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Module 1819
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**From ‘feminisation’ to ‘feministisation’
in Galician Nationalism:**
the case study of women in
the Bloque Nacionalista Galego

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Plagiarism declaration

I declare that the work presented in this report is my own and all other published work has been referenced.

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Abstract

Given the current wave of nationalisms in Spain, this research project aims to explore the connection between nationalism and women in Galicia, a nation in north-western Spain. Through Lovenduski's framework of 'feminising politics', and Dean and Maiguashca's 'feministisation' analytical criteria, this qualitative study seeks to identify the process of 'feministisation' that has been taken place in Galician nationalism, the role of women activists in this process and the obstacles encountered; ultimately assessing this 'feministisation' as a strategy to find a path towards reconciliation.

Based on the experiences of women activists collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, the study has identified that the alliance of feminism and nationalism has allowed international and local networks to be interwoven, and it has also positioned feminist values and gender analysis at the core of the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG), one of the institutional organisations within Galician nationalism. Additionally, it has defined 'feministisation' as a complex process where the wide context of an internal crisis, the years of collective work by feminist groups and individuals, and the current hegemonic acceptance of feminism in Galician society have played their part. The study concludes that there is substantial evidence to identify a process of feministisation that is taking place within the Galician Nationalist Bloc and that the characteristics and values of this process could become a strategy to forge a path towards a more tolerant and internationalist reconciliation.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the women who inspired and supported me throughout the writing of this piece of work, especially those who have been inspiring me the longest, *quero agradecer-la miña avoa, á miña nai, miña irmá, miña tía e á miña amiga Eliana. Graciñas.*

Also, I would like to thank all the kind, bright and open-minded women who agreed to participate in this humble project and gave their time to talk about their experiences, as well as Galiza Sempre, and especially Lucía Veciño, for being the link of connection for these women.

I would like to thank my tutor, Dr Melissa Butcher, for her advice, support and encouragement as I was navigating this journey of writing a dissertation.

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Notes on Translation

In this dissertation, some of the documents have been translated from Galician and Spanish, and the same occurred with interviews which were conducted in Galician. All cited quotations are translated from the Galician language by the author unless otherwise specified.

1. Introduction

'Galicia is a land not of matriarchy, because it never was, but of matriarchs' (Encarna, 2019).

The election of Ana Pontón in 2016 as the Bloque Nacionalista Galego's (Galician Nationalist Bloc) candidate for the Galician Parliament, saw the first appointment of a woman to become a candidate for La Xunta's presidency (Galician government) (Nespereira Vale, 2017). Despite the party representing a minority in the Galician Parliament, it leads a strong active opposition (Fernández Esquez and Rama Caamaño, 2018).

To contextualise this situation, Galicia, one of the seventeen autonomous communities within the Spanish nation-state, constitutes a nation with its own history, culture and language (Fernández Baz, 2003; Miguélez-Carballeira, 2014). Galicia also features what all nationalist myths imply, and resembles the most well-known examples of Catalunya and Euskadi (Nogue and Vicente, 2004). These geographies have transformed Spain into a multinational state, where a current rise of nationalisms within has created a tense environment. The growth of Catalan pro-independence sentiments have in part consequently reinforced the centralist Spanish nationalism (Rico and Hierro, 2019). As a new wave of both central and peripheral nationalist movements have clashed within the Spanish territory, the constructions of 'the other', present in all nationalist myths, are reinforced and tensions arise (Rico and Hierro, 2019). All in all, Galician nationalism becomes a minor player in the state-level friction (Rico and Hierro, 2019).

Acknowledging this rise of nationalisms, the study will not be focused on the reasons behind this phenomenon, although this will condition the construction of 'a multinational territory' and be crucial to formulating strategies towards a reconciliation. Instead, the establishment of feminism within Galician nationalism will be investigated. Having now an institutional feminist leader and a female presence conformed by feminist activists who fight for gender equality and support actions to dismantle patriarchy (Ortbals, 2007), this study will address if Galician nationalism has shifted towards a more 'feministised' form, or whether it has reinforced other tendencies.

1.1 Aim and research questions

This dissertation is a qualitative case study, aiming to examine the experiences of women in the Galician nationalist movement. It focuses on its institutional form, the Bloque Nacionalista Galego (also referred in the study as BNG, Galician Nationalist Bloc or Bloc), through a theoretical lens of transition from 'feminisation' to 'feministisation' (see section 2.3 and 2.4). The case is explored using both Lovenduski's (2005) 'feminising politics' theoretical framework and Dean and Maiguashca's (2018) 'Feministisation' analytical criteria. The former constitutes a valuable theoretic approach to exploring the process of the feminisation of political spaces (Tasdemir, 2013), whilst the latter is aimed at analysing the presence of feminism.

My research questions focus on women's interpretations of 'feminist nationalism', and their participation and activity in the Galician nationalist movement. Ultimately, it will conclude if this 'feministisation'

of nationalism could influence the reconciliation of national identities. Accordingly, I will attempt to respond to a number of questions during this analysis, which can be listed as:

- What is the role of women, especially political activists, in the Bloque Nacionalista Galego (BNG), at the heart of Galician institutional nationalism?
- Are these women, especially political activists, trying to bring about 'feministisation'?
- What are the obstacles they are encountering?
- Can this 'feministisation' be a strategy itself to reconcile multinational territories?

1.2 Scope and delimitations

The scope of the study will be focused on the area of influence of women activists in the BNG (Galician Nationalist Bloc), and the process that has been taking place since Ana Pontón's appointment as the highest responsible figure within the party.

Since the study centres on the current 'feministisation', it does not contrast in detail the situation pre-Pontón and post-Pontón or analyse the impact of women's activism over time since the establishment of democracy in Spain. Furthermore, as most participants have held or currently hold an institutional position within the party, the thesis does

not aim, in any respect, to look for a 'universal truth' in this subject. Rather this study seeks to analyse the involvement and engagement of a specific group of women in nationalism in the specific context of Galicia, and how this analysis could draw a framework towards a reconciliation between national and state nationalisms.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The first chapter discusses relevant literature on the intersection of gender, nationalism and feminism, and places the study in this area of research. Next, the case study of Galician women and nationalism, as well as the theoretical framework, which outline the thesis, are examined. Chapter 3 presents the study's methodology, where the employed methods, data collection and analytical tools will be considered. The analysis of the results takes place in chapter 4, structured by the four research questions concerning the meaning and evidence of 'feministisation' in the BNG. Chapter 5 discusses the findings in a broader context and makes suggestions for further research, whilst the dissertation culminates in chapter 6 summarising its findings in order to answer the research questions. In the appendix, the interview schedule and interviewees information can be found.

2. Literature review

The relationship between nationalism and feminism is positioned at the core of this study, which requires literature addressing this intersection. This chapter concentrates on providing the background to this study. First, literature connecting women and nation will be synthesised in order to understand the women's role in the nation and eventually, in nationalist movements. In the second part, the studies related to nationalism and feminism are discussed. This is followed by the outlining of the two theoretical frameworks employed in the study. The last section concludes with the presentation of the literature addressing the case of Galician nationalism and feminism and discusses the research gap the thesis aims to fill.

