

FASCISM, NEO-FASCISM, OR POST-FASCISM? CHILE, 1945-1988 *

Sandra McGee Deutsch

Abstract. The article sets out to analyze fascist and neo-fascist movements in Chile, in the period following World War II. Chile is an exemplary case for this type of analysis, as it had a significant fascist movement in the period between world wars, with several radical right organizations appearing later on. The objective of the study is to understand how the defeat of the Axis and post-war context affected these fascist movements, including some composed by women.

Keywords: Fascism; Neo-Fascism; Chile.

¿FASCISMO, NEOFASCISMO O POSFASCISMO? CHILE (1945-1988)

Resumen. El artículo se propone analizar los movimientos fascistas y neofascistas de Chile, durante el período posterior a la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Chile es un caso ejemplar para este tipo de análisis ya que tuvo un significativo movimiento fascista durante la etapa de entreguerras, con el posterior surgimiento de varias organizaciones de derecha radical. El objetivo de este estudio es comprender cómo la derrota del Eje y el contexto de posguerra afectaron dichos movimientos fascistas, incluso los de las mujeres.

Palabras clave: Fascismo; Neofascismo; Chile.

FASCISMO, NEO-FASCISMO OU PÓS-FASCISMO? CHILE, 1945-1988

Resumo. O artigo se propõe a analisar os movimentos fascistas e neo-fascistas no Chile, no período posterior à Segunda Guerra mundial. O Chile é um caso exemplar para esse tipo de análise, pois teve um significativo movimento fascista no período entre guerras, com o surgimento posterior de várias organizações de direita radical. O objetivo do estudo é compreender como a derrota do Eixo e o contexto pós-guerra afetou esses movimentos fascistas, inclusive os de mulheres.

Palavras chave: Fascismo; Neo-Fascismo; Chile.

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INTRODUCTION

Latin America before the end of World War II witnessed influential fascist movements and governments that found some of their ideas attractive. These groups generally embodied the characteristics of "classic fascism," as Diethelm Prowe called it (PROWE, 1994). A number of these movements that continued to exist after 1945, or morphed into new ones, kept these traits. Others, however, appeared to alter their beliefs and organizational styles, as was the case for kindred groups in Europe.

Chile offers an excellent case for analyzing continuity and change within the right. It had a significant fascist movement in the interwar period, followed by a variety of radical rightist organizations and several administrations that sympathized with such ideas. Concentrating on this country between 1945 and 1988, when a plebiscite heralded the end of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-90), this essay addresses several interrelated questions. How did the defeat of the Axis and the postwar context affect fascists and their successors, including women? What alterations did they undergo, and how fundamental were they? Could one define them – and the governments they influenced – as fascist? Responding to the last question, the paper suggests that while the Chilean phenomena differed from classic fascist and post-1945 European "neofascist" movements, there also were similarities among them.

Examining these issues is important for several reasons. First, Latin Americanists have paid more attention to prewar fascism than to its possible postwar manifestations.¹ Second, this paper reflects on a matter of vital interest for researchers of fascism around the world. Many specialists have seen this persuasion as arising out of the interwar era in Europe. They question whether it continued to exist after its "epoch," as Ernst Nolte put it, and if it did, whether it had any weight (NOLTE, 1964). By extending the analysis to Chile, this essay situates Latin America within a transnational framework of comparison and scholarly debate. Third, it inserts women into discussions of the postwar radical right and the characteristics of fascism, which often have ignored them.

¹ On the literature before the late 1990s, see Deutsch (1999).

CLASSIC FASCISM AND THE CHILEAN VERSION

One must understand classic fascism in Europe and Latin America in order to determine whether fascism outlasted World War II.² According to Stanley Payne's "typological description," fascism from 1914 to 1945 opposed liberalism, leftism, and conservatism, although sometimes it allied with the latter. It sought to create a corporatist economic and social system; a new form of authoritarian government; a vitalist, modern, and spiritual yet essentially secular culture; and a more assertive relationship with other countries. Fascists accepted private ownership of property with strong government regulation. They favored violence, male domination, the *führer* principle, youth, and the use of symbols, rituals, and emotion. They also tried to mobilize large numbers of followers into a militarized version of politics (PAYNE, 1995).

Roger Griffin (1993, p.44) described fascism as "a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism." While fascists may work within the existing system to gain influence, they aim to destroy liberals, leftists, conservatives, and other forces they blame for degrading the nation. They attempt to form a society purified of these elements, one that blends new structures and practices with a "heroic ethos" and healthy customs.³

The last definition I offer is my own, derived from perusing the European literature and researching Argentine, Brazilian, and Chilean (ABC) movements of the 1930s-1940s. While these groups opposed conservatism and liberalism, they regarded leftists as the most severe threat to society, given the Bolshevik Revolution and the rise of local Communist parties. As did other fascists, they frequently allied with conservatives, and part of their critique of liberalism was based on their view that it led to leftism. Therefore in my definition I privilege fascist resistance to the left. By devising radical alternatives to leftism and fighting its proponents in the streets, the Argentine Nacionalistas, Ação Integralista Brasileira, and Chilean Movimiento Nacional Socialista (MNS, or Nacistas), represented the most extreme means of countering their

² For older reviews of this literature, see Laqueur (1976). For a newer review, see Finchelstein (2008).

