male, liberal with his flesh, has always been tyrannized by the female."³³⁵ Men were unable to fight their sexual attraction to women, so eugenicists had to find a way to manage this desire. His opinion was notable because secular reformers charged male professionals with controlling male sexuality. In a system where sex was restricted to marriage, the professionals responsible for managing this would be all male professions: priests, justices of the peace, lawyers, and doctors. For Coutts, this presented no predicament, as men were the sources of all Chilean sexual desire. However, we can certainly see how putting men in charge of regulating their own sexual behavior might be problematic.

Coutts considered male sexual desire to be dangerous to the Chilean social order. He argued that, "one kills, robs, cheats, tricks, suffers, works and fights for love. Love is

³³⁵ Ibid 8. "...el hombre, pródigo de su carne, ha vivido siempre tiranizado por la hembra." Another example of this is the following, "Así en todos los casos [ha discutido una variedad de insectos], en todas las especies, en mayor o menor grado, observamos que sus múltiples actividades, su existencia misma, están orientadas hacia la incesante lucha por la posesión de la hembra y la eterna conservación de la forma y los caracteres." 7.

the basis of life; whoever does not feel it is not worthy of life.”³³⁶ While love might also inspire noble behavior, he was more worried about the negative results of men pursuing women. Coutts believed that most of the social problems affecting Chile in the 1920s were the result of sexual desire and irresponsible behavior on the part of men trying to satisfy sexual urges with little concern for the consequences.³³⁷ Thus, young men and women had to be instructed in how to manage those urges. However, Coutts offered no suggestion as to how to do so.

Catholic reformers argued that the best way to confront natural sexual urges was to practice chastity. Gentilini wrote an educational manual about how young people ought to control their sexuality, *¡Sed Puros! Educación de la castidad: Gobierno de las pasiones* (1936). “As there is hygiene to protect the health of the body, there is just such a [hygiene] for the preservation of the soul. This hygiene consists in carefully avoiding the morbid influences of passions.”³³⁸ Much like Coutts, Gentilini recognized that male sexual desire could incite behaviors that were dangerous for the individual and Chilean society as a whole. To combat this social degeneration, he argued that the best method was to advocate abstinence before marriage for both men and women. This was a

³³⁶ Ibid 44. “...por amor se mata, se roba, se estafa, se engaña, se sufre, se trabaja y se lucha. El amor es la base de la vida; quien no lo siente no es digno de vivir.”

³³⁷ In a book written two years after *El instinto sexual y la vida contemporánea*, Coutts also argued that venereal disease should stop any rational woman from sexual intercourse and marriage with a potential husband. “Al encontrarnos frente a un caso en que se nos solicita permiso para contraer matrimonio y comprobamos y sospechamos la existencia de una enfermedad venereal, debemos hacernos sordos a todas las consideraciones sociales personales y de conveniencia del novio, por el propio bien suyo y en defensa de la inocente niña que llena de ilusiones se cubrirá con los velos nupciales. Lanzar a una inocente al Holocausto sería una cobardía moral de nuestra parte.” Therefore, love and emotion could also contribute to the spread of dangerous social diseases. W.E. Coutts. *Las Enfermedades Venéreas y El Matrimonio*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Nacional, 1928. 18.

³³⁸ Bernardo Gentilini. *¡Sed Puros! Educación de la castidad: Gobierno de las pasiones*. Santiago de Chile: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1936. 63.

particularly difficult proposition, Gentilini believed, because contemporary social mores allowed for men and women to socially interact in potentially compromising ways. “One can never insist enough on the immorality in amassing a crowd in a dark room, men and women before whose eyes, parade films of a certain erotic flavor.”³³⁹ While he chose the specific location of a movie theatre to make his example, the general point was more important. Men and women were increasingly in each other’s company and this created situations in which they could closely interact. New patterns of socialization that were the result of capitalist economic expansion, such as women working in factories and shops, caused familiarity between genders that too often resulted in sex outside the confines of marriage.

Gentilini believed that this was because men were subject to the whims of their sexual urges. “Very few men exist that have not experienced the insolent rebellions of the beast.”³⁴⁰ However, he believed that men were capable of controlling this instinct. He advocated for a new sexual standard for men that encouraged male chastity and fidelity as the new model of strength and masculinity.³⁴¹ Fighting against one’s natural sexual urges showed real strength and would allow men to better manage their sexual desires which would keep them healthy. With this new sexual standard, venereal disease and illegitimacy (among other social problems) would resolve themselves. This sexual continence would also prevent social degeneration because, “There are contagions that

³³⁹ Ibid 76.

³⁴⁰ Ibid 88.

³⁴¹ Ibid 114.

stigmatize not only individuals, but families and entire generations.”³⁴² This statement shows that Gentilini accepted general tenets of evolution and eugenics while applying his own, Catholic understanding as to how to resolve social problems by encouraging male chastity.

Barbet also felt that men needed to learn how to control their sexual desires. He called for an end to the sexual double standard that allowed men to visit prostitutes while women were expected to sleep only with their husbands. “For a man to be able to demand of she that will be his wife, a pure body and soul, he needs to be able to lead by example and give her the same.”³⁴³ A man could not expect purity from his wife when he did not maintain his own. This idea matched with a variety of other social commentators, mostly women, who argued that the sexual double standard contributed to the existence of prostitution, rape and white slavery.³⁴⁴ Barbet even went on to argue that every person, no matter what the circumstances, was capable of living a chaste life.³⁴⁵ Chastity was not necessarily the ideal state for all people, but it was possible for everyone for a period of time. He argued that this showed that all people were capable of controlling their sexual urges, including men. While he did not say that chastity was natural, he did believe that chastity before marriage was important to properly develop Chilean society.

³⁴² Ibid 110.

³⁴³ Barbet 34. “Para que un hombre pueda exigir de la que será su mujer, un alma y un cuerpo puro, necesita poder darle el ejemplo y aportarle el equivalente.”

³⁴⁴ Fournier also lamented this sexual double standard in “La sífilis de las mujeres honradas,” *Revista Médica de Chile*, no. 11 (November 1906): 341-343. See also items such as: Liga Chilena de Higiene Social. *Memorial de la Liga Chilena de Higiene Social sobre el Problema de la Esclavitud Blanca en relación con el Título IV del Nuevo Código Sanitario de Chile*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Nascimento, 1926. Rafael Edwards. *La continencia y la juventud*. Santiago de Chile: Librería y Casa Editorial de la Federación de Obras Católicas, 1918.

³⁴⁵ Ibid 43.

The seeming obsession with male sexuality on the part of public intellectuals was explained by the fact that men were expected to naturally have active sexual appetites. The issue, for virtually all of these intellectuals was how to control and modify those appetites. Coutts weighed in on this issue in his 1929 publication, *A los jóvenes*. He wrote, “step by step, the multitudes come to realize that the vast majority of social problems that are still to be resolved, are intimately linked to the issue of sex.”³⁴⁶ His opinion about the socially transcendent nature of sex explains why so many eugenicists of the day sought to manage this aspect of private life. If sex could be rationalized and controlled, then Chileans would begin to form proper family units, the building block to an orderly society. Chilean men had to engage in responsible sexual interactions, fully aware of the fact that their actions would have repercussions not only for themselves but also the children of those unions. The effects irresponsible sexual practices had on women were incidental and only applied when women became mothers.