2.1 Women and nation

Writers such as Gellner (2006), Hobsbawm (1990) and Smith (1981) have disregarded the gender perspective seeing it as irrelevant to the analysis and definition of the concepts of 'nation' and 'nationalism'. However, these arguments are countered by the work of Yuval Davis (1998) among other authors (Tasdemir, 2013; Hindi Mediavilla, 2015) who argue that gender, along with class, race, sexuality, etc., influence the production, membership and connection to the nation.

Along these lines, Yuval Davis (1998) connects the omission of women from this section of the literature to the legacy of Rousseau's (1998 [1762]) 'Social Contract' and with it, to the idea that society is divided into two spheres – the public and the private. The former refers to the natural space of the family as well as the space of women, excluding them from the latter, and consequently omitting them from the discourse of the nation. Nevertheless, the public sphere cannot be understood without relying on the construction of the private (Pateman, 1988; Grant, 1991). This dichotomy, explored by different feminist authors (Yuval Davis, 1998; Kaufman and Williams, 2010), presents a fluidity and porosity compounding the separation of both spheres.

Before proceeding any further, the concept of 'nation', still contested within academic circles, must be defined. One of its most cited definitions belongs to Stalin (1972 cited in Hindi Mediavilla, 2015 p. 36), in which he delineates it as 'a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and national character'. Similarly to Stalin's view, Greenfeld (1992) argues that the nation is a concept which encompasses not only a common origin or land but also a feeling of belonging to a community, essentially homogeneous, a concept Anderson (1983) defines as 'imagined community', which will be explored below. Bauer (1940), in contrast with these previous interpretations, leaves the common identity behind in the past and puts forward the idea of a 'common destiny', also supported by Yuval Davis (1998), where the focus lies on the projection of the nation into the future. This last concept potentially becomes an approach which could include and flexibly adapt to global migration and changes, in a way that places the idea of nation within the wider global context.

Returning to 'Imagined communities', Anderson (1983) here envisions the nation not as an ageless and universal phenomenon, but instead as a product of modernity and European historical development. He argues that this concept of nation, established by technological innovation, mass literacy and education, allows people within an extensive space to develop a common feeling of belonging, a sense of community. This perception becomes interiorised to a level which leads people to believe that is not chosen nor fabricated, but instead organic and natural (Hindi Mediavilla, 2015). This idea of 'the imagined community' and dialectic nationalisms, Anderson (1983) proclaims, divides the world between 'us' and 'them' and perpetuates the differences establishing barriers to distinguishing who belongs and who does not.

Nonetheless, this tendency in hegemonic Western literature dichotomises the concept of nationalism into positive, democratic and civil against negative, ethnic and inclined to exclusion, racism and authoritarianism (Hindi Mediavilla, 2015), the latter reminiscent of Anderson's (1983) exclusionism, or Arrighi's (1978) imperialism. On the other hand, Seodu Herr (2003) argues that these two faces may overlap on occasions and concludes, along with Davis' (1978) that ultimately nationalism is a tool towards liberation, both class and national. In this line, Feminists also enter the liberation from a patriarchal hierarchy into the equation (Jayawardena, 1986; Seodu Herr, 2003).

2.2 Feminism(s) and nationalism(s)

The involvement of feminism in nationalist movements pursues both national and anti-patriarchal goals simultaneously. Anne McClintock

(1995 p. 77) states that not applying a gender power analysis to nationalism, will mean that 'the nation-state will remain a repository of male hopes, male aspirations, and male privilege'. Following this statement, the idea of nationalism focusing on feminist literature will be explored to ultimately find connections between both feminism and nationalism.

Firstly, I will define this concept of 'feminisms', acknowledging the different underlying currents and plurality found in this word, as an emancipatory project 'to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression [...] seek[ing] social justice "for everyone"' (hooks, 2000 p. 1). Given that this definition interprets feminisms, primarily as a movement rather than a form of self-identity, people of all genders can feel a part of it (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018).

The relationship between nationalism and feminism has been very complex, varying enormously geographically. Whilst in post-colonial countries in Asia and Africa, feminist consciousness emerged in parallel and integrated with anti-imperialist struggles, to the contrary, in Europe, this connection is less prevalent throughout its history (Kaplan, 1997). Thereupon, the academic debate question of whether nationalism and feminism are compatible or clashing notions remains (al-Ali and Pratt, 2009).

One of the most prominent authors exploring this relationship is Cynthia Cockburn (1998) whose study offers different accounts of feminist women reinterpreting nationalism whilst decoupling it from exclusionism, militarism, and masculinity. Marie Mulholland predicts how this could materialise:

'The kind of nationalism related to the land has always been violent and savage. But I still believe there is a nationalism which allows sharing. Different people who live in the land bring in their culture and arguments and you create a mix of all the different cultures. This could be a form of nationalism that we have not seen yet'
(Cockburn, 1998 p. 41).

Mulholland (cited in Cockburn, 1998 p. 41) highlights above the necessity of tolerance, internationalism and sharing in order to obtain an 'alternative' nationalism which converges both aspects of nationalism and feminism.

To further this analysis of feminist interpretations, Chatterjee (1986) identifies two dimensions within nationalism. Reminiscent of the public and private sphere, the first dimension relates to the material, the economical development, and the creation of state institutions whilst the second dimension refers to the collectivity and the essence of cultural identity. Contributing to this analysis, Yuval Davis (1998) perceives the construction of nationalism as an eminently patriarchal system which reinforces this idea of women as 'mothers of the nation', and as biological and cultural reproducers. Again relegated to the role of 'mother and carer' and the private sphere, women were excluded from the myths of the nation as they were from citizenship. That is, 'full membership to the 'community' including civil, political and social rights and responsibilities' (Marshall, 1977 cited in Hindi Mediavilla, 2015 p. 23). Therefore, women's exclusion was an integral part of the men's acquisition of rights in the public sphere, as well as their legitimacy within that space (Vogel, 1989). Here, it is also important to consider the relationship between activism and masculinity. That is, organised

and recurring political action requires time and dedication that precarious sectors cannot afford, nor can the people responsible for the care of dependents, who are mostly women (Vogel, 1989).

On that account, nationalism's potential to integrate women's rights and gender equality may not be 'guaranteed' and in reality, may become merely superficial since structural inequality along with power relations may be found in institutions, public policies, economy, labour access, and the state resources in the public sphere (Yuval Davis, 1998). In fact, the homogenisation of nationalism is a problematic aspect identified by many authors. Walby (1997) argues that 'even the most cohesive ethnic/national group almost always entails a system of social inequality, and one where the dominant group(s) typically exercise(s) hegemonic control over 'culture' and the political project of the 'collective'' (Walby, 1997 p. 178). This tendency presents a substantial obstacle for women and/or feminists in these contexts. Frequently, more than a fluid bilateral relationship between nationalism and feminism, the interaction between the nationalist male elite and women activists creates tensions in the discursive process of the meaning of national identity (Hindi Mediavilla, 2015). The participation of these women allows the prioritisation of a double liberation struggle both as members of the 'imagined community' and as women (Jayawardena, 1986; Seodu Herr, 2003). Despite the difficulties and limitations, the nation is the framework through which women acquire rights and obligations and it constitutes the space where their aspirations are articulated (Cockburn, 1998). In essence, nationalism and feminism are not an oxymoron (Hasso, 1998), as national and gender identity both inhabit women; however, different levels of tension may exist depending on the national and feminist projects (Cockburn, 1998)

2.3 The feminisation of nationalism

In order to examine the Galician Nationalist Bloc's national and feminist project and whether it has been gradually 'feministised' since 2016, Lovenduski's (2005) framework presented in her 'Feminising politics' will be taken as a source for theoretical explanations and empirical references. It will also provide an interpretation to some other questions related to the main issues, such as the new leadership of Ana Pontón during a substantially important crisis in the Galician Nationalist political arena (Nespereira Vale, 2017).

