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Cover Page Footnote

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Anarchist Sociability in Spain in Times of Violence and Clandestinity

ÁNGEL HERRERÍN LÓPEZ

The introduction of anarchism in Spain has been, during the last several decades, one of the most analyzed subjects of Spanish historiography. The interpretations provided for this have been varied and the explanations range from political, social and cultural to religious.¹ Its establishment took place during the last third of the nineteenth century, at the moment when workers' organizations enlisted in the First International were constituted. The period was marked by a strong repression on the part of the state and by acts of violence perpetrated by action anarchists.

If a group--this term is understood here as a collection of people who interact, develop some interdependence and gather in order to achieve certain goals--develops consistency in the places of sociability where it maintains relationships,² those spaces acquire different preeminence depending on the time periods of freedom or clandestinity under which said group is operating. The matter becomes more complicated if the group being considered and analyzed is anarchist. In the first place, this is so because anarchist actions were almost always carried out clandestinely. Anarchist exploits were forbidden by law and, therefore, the perpetrators operated secretly. In the second place, because the group consisted of a highly heterogeneous and complex conglomerate of individuals that included peasants, workers, individualists and collectivists as well as freethinkers, rationalists, neo-Malthusians or naturalists. In this case the role of the places of sociability went beyond the incipient structures of the workers' organizations since it

¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *Rebeldes primitivos: estudio sobre las formas arcaicas de los movimientos sociales en los siglos XIX y XX* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1959); Gerald Brenan, *El laberinto español. Antecedentes sociales y políticos de la guerra civil* (París: Ruedo Ibérico, 1962); Clara E. Lida, *Anarquismo y revolución en la España del siglo XIX* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1972); José Álvarez Junco, *La ideología política del anarquismo español (1868-1910)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1976); Javier Paniagua, "Una gran pregunta y varias respuestas. El anarquismo español: desde la política a la historiografía," *Historia Social* n° 12 (1992): 31-57; Joseph Termes, *Anarquismo y sindicalismo en España (1864-1881)* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2000, first published in 1965); George Esenwein, *Anarchist Ideology and the Working-Class Movement in Spain, 1868-1898* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

² See Maurice Agulhon, *Histoire vagabonde* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1988); and Maurice Agulhon "Clase obrera y sociabilidad antes de 1948," *Historia Social* n° 12 (1992): 141-167. The first delving by French historians into the sociability of contemporary Spain had as a main theme the one initiated by Agulhon who tended to equate sociability with association. This research was centered on the middle of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth, such as the research carried out by the Equipe de Recherche sur les Cultures de L'Espagne (ERECEC), from the University of Paris 8. See J. Maurice, "La sociabilité dans L'Espagne contemporaine. Considerations préliminaires" in *Clases populares, Cultura, Educación. Siglos XIX-XX*, eds. Jean-Louis Guereña and A. Tiana (Madrid: Casa Velázquez-UNED, 379-392).

performed a fundamental function in the extension of its own culture as well as in the formation and the proselytism of each and every one of those groups. Among them, the direct-action anarchists constituted a large minority which, due to the repercussions of their spectacular terrorist acts, succeeded in causing people to associate anarchism with violence. This article will describe the places of sociability in existence during the last part of the nineteenth century, will explain their uses, depending on the groups or on the particular moments of freedom or clandestinity, and will conclude by emphasizing their importance in the survival and development of Spain's libertarian movement.

Context

In the last years of the nineteenth century, western society was taken aback by a significant number of violent attacks perpetrated by anarchists. Kings, empresses, presidents and governments were the main targets of these incidents. In June 1894, the Italian anarchist Sante Caserio stabbed the president of the French Republic, Sadi Carnot, while screaming "Long live anarchy!"³ On September 1, 1898, Empress Isabel of Austria-Hungary, the famous Sissi, was fatally stabbed as well by the Italian anarchist Luigi Luchenni in the Swiss city of Geneva. In July 1900, the anarchist Gaetano Bresci shot and killed Italy's King Humberto I in Monza.⁴ The following year, the anarchist Leon Czolgosz shot the president of the United States, William McKinley, repeatedly at the Pan American Exposition held in Buffalo, New York. McKinley died a week later as a result of the wounds. Czolgosz was tried, found to be guilty and electrocuted. His brain was examined in search of some anomaly which might explain his actions. The remains of his body were dissolved in sulfuric acid.⁵