³ Also see Paxton (2005).

leftist foes.⁴ Some might argue that this formulation makes fascism seem merely reactive, but one must note that varieties of leftism and rightism have evolved in tandem, and each has influenced constructions of the other (VALDIVIA ORTIZ DE ZÁRATE; ALVAREZ VALLEJOS; PINTO VALLEJOS, 2006; EATWELL, 1990).

Despite female activism in such movements and the scholarly attention it has received, theories of fascism rarely discuss women, apart from their implicit subordination in male-dominated movements. This seems a glaring omission, as at least some fascist groups placed women and domestic life at the center of their discourse (SARNOFF, 2008).⁵ They lauded women's roles in the family, a custom presumably retained in Griffin's new fascist community, yet at the same time erased the boundaries between public and private. As social housekeepers and moralizers, fascist women participated in the purification efforts that Griffin stressed. They also helped root fascism in the political system and construct an alternative to the left.⁶ These ideas and activities were vital to classic fascism.

Chilean Nacistas conformed to the definitions of fascism offered above. They advocated a strong government with a corporatist representation system and equal but limited political rights and duties for men and women. Modeling the future state, uniformed male and female Nacistas organized in a hierarchical and militarized fashion under their leader, Jorge González von Marées. They claimed to embody idealism, self-sacrifice, discipline, and vigor. The MNS insisted it was as radical and concerned about the poor as the "other socialism". Opposition to "Jewish" international capital formed part of its alternative to the left, as did an economic program that supposedly rejected both capitalism and Communism. Instead Nacistas favored private property that served Chile's interests, economic nationalism, and government intervention in

⁴ Deutsch (1999), especially, p. 140; on the overlap with conservatism see Blinkhorn (1990). The definition of fascism as a radical form of antileftism draws upon Nolte (1964) and other works.

⁵ The Brazilian Integralistas called theirs the "revolution of the family"; see Deutsch (1999). Broad recent works on fascist women include Durham (1998); Bacchetta and Power (2002); Passmore (2003); Right-Wing Women... (2004).

⁶ Paxton (2005, p. 14, *passim*), divided the history of fascism into five stages. Its rooting in the political system was the second stage. On ABC fascist women see Deutsch (1999, p. 171-175, 234-238, 283-289), and Deutsch (1997); (Geraldo (2001). Also see Dotta, Possas and Cavalari (2004). For a useful overview of women under fascism, see Koonz (1998).

the economy. Denouncing imperialism, Nacistas urged the government to raise taxes on exports of copper, mined by foreign companies, and renege on the foreign debt. Another component of the alternative to the left was the displacement of class struggle. The movement's military character, support for corporatism, and its proposed obligatory year of national service for all Chileans sought to obscure class boundaries. So, too, did Nacista women's charitable projects, designed to appeal to the poor and combat leftism. To purify Chile and prepare for national rebirth, Nacistas assaulted leftists and workers. At its height, the MNS recruited about 20,000 members, including several hundred women. Perhaps half to two-thirds came from the lower and lower middle class. In line with the three definitions of fascism, Nacistas constituted the most radical form of opposition to Chilean leftists in the interwar years. They were populist ultra-nationalists who sought to eradicate degenerate elements and erect a new country on the ashes of the old. Finally, they fit Payne's characteristics.⁷

The only debatable difference was that at times Nacistas overlapped with Catholicism, which would seem to contradict Payne's emphasis on the modern and secular nature of fascist culture and governance. Yet other authors have pointed out how Italian Fascists, the Romanian Iron Guard, Croatian Ustasha, and Belgian Christus Rex collaborated with and mobilized devout Christians. Furthermore, Nacista relations with the Church shifted with the political breeze; in fact, the MNS's strategy of adapting Christian imagery and claiming a Christian mantle subtly threatened the Church.⁸

FASCISM AFTER 1945?

Despite the wartime destruction, Allied victory, and the Holocaust, some European fascists remained committed to their cause. These events, however, alienated many former supporters of fascism. By the 1960s, movements that wanted to win broad support understood that they had to devise new strategies.

⁷ Deutsch (1999, p. 145-146, 155-192); Potashnik (1974); Sznajder (1993).

⁸ Blinkhorn (1990); Deutsch (1999, p. 177-181). Sznajder ((1993, p. 269-296), argued that MNS adherence to some conservative values such as religion kept it from being truly fascist.