Lovenduski (2005) highlights the division found in feminist literature about women's political representation, understood in terms of two contradictory perspectives in feminist thought: equality feminism and difference feminism. The former defends the right of women to be on the same terms and in the same numbers as men in political spaces. Whilst the latter emphasises that women have particular characteristics or interests and perspectives that might be represented only by women (Lovenduski, 2005 p. 5).

There is a series of issues related to these two visions. On the one side, women enter the political arena as equal to men and play by the same rules and criteria whilst the second implies that their incorporation will suppose a big change within politics, a space predominantly occupied by men for centuries (Lovenduski, 2005 p. 6). These two suppositions create a contradictory base for women to create the expectations of transgression whilst still complying with the imposed establishment. Therefore, the debates follow the lines of whether the increased presence of women will transform the characteristics, values and

priorities, in the case of this study, of nationalism itself (Lovenduski, 2005 p. 6).

In her research, Lovenduski (2005 p. 12) establishes that feminisation is 'the insertion and integration of women, both in terms of numbers and ideas, into a process', putting them at the core. Furthermore, she identifies the players which take part in this transformation as well as factors that contribute to women's rise to power in moments of crisis. As both politics and nationalism have been male-dominated spaces, obstacles are likely to be encountered in this process of feminisation.

Even so and acknowledging its compactness and accuracy to inspire this study, other authors (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018) find Lovenduski's theoretical framework moderately limiting in terms of identifying feminist practises and policies when assessing not just a feminising process but a 'feministisation process'.

2.4 From 'feminisation' to nationalist 'feministisation'

As a matter of fact, Dean and Maiguashca (2018) argue that "[a]ny claim that the integration of women's issues and perspectives in politics can only ever mean the inclusion and integration of feminist issues, perspectives and interests" (Campbell and Childs, 2015 p. 155) must be sceptically reviewed. Lovenduski's (2005) feminisation does not instinctively equal 'feministisation' (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018; Campbell and Childs, 2015).

First coined by Campbell and Childs (2015 p. 155), 'feministisation', refers to 'the fluid and uneven, rather than fixed, all-encompassing process of transformation in which feminism is simultaneously endorsed and contained across a range of social, political, and cultural sites' (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018 p. 4). In order to identify and assess this process, the authors (2018) propose a set of analytical criteria. Although one of the original features, 'affect', will not be examined due to the nature of this study's methodology, the remaining dimensions which serve as tools to recognise and map the presence of 'feministisation' (or absence, therefore) will be presented below.

To begin, 'analysis and self-understanding' involve both self-identification and a theoretical worldview. It is not only about how individuals self-identify and give meaning to their political activism, but also about the importance they give in a wider scale to the implementation of feminism (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018 p. 13).

Secondly, in 'policy and campaigning', the authors (2018) refer to the policies which are being proposed and implemented, and the campaigns in place to achieve such aims. The level of feminism represented in these policies may be assessed by their aim to challenge unequal gendered power relations (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018).

In addition, 'organisation' explores the internal structures as well as regulations, codes of practice and procedures in place to combat gendered and other kinds of power inequalities. The authors' (2018) understanding of feministisation involves "the pursuit of participatory, egalitarian and anti-hierarchical modes of organisation" (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018 p. 18), and therefore a commitment to challenge

strict divisions of labour predominantly found in male-dominated organisations (Cockburn, 1991 cited in Dean and Maiguashca, 2018).

Lastly, 'embodied performance' focuses on the styles of speech and comportment of activists. That is what the authors (2018) label the aesthetic dimensions of politics and, in particular, the role of verbal, sartorial and bodily norms. It also focuses on types of masculine behaviour, i.e. 'mansplaining' or the cultivation of a 'homosocial capital', exclusive male social networks and friendship groups, or the establishment of a hostile and confrontational sphere which 'may discourage women from being more active in terms of access, presence and agency' (Verge and de la Fuente, 2014 p. 68) or otherwise pushes women/feminists to adopt a masculine mode of intervention in order to be heard.

Taken as a whole, these dimensions allow a complex and fluid process to materialise with points of tensions and contradictions, as well as to diagnose its nature and the extent to which 'feministisation' has 'infiltrated' the Galician nationalist space.

2.5 Localising feminist nationalism in Galicia

When feminist nationalism in Galicia comes to focus, a variety of debates, which shape the image of 'feminist nationalists' throughout academia, are found. These issues which will be discussed are related to the relationship between centralist Spain and peripheral Galicia; the impact of the construction of Galician nationalist discourse, and the conflicts between nationalism and feminism in the Galician nationalist movement.

Ortbals (2007) identifies in her research the distinguishing character that Galician feminists possess from others in the Peninsula highlighting their 'nationalist' identity. Many of those who self-identified as nationalist envision Galicia as a nation and aim for its independence from the Spanish state (Ortbals, 2007). The relationship between Galicia and the state is fundamental to understanding the role and activism of these women (Miguélez-Carballeira, 2012).

Many academics have studied the dialectical relationship between the Spanish central state and the peripheral 'nationalities', the euphemism used in the Constitution of 1978 to refer to Galicia (Nogue and Vicente, 2004 p. 120). For this purpose, Miguélez-Carballeira (2013) incorporates post-colonial and feminist theoretical frameworks as her tools to argue that Galicia's status as a 'sentimental nation' has been demarcated by the dominant central state imposing a discourse, where not only the nation but its people and its language are feminised to situate Madrid as the 'centre' of 'high culture' (Roseman, 1997 p. 45), ultimately reinforcing the portrait of a nation 'in need' of external governance.

Many feminists dispute this problematic utilisation of passive female imagery in the construction of the Galician national identity (Roseman, 1997). As the initial political nationalist discourse was exclusively linked to 'masculine cultural themes' (Nagel, 1998 p. 252) to legitimise its claim for self-governance, it barely left any space for women (Rios Bergantinhos, 2001; Miguélez-Carballeira, 2013). Despite this, since its political origins, Galician nationalism has pointed to the equal rights of both men and women as a political goal, led by Irmandades da Fala (Language Brotherhood) in 1918 (Rios Bergantinhos, 2001). Still, Rios Bergantinhos (2001) identified within the movement and later in the Galician Party a wide range of approaches towards gender equality, yet

those approaches were predominantly patriarchal (Miguélez-Carballeira, 2012), which is crucial to understanding the invisibility of women in the history of politics in this specific context.

In the same vein, Queizán (2004), a feminist intellectual and activist since the 1970s, notes that feminism in Galicia was substantially attributed to the nationalist movement. However, the nationalist movement was barely feminist when there was a predisposition to form a feminist current within the nationalist political front, the development of feminist organisations, such as the Galician Women's Association, the FIGA (Galician Independent Feminists) or MNG (Galician Nationalist Women), took place outside of the political framework. Yet, many participants were activists on both nationalist and feminist movements (Ces, 2001; Queizán, 2004).