But these violent acts did not just affect prominent individuals. These assaults also touched members of the upper bourgeoisie and even humble people who, by chance, happened to be in public places when the aggressions occurred. The anarchist Auguste Vaillant threw a bomb in December 1893 during a parliamentary session in France's Chamber of Deputies. Seventy people were wounded including representatives, parliamentary employees and visitors who attended the debate. In February of the following year, the

³ Jean Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste en France, Vol. I: Des origines à 1914*, (Paris, Gallimard Editions, 1975); Lucía Rivas, "El terrorismo anarquista en Francia," in *El nacimiento del terrorismo en Occidente. Anarquía, nihilismo y violencia revolucionaria*, eds. Juan Avilés and Ángel Herrérin López (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2008), 71-75; Vivien Bouhey, *Les anarchistes contre la République, 1880 à 1914: contribution à l'histoire des réseaux sous la Troisième République* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008).

⁴ Giuseppe Galzerano, *Gaetano Bresci: vita, attentato, processo, carcere e morte dell'anarchico che 'giustiziò' Umberto I* (Salerno: Galzerano Editore, 2001); Juan Avilés, "Propaganda por el hecho y regicidio en Italia," in *El nacimiento del terrorismo*, eds. Avilés and Herrérin López, 1-28.

⁵ Jack C. Fisher, *Stolen Glory. The McKinley Assassination* (La Jolla: Alamar Books, 2001); Susana Sueiro, "De Johann Most a Emma Goldman: el anarquismo en los Estados Unidos de América," in *El nacimiento del terrorismo*, eds. Avilés and Herrérin López, 79-102.

anarchist Emile Henry exploded a bomb in the Café Terminus in Paris, frequented by the French upper bourgeoisie, which resulted in one death and the wounding of nineteen others. Henry carried “a gun loaded with modified bullets, meant to fragment in order to cause greater damage, a knife with a poisoned blade, and the bomb attached to his waist.”⁶

In Spain, the behavior of these aggressive anarchists was especially significant in Barcelona, a city considered by the experienced French police as the most important anarchist center in Europe.⁷ In Barcelona there were acts of violence against Catalonia’s Captain General, Martínez Campos, in September 1893, which claimed the life of a civil guard while the general was only slightly wounded. Two months later, a bomb exploded in the Teatro del Liceo, an emblematic place for the Catalan bourgeoisie, which killed twenty people and injured twenty-seven. In June 1896, another device exploded in Barcelona’s Cambios Nuevos street as the Corpus Christi procession from the Church of Santa María del Mar passed by. The outcome of this incident was twelve dead and thirty-five injured.⁸

The response of the authorities to these two acts of violence was an indiscriminate, illegal and extremely harsh repression. The police, pressed by the wealthy upper classes to find the individuals responsible for the terrorist attack at the Teatro del Liceo, arrested close to four hundred people from the lower classes. The police intervention included the torture of workers who were well known for their commitment to the labor movement. Some of these men ended up “confessing” to their participation in the events in spite of their innocence. It did not matter much that the actual perpetrator, Santiago Salvador, arrested after the “confessions,” declared himself the author of the attack. The authorities reopened the investigation corresponding to the attack on General Martínez Campos. The culprit of this violence against the general, the anarchist Paulino Pallás, had been tried, sentenced to death and executed, yet ten of the arrested individuals were tried for this crime. Six were sentenced to death and the other four were sentenced to life in prison. The death sentences were carried out on May 21st, 1894.

On the part of the police, their behavior after the attack on the Corpus Christi procession netted close to five hundred people in jail, some of whom were also tortured. The famous Montjuich trial (Proceso de Montjuich), where eighty-seven people were tried for this deed, was full of irregularities:

⁶ Lucía Rivas, “El terrorismo anarquista en Francia,” in *El nacimiento del terrorismo*, eds. Avilés and Herrerín López, 67-68.