Coutts also argued that individuals who underestimated the power of male sexual desire were not being truthful with themselves. The sexual impulse was strong in men and could not be denied. In fact, attempts to deny this natural imperative would only result in disaster.³⁴⁷ All efforts to manage male sexuality had to be based upon the understanding that men naturally needed to have sex regularly. However, Coutts did not believe in masturbation. Masturbation was the gateway to homosexuality, which was in diametric opposition to his vision of a rationalized sexuality. “In the moment, masturbators are frightened to have sex, from there grows a perseverance in their vice

³⁴⁶ W.E. Coutts. *A los jóvenes*. Santiago de Chile: Talleres de San Vicente, 1929. 4.

³⁴⁷ Ibid 4-5.

and the ease with which they engage in abnormal practices, especially sodomy.”³⁴⁸ The emphasis on sexuality within marriage and the creation of family units as the goal of social reform explains why homosexuality was considered to be especially dangerous to the resolution of the social question. Homosexual relationships, almost always understood to be between men, allowed for non-reproductive sex outside the confines of marriage that was not as easily managed by state or religious institutions.

While Coutts did not make explicit his position regarding morality, his vision of appropriate sexual behavior was similar to both Fournier and Barbet. This was best exemplified when he wrote, “No, young men, the most virile man, the ‘most manly’ is he who takes his true place in life, he who works most and best defeats the other men in the struggle for existence and not he who makes of life a field of pleasures, and especially not pleasures of a sexual nature.”³⁴⁹ Coutts wanted to change the meaning of being a real man from a sexual to a social significance. A real man was someone who was able to manage all the passions with which nature had endowed him. That was real strength. He naturalized and scientized that version of masculine strength by discussing it in the context of the Darwinian struggle for life. All of the reformers mentioned above, both Catholic and secular, believed that sex within the confines of heterosexual marriage was the best (and only) way to express sexual desire for all people. They believed this was so because it conformed with a social order designed by nature. However, modern living

³⁴⁸ Ibid 6. “(Los masturbadores están asustados en el momento de hacerlo, de aquí nace la perseverancia en su vicio y la facilidad con que se entregan a prácticas anormales, especialmente la sodomía).”

³⁴⁹ Ibid 7-8. “Nó, jóvenes, el hombre más viril, el ‘más hombre’ es el que toma su verdadero puesto en la vida, el que trabaja más y vence mejor a los demás hombres en la lucha por la existencia y nó aquel que hace de ella un campo de placeres, y especialmente de placeres de naturaleza sexual.”

had caused Chilean men and women to move away from their biologically determined roles, which necessitated eugenic social reforms and intervention.

Teaching Chilean Women their Place

Women, unlike men, did not need to be taught sexual continence. Rather, eugenicists contended that Chilean women needed only to pay better attention to their natural skills and inclinations. This discourse focused mostly on women's abilities to nurture and raise healthy children. In "María y la mujer chilena," the gendered expectations for modern Chilean women were made very clear. Written in 1905, this article appeared in *LRC* and discussed how women should use the Virgin Mary as their role model. "We are going to begin this essay proposing the Virgin Saint as the perfect model of virtue, and a divine panacea, able to remedy the evils of all humanity."³⁵⁰ The Virgin's qualities—altruism, piety and chastity—were what would cure Chilean society of its ills.

Sofia del Campo, the pen name of the article's author Juan Ramon Ramirez that meant Knowledge of Nature, recognized the importance of Chilean women to improving social conditions by arguing that their natural feminine qualities should be used to fix social problems. While men were admonished to change their sexual behavior, masculine qualities were not defined as central to renewing Chilean society. Men were expected to be workers and providers for their nation and families. They were concerned with self-preservation first. This was understood to be a characteristic determined by biology and could, at best, be modified. Women, on the other hand, had moved away from their

³⁵⁰ Sofia del Campo (Juan Ramon Ramirez). "María y la mujer chilena." *La Revista Católica* no. 87 (March 4, 1905): 185-205. 185.

natural social roles and had begun to work and live in the male-dominated public sphere. As such, Chilean women were the recipients of more social reform programs specifically focusing on their sexual behavior. Their behavior and social expectations were what had most drastically changed as a result of capitalist expansion. The most profound social problems affecting Chile were more associated with female misbehavior rather than that of men. Though the previous section indicates that male sexuality was a concern, the quantity of writing about men did not even compare to the number of items written about female behavior, sexual or otherwise.³⁵¹

Returning to del Campo, “she” argued that women and men were naturally dependent on each other. “Feminine weakness finds strength in masculine robustness, and, in exchange, she with her affability softens and tempers in him the roughness of his character and energy of his passions.”³⁵² Men and women had their spheres of expertise and those spheres were designed to complement each other while also being mutually exclusive. As such, women had a very important social role to play. For del Campo, this role was as workers and leaders only in charitable organizations. While men could work as politicians, doctors, lawyers, or priests to resolve the social question, women were restricted to the field of charitable work alone. They were not to stray further into the public sphere or they might put their femininity at risk. However, del Campo argued that charity work was vital to the proper functioning of society as a whole and Chilean social renewal. “But this also indicates that the Christian woman is the first factor in the great

³⁵¹ Out of a total of 387 documents that discussed idealized gender norms and behaviors, 251 were about women. Only fifty focused on male misbehavior.

³⁵² del Campo 188. “La debilidad de la mujer encuentra apoyo en la robustez del hombre, y, en cambio, aquélla con su afabilidad suaviza y modera en éste la aspereza del carácter y el ímpetu de las pasiones.”

works of charity and beneficence.”³⁵³ While women might be considered second-class citizens in terms of the public sphere, they were still critical to the resolution of social problems. Even more important, they were called upon as more than wives and mothers.

In 1912, Catholic writer Esteban Lamy argued that women had been systematically pushed from positions of social power over time and that this imbalance needed to be addressed. In a series of articles entitled “La mujer de mañana,” which appeared in *LRC*, Lamy contended that women had been pushed out of scientific disciplines in two ways. First, women had generally been discouraged from pursuing any sort of education. He blamed women’s inability to access educational opportunities on secular notions that were against education for women.³⁵⁴ Lamy argued that women ought to be educated and there was nothing wrong with that pursuit. Second, he stated that secularists had convinced women that scientific disciplines were anti-Catholic. As a result, most women were not interested in pursuing scientific educations.³⁵⁵ The assumption that women placed their religious interests over educational development demonstrated Lamy’s own beliefs about the relationship between gender and Catholicism in Chile, but he still believed women ought to play a central role in scientific study. Perhaps, he might argue, female scientists would be more able to combine the study of science with that of moral fortitude.

³⁵³ Ibid 197. “Pero esto también indica que la mujer cristiana es como el primer factor en las grandes obras de caridad y de beneficencia.”

³⁵⁴ Esteban Lamy. “La mujer de mañana,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 261 (June 15, 1912): 970-978. 971.

³⁵⁵ Ibid 972.