They did so in a context that differed markedly from that of the interwar period. World War I, political tensions, and the Great Depression helped shape classic fascism, but the postwar radical right, or "neofascism," has grown in a time of peace and prosperity. Western and Central Europe has been politically stable, and most of its inhabitants accept democracy. Extreme rightists must either advocate revolution or adapt to the democratic system, and most have chosen the second approach. Imperialist and Social Darwinist racial theories influenced classic fascism, while decolonization and globalization set off population movements that in turn incited neofascist racism. Classic fascists regarded militant workers and leftists as their primary enemies, and neofascists continued to rally around anti-Communism. Yet by the 1970s, immigrants were replacing Communists as the neofascists' main target (PROWE, 1994).⁹

Few, if any, of these conditions applied to Latin America. Chile and its neighbors experienced political and economic turmoil after 1945. A large minority among their citizens accepted or even welcomed military dictatorships in the 1960s to the 1980s. Many assigned greater value to populist economics than political democracy. While some racial and ethnic tensions beset these nations, the primary fissure still was class. The Cuban (1959-) and Nicaraguan (1979-90) revolutions, insurgencies elsewhere, the prominence of leftist parties, and the election of Salvador Allende and his Unidad Popular coalition in Chile (UP, 1970-1973) demonstrated the left's hardness. Thus the specter of Marxism persisted long past 1945 and continued to incite extreme rightists.

While European neofascist movements possessed many classic traits, those that rooted themselves in the political system differed in some key respects from their forebears. They gained support by cultivating an outwardly moderate appearance and denying fascist links, despite attracting old-line militants of this persuasion. Parties such as the Front National of France, Movimento Sociale Italiano (later replaced by Alleanza Nazionale), and Freiheitspartei of Austria seemingly accepted democratic rules and were less overtly militarized than previous groups. They usually rejected corporatism and upheld free-market economics. This stance reflects criticism of bureaucrats, official corruption, and progressive social welfare policies. Although their economic views

⁹ Also see Merkl and Weinberg (1993); Hainsworth (2000); Betz and Immerfall (1998); Davies (2002). Some Eastern European countries present far different conditions and fertile ground for genuine fascism. See Paxton (2005, p. 188-191).

differed from those of classic fascists, they, like the latter, opposed the left and tried to mobilize ordinary people. They appealed to “hardworking individuals” by denouncing immigrants, political parties, and non-productive freeloaders. The presence of strong male leaders such as Jörg Haider and Jean-Marie Le Pen suggested continued male domination and the importance of powerful personal leadership, yet the sources mention a few significant female figures. Neofascist support for motherhood and pro-natalist policies and critiques of permissiveness and feminism indicated carryover from the past, although Martin Durham noted that these views have been nuanced and fluid. He has also shown that postwar fascist parties usually received less support from women than from men (BETZ; IMMERFALL, 1998; DURHAM, 1998).

CHILE

Shifts in the international context also prompted changes in Chile. The Allied victory convinced some fascists that the era of corporatism, economic nationalism, anti-Semitism, and dictatorship had ended. Reluctant to give up long-held beliefs, or distrustful of what they regarded as false propaganda about the Axis, others retained such notions. Still others kept their anti-democratic ideas but dressed them in more moderate clothing. The Cold War led many to revise their perceptions of the United States, now that it headed the worldwide struggle against Communism, although they harbored suspicions of U.S. designs on the region. This global anti-Communist crusade, as well as local leftist prowess, seemingly justified far rightist views. A number of small groups continued to adhere to a virtually unaltered fascist agenda, but few were powerful.¹⁰

Several important Nacistas reevaluated their ideas after 1945. One was former chief González von Marées, who joined the moderate rightist Liberal party. His realization that Chileans disliked extremes, as well as his perception that the Liberals were the most *criollo* of local parties, influenced this shift. Speaking in 1950, he decried “Marxist intervention” in the economy, which he identified with the bureaucratic

¹⁰ Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (1995b, p. 21-31); Ramírez Necochea (1978); Prieto (1999). One such group – Patria y Libertad -- was important, but has received little detailed scholarly attention. Fuentes (1999), is an account by a participant. To test Nolte's assertion and facilitate comparisons with Europe, this essay mostly focuses on governments and influential groups that seemingly moved away from fascism.

welfare state, and, departing from MNS economic nationalism, advocated less regulation. Chile should address the problems of poverty and economic development through “anti-demagogic” and “anti-classist” policies. He also turned against corporatism. If political parties could become demoralized – as most Chilean ones were -- the same or worse could befall functional interest groups (*gremios*), especially since they lacked allegiance to any doctrine beyond their narrow economic goals. González acknowledged that respect for the constitution strengthened Chile; installation of a dictatorship might benefit the economy but could also result in corruption or collapse, as in Germany. Thus he had come to favor democracy. Nevertheless, he retained trust in the discipline, hierarchy, and self-sacrifice that Nacistas had practiced (Dr. LUX, 1950). Despite his new faith in the free market and rejection of corporatism, González’s support for core fascist values; opposition to Marxism, demagoguery, and class divisions; and subtle critique of democracy indicated the carryover from the past. His shift predated and paralleled that of some European neofascists.

