

MAGALI SEGOVIA

...ya se acabó aquello de “Anarquía y libertad” y las mujeres a fregar. ¡Salud!

Feminine Emancipation and Feminist Press in Argentina at the End of the 19th Century

ABSTRACT

Anarchism irrupted in Argentina in the last quarter of the 19th Century as a consequence of the great immigration waves arriving to the country. In this paper we will focus on the first feminine anarchist newspaper La Voz de la Mujer (The Voice of the Woman, 1896-1897), edited by a group of working women, that defined themselves as anarcho-communist. We will, first, analyse the specific discourse used by these women while pursuing two major objectives to achieve consciousness of the double exploitation, work and domestic, they suffered and the use of the newspaper as an educational devise. We will take special attention to the social concepts they express over the feminine body and their reflection about bodily autonomy and control. This study will use concepts from Feminist Epistemologies such as the categories of gender, intersectionality, hierarchical dichotomy, gender roles and social norms. We will propose that they created a feminine anarchist political culture with their own objectives and identities, considering them not as a sum of identities but as a blending of their being anarchist, workers, and women.

KEYWORDS

Anarchist women, political culture, women workers' press, bodily autonomy, 19th Century Argentina

BIO

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Working Paper Series
Volume 7
Issue 1

ISSN: 2700-1415

Editor: Jessica A. Albrecht
Reviewers: Carlus Hudson
and Jessica A. Albrecht
Layout and Publishing:
Jessica A. Albrecht

To cite this article:

Segovia, Magali: “Feminine Emancipation and Feminist Press in Argentina at the End of the 19th Century”, En-Gender 7:1 (2024), 1-16.

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**Feminine Emancipation and Feminist Press in Argentina at the End of the 19th
Century**

by Magali Segovia

Introduction

Anarchism irrupted in Argentina in the last quarter of the 19th Century as a consequence of the great immigration waves arriving to the country¹. With this migration, arrived individuals that had played an active political role in European revolutionary processes, particularly the Paris Commune. Furthermore, arising from their anarchist and socialist positioning they partook of the 1st and 2nd International (Fernández Cordero, 2017:32). Given these experiences, these groups inaugurated the first masculine anarchist circle in the new country. Buenos Aires City, as incoming port city, became a Cosmopolitan space, that provided a good environment for the exchange and free flow of these new ideologies. The main propagandistically media for these movements were the public assemblies and discussions. From those emerged anarchists' booklets and press, quickly becoming the main disseminating body of the movement, both for its internal debates² and with the socialist movement.

The first Argentinian anarchist newspaper, *El Descamisado* (The Shirtless), emerged in Buenos Aires in 1879. From this point forward, periodical publication grew in numbers, in such a way that in 1896, around 25 publication and 20 booklets could be found in the country. Their main

1 The newly arrived were quickly included into the up-and-coming economy, mainly as salaried labour. The economic development was based in the export of agricultural production and the arrival of English capital and investments (Barrancos, 1999: 19-20). The latter were placed in railway construction, meat refrigeration Enterprises, and the construction of public amenities. For further information on this topic cfr. Míguez (2008: 141-241).

2 The debates took place between two distinct lines: the organizational and the anti-organizational. In addition to these, two further tendencies could be found: the anarcho-socialism and anarcho-communism, the latter became the biggest movement in the country. The focus of the debates was along the ways the action should take form. See Oved, 1978.

content involved translation of short essays by European anarchist (Oved, 1978: 46). It is important to consider that until this point, both, these groups and the whole media were in the hand and a prerogative of male anarchist.