Catholic reformers, like Lamy, felt social renewal was a special duty of the Chilean Catholic woman. An article written by an anonymous author appearing in *La Cruzada*, the newspaper produced by the Liga de Damas Chilenas, in 1917 claimed, “Keeping your children from evil and making them love virtue, that is a true science.”³⁵⁶ This statement demonstrated that Catholic women were expected to raise their children according to a high moral standard. Not only that, the author argued that this task was a science in itself. Discussing child rearing as a science recognized the iconic and discursive power of science as a social tool for progress. Even more important, this author went on to argue, “How serious is the mission of a mother! Terrible when we consider how on her management depends the salvation of the souls of her children, and even the children of these.”³⁵⁷ Mixing a Catholic woman’s religious duty to inculcate her children in Catholic tradition with an evolutionary statement about offspring demonstrates the popularity and power of eugenic discourse in the first half of the twentieth century.³⁵⁸

Both Catholic and secular intellectuals agreed that a woman’s primary social obligation was to bear and raise eugenic children. This was her natural duty and most writers discussed a woman’s desire to conceive in the same way they discussed male sexual desire, as a biological imperative. They differed in how to raise children, but most

³⁵⁶ “La mujer Católica.” *La Cruzada* no. 106 (March 15, 1917): 5.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Erika Maza Valenzuela. “Catolicismo, anticlericalismo y la tensión del sufragio a la mujer en Chile,” *Estudios Públicos*, no. 58 (Otoño 1995): 137-195. Power 2002. Ericka Verba. *Catholic Feminism and the Social Question in Chile, 1910-1917: the Liga de Damas Chilenas*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003. Pamela Voekel. *Alone Before God: The Religious Origins of Modernity in Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002.

Catholic authors agreed that the most important aspect of this task was the education of children in Catholic values and customs. In *El Libro de la Mujer: Como Cristiana, Esposa, Madre, Educadora y Apóstol* (1917), Gentilini argued that women were designed to lavish love upon their families.³⁵⁹ Based on a series of lectures given at the Universidad Católica for mothers and educators, this monograph was aimed at an audience Gentilini believed to be sorely in need of help. Like his counterparts, he argued that a Christian woman's most important characteristic was her charitable nature and that social renewal would be the result of Catholic charity.³⁶⁰ Because women were naturally equipped to be nurturers and caregivers, they were also naturally equipped to work in charities. After all, they did charitable work not for monetary gain but for the satisfaction they would get from caring for others.

However, women had to be educated about how to properly fulfill their social obligations. Natural inclination could only carry them so far. Gentilini argued that women were far from the weaker sex in religious matters. Rather, they far surpassed men in their piety and dedication to religious observance.³⁶¹ However, this was only true when women were raised in a moral environment. Like Lamy before him, Gentilini was disturbed by the apparent lack of interest in female education, religious or otherwise. He argued, "This [religious ignorance] would be unspeakable for all Christians, but especially in the woman, destined by her mission to give the heat of her soul and the fire of her mind to

³⁵⁹ Bernardo Gentilini. *El Libro de la Mujer: Como Cristiana, Esposa, Madre, Educadora y Apóstol*. Santiago de Chile: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1917. 9.

³⁶⁰ Ibid 14-15.

³⁶¹ Ibid 30.

the future generation.”³⁶² While women were naturally inclined to a religious life and upbringing, nothing could help them if they were raised in a secular environment. Their natural predisposition toward piety would be lost and the hope of Chilean social progress with it. This was particularly dangerous to the future generations of Chilean children that needed pious mothers to properly raise them to accept their social obligations like choosing a eugenic marriage partner.

Gentilini believed that a fundamental part of this education ought to be about how to manage a home, specifically some type of home economics course. “When saying that home economics is the science of women, we do not want to say that which Molière in his times supported, that the only obligation of women is to know how to make a good soup. But rather this domestic science must be an integral part of the vast educational program for women.”³⁶³ This statement demonstrated that Gentilini believed women were far more capable than secular reformers gave them credit for. Running a household required more than cooking good meals. Instead, household management was a science that women practiced. Much like intellectuals in the United States who advocated for the recognition of domestic tasks as a science, Gentilini argued that women’s work ought not be shortchanged or overlooked.³⁶⁴

³⁶² Ibid 37. “Esto [ignorancia religiosa] sería incalificable en todo cristiano, pero especialmente en la mujer, destinada por su misión a dar a la futura prole el calor de su alma y la lumbre de su mente.”

³⁶³ Ibid 93. “Al decir que la economía doméstica es la ciencia propia de las mujeres, no queremos decir lo que en sus tiempos sostenía Molière, que la sola obligación de las mujeres era saber condimentar una buena sopa. Sino que esta ciencia doméstica ha de ser parte integral del vasto programa educativo de la mujer.”

³⁶⁴ Scholars who examine the development and discourse surrounding home economics include: Rima D. Apple. *Perfect Motherhood: Science and Childrearing in America*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006. Megan J. Elias. *Stir It Up: Home Economics in American Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008. Sarah Stage and Virginia Bramble Vincenti. *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997. One of the

Social reformers also discussed how to prevent the most problematic gender issue in Chile, the sexual double standard. Many, typically female, social reformers argued against the social mores that allowed different sexual rules for men and women. Women had to protect their bodies because they were the carriers of the future human race. Men, however, were often left free to behave however they chose. Cora Mayers's *La mujer defensora de la raza* argued that women were to blame for this situation because they did not demand the same standard of purity from their partners. "From birth, the woman must prepare to comply with the most sacred and delicate of missions; she should arrive to marriage demanding the same conditions of purity of body and soul of he who will be her husband as she has observed."³⁶⁵ By expecting their partners to be as pure as they were, Chilean women could actively work to improve the Chilean race.

According to Mayers, women were actually the cause of most of Chile's social problems because they allowed men to behave badly. She argued that by refusing to marry impure men, women could change this double standard. This approach did empower women to some extent. They were able to refuse marriage. However, her argument was also problematic in a number of ways. First, it assumed that men were equally interested in marriage as women, so they would respond to female refusals. However, we can surmise that men were not necessarily as interested, based on the previous analysis regarding male sexual desire. In fact, women may not have been as concerned about marriage either, since many social reformers lamented rising rates of

foundational texts of the discipline in the United States was: Madalyn Avery. *Household Physics: a Textbook for College Students in Home Economics*. New York: Macmillan, 1955.

³⁶⁵ Cora Mayers. *La mujer: defensora de la raza*. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Santiago, 1925. 12.

illegitimacy.³⁶⁶ Second, Mayers assumed that women could move beyond emotional attachment to their male partners and end relationships for strictly medical reasons. Finally, this recommendation overlooked the possibility that Chilean women may have preferred their male partners to have some sexual experience.

Intellectual opinions about how women should behave did not change much over time, either among Catholic or secular intellectuals. Violeta Martínez wrote in *Servicio Social*, “In scientific investigation, in artistic creation and in political manifestations, we can always find a woman as the muse.”³⁶⁷ Martínez, a secular writer, characterized women’s roles as important to society, but only as helpmates and inspiration to the work of men. Sarah I. de Phillippi wrote that, “the woman is under her husband’s power, because this is how nature ordains it,” in 1951.³⁶⁸ Though writing in *Estudios*, a Catholic biblical study periodical, we see that de Phillippi’s opinion about gender relations was not exclusively Catholic. As has been demonstrated in previous examples, women were thought to be naturally subordinate to men.³⁶⁹ De Phillippi, however, added a religious imperative to this patriarchal social order. It was not only natural, but moral. Even though decades had passed between de Phillippi’s writing and that of Vicuña, their opinions remained more or less the same. The consistency of this argument throughout the period

³⁶⁶ “El primer aspecto de este problema es entonces la ilegitimidad que implica deficientes condiciones de Resistencia fisiológica ya que son hijos—en su mayor parte—de madres solteras privadas del apoyo económico del padre...De ahí la preocupación de este Ministerio por el desarrollo de una política de protección a la madre soltera y la normal constitución de las familias de nuestra clase trabajadora, por lo que ella significa para el provenir de la madre y del niño.” Allende 105.