Several former Nacistas who turned populist defended their previous political allegiances. Oscar Jiménez, a Partido Agrario Laborista (PAL; discussed below) member and cabinet minister under Carlos Ibáñez (1952-58) and Allende, along with several others, emphasized the MNS’s national socialism, which they classified as a native leftism distinguished from the upper-class rightist Liberal and Conservative parties. Also attempting to set the MNS apart from Nazism, they inaccurately insisted that the Nacistas had never been anti-Semitic. Admitting it had engaged in violence, these ex-Nacistas claimed that young militants of various persuasions in the 1930s had attacked each other, which was true, and that they were not truly homicidal, which was questionable (JIMENEZ; SALINAS; ZORRILLA, 1998; RECABARREN VALENZUELA, 1964). A PAL (1948) cabinet minister under Ibáñez and self-declared leftist, Sergio Recabarren Valenzuela characterized the MNS as “the most virile and integral local manifestation” of the national and popular struggle. Opposed to the alliance between the local oligarchy and international capital, Nacismo paralleled the Communists in some ways, he asserted. Recabarren emphasized MNS “morality,” economic nationalism, and sympathy for the *por* (RECABARREN VALENZUELA, 1964, p. 11, 13, 15-16, 38, 42, 55, *passim*). He was correct in stating that the MNS had criticized both the elite and international capital, although he neglected to mention that it had often done so in a fascist manner by identifying the latter with Jews. While

they had attacked Communists, Nacistas in fact had admired their courage, militancy, and integrity. These former militants did not deny their Nacista past, but they highlighted certain aspects and obscured others to reinforce their new political identities.

As in Europe, movements before the 1960s tended to be nationalistic, such as the group coalescing around *Estanquero* (1946-1954), headed by former Conservative Jorge Prat. The magazine favored corporatism, authoritarianism, and a third position between liberalism and Communism. In its view, the Axis defeat did not nullify corporatism, which had Hispanic roots. However, it claimed to support a corporatist society that was nonpartisan and independent of government control, unlike the fascist type¹¹. In other respects these stances were characteristic of classic fascism, although the magazine claimed Francisco Franco and other non-fascist Iberians and Spanish Americans as its sources of inspiration. One admired figure was Diego Portales, the leader of the conservative Estanqueros, who had forged an antiliberal pact of rule among landowners, merchants, the Church, and the military in the 1830s. Much like its fascist precursors and neofascist contemporaries in Europe, *Estanquero* criticized liberal democracy for promoting disunity, a false sense of equality, and demagogic social reforms, which in turn had degraded Chile, hurt the economy, and facilitated Communism. As Carlos Ruiz (1992a), noted, the group's extreme anti-Communism facilitated "points of contact between these former admirers of the Axis and the ideologies of the Cold War." According to *Estanquero*, only a refurbished Christian nationalism that united Chileans could win an apocalyptic final showdown with Communism and halt the country's decline. Its standard bearer would be an authoritarian government that stood above classes and parties.¹² *Estanquero* shared the classic fascist goals of radically countering the left and reversing a perceived national degeneration. The fact that former MNS leader González von Marées wrote some (unsigned) editorials for *Estanquero* also indicated its ties to the past (ALLIENDE GONZÁLEZ, 1990).

¹¹ On the Catholic roots of this view in the 1930s-40s, see Gazmuri Riveros; Aylwin Oyarzún; González Ransanz (1977) and Carlos Ruiz (1992a). On the variety of corporatist currents, see Sutil (2004).

¹² These "points of contact" were also evident in the militarized Acción Chilena Anticomunista, or AChA (1946-1949), to which Prat and other radical rightists belonged. See Prieto (1989); and Right-Wing... (2004, especially, p. 78-80). Also see *Estanquero* (1946); Fariña Vicuña (1990, p.120-131); Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (1995^a, p. 32-42); Ruiz (1992b, p. 103-104, quote on p.104); Prat Echaurren (1965).

These links notwithstanding, there also were differences. *Estanquero* shared the cult of Portales with Nacistas, who, however, had not regarded the nineteenth-century conservative as an appropriate model for a modern movement. An aristocracy based on birth had characterized Portales's system, whereas the MNS favored an aristocracy of merit. Strongly identifying with the upper-class leader, and less interested in attracting a popular following, *Estanquero* advocated a "contemporary Portalianism" that would construct a new political order based on "our Spanish and Western cultural heritage." The MNS had also appealed to tradition and elitism, but it combined these traits with an emphasis on social justice and mobilization that *Estanquero* lacked. Chilean radical rightists needed new sources of inspiration after 1945, and they found them in Hispanism and Catholicism, which had not influenced Nacistas to any great extent.¹³

Whereas *Estanquero* and the Nacistas both supported economic cooperation among Latin American countries and greater economic independence, the former was less nationalistic than the latter. The MNS had proposed that the government nationalize certain enterprises, implement agrarian reform, and stop paying the national debt, but *Estanquero* supported none of these positions. The Depression had ended, and the group opposed the Popular Front's industrialization and social welfare policies. The magazine favored reducing the government's economic role, a stance the European neofascists would soon advocate. *Estanquero* wanted to delegate more authority to employer associations, trade unions, and other intermediary groups (*gremios*); this supposedly depoliticized *gremialismo* would be a significant feature of the postwar Chilean radical right.¹⁴

Prat and some ex-Nacistas thought General Carlos Ibáñez could create the desired political order. As president between 1927 and 1931, he had suppressed political parties, leftists, and independent labor unions; modernized administration; and implemented some nationalistic socioeconomic policies. His combination of authoritarianism, charisma, nationalism, and reform had appealed to the MNS, which supported Ibáñez when he ran for the presidency in 1938 on a populist anti-Communist platform. Stressing his opposition to party politics, corruption, and disorder – much as neofascist candidates would in

¹³ Correa Sutil (2004, p. 244-246); quote in Farina Vicuña (1990, p. 130-131).