⁷ Archivo de la Prefectura de Policía de París (henceforth APPP), BA 1511, A 40. French police report, October 3, 1893.

⁸ Angel Herrerín López, *Anarquía dinamita y revolución social. Violencia represión en la España de entre siglos (1868-1909)* (Madrid: La catarata de los libros, 2011); Eduardo González Calleja, *La razón de la fuerza. Orden público, subversión y violencia en la España de la Restauración (1875-1917)* (Madrid: CSC, 1998); Rafael Nuñez Florencio, *El terrorismo anarquista, 1888-1909* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1983).

prolonged isolation, individual recognition instead of line-ups of six people as stipulated by law, obstacles to the testimony of defense witnesses, and the failure to document the accusations of ill treatment brought up and presented in court. The Court Martial (Consejo de Guerra) sentenced eight individuals to death without proving their guilt. The case was taken up to the Supreme Army and Navy Court Martial (Consejo Supremo de Guerra y Marina) who reviewed the sentence and confirmed the death penalty for five of those eight individuals. As concerns the rest, twenty men were given prison sentences ranging from ten to twenty years in length, while the other sixty-two were acquitted.⁹

This questionable conduct brought about a desire to exact revenge against Spain's prime minister, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, whom the anarchists considered responsible for the abuses. The Italian anarchist Michele Angiolillo ended the life of the statesman by shooting him several times on August 8, 1897 at the Santa Agueda spa in the province of Guipúzcoa.¹⁰

To this rapid succession of violent acts must be added a considerable number of bombs aimed at religious centers and political institutions, as well as attacks against governors and policemen. Due to all of this violence, Barcelona became identified in international anarchist circles as the "Rose of Fire."

The violent behavior of these anarchists resulted from their commitment to what they called "propaganda by the deed." By means of this tactic, they believed they could spread their ideology, attract people to the movement, and raise awareness among the masses with respect to the exploitation they were enduring.¹¹ As early as 1870, the great anarchist ideologue, Mikhail Bakunin, had pointed out the possibility of spreading his principles, not through words, but by deeds, because, as this Russian revolutionary maintained, this was "the most popular, the most powerful and the most irresistible form of propaganda."¹² At first this tactic was accepted by the insurrectionists thanks to the Italians Errico Malatesta and Carlo Cafiero, both of whom aspired to achieve social revolution via the uprising of the masses. These two revolutionaries presented a document at the IWA (International Workers Association) conference celebrated in Bern, Switzerland in 1876. In it, they pointed to "the insurrectional act...as the most

⁹ About these events, see Angel Herrerin López, *Anarquía dinamita y revolución social*.

¹⁰ Francesco Tamburini, "Michele Angiolillo e l'assassinio di Cánovas del Castillo," *Spagna Contemporánea*, n° 9 (1996); Frank Fernández, *La sangre de Santa Agueda. Angiolillo, Betances y Cánovas* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1994).

¹¹ Marie Fleming, "Propaganda by the deed: terrorism and anarchist theory in late nineteenth-century Europe," in *Terrorism in Europe*, eds. Y. Alexander and K.A. Myers (London: Croom Helm, 1892); Richard Bach Jensen, "Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite: Anarchist Terrorism in Nineteenth Century Europe," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, n° 16 (2004).

¹² "Lettre à un Français," quoted in Caroline Cahm, *Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism, 1872-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 76.

effective means of propaganda.”¹³ Both Malatesta and Cafiero were protagonists in a failed uprising in the region of Matese (Benevento).¹⁴ However, an article published a year later in the IWA’s Bulletin of the Swiss Federation of the Jura, probably signed by the Frenchman Paul Brosse,¹⁵ indicated that the protest demonstrations and, especially insurrections, even if they did not serve to achieve the revolution, were more effective and spread information better than any other type of oral or written propaganda.¹⁶