³⁶⁷ Violeta Martínez. “La mujer,” *Servicio Social*, no. 1 (January-April 1944): 53-59. 55. “En la investigación científica, en la creación artística y en las realizaciones políticas, hallamos siempre a una mujer como inspiradora, como tonificante...”

³⁶⁸ Sara I de Phillippi. “La misión de la mujer,” *Estudios* no. 212 (April-May 1951): 25-40. 26.

³⁶⁹ Donna Guy. *Women Build the Welfare State: Performing Charity and Creating Rights in Argentina, 1880-1955*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.

might suggest the ahistorical timelessness and dogmatism that secular reformers accused Catholics of espousing.

“Solving” the Gender Question

Many social reformers gave advice about what constituted proper gender behavior, however, some eugenicists were more concrete in their discussion of solutions to the problems regarding male and female sexual interaction and behavior. Though eugenicists argued that both men and women needed to adjust their behaviors, female behavior was considered the most problematic. The documentary imbalance mentioned previously also suggests that women were thought to be more manageable and more amenable to state or religious interventions into their personal lives. Though men also needed instruction as to proper gender behavior, it seems that reformers were unsure about how to best proceed. Typically, they encouraged men to live up to their expectations as breadwinners and practice sexual responsibility if not continence. However, there were few social reform programs aimed at men. This was most likely because men’s roles in modern life had not deviated much from their natural inclinations.

In a series of articles about poverty, Adela Edwards de Salas advocated for the construction of schools to instruct new mothers. She believed that poor women not only did not know the best child rearing techniques but, also, were incapable of providing the necessary resources for their children. Edwards de Salas was the founder of the Cruz Blanca, a charitable organization aimed at helping Chilean women in a number of ways.³⁷⁰ She also was behind a successful campaign to unify Catholic women in the

³⁷⁰ This included job training, help leaving prostitution, support for single mothers, and aiding victims of domestic abuse. Valenzuela 166-167.

group, Acción Nacional de Mujeres, which had 18,000 members by 1935.³⁷¹ Edwards de Salas envisioned that these schools would, “consist of giving practical lessons to poor women about how to wash, dress and feed their child, and on the first steps in caring for the sick before the doctor arrives.”³⁷² Edwards de Salas believed poor women were unaware of proper hygiene and nutrition practices and this needed to be corrected. She also illuminated the growing belief among most Chileans that a doctor, not a druggist or midwife, was necessary when a child became sick. This speaks to the increasing prejudice against non-traditional remedies and women who practiced medicine. Even the poor were expected to call a doctor.³⁷³

Verónica, writing for *El Eco de las Damas Chilenas*, was of a similar opinion. As the publication representing the Liga de Damas Chilenas, she represented the upper class Chilean Catholic women who felt compelled to address social problems. She believed, as Edwards de Salas did, that women needed instruction to be good housewives. In her case, this was not just aimed at poor women. This was for all women and was to be limited to domestic training only. “This instruction is not professional instruction that specializes in a science so that with it she can earn a living; this is a general knowledge of all that she

³⁷¹ Asunción Lavrin. *Women, Feminism, and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, 1890-1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. 305.

³⁷² Adela Edwards de Salas. “Nuestros pobres y sus hijos – Escuelas maternas,” *La Revista Católica*, no. 206 (February 18, 1910): 170-174. 173. “...consisten en dar lecciones practicas á las pobres sobre la manera de lavar, vestir y alimentar á su niño, y sobre los primeros cuidados en caso de enfermedad antes que llegue el medico.”

³⁷³ María Soledad Zárate C. *Dar a luz en Chile, siglo XIX: De la “ciencia de hembra” a la ciencia obstétrica*. Santiago, Chile: Ediciones de la Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos, 2007.

needs to know to be an excellent housewife.”³⁷⁴ She stipulated that domestic instruction for mothers should not be confused with professional education. She did not want to give the impression that a program of study regarding home economics should lead to women working outside the home. Rather, the proper education would allow women to better serve in their roles as wives and mothers. Verónica also added, “Even more so; this instruction though it appears material, prosaic, and positive, it may on the contrary spiritualize and become real moral and religious propaganda.”³⁷⁵ Much like previous writers, Verónica believed that teaching women to care for their homes and their bodies would result in spiritual growth and health for the whole country. This second benefit was even more important to the social progress of Chile than the first.

Another solution eugenicists proposed was sex education for young Chileans. For example, Barbet believed that sexual education was a vital part of encouraging young men to maintain their chastity until marriage.³⁷⁶ Barbet concluded his book by insisting that scientific or medical information about sexuality was not enough. Young men also had to have moral instruction to encourage the best behavior. If young men were not acquainted with the benefits of chastity and sexual continence, “Without chastity, the young man will start to become accustomed to birth control and, much later, being logical, legitimate abortion, divorce and free love; immorality will reign and

³⁷⁴ Verónica. “La enseñanza doméstica,” *El Eco de la Liga de Damas Chilenas*, no. 26 (September 15, 1913): 1. 1. “No es esta enseñanza la enseñanza profesional que se especializa en una ciencia para poder con ella ganar la vida; es un conocimiento general de todo lo que necesita saber una excelente dueña de casa.”

³⁷⁵ Ibid. “Más aún; esta enseñanza al parecer material, prosaica y positiva, puede al contrario espiritualizarse y convertirse en verdadera propaganda moral y religiosa.”

³⁷⁶ Barbet 49.

depopulation will come with her.”³⁷⁷ If young men were able to receive the benefits of sex with none of the responsibilities, then the social order would be threatened because families would not be formed.

In many ways, this opinion matched that of the secular reformer and juvenile court judge Samuel Gajardo. *La educación sexual del niño y del adolescente* (1940) stated that embarrassment and morals had no place in sex education.³⁷⁸ Gajardo believed that holding preconceived notions about the immorality of sex education would result in disaster for young people in the form of sexually transmitted diseases. Additionally, he did not see the conflict between moral instruction and sex education. “Catholic dogma does not contain any principle that is incompatible with sexual education for boys, this is teaching natural laws.”³⁷⁹ He argued that one of religion’s primary goals was to teach about how the natural world worked and humanity’s place in that world. As such, sex education was nothing more than acquainting young men with natural laws they ought to know. This instruction was all the more important because marriage was the only proper way to confront and control the natural sexual urges in all people.³⁸⁰ Gajardo recognized that reality did not always work out this way. People did have sex outside the confines of marriage.³⁸¹ However, he still argued that marriage was the best expression of natural sexual desire, not much differently from Catholic intellectuals of the period.

³⁷⁷ Ibid 55.

³⁷⁸ Samuel Gajardo. *La educación sexual del niño y del adolescente*. Santiago: Dirección General de Prisiones, 1940. 7.