¹⁴ Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (1995a, p. 38-40); Deutsch (1999, p. 146, 166).

Europe - Ibáñez won the 1952 election backed by *Estanquero* and a broad spectrum.¹⁵ As Ibáñez's treasury minister, Prat advocated a Latin American common market and regional financing of development and warned against U.S. economic control, similar to previous MNS stances. His internal measures to stem inflation, however, were not particularly populist or nationalist.¹⁶

Ibáñez's main political base, at least until 1955, was the Partido Agrario Laborista (PAL). It represented the merger of the Partido Agrario, which supported corporatism, antileftism, and landed interests, and several radical rightist and Catholic movements in 1945. Nevertheless, "displaced Nacistas were the ones who formed and dominated the party," according to a former militant, and helped shape the Ibáñez administration during its initial years. Recabarren, Jiménez, and three other former MNS activists-turned-PAL leaders entered Ibáñez's cabinet (GARAY VERA, 1990, p. 231).

In many respects the PAL program updated old Nacista ideas. It opposed class conflict, party politics, and much of liberalism. For the PAL, the social and integrative function of the economy assumed priority over profits. It supported a "popular capitalism" that would convert workers into shareholders of the companies in which they worked and thereby diminish the lines between capital and labor, as would government welfare policies. Further eliding class divisions, the PAL favored "men of work" and an MNS-type semi-militarized work service that would meld recruits of all classes. It thought that its platform distinguished it from both right and left, although some members claimed they were leftist. The PAL's allegiance to "Christian Western European Culture" placed it on the side of the U.S. against "Asiatic Communism," yet it opposed U.S. intervention in the Americas. Proclaiming its allegiance to Latins as a third force in the world, aside from Anglo-Saxons and Slavs, the PAL advocated Latin American integration and ties to Franco's Spain. Once powerful and spiritual, Chile had lost its role as standard bearer of the West in the region. Corporatism, class conciliation, a Portalian system above ideologies and parties, and a renewed popular nationalism would stem Chilean decadence and

¹⁵ On his administration see Correa Sutil (2005, p. 161-177); Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (1995b, p. 33-63).

¹⁶ Prat Echaurren (1965, p. 65-74); Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (1995b, p. 42-53). Three other *Estanqueros* also joined the cabinet at this time; see Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (1995b, p. 44).

regenerate the country. Most of these notions had characterized the MNS, which had even claimed space on the left between 1937 and 1939. There were, however, some differences. The alignment with the U.S. in the Cold War and emphasis on Hispanism, Latinity, and the Christian West were new. While it favored some government regulation, the PAL's advocacy of individual initiative also contrasted with the MNS's suspicion of economic liberalism.

Was this fascism? Along Griffin's lines, the PAL emphasized populist nationalism and the regeneration of Chile, although not through violent means. The party met Payne's characteristics, except for the rejection of violence and acceptance of the democratic system. One could argue, however, that its corporatism and critique of *politiquería* indicated a weak allegiance to democracy. Still, during its brief stint in power, the party behaved democratically (RAMÍREZ NECOCHEA, 1978).

Did the PAL create a radical alternative to the left? It did not use violence to reinforce its radicalism, as had the MNS. It favored social justice, however, and its work service represented a militarized means of mobilization. Interestingly, the PAL helped rescind the law of 1948 that proscribed the Communist party, asserting that social reforms could heal class wounds better than repression.¹⁷ Agrario Laboristas and Socialists backed Ibáñez's establishment of a minimum wage for rural workers, ministry of mining, government housing program, and state bank. The government's turn toward liberal economic policies, however, alienated these allies.¹⁸ Whether the PAL was mildly leftist or the most radical way of coopting and countering the left, as befits fascism, is worth pondering.

The 1960s and early 1970s witnessed a dramatic shift within the right, from nationalism to neoliberalism. Liberals, Conservatives, and Acción Nacional, a party formed by Prat in 1963, merged to form the Partido Nacional (PN) in 1966. Support for private property, the free market, and an authoritarian system united this new party, as did its denunciation of socialism, party politics, and Chilean "decadence." Threatened by the UP and its socialist project, the PN mobilized diverse

¹⁷ Correa Sutil argued that the Communist party unofficially supported Ibáñez in return for his pledge to nullify this law; see Correa Sutil (2005, p. 147-148).