In this paper we will focus on the first feminine anarchist newspaper *La Voz de la Mujer* (The Voice of the Woman, 1896-1897), edited by a group of working women, that defined themselves as anarcho-communist. The biographies of their editors, Josefa Calvo y A. Barcla, are difficult to reconstruct as they are most likely pseudonyms. The same happens with the columnists Luisa Violeta, Carmen Lareva, Milna Nohemí, Pepita Gherra y Maria Muños. The periodical printed nine numbers, from which numbers 1 to 4 had 1000 copies, 2000 for number 5, 7 and 8, and 1500 for number 9. The main place of circulation was Buenos Aires City, and its subscription policy was voluntary. At the beginning it came out every 3 weeks, later changing to publishing every two months (Molyneux, 2018). Its publications, of around 4 to 6 pages, included first person stories, opinion pieces, stories, songs, fables and poetry, without any advertising. Translation and articles from the European movement were also published, among them writings from the Spanish anarchist Soledad Gustavo could be found. The latter serves as proof of the involvement and the exchanges this group had with the international feminine anarchist discourses³ (Fernández Cordero, 82-83: 2017; Barrancos, 2008: 63).

In this study we will, first, analyse the specific *discourse* used by these women while pursuing two major objectives. On the one hand, they wanted to achieve consciousness of the double exploitation, work and domestic, they suffered, as well as disseminate and reproduce the anarchist doctrine. On the other, we will examine the way the editors used the newspaper as an educational device. Within this point, we will take special attention to the social concepts they express over the feminine body and their reflection about bodily autonomy and control. This study emerges from feminist epistemologies by using the categories of gender⁴, hierarchical dichotomy, gender roles and social norms. It is also important to always take into consideration the intersectionality of the multiple oppressions these women were under. These are particularly clear in their critiques on the unequal condition as women and as workers (Bach, 2015; Cobo Bedia, 1995; Maquieira, 2008). As a conclusion we can state they created a feminine anarchist

³ For more information about the connection and exchanges with international anarchist see Fernández Cordero, 2017

⁴ The women in the newspaper use a binary language, and we have not dwell into the existence of gender diverse people within the newspaper. We understand that their presence was a historical fact (O'Sullivan, 2021), but that analysis needs more than we can give it space in this paper.

political culture with their own objectives and identities. We must consider the latter not as a sum of identities but as a blending of being anarchist, workers and women. Further so, we can propose that this newspaper should be included into the feminist press, and them be recognized as active subjects in the political field.

In order to reach that stage of the analysis we begin by following Borrat's concept of what a newspaper entails. In other words, we view as vital the premise that "...es un verdadero *actor político* de naturaleza colectiva, cuyo ámbito de actuación es el de la *influencia*, no el de la conquista del poder institucional o de la permanencia en él"⁵ (Borrat, 1989: 10. The italics are from the original). Thus, it becomes a way of communication for those *politically not articulated*, who do not have the resources and/or capacities to participate in decision making spaces (Borrat, 1989:26). At the same time, we can consider this study within the New Political History⁶, since these anarchist women used *La Voz* to manifest the political, social and economic preoccupation that concerned them, due to the juxtaposition of their identities being both workers and women. By grouping, within the newspaper, women with shared experiences, thoughts and interests, we understand we find ourselves confronted with a feminine anarchist political culture. Even when they promoted the ideological precepts and anarchist traditions, they stood up against the dominant anarchist male group (Berstein, 1999: 394, 403; Luna, 2004:2-4).

The social condition of Argentinian working women at the end of XIX century

Women's social positioning, at the time, was conditioned by the passing of the Civil Code of 1869. In it, women were considered as underage and, therefore, remained under male tutelage, be it the father or the husband. Their goods were to be administrated by the men and if they desired to study, work or trade, they had to have male authorization (Barrancos, 2008: 35-36). Women's place was, essentially, the home and their activities were reduced to raising children, caring for their husband, and cleaning the home. The latter being considered as their natural place of realization.

However, in the census of 1869 and 1895 more than 30 per cent of the population were women that carried out some form of productive task (Barrancos, 2008: 102). It could coincide

⁵ "...is a real *political actor* of a collective nature, whose scope of action is that of *influence*, no that of the conquest of power or remaining in it".