Contrary to most feminist literature, in the current discourses of Galician nationalism, feminism and nationalism are identified as confluent in 'their shared emancipatory struggle' (Miguélez-Carballeira, 2012 p. 368). Thus, María Xosé Queizán conceptualised in 1977 the liberation of women from patriarchal hegemony and the liberation of Galicia from the oppressive Spanish centralist state as "two necessarily coterminous processes" (Miguélez-Carballeira, 2012 p. 368). Helena González (2005) agrees that the Galician feminist struggle has been included under the nationalist movement, not in conflict with it.

Likewise, the BNG, one of the main nationalist parties (Liñeira, 2014), has led the way in proposing equality policies, supported abortion reform, lobbied for reproductive health services and advocated for nonsexist education since its birth in 1982 (Ortbals, 2007). Even, Nunes Garcia (2017) qualifies the organisation as in line with the communities

of activists and social movements to assume a greater role in citizens decision-making and accomplish greater democratisation. However, the BNG has suffered substantial change since the rupture of many parties and organisations within the Bloc in 2012 (Liñeira, 2014; Nespereira Vale, 2017). This identity crisis led to a change of leadership, which has been headed by the feminist politician Ana Pontón since 2016 (Nespereira Vale, 2017; Sánchez Andrade, 2018).

Ortbals (2007) addresses a specific complicity that institutional officials must create with activists, in this case, the nationalist feminists. Weaving spaces for their political action, not only claiming basic equality measures but also explicitly fighting patriarchy, along with them. Following Roseman's proclamation (1997 p. 13), the Galician nationalist movement itself presents another example of the fight feminists undertake to claim a kind of 'national autonomy' which also leaves space for 'the pursuit of gender equality'. Having a feminist leader in one of the most representative nationalist parties, this study aims to analyse Galicia's current relationship between nationalism and feminism and explore the concept of 'feministisation' in this context which will contribute to the literature on women and nationalist movements broadly, and the 'feministisation' of nationalism, more particularly.

3. Methodology

Having established the background and context of this research, this chapter will set the framework of methods used for the completion of this project. Firstly, I will describe and justify the selection of data collection methods and explain where the data have been obtained. Then, the process of data collection in the field and the limitations and obstacles encountered will be discussed. Lastly, the methods for analysing data utilised in the following chapters will be addressed.

This thesis is a qualitative case study which vigorously depends on data collected in the field. As this dissertation explores the process of 'feministisation' which has taken place in the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG), capturing the views and experiences of the women taking part in this process was crucial to answering the research questions. For this, two qualitative research methods were utilised: semi-structured interviews and textual analysis. Furthermore, quantitative analysis was utilised on a small scale to reflect the number of women in the positions of power in the BNG.

Semi-structural in-depth interviews are positioned as the main method, commonly used in qualitative research. This type of interviewing does not simply intend to obtain the answers to the questions nor to assess any theories, but instead to understand the experiences of these women and the values and meanings behind those experiences (Seidman, 1991).

For the conduction of the interviews, although I was never involved in the Galician political scene, I relied on both personal connections and nationalist organisations, principally the cultural association Sempre Galiza, to get in touch with potential participants. Some interviewees and people I met in the period when I was interviewing directed me to other women who could participate and collaborate in the project.

During the process, eleven women from different backgrounds and levels of connection to the BNG (see Appendix A) were interviewed. Ten of them are activists, among them eight hold or have held institutional positions. However, one of them belongs to a different political party with no nationalist ideology but extensive experience in feminist activism.

The interviews lasted, generally, one hour, although some interviewees were able to expand into more detail. The interview schedule (see Appendix B) was used as a reference for all the interviews but due to their informal and flexible nature, a flowing conversation was achieved at times and more topics of relevance were covered. The open-ended preselected questions revolved around four axes:

- Interpretations of nationalism and the dialectical relationship of the state and the nation in this context.
- Experiences in the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG).
- The union of nationalism and feminism.
- The possible balance of nationalisms within the same state.

It was agreed with the participants to record the interviews which were later transcribed, the transcriptions remaining a key piece of analysis.

All in all, the results from the fieldwork have been positive regarding the amount of data collected, yet, I have encountered some limitations to this research in terms of the methods used.

Having employed 'interview' as the main research method has given me the opportunity to learn about these women's views and experiences. Nevertheless, a presented limitation in the study as a qualitative research must be acknowledged. The data being 'subjective' was my initial concern about biased answers due to the participants' active participation in the party and the nationalist movement. These expectations disappeared as the interviewees expressed their personal experiences and opinion, even if it differed from a homogenous view of the BNG given in manifestos and other published writings.

Furthermore, the fact that I share with the participants both the same gender and national identity, as well as the fluency in Galician and Spanish, proved to be of advantage. However, few difficulties were encountered. At first, I intended to cover a wider range of organisations and political parties within the Galician nationalist movement, as well as other organisations and political parties outside the Galician nationalism which could represent other identities within the Galicia territory. Although this could have exposed the dynamic contrast between the different nationalisms found in Galicia, this idea would have encompassed a broad scope of data which would not allow the analysis required to focus on the main question of feministisation of Galician nationalism. Therefore, when it came to define the criteria a more specific scope was set. The time limit to work in the field and the difficulties of contacting the different possible participants could be added to the limitations encountered. The participants who took part in the project have heavy schedules and previous commitments but still

were receptive and enthusiastic to participate in the project. Moreover, all the interviews were conducted face-to-face either in the participants' offices or in the Museum of the Galician People (Museo do Pobo Galego) in Santiago de Compostela, A Coruña, Vigo and Vilagarcía de Arousa; except for two of them which were conducted via Skype due to the limited time I spent in Galicia.

Even so, other resources were employed to assess the process of feministisation in this dissertation in a minor proportion, where textual analysis was utilised to assess the level of 'feministisation' of written sources, mainly manifestos and the BNG's 2019 electoral programme. Also, as aforementioned, quantitative methods via statistical techniques are used in order to present and track the increase of women's representation in different organs of the BNG; the use of this method allows a clear display of these numbers in order to complement the conclusion the qualitative research provides (Flowerdew and Martin, 2005).

Before introducing the data collected in the field, a few clarifications need to be made. As aforementioned, only feminist activists with a connection to the party, with an exemption, have been interviewed, therefore the thesis does not aim, in all, to look for a 'universal truth' in this subject. Instead, this study attempts to analyse the involvement and engagement in nationalism of a specific group of women in the specific context of Galicia, acknowledging the diversity among Galician women. Another aspect, which may need mentioning, is the fact that this study exclusively focuses on the experiences and views of women to reveal their role in bringing about a more feminist approach towards nationalism in its institutional form. Hence, the study does not integrate the views nor political experiences of men in the BNG.

Lastly, regarding the analytical methods employed for this study, content and thematic analysis were utilised. As data analysis is seen as one of the most crucial elements of the research, the relevance and accuracy when choosing the methods is fundamental to ensure the findings are insightful. Following this statement, the data obtained in the interviews are analysed through thematic analysis, a method which Bryman (2016) identifies as prevalent in qualitative research. Firstly, the transcriptions of the interviews were thoroughly read to later be divided into sub-themes relevant to the answering of the research questions. These sub-themes are encountered across different interviews, trends having been identified. As the methodology has been discussed, the following chapter will introduce the data collected, as well as present an analytical view.

4. Findings

This chapter will present the data collected in interviews during field research and sketch the terrain for its following analysis. As specified in the first chapter, the first three research questions relate to the Galician nationalist movement in its institutional form, the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG), whilst the last question focuses on the conflict of nationalisms in the Spanish state, introduced in Chapter 1.