¹⁸ Bray (1967, p. 38); Drake (1993, p. 123-126).

groups to challenge the government in the streets, encouraged violence, and facilitated a military coup.¹⁹

One group the PN helped mobilize was women. Women of the National and Christian Democratic (PDC) parties were instrumental in organizing the March of the Empty Pots and Pans in December 1971, in which thousands of women, including some of the working class, protested alleged food shortages. The organizers constructed the specter of scarcity – which did not yet exist -- to argue that the Allende administration imperiled the gender system: if women could not feed their families, they could not fulfill their gender duties. Contesting Fidel Castro's recent visit and the leftist government, the organizers asserted women's roles as mothers, wives, and providers, which supposedly transcended partisan and class divisions.²⁰

Some anti-Allende women, including marchers, launched Poder Femenino (PF) in early 1972. This name signified that they were "feminine," not feminist; their strength and tasks conformed to the gender status quo. Indeed, their mission partly consisted of prodding men to fulfill their manly role of defending their families against Marxism. Identifying homes as the "trenches" from which they fought leftism, the PF encouraged housewives to challenge the government by banging pots and pans each night. Yet the PF also carried the struggle outside the home, supporting opponents of the UP, confronting the administration in the media, organizing protests, and in general destabilizing the polity. Through some of these actions, as well as their PDC members' ties to Mothers' Centers, organized by this party in the 1960s to integrate poor women into activities in their communities, the PF mobilized many working-class women. PF also stigmatized military officers as unmanly for not ousting Allende. Thus PF helped goad the armed forces into a coup and created backing for it (POWER, 2002).²¹

¹⁹ Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (2006, p. 15-47); Ramírez Necochea (1978, p. 25-27); Power, (2002, p. 71, 118-120, *passim*); Correa Sutil (2005b, p. 157-158); Pollack (1999, p. 26-30).

²⁰ Power (2002, p. 71, 144-168).

²¹ Also see Deutsch (1991, p. 302-303); Angeles Crummett (1977, p. 103-113); Mattelart (1975, p.14-25); Correa Morande (1974, p. 142); and Donoso Loero (1974); Tinsman (2002, p. 146-156, *passim*); Valdés, et al (no date). Margaret Power treats Brazilian influences on PF in *The Transnational Diffusion of Anti-Communism: Conservative Women in Brazil and Chile in the 1960s and 1970s*, forthcoming (date not available).

PF strongly resembled its fascist precursors. It upheld a rigid binary and hierarchical distinction between men and women that symbolized its notion of the ideal class system. PF members emphasized their domestic roles, which their male allies lauded, and envisioned the male-led bourgeois family as the microcosm of society. Their activism aimed at cleansing Chile of degenerate Marxist elements and erased the boundaries between private and public. By mobilizing support and encouraging a coup they helped root fascism – if that is what these views represented -- in the political system and enable it to seize power. One member noted that the PF fulfilled women's yearnings for activism that the other "less aggressive" political groups had not satisfied.²² In fact, the PF was far more pugnacious and radical than MNS women had been. Their provocative rhetoric and militancy formed part of a radical antileftist strategy. In addition, they recruited among the poor and claimed to represent all women and the entire nation, thus obscuring class conflict.

Another crucial actor in the events leading to the coup was Jaime Guzmán. As a law student at the Universidad Católica in the mid-1960s, Guzmán envisioned a new vehicle to match the dynamism of the center and left. Repelled by Christian Democratic plans for student participation in university governance, he contested what he saw as the decline of authority and hierarchy within academe and the partisan penetration of student organizations. To protect these intermediary groups from government interference, he founded the Movimiento Gremial, which soon controlled the student federations in this school and mobilized opponents against Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei (1964-1970), doing so far more effectively than the old rightist parties. This supposedly apolitical movement challenged liberal, democratic, and leftist principles. Guzmán and the Gremialistas went on to organize protests and media campaigns against the Allende government, their stridency matching that of their ally Poder Femenino (VALDIVIA ORTIZ DE ZÁRATE, (2006, p. 31-36, passim).

Neoliberalism was gaining sway, and Guzmán participated in this shift. The Cold War had prompted the flow of free market ideas through U.S. universities and financial missions to Chile. Rightist parties, entrepreneurial groups, and Chile's most prestigious newspaper, *El Mercurio*, began to advocate such policies in the 1950s. In 1955 the

²² Correa Morande (1974, P. 57). Rooting in the system and seizing power are stages two and three of fascism, according to Paxton (2005).

Universidad Católica and University of Chicago started a well-known program to train local economists, financed by the U.S. State Department. As a student and professor at the Universidad Católica, Guzmán absorbed ideas from this neoliberal milieu.²³

This influence was apparent in his adaptation of the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, discussed in *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). Here Pope Pius XI proposed that the higher intermediary groups should not restrict the lower ones, but rather aid them and help coordinate all components of the corporatist society to promote the common good. Altering this communitarian model, Guzmán's notion of subsidiarity stated that the government should not take on duties that individuals and *gremios*, including businesses and entrepreneurial organizations, could fulfill. To do otherwise would stifle private initiative and freedom, which he viewed in a narrow economic sense. He considered individual property ownership and free enterprise fundamental to Catholic social doctrine; they promoted the liberty and dignity of the person, whose existence superseded that of the government. Yet Catholic thinkers (and fascists) before 1945 theoretically had subordinated property rights to the needs of the society, advocated public welfare policies, and favored a third position. In contrast, Guzmán supported unfettered capitalism, decrying government redistribution programs as restricting private efforts and undermining subsidiarity. He did not find it contradictory that a Chilean government compatible with these ideas would impose economic "freedom" by force. As did European neofascists somewhat later, Guzmán constructed his economic ideas as a reaction against the official model – in Chile, one of public economic control and social justice.²⁴ Yet his European counterparts, however, largely rejected corporatism and coercion.