⁶ For more on the fundaments, perspectives and background of the New Political History see Bourdé y Hervé Martin, 1992: 251-268.

with the domestic space⁷ as were the cleaners, ironers, seamstress, dressmaker and embroiderers. These jobs allowed for both work and care of the family at the same time. At the same time, one could find working women that left the domestic space and went into the matches, tobacco and candle factories, or that worked as cooks or maids. In all case women were facing the double burden⁸: once done with salaried worked they were expected to continue with their domestic duties (Guevara, 1994: 430-441).

There was a negative understanding of feminine labour. On one side, to work outside of the home, implied going against what was expected of them. The long working hours in the factory were presented as immoral and detrimental to their reproductive capabilities. In other words, if they worked their descendants would be weak and malnourished. On the other side, they faced the opposition of the working men. The workers judged female labour as unfair competition, since employers preferred to hire women because of their lower salaries⁹. This discrimination became one of their biggest claims. However, unionized female action, in this period, was scarce due mainly to two reasons. Firstly, it reprehensible for women to participate in the political arena. Secondly, those who tried to override such consideration, did not have the time to do so since they were occupied with the double work schedule mentioned before. Even against these obstacles, there was a female presence in the bases of the unions (Nari, 1994: 259-267). Their objectives were to promote regulations and protection for women workers, due to the bad conditions they were under, particularly the long hours and the novice working spaces, more so for those that were mothers (Nari, 2004: 156-167)¹⁰.

On top of this historical context, we can advance further our analysis of the feminine anarchist newspaper *La Voz de la Mujer*.

⁷ The spaces where the live of these workers took place, in the Buenos Aires of the end of the Century, was characterized mainly by precarity. Most of them lived in “conventillos”, usually overcrowded, along with their family in a single room (Guevara, 1994:430-431).

⁸ On this concept see Bonaccorsi, 2009:104-105.

⁹ Women’s salary was considered as complementary to men’s, given the latter status as the provider. This reason alone justified a smaller salary, even for the same tasks (Nari, 1994: 261).

¹⁰ Labor legislation made effective at the beginning of the 20th Century was focused on protecting working mothers. Thus, making visible the prevalence of the mother role, imposed women.

The conformation of a feminist anarchist political culture

In the first number of the newspaper, in their purpose “sus propósitos”, the anarchist women grouped their status and the reasons behind the creation of the periodical. The first article allows the editors to highlight feminine individuality, allowing them to think themselves as subjected to oppression. Therefore, rising their voices in an act of political manifestation:

*Largas veladas de trabajo y padecimientos, negros y horriblos días sin pan han pesado entre nosotras [...] hastiadas ya de tanta miseria y padecimientos, nos decidiésemos a dejar oír nuestra voz, no ya en forma de lamento ni suplicante querella, sino en vibrante y enérgica demanda. Todo es de todos.*¹¹ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. I. The underscoring is our own.)

Thus, positioning themselves both as women and as workers, breaking with the monopolistic masculine vision of the working world. In order to be able to make the women of the paper visible, they decided to construct themselves as politically active individuals, creating distance from the feminine imaginary of the period, that identified them as the weak sex. Through this change they could move around the exclusion, both society and anarchist men force on them. Even though the libertarian ideology proclaimed economic, social and political emancipation for all humankind, in practice it remained as a simple discursive practice. In other words, although these women fought against their oppression in society and as workers, they started showing their peculiar demands by expressing the lack of representation in the masculine hierarchical composition of the organizations and their discourses. From that struggle the anarchist women of *La Voz* decided to fight to end the gender hierarchization, that forced them to be subordinate to their own comrades, in the anarchist praxis. Therefore, they proclaimed direct feminine autonomous action: “...más como no queríamos depender de nadie, alzamos nosotras también un girón del rojo estandarte; salimos a la lucha...sin Dios y sin jefe.”¹² (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. I). By highlighting they would be the carriers of the flag of liberation struggles, they seek to establish themselves actively in the revolutionary activities. At the same time, they freed

¹¹ Long days of work and suffering, dark and horrible days without bread have weighted among us [...] disgusted now of so much misery and suffering, we decided to let our voice be heard, not as a lament nor as a begging grievance, but as a vibrant and energetic demand. Everything is for everybody.”