³⁷⁹ Ibid 10.

³⁸⁰ Ibid 15.

According to Gajardo, one of the primary ways parents could help their children was by instructing them in proper sexual behavior. He accepted the fact that men had a powerful sexual drive that attracted them to women. However, he argued, they did not know how to properly consummate physical relationships.³⁸² This meant that men improperly understood sex to be about personal pleasure and nothing else. Gajardo believed men needed to be acquainted with the pleasures and responsibilities of sex early on. In fact, Gajardo argued against waiting until puberty to tell young boys about sex.³⁸³ By then, the sexual urges in them would be too strong to effectively educate them in proper sexual behavior.³⁸⁴ The tyranny of the sexual impulse would bring young men to their downfall if parents waited until sexual interest was already present in their sons to discuss appropriate sexual behavior. Instead, parents ought to educate them about sex before they were interested in it.

Gajardo did not believe that women suffered from the same sexual tyranny. He wrote, “In the woman, the problem [of puberty] is normally less serious because in her the sexual instinct is more attenuated and because social life does not offer her the tyrannical stimuli that surrounds men.”³⁸⁵ Women were not as strongly compelled by their instincts to have sex. This did not necessarily mean that women did not need sex education, or have sexual urges, but rather their program of study should be different.

³⁸¹ Ibid 114. “No vacilamos al aceptar ese ideal [no hacerlo antes del matrimonio] y ya lo hemos recomendado. La educación debe infundir esa norma saludable; pero, la solución de los problemas sociales no está en construir sobre ideales, sino también sobre la realidad.”

³⁸² Ibid 51.

³⁸³ Ibid 93.

³⁸⁴ Ibid 103.

³⁸⁵ Ibid 97.

Most often, sexual education for women focused on how the reproductive cycle worked. Virtually every intellectual, Catholic and secular, was of the same opinion.

How to prepare men and women for responsible sexual encounters continued to be an issue throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In 1941, Gustavo Weigel wrote an article for *Estudios* about how to properly prepare young men and women for marriage. “Preparación al matrimonio” explained that young men were quite educated in terms of their future careers but unaware about how to manage the most important aspect of their lives, their sexual relationships.

This is a shame but it is a sad truth. We prepare the youth to be an engineer or to become a mechanic, but not to be a husband, which is how his most urgent problem must be resolved, his sexual problem. Even worse, we allow him to work sexually in such a way that he arrives at marriage completely disoriented and badly directed.³⁸⁶

Men were left to their own devices when it came to sex; friends and coworkers became experts and confidantes. They were never instructed about how to be responsible husbands. At best, men got some ribald jokes about how to be a good lover. Weigel thought this was irresponsible. Professionals should provide this information to young men because young men in particular were subject to obeying their baser instincts and listening to their friends’ advice regarding sex. He believed that young men needed to be educated about sex by their fathers, who would instill in them the proper responsibility and respect for the act.³⁸⁷ Weigel believed fathers were more than breadwinners and this was one responsibility that could not be shirked.

³⁸⁶ Gustavo Weigel. “Preparación al matrimonio,” *Estudios*, no. 102 (June 1941): 4-13. 5. “Esto es una lástima pero es un hecho tristemente cierto. Lo preparamos [el joven] para ser ingeniero o para hacerse mecánico, pero no lo preparamos para esposo, que es como debe resolver su problema más urgente, su problema sexual. Peor aun, lo dejamos obrar sexualmente de tal manera que llegue al matrimonio completamente desorientado y mal dirigido.”

Weigel also believed young women needed to be better prepared for their sexual obligations. He lamented the fact that young girls were told that attracting a husband was their first priority. This encouraged flightiness and early sexual awareness that was dangerous for young women. Weigel advocated for giving young women more education and responsibilities to occupy their time and their minds, to keep them from becoming sexualized at an early age.³⁸⁸ He felt that Chilean society had started to place a premium on female sexual attractiveness and beauty over more important qualities, such as fealty, duty and responsibility. This inculcated in young women a disregard for social obligations and threatened their ability to properly raise eugenic children, which was a threat to the national progress social reform was supposed to achieve.

This problem was exacerbated, according to Weigel, by the Chilean custom of *pololeo*, an exclusive romantic relationship between a young man and woman. He believed this was dangerous because it caused young people to form strong romantic attachments early on that did not result in marriage. In fact, Weigel pointed out that it was widely accepted that *pololeos* were not meant to end in marriage.³⁸⁹ Instead, he argued that young men should be friendly with many young women but should not form a specific connection to any one girl. Encouraging a relationship with just one girl would result in both parties developing feelings that were too mature for them and might lead them into trouble, e.g. a sexual relationship outside the confines of marriage.³⁹⁰ Weigel

³⁸⁷ Ibid 6.

³⁸⁸ Ibid 7.

³⁸⁹ Ibid 8-9.

³⁹⁰ Ibid 9.

concluded by stating, “Instead of pololeo easy and normal dealings between the sexes should be permitted and fomented in such a way that the environment produced by these dealings be spontaneous and natural, without any matrimonial color and without any explicitly erotic tendency.”³⁹¹ This would allow young men and women to interact without fear of illicit sexual interactions.

Educating young women about pregnancy, the reproductive cycle and sexual contact between men and women was another important tactic to discouraging premarital sex. Jeanne Leroy Allais’s *De como he instruido a mis hijas sobre las cosas de la maternidad* (1925) discussed these issues for young women. Most intellectuals agreed that some amount of sexual education needed to be given to both young men and women. They differed, however, on how detailed this information should be and believed that men and women needed different kinds of information. For example, Allais’s book was mostly concerned with the mechanics of menstruation and childbirth and avoided details about sexual intercourse and reproductive health.

Allais began her book by saying that she was unsure how much information she should give her daughters about sex and reproduction. In fact, she hesitated to provide them any sort of sexual education at all. She was only convinced when her brother-in-law, a doctor, told her, “With all these modern pretensions of comprehensive education for women, they put in their heads multitudes of sciences that will never serve and they leave them ignorant of what nature destines them to do, their principle function in life, which is to say, maternity.”³⁹² This statement pointed to the fact that, while female

³⁹¹ Ibid 10. “En lugar del pololeo debe permitirse y fomentarse un trato fácil y normal entre los sexos de tal manera que el ambiente producido por tal trato sea espontáneo y natural, sin ningún color matrimonial y sin ninguna tendencia explícitamente erótica.”

educational opportunities were increasing, the most important lessons about being a woman were being ignored due to moral arguments or parental embarrassment. Young girls needed to learn how their bodies worked at an early age, to teach them their natural responsibility as future mothers. They did not need to be told everything, but they could not be left completely in the dark.

In addition to sex education and child-rearing instruction, many eugenicists argued that environmental improvements would facilitate social change. The second article in Edwards de Salas's series addressed how to follow up on the work of the maternal schools, which included a program of supervision of the families after the child was born. After all, it would be a waste of effort if the children who were saved by the maternal college ended up even worse off as young adults.³⁹³ If conditions in a child's home were dangerous, Edwards de Salas advocated for the removal of the child from that environment. This was not only for the protection of the child, but of the race as well.³⁹⁴ She believed that environments played an important role in the development of the individual. A poor child needed to be removed from his or her family for the good of the child, if that family could not provide the basic necessities required to maintain a hygienic environment.³⁹⁵

³⁹² Jeanne Leroy Allais. *De como he instruido a mis hijas sobre las cosas de la maternidad*, Emilio R. Coni (trans). Santiago de Chile: Liga Chilena de Higiene Social, 1925. 6.