In the first part of the chapter, the role of women will be explored through a quantitative analysis of the descriptive representation of women in the BNG; secondly, qualitative analysis will take the assessment further to explore the process of 'feministisation'; the obstacles encountered during the aforementioned process will be discussed in the third section; whilst the last section attempts to reflect on that 'feministisation' and evaluate its effectiveness in reconciling multinational territories.

4.1 Descriptive Representation in quantitative research

As this thesis focuses on the institutional dimension of Galician nationalism, this section begins by quantifying nationalist women's presence in the Galician Parliament and the different components of the BNG. This analysis reveals that the presence of women has increased, particularly in the decision-making spaces.

Table 4.1 indicates the number of women in the Galician Parliament since 1989. Contrary to the decrease in BNG seats in this space, women's presence has had a steady increase to over 66%, especially locating significant rises between 2001-2005 and 2012-2016.

Table 4.1: BNG Women members in the Galician Parliament

<i>Year of legislature</i>	<i>Number of seats</i>	<i>Number of women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1989	5	1	20%
1993	13	2	15.3%
1997	15	4	26.6%
2001	17	6	35.2%
2005	13	8	61.5%
2009	12	7	58.3%
2012	7	3	42.8%
2016	6	4	66.6%

Source: *The Galician Parliament website*

Table 4.2 enumerates the number of women in other key institutions in the BNG, these numbers represent a lower percentage than seen in the Parliament, especially in reference to elected mayors. Nevertheless, the National Council and National Executive present higher numbers than the last legislature.

Table 4.2: Presence of women in BNG Institutional Organs

<i>Institutional Organ</i>	<i>Number of members</i>		<i>Number of women</i>		<i>Percentage</i>	
	2012	2016	2012	2016	2012	2016
Consello Nacional (National Council)	104	109	7	44	38.4%	40.3%

Executiva Nacional (National Executive)	15	20	40	11	46.6%	55%
Deputación	-	10	-	4	-	40%
Alcaldías (Elected mayors)	-	30	-	6	-	20%

Source: BNG website

The representative numbers of women in the party have increased considerably in its higher positions since 2016, the same year as the appointment of Ana Pontón as the leader and representative of the party (See table 4.1 and 4.2). At its base, despite figures provided by the BNG reflecting an increase of women activists, they also reveal a still masculine majority where the former constitutes the 35 per cent of its membership. Nevertheless, all interviewees have established that an increase in the numbers of women in positions of power does not signify that neither a ‘feminisation’ nor a ‘feministisation’ process has taken place.

‘It is not the same to have women in positions of responsibility that these women are feminists, and then also how they act both in the daily management of an institution and in the policies they advocate’ (Presas, 2019)

The next section will interrogate the quantitative representation of women in the BNG by introducing a qualitative analysis.

4.2 'Feministisation' and women's role

In the analysis of the qualitative data, the following themes emerged: Interpretations of 'nationalism' and the dialectical relationship of the state and the nation; activists' experiences in the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG); the union of Galician nationalism and feminism; and the possible balance of nationalisms within the same state. The following sections will discuss each of these in turn.

This section presents the findings from interviews and textual analysis, structuring them into the four features of "feministisation" as set out in Chapter 2: analysis and self-understanding; policy and campaigning; organisation; and embodied performance. Overall, the data have revealed there is significant evidence that a process of feministisation has taken place at the institutional heart of Galician nationalism. Although many factors have been identified, women activists certainly represent one of the most active and effective drivers of this process.

Analysis and self-understanding

This section will refer to questions around individuals' identities and the meaning attached to their political activism, as well as how they utilise feminism as a diagnosis for their nationalist objectives.

There is evidence suggesting a strong level of gendered analysis and self-understanding among the activists interviewed. These women's perceptions of the connection between feminism and nationalism and their commitment and responsibility to do more than just 'feminise' but to bring feminism at the core of both society, nationalism and,

specifically, the BNG, are key to understanding their role within this movement. All interviewees resoundingly self-identify as feminist and a vast majority of them recognise feminism as a fundamental part of the skeleton of Galician nationalism, and consequently, the BNG.

'I do not think they complement each other but one does not make sense without the other. I do not credit a nationalism that does not have a gender perspective, but also a 'feminism' that is not focused on where you live. For me, everything has the same root and we must combine them' (Cambeiro, 2019).

Cambeiro (2019) above reflects on the importance of both gender and national identities for nationalist feminists as complementary ideologies which can be merged. On the other end of the spectrum, one of the feminist activists does not share this vision and instead argues that nationalism, specifically the one presented by the BNG, limits and claims a space which can become confrontational or does not embrace conciliation. Nevertheless, the discourse of these women as nationalist activists denote an 'internationalist' essence in their interpretations of nationalism, one of the activists highlighting:

'I do not agree with the idea that there is a condition of being Galician along essentialist lines. Instead, I think that we are casually born here as it could be anywhere else' (Cambeiro, 2019).

Additionally, the argument was also contradicted by another nationalist activist who instead described *Galician Nationalism* as:

'a way to see the world from here, without undermining others. It means reconciliation, solidarity with other peoples' (Fouces, 2019).

Solidarity with other peoples and nations in regards to social justice has been an important aspect the nationalist activists have reflected on, as many of the interviewees regarded the creation of international networks as fundamental. Many also recognised that these networks proved most consolidated through feminist alliance. One mentioned example was their participation as 'Galician women' in 'A Marcha Mundial das Mulleres' (World March of Women), which analyses questions of nations and their struggle for recognition along with women's shared struggles. At the state level, the links with other 'peripheral' nationalist activists of Euskadi and Catalunya were also raised, as they all share a common cause within the same territory.

In addition, participation in local feminist groups was crucial to the activists. An acknowledgement of enrichment due to the incorporation of the perspective of nation to already established dimensions of feminism allows other proposals and local viewpoints to materialise. Nevertheless, many participants have disputed the existence of a Galician feminist agenda, instead, vindications come from external sources, such as international or from the central state, whilst *'not analysing our own issues and own realities'* (Cambeiro, 2019) in the national spaces.

For the most part, nationalist activists reflected as well on the need to not only identify feminism as part of their identity and the nationalist identity but also as a theoretical framework from which to question reality. In this case, activists refer to the 'violet glasses' as essential to

analysing power relations, not only within the party or the nation but also in the dialectical relationship with the central state. Drawing upon an absolute consensus regarding the strength of feminism within society, one of the activists reflects:

‘Feminism is the force which is questioning the current socio-economic system the most. Feminism is wanting to decentralise power and not depend on the Spanish centralism’ (Corral, 2019).

Expanding on this, women activists have reflected through a feminist perspective their different fights. And as many pointed, the lack of an ‘essential’ national identity and the internationalist aspect advocated by the nationalist activists is reminiscent of the plurality feminisms stand for. The necessity for feminism has been permeated throughout the organisation and Galician nationalism as a movement, this statement will now be examined through other aspects.

Policy and Campaigning

Policy and campaigning refer to the level of ‘feminism’ encountered in the policies and goals of the BNG. On one hand, the first and last manifesto along with the latest electoral programme of the Galician Nationalist Bloc will be assessed through textual analysis, whilst the second part will be focused on the impact a female leader could have in the new discourses of nationalism in the BNG.