¹² “...but as we didn’t want to depend on nobody, we rise as well a mast of the red flag; we go out to fight ...without God and without boss.”

themselves from the men through two references. On the one hand, by mentioning God, they referenced the struggles against the Catholic Church, as one of the main institutions upholding the *status quo*, particularly for women. On the other, in alluding to a singular boss there is a plural engraved to it that includes both the working boss (employers and/or supervisors) and the boss at home (husband, father, brother).

In the second number we can perceive the consequences of the creation of the newspaper. We can see how the anarchists characterize the relationship between genders, within anarchism, and the tensions derived from them:

Apareció el primer número de La Voz de la Mujer, y claro ¡allí fue Troya! [...] “¿emanciparse la mujer?”, “¿para qué?” “¿qué emancipación femenina ni que ocho rábanos?” “¡la nuestra”, “venga la nuestra primero!”, y luego, cuando nosotros ‘los hombres’ estemos emancipados y seamos libres, allí veremos”¹³ (La Voz de la Mujer, Year I, Num. II)

In this case the enunciation fulfills two functions: it expresses the confrontation between anarchist men and women, and, at the same time, exposes, through irony, masculine valuation of feminine claims. The writers evidenced how the negative of women emancipation implied the cancelation of women as a subject. Thus, probing that men did not recognize the existence of women’s oppression and therefore, there was no individual to liberate. Thus, they were not only not recognized as a revolutionary subject, but they were also nullified by oppressing them in their freedoms¹⁴. Even when women exited the private sphere, due to working needs, they were still thought of as reproductive mothers and dedicated wives. That was the natural destiny for any woman. The domestic space was considered a site of protection and safekeeping for women. It is important to highlight that in this period, women that participated in the public sphere were thought of as having lost their femininity (Barrancos, 2008:74). Aspect that was not alien to the male anarchist way of understanding the world.

In the same article the editors discuss what the home meant to them:

¹³ “The first number of the *Voz de la Mujer* came out and, of course, there went Troy! [...] ‘will woman emancipate?’, ‘for what?’, ‘what female emancipation or other nonsense?’, ‘our own’, ‘let ours come first’, and then, when we ‘the men’ are emancipated and are free, we’ll see”.

¹⁴ This position is stated in a gendered dichotomy, also present within anarchism, which divided individuals antagonistically. In that way, cultural mandates were constructed, limited spaces of influence and made gender hierarchical.

*... ¡oh!, ¡falsos anarquistas! que comprendáis una vez por todas que nuestra misión no se reduce a criar vuestros hijos y lavaros la roña, que nosotras también tenemos derecho a emanciparnos y ser libres de toda clase de tutelaje, ya sea social, económico o marital [...] Ya sabíamos señores infelices que para vosotros una mujer no es más que un lindo mueble, algo así como una cotorra que os halaga, os cose, os trabaja, y, lo que, es más, os obedece y teme.*¹⁵ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II)

There the authors manifested their rejection to social precepts imposed on women as their only way in life. At the same time, they further presented, once again, the demand of freedom in the same terms as the libertarian men. The same way they clarified that the female question was not restricted to only one subjugation. On the contrary, the domination and submission were suffered both in the public and private spaces. In this case, the home was catalogued, by the editors, as a hostile working environment, dominated by the anarchist men. Furthermore, they seek the concientization of the readers¹⁶ by exposing the exploitations suffered by women: “...haremos que “*La Voz de la Mujer*” se introduzca en vuestros hogares y que diga a vuestras compañeras que no sois tales leones, ni siquiera perros...”¹⁷ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II. The italics are from the original). It is relevant to highlight that the accusations made by the anarchist were posed against male anarchist, without presenting any discomfort with anarchist’s ideological principals. For that reason, the recipient of their message were the *fake anarchists*, given that real anarchism included female liberation. The editors showed the tensions existing within the movement, showing how it didn’t escape power and gender relations that ruled society. The latter was also reflected in the descriptions provided of the domestic situation of members of the movement:

...“Quita allá mujer, que es necesario que yo vaya a la reunión [...] vosotros que habláis de libertad y en el hogar queréis ser unos zares [...] vosotros los que os creéis muy por encima de nuestra condición, ya no os tendremos más

¹⁵ “... oh you fake anarchists! That you understand once and for all, that our mission is not reduced to rise your children and clean your dirt, that we also have the right to emancipate and be free of all kind of tutelage, be it social, economic or martial [...] We knew Mr. Unhappy that for you a women is nothing but a nice furniture, something like a parrot that flatters you, sews for you, works for you, and what is more, obeys and fears you.”

¹⁶ For an analysis on the reception of the newspaper see Feijoó y Nari, 1994.

¹⁷ “...we will make that the ‘*Voz de la Mujer*’ gets introduced into your homes and make it tell your partners that you are not such lions, not even dogs...”

*miedo, ya no os admiraremos más, ya no obedeceremos, ciega y tímidamente vuestras ordenes*¹⁸ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II)

Women anarchist did not aspire to split from the movement, on the contrary, they pushed for an effective enlargement of the ideas. When the doctrine promoted the liberation of humankind, they understood the emancipation of both genders: men and women. That understanding of the anarchist ideology was the one published in the newspaper: “Si vosotros queréis ser libres, con mucha más razón nosotras; doblemente esclavas de la sociedad y del hombre...”¹⁹ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II). The content of the paper was presented as a disruptive element inside the movement, since the critiques being presented by the masculine side continued in the following numbers. The rejection, by the men, was reproduced by *La Voz*, without any clarification as to its origins: “Esto no puede ser...Ésta no es manera de escribir, no se pueden tolerar semejantes provocaciones de parte de esas mujeres.’ Es necesario que ese periodicucho desaparezca’, etc., etc.”²⁰ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. III. The underscoring is our own.). The expressed rejection showed what implications excited when women carried an active role in the political sphere. Especially when they publicly exposed the harassment suffered by women both in their working space and in their homes. It was aggravated by the fact that those doing the harassment were the same that proclaimed to carry the fight for humankind’s emancipation. It is not casual the pejorative denomination employed for the newspaper; the intention was to degrade it and those involved in it. Once again, the logic of the dichotomic thinking was in action, undervaluing the platform because it was produced by women. In that sense, their cultural construction was reinforced, associating them with inferiority, weak and lacking rational thinking. For that reason, as it was created by them it was not considered equal to other libertarian press. Against these the anarchist answered in the same article, curiously titled “Firmes en la Brecha (A nuestros enemigos)” (“Steady on the gap (To our enemies)”):

Pero, a pesar de toda vuestra guerra, seguiremos firmes en la brecha [...]a mantener bien alta la bandera de la intransigencia pese a quien pese y dúelale a quien le duela [...]sobre nuestra línea de conducta [...]cumpliendo nuestra

¹⁸ “...go away woman, that I need to get to the meeting [...] you, that talk about freedom and at home you wish to be tsars [...] you that think of yourselves well over our condition, we will not fear you anymore, we will not admire you anymore, we will not blindly and with shyness obey your orders.”

¹⁹ “If you want to be free, with many more arguments so do we; double slaves, of society and men...”

²⁰ “This cannot be... This is not the way to write, Such provocation cannot be tolerated coming from those women.’ ‘It is necessary for that shitty newspaper to disappear’, etc., etc.”