³⁹³ Adela Edwards de Salas. "Nuestros pobres y sus hijos." *La Revista Católica* no. 208 (March 19, 1910): 353-356. 354.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid* 355.

³⁹⁵ Nara B. Milanich explores how the Chilean state dealt with the removal of children from their parents. In particular, she points out that the Chilean state was not equipped with facilities of its own and depended on private institutions. See: Nara B. Milanich. *Children of Fate: Childhood, Class, and the State in Chile, 1850-1930*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.

Gentilini also strongly believed in the power of the environment in shaping individuals, especially children. As a result, he argued that women needed to play an active role in the upbringing and education of their children. However, women required instruction about how to do this because correcting an improper upbringing was more difficult than instructing a proper one.

The child is like soft wax, that receives the imprint of the breeze that blows, of the drop that falls or of the hand that shapes it. The first ideas, and feelings and acts, stay there encrusted...And if repeated, they begin to form roots, forming in this way a second nature. For this [reason] it was said that good habits are like a second nature that impresses upon the first, and makes the practice of virtue or the acceptance of obligations easy, natural and spontaneous.³⁹⁶

Gentilini clearly understood childhood development in somewhat Lamarckian terms. The environment surrounding a child, especially its mother, played a critical role in the development of that child. With repeated exposure to moral behavior, a child would begin to naturally manifest moral behavior. The opposite was also true. As such, Gentilini advocated a naturalized morality as vital to the creation and stability of proper social order.

Morality was also important because Gentilini related moral behavior with physical health. “In other words, make healthy bodies, with all the means hygiene gives us, so that they can be worthy instrument of the soul. Many times to miserable bodies correspond miserable souls.”³⁹⁷ It is unclear whether morality affected health in the sense

³⁹⁶ Gentilini, *Mujer*, 114. El niño es como blanda cera, que recibe la huella de la brisa que sopla, de la gota que cae o de la mano que plasma. Las primeras ideas, y sentimientos y actos, quedan ahí incrustados...Y si repetidos, llegan a echar raíces, formando así una segunda naturaleza. Por esto muy bien se dijo que los buenos hábitos son como una segunda naturaleza que se sobrepone a la primera, y hace fácil, natural y espontánea la práctica de las virtudes o el cumplimiento de los deberes.

³⁹⁷ Ibid 136. “En otras palabras, formad cuerpos sanos, con todos los medios que la higiene os proporciona, para que ellos puedan ser dignos instrumentos del alma. A cuerpos raquíticos corresponden muchas veces almas raquíticas.”

that moral behavior prevented sexually transmitted diseases, or, if he believed that moral behavior actually affected the physical processes of the body. Nonetheless, Gentilini linked moral behavior with a healthy body and this morality was achieved through environmental (educational) instruction, the responsibility of mothers. Therefore, the religious formation of women contributed both to their own health and the health of their children.

Gajardo also argued that the environment was a deciding factor in the development of the individual. “We have extensively discussed the personality of the child. This is no less than the result of the environment. But for exceptions derived from pathological heredity, there are no good or bad children by birth.”³⁹⁸ While the debate about the importance of nature versus nurture continues in various scientific disciplines even today, it is interesting that Gajardo so strongly believed in the transformative power of the environment. This was most likely the result of his own work as a judge in the juvenile court system. He saw for himself that most of the youths brought before him were the product of virtually no parental involvement and incredible poverty. It is no surprise then, that he surmised that environment was the primary cause of juvenile delinquency. As such, he believed all of these children were capable of rehabilitation if placed in a hygienic and secure environment, a similar notion to that of Catholic eugenicists.

³⁹⁸ Gajardo 34. This is also interesting because later in the same book, Gajardo argued that male sexual desire was compelled by a natural desire to perpetuate the species. As such, he clearly believed in some form of modified evolutionary theory, even when arguing that environment was most important. “The libido or attraction to the opposite sex constitutes a psychological character of man and of almost all the living beings. It is a base instinct, in that it has been imposed by Nature for the perpetuation of the species.” 103.

All Chilean social reformers in the early twentieth century believed that Chilean men and women were facing new challenges to their traditional gender roles. New social spaces like movie theatres, clubs and bars were opening and making room for new ways for men and women to interact with each other. An increasingly urban population also meant new customs and new ways to behave. More and more women were working outside the home. Some commentators believed that poverty born of capitalist expansion was the fundamental problem affecting the Chilean social order. Others believed that it was uncontrolled male sexual urges that caused trouble. Regardless of their opinions about what was causing social turmoil, all of them agreed that both men and women needed to be reminded of and instructed about their natural skills and responsibilities. These social reformers agreed that ideal sexual intercourse should be heterosexual and within the confines of marriage. This ensured a eugenic union that would result in healthy and strong children, which were the hope for Chile's future. To achieve this goal, both Chilean men and women had to be encouraged to follow their natural instincts; for women, to nurture, for men, to work.

Conclusion

Social Reform, Chilean Progressivism and the Legacy of Catholic Eugenics

“A vitalized people, healthy and cultured, I have here the task that all of us Chileans must attend to so we can serve the Fatherland as we ardently wish, and we fight without rest so the people will rise from the age of exploitation and ignorance in which they have languished.”³⁹⁹

-Pedro Aguirre Cerda, Chilean president 1938-1941 (Radical Party & Frente Popular)

“For these reasons the Teaching Authority of the Church does not forbid that, in conformity with the present state of human sciences and sacred theology, research and discussions, on the part of men experienced in both fields, take place with regard to the doctrine of evolution, in as far as it inquires into the origin of the human body as coming from pre-existent and living matter – for the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that souls are immediately created by God.”⁴⁰⁰

-Pope Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, 1950

“I hate having to worry that being able to see a girl’s underwear will so addle the boys’ brains that they will be unable to concentrate in science class.”⁴⁰¹

-Jessica Lahey, *The Atlantic Monthly*, 2013

Pedro Aguirre Cerda’s “To Govern is to Educate and Give Health to the People,” elucidated one way political progressives in Chile understood the relationship between physical health and economic liberation. He felt that the application of scientific methods

³⁹⁹ Pedro Aguirre Cerda. “Gobernar es educar y dar salud al pueblo,” in Salvador Allende, *La realidad medico-social chilena*. Hernán Soto, María Angélica Illanes y Mariano Requena (eds). Santiago, Chile: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 1999 (1939). 5. “Un pueblo vitalizado, sano y culto, he ahí la consigna a la cual debemos atenernos todos los chilenos que anhelamos ardientemente server a la patria, y que luchamos sin descanso porque el pueblo supere la etapa de explotación y de ignorancia en que ha vegetado.”

⁴⁰⁰ Papal Encyclicals Online. “Humani Generis: Encyclical of Pope Pius XII Concerning Some False Opinions Threatening to Undermine the Foundations of Catholic Doctrine,” by Pope Pius XII, August 12, 1950, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius12/P12HUMAN.HTM>.