As early as in its 1989 manifesto, the BNG has had a specific section for ‘women’, there it recognises the layers of oppression experienced by

women in Galicia (Gender, national identity, socio-economic system) as well as the predominant role of the feminist movement to challenge these inequalities. Similarly, the fifth resolution in the last assembly (2017) focused on the necessity to assume feminism as a crucial tool to overcome heteropatriarchy and fight all forms of violence, exploitation and discrimination in social, political, economic, psychological, and physical terms. This perspective is inscribed in all political aims as well as the political action of the BNG. Furthermore, the electoral programme proposed for the general state election in 2019, broadly speaking, defends accessibility to high-quality public services and social justice. It provides an analysis in both national, class and gender perspectives. Nevertheless, it indicates that feminist policies will be implemented to furthering women's rights, and the only mentions of feminism are located in that section. On the other hand, references to women's inequity in terms of salary and pensions are acknowledged in other sections. In essence, this idea of social justice and equality permeates the analysed documents which can follow a line of steady feminist presence, especially substantial in the recently published.

At the same time, a *'feminisation of content, make the issues related to women be there [in the Parliament] as a priority'* (Sanmartín, 2019) and allows gender-related issues to be at the front line.

'Women as the key piece to the construction of thought itself, they are part of the political action allowing them to design strategies, focus priorities and build discourse, I think that is the best action Ana [Pontón] is doing. Feminism is on the front line of political priorities' (Rodil, 2019).

As a Galician nationalist organisation, the discourse Ana Pontón proposes finds an analogy with the feminist discourse as a liberating ideology that seeks equality, but it also acknowledges how both Galician ‘feminisms’ and ‘nationalism’ have been identified with their antithesis, machismo; and imperialism, chauvinism and xenophobic movements, respectively. Instead, it is an opportunity to build a country based on other values’ (Pontón, 2019), referring back to the documents or the vision of nationalism of women activists above.

For the most part, BNG activists have agreed on nationalism and BNG is committed to adapting and bringing gender issues at the core of their policy, although, at the same time, participants raised their concern about these policies permeating the structure of the Bloc equally and in a way also impacting its wider constitution which will be considered below.

Organisation

In this section, this dimension of ‘feministisation’ will be explored through BNG’s internal structures, women’s internal organisation and the leadership. The section reveals the need for structural change and places the Galician nationalist case in a wider context to assess the process of feministisation more effectively. Furthermore, it determines that the new leadership within the organisation has been a step forward towards aligning the current process of ‘feministisation’ to a historical process led by women activists.

Many interviewees describe the internal structure of the BNG as an effective assembly-based democratic organisation. Although, despite

the presence of a female leader, some nationalists activists have identified a substantially masculine structure, incorporated into wider patriarchal structures, and encompassing a larger context than just the organisation.

‘Many political organisations still have very patriarchal structures, changes that are advancing hand by hand with society itself. These changes are also slow, therefore along the way contradictions may be encountered on a day to day basis’ (Presas, 2019).

One of the interviewees argued that the work of gender and gender equality at both the national and state level must be taken as slightly superficial.

‘And as it has been possible to assume a hegemonic discourse where everyone takes for granted equality, more structural changes are not being incorporated. There are many positive aspects such as huge mobilisation, we incorporate feminist policies, but then there is no transformation neither political nor social nor organisational’ (Cambeiro, 2019).

When querying about the organisation of women inside the BNG, they all mention ‘the Women’s Assembly’, a nationalist historical organisation which assembles at a local, provincial, and national level. There, gender issues are examined through a feminist perspective to be later interiorised by all different departments of the Bloc. Also, this assembly constitutes a safe space where activists can discuss different issues, including those related to gender discrimination, and reflect on their role

as activists.

Suggesting strategies for combating this reality, participants have relied on the aforementioned metaphor of 'wearing the violet glasses' which allows to light up *'these difficulties and the masculinisation which exist at the base'* (Presas, 2019) with the ultimate aim of incorporating women from bottom to top.

'I believe this all coincided with a group of women who clearly knew that the feminist discourse should be brought to the BNG, and this allowed that, since the end of the decade of 1990, the BNG assumed the feminist fight as its own' (Sanmartín, 2019).

Overall, feminist activists identified that 'feministisation' would imply a more complex process than descriptive representation, although nationalist activists have seen the appointment of a feminist leader as a commitment towards embracing feminism which has allowed a parliamentary feminist group to flourish (three of them, participants in this study). In a nutshell, labelling the structure of the Bloc as masculine, would not only obviate the wider context it is situated in, but the 'collective reflection of many years' of feminist activism which opened spaces for dialogue where debates are not to be won but instead are tools to finding common ground. *'For example, in our space in the Women's Assembly, there is this form of dialogue with more frequency than other spaces'* (Cambeiro, 2019). This can relate to the ways of communicating and behaving in these spaces which will be next explored.

Embodied Performance

Here, the perception of the styles of speech and comportment from activists' experiences will be analysed. On one hand, according to some activists' perspective, more women in leadership positions have not only changed the discourse, but also the way of interacting with others. Many of the participants agree on the necessity to employ other forms of communication in political spaces. For example, *'Ana [Pontón] has found her style, implacable but never disqualifying anyone'* (Otero, 2019). Similarly, for some of the activists, having a feminist representative fronting debates can also present many advantages for the feminist agenda:

'It is not the same that someone talks about sexist violence with a male voice that an empowered woman doing so. [...] Of course, when the spokespersons are very 'machirulos' [macho alfa-behaviour] and aggressive contrasts a lot with a sweet voice even if it is very fierce. We really see a palpable demonstration that there was interest in feminising politics, and therein lies the ultimate exponent' (Corral, 2019).

Nevertheless, as one of the interviewees has pointed out, certain standards still dominate the nationalist spaces when it comes to political communication, instead of creating new safe spaces for other performances.

'If your voice trembles while speaking, it is fine. It is not as if you must come across as completely impassive, without showing any emotion, if you are nervous and you cry, that

is also fine' (Cambeiro, 2019).

As the activist concludes, the behaviours that women embody tend to be the standard and expected in those spaces. Even to the point, as some of the activists noted, of replicating a masculine embodiment, which was identified at all levels of experience and institutional positions. One of the activists argued:

'At the militant level, in an assembly or decision-making bodies, when male campaigners speak in public, even their corporeality takes up a lot more space, the way they sit in assemblies you can also notice that difference' (Cambeiro, 2019).

In conclusion, embodiment performance can signify substantial evidence of 'feministisation', specifically when having a feminist woman as the public reference. Nevertheless, political standard comportment limits the acceptance of other emotional behaviours, also Pontón (2019) pointed out the difficulty of avoiding confrontation in frictional political spaces, where there is a risk women replicate masculine behaviour in the context of both 'nationalist' and non-exclusively 'nationalist' spaces.

Conclusion

After the analysis of the four features of 'feministisation' in the context of Galician nationalism, specifically the BNG, there is evidence to suggest a strong level of 'feministisation' in certain aspects. The activists' perceptions of the connection between feminism and nationalism, recognise the former as a fundamental part in the skeleton

of Galician nationalism, and consequently, the BNG. Also, the current programmes offered by the BNG, as well as its discourse has displayed a significant feminist essence. In regards to both organisation and embodied performance, there was evidence of a current process of feministisation, although the conclusion may be unclear in terms of assessing structural changes and the impact of a feminist public figure in the wider context of nationalism. In order to assess this process further, the barriers or impediments for its development identified by activists will be further explored in the question below.