*más completa autonomía individual dentro de los ideales del Comunismo y la Anarquía.*²¹ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. III)

We can assert that women were incorporated into the movement in opposition to the male dominant positioning by demanding a spot in it, they had to expose everyday experiences in order to make their oppressed situation visible in working and home spaces, showing the double exploitation they were suffering. For that reason, they showed the specific circumstances, distancing from the men in a way that, by not sharing the same fighting objectives, should become independent revolutionary subjects. Workers fought for their freedom, women should do the same both as workers and as women. As a consequence the “emancipación ha de ser un gran factor para el buen éxito de la revolución social”²² (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Núm. III). We can see how the revolution was incomplete for them unless it included women emancipation. Because of the analysis made here, we can state we find ourselves with the conformation of a feminine anarchist political culture.

***La Voz de la Mujer* as an educational device: female capacities, sexuality and marital relations.**

Another function of the newspaper was constituting itself as an educational device. The editors promoted female instruction by way of the dissemination of anarchist ideals. It not only implied the transference of knowledge, but also evaluation and advice on the female body and its roles as a reproductive unit, not as a productive one. The discussions with the masculine line were used to reference libertarian ideals and concepts and amplified for the readers. The following extract is an example of it:

Los que habéis hablado ¿estudiasteis bien lo que es la Anarquía? ¿No será ella quien asegure nuestra más completa libertad individual, una vez que haya triunfado? ¿No será ella la que pondrá a la mujer a la altura del hombre? [...]

²¹ “But, besides all your fighting, we will continue by the gap [...] to maintain raised high the flag of inflexibility no matter who it bothers or who it hurts [...] about our conduct [...] fulfilling the utmost individual autonomy within the ideas of Communism and Anarchism.”

²² “emancipation must be a big factor to the success of social revolution”

*¿Por qué os servís de la palabra Anarquía para cortar nuestra libertad de pensamiento y nuestra libertad de acción [...] por el solo hecho de ser mujeres?*²³ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. III).

At the same time, they challenged women to occupy the place given by anarchist principles, explaining how the central elements of female emancipation were the possibility of expressing their postures, opinions and demands regarding their unequal condition, and how they would allow them to become active subjects of their own independence. Further so, they were preoccupied to push for the conscientization of the different ways male domination acted:

*...siendo el juguete de tus padres cuando niña, el capricho de tu marido cuando mujer y [...] lo peor de todo, el escarnio de los hombres [...] no hace de ti más que una esclava de servicio y compañera de lecho momentánea [...] Es tiempo mujer querida, que caiga esa espesa venda de tus ojos...*²⁴ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. III).

Thus, the readers, as they faced these situations, would understand how society educated them to fulfill the social role of mother and wife. In this way, they would comprehend that all their lives they were the object of the will of others: first under the tutelage of their father and after of their husband. With their action, the editors seek not only to create a consciousness, but also add followers to the demands of the anarchist female collective.

The social consideration of the female body was also a focus of the paper's education effort. To achieve that, they focused on the examination of sexuality and the assessment of marriage. The defence of feminine reasoning capacity appeared recurrently, having as its main objective the suppression of that gender stereotype. In relation to that, they speak about the prejudice men have about feminine mind:

... ¡oh! modernos cangrejos que vosotros recibiríais con vuestra mecanística y acostumbrada filosofía nuestra iniciativa porque habéis de saber que nosotras las torpes mujeres también tenemos iniciativa y ésta es producto del pensamiento;

²³ “Those who have spoken, did you study well what anarchy is? Isn't she the one that secures our most complete individual freedom once she triumphed? Isn't she the one to put woman at the same high as the man? [...] Why do you use the word Anarchy to deny or freedom of thought and our freedom of action [...] just for being women?”

²⁴ “...being the toy of your parents as a child, the whim of your husband as a woman and [...] worst of all, the scorn of men [...] does not make you any more than a service slave and a momentary bed companion [...] Is time, dear woman, that said bandage should fall from your eyes.”

*¿sabéis?, también pensamos [...] que la diferencia de sexo no nos impide de sentir y pensar.*²⁵ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II. The underscoring is our own.)