For a brief period of time the term “propaganda by the deed” was associated with attacks on individuals much more so than with insurrections. However, the anarchist paper *Le Révolté*, published in Geneva by Kropotkin, included an article at the end of 1880 entitled “L’Action” which maintained that anarchist action should be “a permanent revolt by means of the word, the knife, the gun and dynamite.”¹⁷ This evolution was reflected in the conference celebrated by the antiauthoritarian IWA in London in July 1881. The presence of outspoken defenders of violent actions in order to achieve the revolution, such as Kropotkin, Malatesta and Johan Most, and the murder of Czar Alexander II, four months prior to the conference by the Russian organization Narodnaja Volja, decidedly affected the resolutions approved by those present.¹⁸ Those at the conference had proclaimed the need to “propagate by means of acts the revolutionary idea,” which directed against institutions could speak “better to the masses than thousands of pamphlets and waves of words.” In the end, some of the conference participants recommended the study and application of “technical and chemical sciences” as the way to produce explosives, in order to awaken the masses through violent acts and thus achieve the revolution.¹⁹

If this was the international anarchist movement’s stance, the situation in Spain was more complicated from much earlier times. In June 1870, in Barcelona’s Teatro Circo, the Federación Regional Española (FRE, Spanish Regional Federation) had been constituted by a majority of anarchists registered in the IWA.²⁰ However, events in France, particularly the

¹³ *Bulletin de la Fédération Jurassienne*, December 3, 1876.

¹⁴ T. R. Ravindranathan, *Bakunin and the Italians* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988), 220-229; Giampietro Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano e internazionale, 1872-1932* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003), 63-80.

¹⁵ Cahm, *Kropotkin*, 83.

¹⁶ «La propagande par le fait», *Bulletin de la Fédération Jurassienne*, August 5, 1877.

¹⁷ *Le Révolté*, December 25, 1880.

¹⁸ Astrid von Borcke, “Violence and Terror in Russian Revolutionary Populism: The Narodnaya Volya,” in *Social Protest, Violence and Terror in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Europe*, eds. W. Mommsen and G. Hirschfeld (London: MacMillan/Berg, 1982); Rafael Núñez Florencio, “La influencia nihilista en el anarquismo español,” in *El nacimiento del terrorismo*, eds. Avilés and Herrérín López.

¹⁹ *Le Révolté*, July 23, 1881.

²⁰ For an overview of the First International in Spain, see Anselmo Lorenzo, *El proletariado militante. Memorias de un internacional* (Madrid: Zero, 1974); Termes, *Anarquismo y*

appearance of the Paris Commune, spread concern among all of Europe's upper classes and forced its governments to control the International's activities. The Spanish parliament declared the FRE illegal at the end of 1871.

In this manner, a long period of harassment, prohibition and clandestinity began for workers' organizations in Spain. Clara E. Lida indicates that in the eighteen years between the creation of the FRF and the end of the organization which replaced it, the Federación de Trabajadores de la Región Española (FTRE, Federation of Workers of the Spanish Region), in 1888, the workers belonging to these associations were able to act publicly and legally for a period of only three years. They acted in an illegal and semi-clandestine manner for two years--from the events of the Commune—and were harassed and in fact repressed for five years, due to the Black Hand (Mano Negra) matter.²¹ During the remaining eight years, from January 1874 to September 1881, the associations were forbidden.²²

Repression was the Spanish state's only response to the demands of a working class whose members lacked all rights and lived in abject poverty. These circumstances forced the workers' organizations to change their structures in order to adapt to the need for clandestinity via the creation of small secret groups which tried to keep the organizations alive. These groups reacted to the repression with violence, either by insurrections, fueled by the claim that the arrival of the revolution was "imminent," or by reprisals against those who carried out or supported repressive action. But this violence was different in its origin and execution than the violence prevalent in the 1890s, discussed above. This particular situation emerged from illegality and its violence evolved as a response to the repression initiated by the state.²³

Also different was the labor violence stemming from the closing of factories and the unemployment of workers as a consequence of the economic crisis that affected Spain, mainly in industrial centers such as Barcelona, in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In this environment, strikes proliferated, as did violence intended to intimidate the bosses involved in the negotiations over workers' salaries and rights. Dynamite now became part of the workers' solution to labor problems. On September 1, 1886, a bomb exploded in the headquarters of the Catalan managers' organization, the Instituto de Fomento del Trabajo Nacional (Institute for the Promotion of National Work); on November 26, 1887, a cartridge of dynamite went off in

sindicalismo; Lida, *Anarquismo y revolución*; Max Netlau, *Miguel Bakunin, la Internacional y la Alianza en España, 1868-1873* (Madrid: La Piqueta, 1977, first published in 1925).