⁴⁰¹ Jessica Lahey. “A Dress-Code Enforcer’s Struggle for the Soul of the Middle-School Girl,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 14, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/sexes/archive/2013/02/a-dress-code-enforcers-struggle-for-the-soul-of-the-middle-school-girl/273155/>.

was the best way to break oppressive economic relationships in order to create a new and egalitarian Chilean society. Salvador Allende, co-founder of the Socialist Party of Chile in 1933 and head of Aguirre Cerda's 1938 electoral campaign, studied medicine while eugenics held sway as the most effective way to cure social ills. As Aguirre Cerda's Minister of Health, Allende formulated his Socialist ideology to include tenets of eugenic science that supported male privilege and reinforced female submissiveness in order to overcome economic disparity. My dissertation illustrates how social reformers, like Allende, used eugenics to modernize the patriarchal social order in Chile between 1900 and 1950. What neither Aguirre Cerda nor Allende recognized was that their conceptualization of social reform shared space in a discursive universe that included the work and ideas of Catholic Chileans, mostly political conservatives.

The social reform discourse that Catholic and secular intellectuals created in the first half of the twentieth century in Chile was based on gendered concepts that they believed to be stable, natural, and scientifically proven. Women and men were different, both in terms of their capabilities and complementary talents. The differences between men and women were not the result of politics, education, or culture, but the direct result of inherent natural differences between the genders. While we can see that the belief in natural gender difference was premised upon the prejudices of the historical actors themselves, Chilean social reformers in the early twentieth century explained these differences using evolutionary theory that naturalized gender difference as their proof. Because evolutionary theory informed eugenic practices, the application of eugenics to resolve the social question allowed Chilean Catholics to play a central role in popularizing concepts that would later come to be identified with the Frente Popular and

ultimately setting the stage for *la via chilena*, the peaceful and democratic road to Socialism that Chile was best known for prior to 1973.

Examining how Chilean Catholic social reformers engaged with eugenics shows how secularist discourse reinforced the idea that science and religion were mutually exclusive. Chilean social reform discourse actually complicated the distinctions both Catholic and secular reformers made between themselves. While social reformers treated the line between male and female as impenetrable, the line between Catholic (conservative) and secular (progressive) social reform became blurred. This illuminates not only how historical actors constructed gender difference but also how ideas such as secularism and Catholicism were socially constructed to appear as diametrically opposing forces. As demonstrated above, by 1950, the Catholic Church as an institution recognized that evolution was scientific fact. While perhaps behind secular intellectuals in this acceptance, my dissertation illuminates how Catholics came to accept evolutionary theory. In fact, evolutionary theory was not actually the issue for most Catholics. By 1950, in the aftermath of Nazi eugenic experimentation, evolution, genetics, and eugenics had been separated making it possible for the Church as an institution to accept evolution while continuing to reject the most grievous aspects of negative eugenics.

To better understand the relationship between Catholicism, eugenics, and gender, I delineated what constituted the social question for Catholic and secular social reformers. In order to understand how each group defined social problems, I did a close reading of various social reform documents. Overlapping concerns for both groups included education, modernity, and the results of capitalist economic growth. These intellectuals agreed that the best way to address these problems was with the application

of eugenic science because they also agreed that gender confusion was a central contributor to most social problems. Chapter one shows that, though social reformers agreed about the parameters of the social question and the use of eugenics, they did not agree on the role that Chilean Catholics should play in the resolution of the social question. Secular reformers insisted that Catholic charity was an antiquated system that only dealt with problems as they arose and did nothing to prevent them. Catholics argued that they were especially fitted for using modern science to fix social problems, as they had both previous experience and a moral compass to guide their plans. Though some Catholics recognized the moralizing nature of secular social reform discourse, they still felt it to be lacking in comparison to their own brand of moral guidance.

The insistence of Catholics on their ability to intervene in scientifically based social reform debates required that they explain how they understood the relationship between religion and science. The second chapter illustrates how Catholic intellectuals discussed science and its relationship to religion. While a few Chilean Catholics believed that religion and science had no relationship whatsoever, most contended that Catholicism and science were different means of exploring the same ideas. Most of the documents analyzed in this chapter demonstrate how Catholic intellectuals understood both science and Catholicism to be concerned with revealing the truth of God's plan. This implied that both were about the revelation of a universal natural order by which all life was organized. Though Catholics often argued that the natural world and its laws were created by God and were therefore subject to his control, the historical actors in this dissertation typically characterized science and religion as working in tandem. Some of

these reformers felt that religious truths trumped scientific truths but, even so, Catholicism and science were understood as mutually reinforcing.

While science in general might be accepted as fitting with Catholic beliefs, eugenics was not so simple. After all, some of the more popular eugenic methods in the North Atlantic included sterilization, birth control, or euthanasia. These methods were anathema to Catholic belief, which might suggest that Chilean Catholics shied away from eugenics entirely. But, as chapter three demonstrates, this was not the case. Both before and after the Church's 1930 decision against eugenics in the encyclical *Casti Connubii*, Chilean Catholics accepted large parts of eugenic science and indeed believed it was the most reliable way to resolve the social question. This was partially because eugenics depended on a certain level of altruism and interest in the collective good, traits that Catholicism also encouraged. Nonetheless, Catholics always argued that the individual's free will and dignity were more important than abiding by eugenic legislation or prescriptions. After all, free will was given to humans by God to manifest his plan and no worldly institution could interfere in that plan. Finally, secular Chilean eugenicists were still very much influenced by the power of Catholic thought in Chile. Their descriptions and understandings of how eugenics worked were often imbued with religious metaphors and ideals. This allowed Catholics to engage in the creation of the discipline.

The most clear area of agreement between Catholic and secular reformers was how both groups understood gender. I argue in chapter four that virtually all social reformers, regardless of their religious affiliations or acceptance of eugenics, agreed that Chilean gender behavior had to be rationalized into a modern patriarchal structure. Female sexuality in particular was labeled as both deviant and worthy of institutional

intervention. While Chilean male sexuality was also seen as problematic, social reformers believed male sexuality was not controllable. Eugenic science had proven that gender difference was based in nature and that women were natural caregivers while men were natural workers. Male sexuality was protected by political ideologies that protected the agency of the citizen-worker and was thus beyond institutional efforts to control it. It also further illustrates how social reformers who identified themselves as progressive or Socialist actually agreed with social reformers who they identified as conservative. The male worker was normalized and privileged over the female reproducer. The acceptance of this modernized patriarchal structure had implications for the remainder of the twentieth century. As Chile moved toward Socialism, an even stronger identification of work outside the home as being a critical component of political agency and self-worth became normalized.

“History is ours and people make history,” Salvador Allende said in his last speech to the Chilean people.⁴⁰² He was not wrong. And his message had an especially poignant and powerful effect on historians who study Chile. Many took this as a call to study just how such an atypical moment, the election of a Socialist president, could come to such a tragic and predictably Latin American end. Authoritarianism, the age-old bogeyman of Latin American political histories, reared its ugly head and Chile’s relatively clean record of democratic tradition was forever tainted. In response to this event, a copious historical literature grew about a country whose relative size and isolation might suggest irrelevance to the larger field of Latin American history as practiced in the North Atlantic. Much of that literature studied Allende’s rise to power,

⁴⁰² Salvador Allende. “Last Words to the Nation,” September 11, 1973, Marxists Internet Archive, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/allende/1973/september/11.htm>.

his abbreviated presidency, or the influence of Socialism on Chilean history and politics. *La via chilena* was often a coded meaning for the way historians should analyze all historical events leading up to the election of Allende and the years following. But this approach does not match Allende's last words. People make history and not just the people we find more heroic, brave, or palatable. History is a fabric made up of the actions of all people.