As an answer to the statement of some men that women lacked intellectual capacities, the men became object of anarchist critique, by characterising male reasoning as mechanical and not analytical²⁶. This way of thinking was objected by creating their own platform of dissemination and publicly positioning the result of their observations and conclusions. Accomplishing this way, a demystification of the prejudices weighted over them. The writers positioned the sexual difference at the centre of the debate to eliminate the implied inference and the implicit inequalities (Cobo Bedia, 1995: 55). Their objective was to reveal there was no feminine natural inferiority and the paper was their main vehicle to accomplish that. As for the female body, they criticized its usage for the Benefit of others: “A nosotras no se nos quiere más que por el provecho que podemos dar, ora satisfaciendo el apetito de los hombres, ora para que trabajemos sin descanso [...] a nosotras se nos obliga a seguir la voluntad de otro...”²⁷ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. VIII). The reflections on *bodily questions* were focused on actions taken over the female body and how it was submitted to the usufruct of the men. They highlighted, at the same time, the work exploitation forced by their employers and the use to satisfy men’s sexual desire, understanding it as sexual exploitation. It was not only reduced to the private sphere, but also in the public, due to sexual harassment suffered in working environments (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. I). As far as their opinion on female sexuality, female sexual desire was not authorized. In this aspect the body was built from the passive stance and the male as the active subject in intimate relations. It implied the inability of women to promote their desire and to remain expectant to men’s actions. It is exemplified in the analogy created between the female body and an object: “...porque nosotras no somos seres que puedan y deban sentir hasta que nos lo permitan, del mismo modo que el cigarrillo no pide que lo fumen y espera a que su poseedor quiera ‘usarlo’”²⁸ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II).

²⁵ “...oh you modern crabs, that you will receive with your mechanical and usual philosophy, our initiative, because you should know that we, the clumsy women, also have initiative, and it is a product of thinking. You know? We also think [...] that the sex difference is not an impediment to our thinking and feeling.”

²⁶ On the analysis on women’s rational capabilities and its historical construction see Hérítier, 2007.

²⁷ “We are not loved more by our usefulness, be it satisfying men’s appetite, nor to work without rest [...] we are forced to follow the will of other...”

²⁸ “...because we are not being that should and could feel until we are allowed to, in the same sense that a cigarette does not request to be smoked and waits for its owner to desire to ‘use’ it...”

The newspaper showed a negative perspective related to civic union as they were instituted. They related it to the lack of female emancipation, which would arrive with social revolution. In such circumstance marriage was constituted by power relations. On that note they analysed: “...entregándola al hombre no como su compañera, sino como su hembra [...] ¡Como si en un concubinato, y lo es la unión de dos almas **desemejantes**, pudiera haber otra cosa que tirano y sierva!”²⁹ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II. The bold is from the original). The domination relationship described were present within the anarchist circles. Therefore, marital bonds were characterized by inequality and subjugation. They emphasized this as one of the ways women were constructed as an oppressed subject. As a counterargument the authors promoted the establishment of “Free Love”. It would arrive once the social revolution was achieved and with it female autonomy. In one of the articles, they detailed what they understood as free liaisons:

*...en nuestra futura y próxima sociedad [...] allí sí que queremos el amor libre completamente. Es decir que la unión termine cuando termine el amor, y que, si yo porque la gana me da, no quiero estar sujeta a ningún hombre, no se me desprecie...*³⁰ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Num. II)

In this new stage, the relationship between gender would be equal and, consequently, unions would be established between equals. Furthermore, it is interesting that dishonour would result obsolete in the case of those women that had not desire to join any man.