4.3 Obstacles encountered by women activists

There are specific barriers which could be slowing down or even preventing a certain level of feminist values and strategies as well as activists to influence the essence of nationalism, and more specifically, the BNG. Frenetic tempos, lack of time, tense environments, legitimacy in this spaces and choosing other priorities are identified throughout the interviews as 'invisible' factors that prevent the 'needed' female participation from bottom to top. On the other hand, other activists have reflected on an issue related to the nation and women's rights.

Tempos and time limitations not only are a barrier for women activists, in particular, but for society, in general, to engage actively in political and cultural movements. Nevertheless, the fact that the stereotype of male activist still marks how to participate, organise or the time and duration of meetings in certain spaces still enlight the reproduction of patriarchal roles in small proportion, which anecdotes, especially by the most experienced activists, confirm. In this case, Pontón (2019) mentioned the introduction of changes regarding the ending time for

meetings and their duration as tools which could bring progressive changes.

Galician nationalism is also formed of spaces of conflict where tense environments may arise in debates and assemblies. Many feminist activists have identified these spaces as most difficult to permeating a more conciliating environment aligned with feminist values.

This may also influence the alignment of women priorities, interviewees highlighted cases of activist couples, who at the time when they have children, women usually 'disappear' from the activist scene until their children are older. An issue which could also be linked to time limiting factors, and the aforementioned gender roles constructed from the image of the male activist.

On a more general line, one participant recognised a particular risk to nationalism.

'As it is the state which guarantees the rights and liberties of all as well as the welfare state, close and hermetic Autonomous Communities [Galicia being one of them] may also become the enemy of women' (Adán, 2019),

Contradicting the interpretation that nationalism as an end in itself could present difficulties to women making them more vulnerable to losing their rights, thereby becoming trapped in a nation away from the state, the answers the participants have given to describe their feelings towards Galician nationalism have a significantly positive connotation.

Table 4.3: Activists' labelling of nationalism in three words

Interviewee	Keywords
Marga Corral	Liberty, justice and self-determination/ right to choose
Carme Fouces	Loyal, committed and feminist
Rebeca Cambeiro	Justice, dignity and necessity
Olalla Rodil	Emancipatory, democratic, self-love or pride of who we are
Carmén Adán	Affect, compromise and deception
Goretti Sanmartin	Hope, dignity and pride (empowerment of the nations)
Noa Présas	Conquest all rights
Ana Pontón	Love, liberty and justice
Encarna Otero	Hopeful, alluring and fighter
Pilar Negro	Human rights, emancipation and liberty

Source: Conducted interviews

In conclusion, interviewees have highlighted different issues related to the feministisation of nationalism, in general, and the BNG, in particular, at both societal and institutional levels. Nevertheless, these must all be combined in a wider structure along with the first two research questions to balance and seek how a feministisation of current nationalisms could start to build a path towards national reconciliation.

4.4 *'Feministisation' as a strategy to reconcile nationalisms*

The last research question focuses on the balance of nationalisms at the Galician and Spanish state level. Many of the interviewees have agreed on the importance of recognising and acknowledging the plurality and the multi-national character of the Spanish state.

One participant highlighted that what can be described as a 'conflict of identities' in the context of Galicia must be considered externally imposed.

'This conflict is exported, not having a real space for existence in the Galician case because the vast majority of people feel both Galician and Spanish; and Galician nationalists who do not identify as Spaniards we do not feel so, fundamentally, due to the attacks from the centralism to that plurality' (Sanmartín, 2019).

Along the same line, many activists established that the representation of Galician nationalism and the BNG in the hegemonic discourse of the Spanish state has linked them to The Basque Country and now Catalonia and the tense conflict of independence.

Most of the interviewees have explained further the complex situation of a state constituted by many nations and the issues this may arouse.

'When it comes to assuming a very obvious reality that there are nations without a state, there are different peoples, there are different languages, there are different cultures, and instead of approaching this situation with

respect and richness, Spain approaches its own reality with discomfort' (Pontón, 2019).

Back to the Galician context, activists indicate the plurality of nationalisms in Galicia:

'There is room for those people who claim more sovereignty or that very high percentage of people who identify themselves as Galician more than Spanish, but still Spanish. There is space for this, common claims even if the goals are different' (Cambeiro, 2019).

Here is where the debate of the merging of both nationalism and feminism becomes key. As shown above, 'feminism' becomes a tool, a set of ideas and values, not a form of identity politics, which allows for all to seek a common goal, the recognition of other realities and the sovereignty to be able to change them positively. As many participants have appointed, the conflicts of nationalisms within Spain are richly complex and have presented many negative aspects in Spanish society.

'[This] struggle may result in two things, to build or to destroy and in this case, it constitutes a destructive struggle, I do not know how everything will end but feminism may be a tool to seek and initiate a resolution path' (Fouces, 2019).

'Dialogue, discourse, silence are feminist tool' (Otero, 2019) but not exclusive to women. As all interviewees appointed, dialogue and finding common ground may be an effective tool which could lead us towards the path of reconciliation.

5. Analysis

This chapter examines the findings revealed in Chapter 4 and investigates their relation to the existing body of knowledge; ultimately discussing a suggestive outlook for further study in this topic. As seen in the data analysis, the number of women activists, even though lower than their male counterparts, has grown at both its base and the highest institutional assemblies within the BNG. However, that does not instantly translate to a process of 'feministisation' taking place.

In the process of pursuing an in-depth analysis, one of the two theoretical frameworks, Lovenduski's 'feminising politics' (2005) facilitated the identification of key parts of the analysis, such as actors, factors and obstacles, which enabled a further understanding of the Galician nationalist case. On the other hand, the four features of the 'Feministisation' framework provided me with the tools and 'checklist' to identify the BNG and Galician nationalism's 'feminist credentials' (Dean and Maiguashca, 2018 p. 13).

A key outcome of the analysis is the strong alliance between feminism and nationalism revealed in this context. Drawing on the initial debate in feminist academia focusing on this connection (Cockburn, 1998; Hasso, 1998; Herr, 2003), the study reveals a consensus among all interviewees that both concepts converge and become tools to achieve 'liberation' in a national and gender perspective. This statement, which has been argued by many authors (Queizán, 2004; Ortals, 2007; Miguélez-Carballeira, 2012) in the Galician nationalist movement,

remains contemporary. In part, these authors find this alliance reminiscent of post-colonial feminist theory (see chapter 2). Post-colonial movements, having been a key reference to Galician nationalism and consequently, the creation of the BNG (Fernández Baz, 2003; Gómez-Reino Cachafeiro, 2009), play a key part to understanding their internationalism and attentive solidarity with all peoples, which also constitutes a fundamental characteristic of feminisms as an emancipatory project 'to seek social justice 'for everyone' (hooks, 2000 p. 1).

This aforementioned intersection of nationalism and feminism is materialised through different aspects in this context. The establishment of feminism as part of the skeleton of the BNG or prioritisation of feminist content in new party programmes are key to indicate a foundation to determine that 'feministisation' is present in the BNG and Galician nationalism.