Allende's own history speaks to how important debates about eugenics, Catholicism, and gender were to social reform. His medical school thesis, *Higiene mental y delincuencia* (1933), explored how to apply eugenics to Chilean society to decrease crime.⁴⁰³ The existence of groups like the Izquierda Cristiana demonstrated that certain Catholic groups supported Allende's politics even before 1973. Rather than see his eugenic past as an embarrassing misstep of a great leader, it should be understood as his first attempt to grapple with Chilean social problems. While he ultimately chose to address those problems through political (and not eugenic) means, this early period of Chilean social history identified the social problems that have dominated the debates about Chilean social welfare for the remainder of the twentieth century: health care, access to education, and income disparity to name a few.

This project also explains how and why some Chilean Catholics were staunch supporters of Augusto Pinochet while, at the same time, the Church as an institution denounced his human rights violations. While parties like the Christian Democrats initially supported Pinochet, they came to be some of the most vociferous in their objections to his authoritarianism. This grew out of almost immediate disillusionment

⁴⁰³ Salvador Allende Gossens. *Higiene mental y delincuencia: tesis para optar al título de médico cirujano de la Universidad de Chile*, Santiago: Ediciones ChileAmérica CESOC 2005.

with Pinochet's promise of a return to democratic rule. The Christian Democrats objected to Allende's economic plan, not his overall message of social welfare and revolution. They had actually been advocating that type of social revolution since their inception in the 1940s. In fact, when Eduardo Frei Montalva was finally elected in 1964, he made it clear that his political conservatism and that of his supporters would not affect the social revolution he planned. Looking at the way Chilean Catholics understood social reform helps to explain these later events. The story I have told in these previous pages is not an addendum that only tangentially relates to the most important Chilean historical moment of the twentieth century. Rather, it helps illuminate why Catholic social reform prior to the 1970s has been written out of the history of Chilean social welfare and social movements and why Chilean gender roles were the result of a combined effort between Catholic and secular reformers.

Social welfare reform, a primary focus of Chilean Socialism and the historians who study it, was not the result of only Socialist efforts. Social reform discourse was a mosaic of various opinions. Even more important, Chilean Catholics did not oppose social welfare programs. Due to Pinochet's use of Catholicism as part of his brand of authoritarianism, and the generally conservative political positions maintained by some Catholic clergy members during his regime, many historians have overlooked the work that Chilean Catholics did to address social problems. This approach makes the significant role of the Catholic Church in ending the Pinochet dictatorship seem unusual or surprising when it was anything but, in fact, it was the natural outgrowth of a social movement that began much earlier. Examining Catholic engagement with social reform discourse thus opens a whole new set of questions to be asked. One of the most important

is questioning the analytical utility of frameworks that reify the political categories of right and left. My dissertation problematizes this issue, but there is still much more to be done. Moving away from narratives that oppose the political categories of right and left allows Chileanists to approach 1973, and beyond, in new ways.

This dissertation also contributes to the history of science in Latin America. Though there is a longer historiography for Latin American-produced histories of science, this field is still relatively new among scholars in the North Atlantic. My work shows that science practiced in Chile was specific to that political, social, and cultural context. Though the practice of science is transnational in its very foundation, many histories of science that focus on Latin America examine the failure to properly execute or apply European or American science there, or, characterize science as a tool of oppression used by imperial invaders to subdue Latin Americans. This dissertation shows that the social reform discourse created in Chile was the product of internal scientific developments. Though foreigners were brought to Chile in order to advise and create social welfare projects and programs, they were only as successful as their ability to integrate into the Chilean context. The emphasis on the citizen-worker and his importance to national economic progress was a specifically Chilean outgrowth of eugenic social reform debates.

Though I do not explicitly discuss Chilean social reform discourse as it related to American or European developments, my work contributes to transnational history by showing how both eugenics and Catholicism interacted with each other in a local context. Eugenic science and Catholicism were both networks of transnational communities and institutions made up of millions of practitioners. Using a transnational framework, I

illustrate how the United States was not hegemonic in the development of Chilean eugenics. The United States can often be portrayed as the bully of the western hemisphere, especially when studying the history of science. However, in chapters two and three it is clear that the United States was not the primary producer of scientific information arriving in Chile. In fact, for the first half of the twentieth century, France, Belgium, and Germany were far more important generators of popular scientific ideologies in Chile. The transnational perspective shows that local developments were critical to the creation of a social reform discourse and displaces the United States as the hegemon of the western hemisphere.

Finally, this dissertation adds to the sizable literature on the modernization and re-articulation of gender difference in the twentieth century. Chilean social reformers found fault with many aspects of Chilean culture, but the most worrisome was inappropriate gender behavior. This qualified as a disinterest in marriage or children, female sexual promiscuity, or the abuse of alcohol. Though gender misbehavior was a vague category, Chilean social reformers focused almost exclusively on controlling female sexuality. This was not a new tactic. The emphasis on female sexuality made women the guardians not only of their own modesty and bodily integrity but that of men as well. This notion has persisted not only in Chile but elsewhere. Journalist Jessica Lahey is just one example of a growing culture of modesty gaining ground in the United States. This movement still characterizes men as at the mercy of their voracious and uncontrollable sexuality. Women, on the other hand, are responsible for male moral failings and must cover or disregard their own sexuality to protect themselves. The themes addressed in this dissertation do not represent a distant past, but an all too familiar present.

My work points to a few directions of new research. First, it demonstrates the need for a more careful study of the role the Catholic Church played throughout the twentieth century in Chile. One of the more intriguing aspects of Chilean history that has not received enough attention is how local clergy in Chile interacted with the Vatican. Contrary to what we might expect, Chilean Catholic clergy broke with Rome a number of times over a variety of different issues. Second, this suggests that new research about Catholicism at the national level and its relationship to the Church as a whole should be explored, both in Latin America and elsewhere. It would also be intriguing to see a renewed interest in liberation theology and its role in the return to democracy in Latin America. Third, Chile is sometimes considered one of the more secular nations in Latin America based on its fairly unblemished history of democracy. However, the lived experiences of many Chileans belie this reputation. Of the eighteen federal holidays recognized by the Chilean government, half are religious. Divorce only became legal in 2005. Abortion remains illegal. This might be attributed to tradition, but that overlooks a wealth of historical reasons as to why a secular government upholds Catholic ideals.

Ultimately, this project demonstrates that historians must be wary of unproblematically invoking the categories of analysis our subjects of study used. This is partially due to the fact that the categories historical actors create themselves only recognize one perspective, their own. Man, woman, Catholic, secular, these are all lines in the sand that social reformers imbued with meaning. While that meaning was true for them, to some extent, it is not true for the historians who study them. We must recognize that those categories are performative and malleable. They exist in a reality that was

created by the historical actors. Analysis of those categories and their meanings better fulfills Allende's hopes for the making and writing of history.

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