By revealing the power relations imposed over women, the editors clarified that the road to feminine liberation was education. In the article “NOSOTRAS A VOSOTRAS” (From Us to You) they stated:

*Aspiramos a educarnos en la cotidiana lucha por la conquista de nuestros derechos [...] Queremos hacer comprender a nuestras compañeras que no somos tan débiles e inútiles cual creen o nos quieren hacer creer los que comercian con nuestros trabajos y nuestros cuerpos [...] queremos derechos y no tantos deberes...*³¹ (*La Voz de la Mujer*, Year I, Núm. IV)

²⁹ “...giving her to man as his partner, but as his female [...] As if in a concubinage, and it is in the union of two **unequal** souls, there could be anything but tyrant and slave!”

³⁰ “...in our future and near society [...] there we do want absolute free love. We mean that the union end when love ends, and if, I want it, I don’t want to be subjected to any man, I won’t be despised.”

³¹ “We aspire to educate ourselves in the everyday struggle for the conquest of our rights [...] We want to make clear to our comrades that we are not as weak and useless as they believe or as they make us believe those that trade with our work and bodies [...] we want rights and not so many duties...”

We can state that the newspaper promoted the education as a political Project that would allow them to reach emancipation in a double sense: both as women and as workers. The main way to bring their interests together, denounce oppressions and gender inequalities was *La Voz de la Mujer*, which gives us the reason to consider it a political actor.

Conclusion

La Voz de la Mujer was born as a consequence of women's exclusion within the anarchist movement. The latter was monopolized by the men, who carried the alleged only authorized voice. Therefore, they were considered the exploited and oppressed subjects, becoming the revolutionary actor of the libertarian struggle. These circumstances pushed women to rise their claims and create a device that allowed them to exhibit their claims publicly. In that sense the platform became the only instrument able to expose the multiple discriminations suffered. In this paper we have analysed the topic as they were referenced in the paper the tension within the anarchist movement became one of the main debates exposed in it. The editors used the confrontation to legitimize and make themselves visible as a political actor. By expressing themselves in a specific vocabulary, beliefs, values and shared experiences as a collective of working women, they developed a feminine anarchist political culture. From it was possible to identify the modification they aspired to create to change women's situation within the anarchist movement and in society as a whole. In relation to it, the education given to their readers was introduced by teaching of anarchist ideals and conscientization of the exploitation of female bodies, both in the working and domestic spaces. At the same time, they warned about the multiple discriminations that crossed them, due to their class and gender condition, showing an intersectional analysis of their reality.

We can establish that the newspaper proved to be a space for women to carry out their political role and, through it, overcome the hierarchical dichotomic logic. Even if the libertarian ideals promoted female autonomy, the writers proved that in everyday practice they were limited to traditional gender roles. They became public as political actors and denounced and exposed the ailments of women. The division of dichotomic spheres, private and public, was, therefore, sorted by the writers. The different topics developed and analysed in this paper, show how the newspaper, early on, made political and public the private space. Thus, becoming not only a working women's aggrupation, but, at the same time, fought for women's emancipation. Such activity would allow us to position them within feminisms.

We must consider that the Conduit for these feminist anarchist ideas was the newspaper. The demands of action, autonomy, bodily freedom are problems that are still present in today's feminist's agenda. The anarchist of the *Voz* started this discussion at the end of the 19th Century, by expressing a feminist analysis of their society. Therefore, we can place the periodical within the feminist press (DiCenzo *et al*, 2011), both by the group it represented and the ideals they promoted. We believe these anarchists should not be separated from the First Feminist Wave, because their fight to amplify gender roles, political participation and elimination of the subjugation to men, made them feminists. The fact they did not adhere to parliamentary struggle, that is the access to the vote, does not dismiss their struggle for female liberation or the argument for their inclusion in the first wave. Currently, we refer to the movement in a plural manner, we must also understand that at the end of 19th Century-beginning of 20th Century, the movement wasn't monolithic. Therein lies the need to use the plural, since they could be identified by their ideological ways, but also by the geographical spaces they occupied. Due to all of this, we think we have argued in favour of being in the presence of a feminist feminine anarchist political press, that defined a political culture at the end of the 19th Century.

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