In addition, the incorporation of Ana Pontón as the spokeswoman and leader of the Galician Nationalist Bloc has been identified as a consequence and driver of this feministisation, some of the participants even defining this change as a 'turning point' for feminism in the BNG. However, the complexity of this process must be acknowledged where the wide context of an internal crisis (Nespereira Vale, 2017), the years of collective work by feminist groups and individuals (Ortbals, 2007; Miguélez-Carballeira, 2012) and the current hegemonic acceptance of feminism in the Galician society (Miguélez-Carballeira, 2014) have played their part.

As previous studies about the feminisation of political movements observed (Tasdemir, 2013), the more women have the ability to

manoeuvre, the more influence they will have to make changes regarding masculine structures, integrating feminist policies or creating safe decision-making spaces. The research findings have highlighted not only the importance of feminist leadership but especially the significance of the women activists' collective consciousness behind them. As one of the interviewees pointed out:

'Having a female leader does not mean a change has occurred, there is still much more to transform into political spaces, but we are on a good path'
(Hermida, 2019).

Considering that, as Nespereira Vale (2017) suggests, the legitimacy and approval of Ana Pontón as the leader of the BNG has increased considerably within the Bloc in the past years, it significantly proves substantial progress when taking the conceptualisation of 'feministisation' by one of the interviewees:

'We would talk about feministisation when a leader would not be questioned just for being a woman'
(Presas, 2019).

Nevertheless, despite the research evidence, obstacles to this process have also been identified, aspects such as BNG's internal structures or standardised behaviour of 'male activist' require to place the BNG and the Galician nationalist movement in a wider context. Replicating one of the activists, 'feminism' has been banalised, in turn, consenting a supposedly already-achieved gender equality, where many positive aspects are being reflected in everyday society - huge mobilisation, incorporation of feminist policies, *'but then there is no transformation*

neither political nor social nor organisational' (Cambeiro, 2019).

Still, women activism has been identified as a major driver which has been able to weave networks and discourse, thus incorporating feminism into the Galician nationalism framework, and with it, opening spaces for gender-analysis, non-essentialism, social justice, solidarity, spaces where dialogue and silences can be transformed from simple to effective tools to reconcile national identities.

Overall, many conclusions may be drawn from this assessment of the Galician Nationalist Block's 'feministisation', therefore I would conclude that 'localising' feminisms and 'democratising' nationalisms in internationalist and solidaristic terms will lead to analyse local realities and agendas, but also find common ground to tackle wider issues.

After completing this study, I realise that to explore further and represent a broader reality within the Galician nationalist movement, men activist must also be participants in future studies, in order to assess their level of commitment and affinity to changes identified in this research. Replicating one of the activists:

'Seeing a man with a well-established union background talk about depatriarchalising an organisation, not so long ago, was unthinkable' (Corral, 2019).

The incorporation of the feminist women activists' counterparts would strengthen the arguments presented here, or in turn, find new approaches towards this process of 'feministisation'.

6. Conclusion

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the ultimate aim of this study is to contribute to what I identified as a shortage of literature addressing the role of women activists and the influence of feminism in the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG). After the evidence given, this dissertation argues that the BNG has experienced a process of 'feministisation' both in the number of feminist activists and its discourses and focus where women activists certainly represent one of the most active and effective drivers of this process. Nevertheless, as some of the participants have expressed, the work towards a 'feministisation' still requires further depth and collective consciousness in a need to feministise politics and society itself. As Lovenduski (2005) had concluded, Galician nationalism and the BNG, as any political space, still reflect the years of male domination where women have been recently allowed in democratically-based numbers, therefore we must not fall into the trap of underestimating the change of perception, but instead widening the range of interests and prioritising feminist issues at the local and national levels.

On this note, national and local issues must be identified and acknowledged, and broader fights must be recognised through an internationalist approach to enable stronger links to be created between nations, celebrating heterogeneity and the democratisation of entire territories. As the Galician nationalist feminist activists have brought to light, feminism presents an effective tool not only for a nationalist and feminist network but also an internationalist network to be interwoven.

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Appendix A. List of interviewees

	Name	Organisation	Role
1	Marga Corral	BNG	National responsible for Women's CIG and feminist activist in the Galician union trade environment
2	Carme Fouces	BNG	Staff counsellor in Pontevedra and Feminist activist
3	Verónica Hermida	Unidas Podemos	Secretary of Feminisms and Feminist activist
4	Rebeca Cambeiro	BNG	Former national responsible for the Women Assembly of Galiza Nova and Feminist activist
5	Olalla Rodil	BNG	Member of BNG in Galiza Parliament and Feminist activist
6	Carmén Adán	BNG	Feminist activist and former General Secretary of Equality in the Galician Government for BNG
7	Goretti Sanmartín	BNG	Counsellor in Santiago and co-founder of World Women's March in Galiza
8	Noa Présas	BNG	Member of BNG in Galician Parliament and member of the Equality Commission Responsible of Feminist Action at BNG
9	Ana Pontón	BNG	Leader and spokeswoman of the BNG
10	Encarna Otero	BNG	Feminist activist and former member of BNG national executive
11	Pilar Negro	BNG	Former Galician Parliamentarian for BNG and feminist activist

Appendix B. Interview Schedule

1 Introduction

- How do you describe yourself? Which tags would you assign yourself?
- Would you briefly describe the political situation in Spain focusing on Galicia?

2 On nationalism

- What is nationalism for you?
- How would you describe Galician nationalism?

3 Experience as a militant in the BNG

- When did you first consider yourself a member of the nationalist movement or when did you start supporting the movement?
- How and when did you become a political activist? How much did the Galician nationalist movement influence this decision?
- Why and when did you join the Bloc?
- Could you tell me about your experiences in the party?
- How are women organized within the party?
- What are the party's gender policies? Do you agree with the party's gender ideology?

- How do you assess the structure and organisation of the party from a feminist/women's perspective?
- Do you think the party has undergone a change due to the increased amount of women? Is there a gender balance?
- What obstacles is this process encountering?

4 Feministisation process

- Briefly clarify what you specify as 'femininity'. Is there a reproduction of the traditional role of man within politics by women, or is there space for the 'feminine'?
- How would you interpret as a 'feministisation' of politics (where feminism has been integrated)? What about nationalism?
- What strategies are women implementing to 'feministise' nationalism?
- Do you think a reconciliation policy could be considered a feministisation tool? Is it a policy implemented by the BNG?

5 On feminism

- What is feminism for you?
- Do you think nationalism or your view of nationalism converges or clashes with your views of feminism? Or can they actually complement each other?

- A relationship could be identified between Galician nationalism and the feminist movement?
- How do you visualize a Galician feminist nationalism?
- Do you have any relationship with feminist/women's organisations nationally or internationally? If so, what organisations?

6 Balance of nationalisms

- What do you think would be the strategies/solutions for building a balanced base for different nationalisms?
- What do you think is the aim in equilibrating nationalisms (identities) in Galicia?
- Do you think that the ideas that 'nationalism' puts on the table can be carried out by other tools that do not have the negative connotations that nationalism has?
- How can feminism change this situation?
- Could you comment on this reductionist interpretation of the beginnings of nationalism with a Rosalia in front. Later, The Brotherhood of Speech (Irmandades da Fala) appealed to the people 'stop being a nation of women, stop writing poetry', and now in the present, we have a movement that is represented by women in public office and elsewhere.

7 Conclusions

- Tell me three words about how to describe your feelings for Galician nationalism.
- Could you make a self-criticism of Galician political nationalism?

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