Guzmán, however, did not want a weak government. Evoking Portales and nationalist currents, he backed an impersonal authoritarian system that would enforce respect for a hierarchical order and assure the common good. Such notions permeated the *Declaración de principios del gobierno de Chile* of 1974, which military leaders had asked the young professor to write. The *Declaración* also contained the principle of subsidiarity, providing for limited citizen participation in intermediary

²³ Correa Sutil (2005, p. 183-211, *passim*); Correa (1985); Valdés (1989); Pollack (1999). On the decline of statist nationalism among military officers, see Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (2003).

²⁴ Cristi (2000, p. 23-27, 59-76), and Cristi (1992, p. 126); Sigmund (1992).

bodies that did not participate in government decisionmaking.²⁵ Suspicion of popular political power carried over into the Constitution of 1980, which Guzmán helped draft. This document incorporated the idea that sovereignty rested in the nation, a mystical entity above the people, rather than in the people themselves. Seemingly accepting universal suffrage, the constitution circumscribed it by creating powerful official bodies with non-elected members, including some senators. It kept Pinochet as president for eight more years, when voters would vote for or against the military junta's candidate.²⁶ By defeating Pinochet, this plebiscite did not function as its framers had planned.

The regime's suspicion of popular mobilization seemed to set it apart from classic fascism and neofascism. It prohibited political parties and many other civic groups from operating and did not create a party that monopolized the political arena. Yet the dictatorship mobilized some people in a controlled fashion. The Secretaría Nacional de la Juventud set up recreational and educational activities for young people to break their ties with the left. It established programs to impart basic skills in poor neighborhoods and sent university students to these areas to engage in charity work. Seen as fostering unity above class and party divisions, these efforts were reminiscent of the MNS Work Service. The Secretaría set up the Instituto de Estudios y Capacitación Diego Portales to teach future leaders about "Christian" values and government policies. That Chile was the bulwark of Western Christian civilization against Communism was among the lessons the Instituto imparted. These youth tried to create a popular base for the government but did not participate in political power (VALDIVIA ORTIZ DE ZÁRATE, 2006; POLLACK, 1999).

Women performed a similar function. While praising the PF, the military dictatorship disbanded it as part of its prohibition of autonomous political activity. Rather than demobilizing women, however, it put them under its control by channeling them into officially sponsored volunteerism. The most important volunteer organizations were the now "depoliticized" Mothers' Centers (CEMA-Chile) and Secretaría Nacional de la Mujer, both headed by Pinochet's wife, Lucía Hiriart. The Secretaría offered courses for potential volunteers on

²⁵ Chile (1974); Bejares González (1976); Cristi (2000); Correa Sutil (2004).

²⁶ Chile (1981); Cristi (2000); Correa Sutil (2004). As Cristi and other authors have noted, Guzmán's thinking evolved under the dictatorship, although not in a progressive fashion, and he eventually distanced himself somewhat from the regime.

"family and patriotic values" such as female domesticity and respect for authority and private property. Mostly of the upper and middle classes, graduates disseminated these notions to impoverished women in the Mothers' Centers and monitored their political views. The Secretaria's courses and numerous publications were designed to harness women to the government. Women who congregated in the Mothers' Centers also received social assistance and training in domestic and "feminine" vocational skills. In 1985 the centers had 226,000 members. Three years later about 145,000 women were involved in government volunteerism, constituting what Margaret Power (2001, p. 305) called the "largest civic movement that existed during the dictatorship." Thus numerous privileged women mobilized a large segment of working-class women, distributing benefits, combating leftism, and encouraging support for the regime. To what extent the recipients favored the government or simply used the centers to acquire aid is another question.²⁷

What is clear, however, is that the dictatorship amassed disproportionate backing from women. While a majority of Chileans voted against Pinochet in the 1988 plebiscite, more women (46 percent) than men (39.5 percent) favored him (POWER, 2001, p. 320). These figures contrast with Durham's finding that European neofascist parties usually have received less support from women than from men.

The female volunteers drew upon radical rightist precedents. Dressed in uniforms and headed by wives of military officers, these women organized in a military-style fashion, as had their fascist precursors. In addition, both the volunteers and fascists erased boundaries between private and public. Also reminiscent of earlier movements was the fact that the volunteers' charitable projects, dissemination of values, and modeling of bourgeois women's roles constituted the peaceful side of the regime's strategy to eradicate the left. Apparently female Pinochetistas accepted bloodshed as necessary to purge the country of Marxism and construct a new Chile based on hierarchy, order, and self-sacrifice, tasks with which they collaborated. These characteristics fit Griffin's definition of fascism.²⁸

²⁷ Chile (1982a; 1982b; 1983); Power (2001, quote on p. 301, 305-307), figure for 1988 on 310; figure for 1985 in Munizaga and Letelier (1988, p. 557).

²⁸ Deutsch (1984, p. 233-2580; Koonz (1998, p. 468-9); Hinkelmart (1976, p. 169-216); Pinochet Ugarte (no date). Munizaga and Letelier (1988, p. 543), described the volunteers as a "parallel army."

Women and youth volunteers played critical roles in implementing the dictatorship's neoliberal goals, which radically opposed leftist notions of worker solidarity and economic uplift. The Secretaría Nacional de la Mujer trained women to teach "consumer education" in the Mothers' Centers (CHILE, 1982a), thus fostering individualism among the poor and redefining citizenship as the ability to purchase goods rather than participate politically. These women, along with students sent by the Secretaría Nacional de la Juventud, engaged in charity work to help compensate for disappearing government welfare programs and assuage discontent with neoliberal economics.

As Margaret Power noted, women served the dictatorship in important ways, but it never invited them to join the leadership or devise policies (POWER, 2001). The government did the same with students and youth volunteers. In effect it organized women, students, and youth as *gremios* in a quasi-corporatist system that separated them from political decisionmaking. Although government-supervised, this system departed from the main aim of fascist corporatism: to bring together workers and capitalists.²⁹

Drawing upon postwar Catholic and nationalist writings, the regime and its supporters wanted to protect Western Christian civilization. It stood for private property, hierarchy, and conservative piety, opposing what they saw as Asiatic Communism. Yet democracy and growing labor strength undermined this civilization from within; complacency toward Marxist infiltration weakened it from without. The military and its civilian base stood for spiritual Christian values, against the decadence that threatened to destroy the West. Adapting Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, and other writers, ideologues claimed that military coups were necessary to halt the decay of Western Christian civilization, restore the free market, and regenerate the nation. This Chilean version of U.S. National Security Doctrine posited a perpetual Manichean and apocalyptic struggle, in which God had chosen the military to fight Marxism. Since Marxism was Satanic, any measure against it was legitimate, no matter how brutal (ROJAS MIX, 2007).

Miguel Rojas Mix characterized these ideas, along with neoliberalism and the suppression of class conflict, as a distinctive Latin American form of fascism. In turn, economist Paul Samuelson described

²⁹ Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate (2003, p. 153-201), showed how some officers failed in their attempt to implement this type of corporatism.

the regime's economic and antilabor policies as "market fascism."³⁰ The dictatorship fit the fascist label in some respects yet not in others. While the dictatorship's purge of leftists and attempted regeneration of the nation accorded with Griffin's description, its nationalism lacked a populist tone; in fact, Pinochet disparaged populism as demagogic. Contrasting with Payne's typology, the regime favored economic liberalism and aspects of conservatism, and its corporatism differed from the fascist type. Whether volunteer efforts to recruit a popular following constituted a genuine fascist-style mobilization of the people is debatable. The dictatorship seems to have justified its violence, rather than glorified it, as classic fascists did. Yet it may have represented the most extreme means of countering the left, especially if its alternative to Marxism truly engaged some workers. The pro-Pinochet Unión Democrática Independiente (UDI) party, founded by Guzmán in 1983, took up this task. Whether one could describe it as neofascist deserves attention. Finally, as they did under classic fascism, women helped cleanse Chile of leftism, reproduce the regime's ideology, and recruit support among the poor.

CONCLUSION

An array of rightist groups and governments continued, modified, or reshaped aspects of classic fascism in Chile between 1945 and 1988. To a certain degree they overlapped with fascism and its primary local manifestation, the MNS. All opposed class conflict, aimed at regenerating the nation, and conformed to much of Payne's typology. Moreover, their gendered rhetoric and practices were similar. Before the mid-1960s, however, ascendant nationalist currents differed from fascism by spurning violence and apparently accepting democracy. After that date, rightist groups and the Pinochet dictatorship rejected democracy, and the latter employed violence. Yet their embrace of neoliberalism and the regime's seemingly limited mobilization of the populace set them apart from fascism. Their Catholicism and Hispanism also distinguished them from the MNS.

There also were similarities and differences with European neofascists. Both eventually adopted neoliberalism and were suspicious

³⁰ Rojas Mix (2007); Sigmund (1981, p.4-6). For a review of the early literature on whether the dictatorships of the 1960s-80s were fascist, see Trindade (1983, p. 429-447).

of democracy, although the Europeans decided to recruit a mass following through democratic means. By the 1970s, this mobilization, as well as the lesser degree of female support and rejection of corporatism and force, emerged as key differences with the Chileans. So, too, did the fact that the Chileans' main targets were leftists, not immigrants or ethnic minorities.

The transformations in the Chilean radical right after 1945 might tempt one to agree with Nolte that fascism was an interwar phenomenon. Perhaps such movements have been postfascist, rather than fascist or neofascist.³¹ Yet other political ideologies have also changed over time without altering their names. Moreover, scholars have noted the ability of fascism to adapt to different contexts. No matter how one designates Chilean postwar groups, they shared the goal of weakening leftist militancy with their precursors and achieved it, at least temporarily.

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³¹ I thank Kathleen Staudt for this observation.

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