²¹ About La Mano Negra, see Clara E. Lida, *La Mano Negra* (Madrid: ZYX, 1972); Demetrio Castro, *Hambre en Andalucía: antecedentes y circunstancias de la Mano Negra* (Córdoba: Imprenta San Pablo, 1986).

²² Clara E. Lida, "Los discursos de la clandestinidad en el anarquismo del XIX," *Historia Social* n° 17, (1993): 63-74.

²³ Herrerin López, *Anarquía, dinamita y revolución*, 39-53.

the textile factory belonging to Salvany, Comas and Estrany.²⁴ On January 17, 1889, an explosion ripped and destroyed the doorway of an apartment inhabited by a prominent Catalan businessman, Batlló.²⁵ On July 17 of that same year there was a large explosion across the street from the house owned by the manufacturer Ramón Alsina, who was slightly injured....²⁶

In short, the various types of violence that were utilized--“propaganda by the deed,” insurrections, reprisals and labor violence--should be considered parts of a whole: the struggle between those who held political, economic and social power and the underprivileged classes, deprived of the most basic human rights and pushed to destitution. This invariably repressive response of the ruling class and the denial of access to any type of democratic power to those who opposed the regime became the norm during the period of the Restoration--the political regime ruling in Spain at that time--and led many workers to believe that the solution to these problems, regardless of the circumstances, was violence.

Sociability in Urban Areas

In spite of the violence and the long periods of clandestinity forced on the libertarian movement, the anarchists did manage to create some social structures that made their organized presence in Spain possible. The FRE advised its militants to create a double organization--public and secret--which would allow the continuation of their activity. Specifically, it suggested the creation of cultural associations or any other type of institutions that could serve as fronts and would enable them to carry on their work. While these organizations would be “cultural associations for the authorities, for us they would be the Local Federation.”²⁷

This tactic to circumvent the established legality, at moments when the law forbade their activities, was implemented during the following years. When early in the 1890s the Ministry of the Interior sent out a request for information to the civil governors of all the provinces about socialist and anarchist associations registered according to the law, their response indicated the non-existence of anarchist associations as such, although certain “special” organizations were pointed out: in Almería, the presence of an organization known as “Artistic Evening of Recreation and Instruction” was mentioned. This organization was prohibited when socialist papers and instructions for producing bombs were found on its premises. In Barcelona and in peripheral

²⁴ *Diario de Barcelona*, November 28, 1887.

²⁵ *Diario de Barcelona*, January 18, 19, 22 and 25, 1889. His wounds occurred in an unusual way. The explosion ripped off the apartment door, which fell on him. Once he was on the floor, a wall clock fell on him, causing significant head and eye injuries. Finally, a painting fell off the wall on top of him as well.

²⁶ *Diario de Barcelona*, July 18, 1889.

²⁷ Clara E. Lida, “Hacia la clandestinidad anarquista. De la comuna de París a Alcoy, 1871-1874,” *Historia Social*, nº 46, (2003): 59.

neighborhoods, workers' associations deemed anarchist as a result of their behavior included "The Workers' Circle," the "Bricklayers' Center" and "The Workers' Recreational Center" as well as the associations "Los Cosmos" and "La Verdad." In Cádiz, the Civil Governor was informed that there was a "Workers' Circle," members of which declared themselves anarchists during the latest strikes. In Valencia, the only association reported to profess those (anarchist) principles was the "Valencian Federation," which presented its by-laws in 1887....²⁸

Legal organizations whose by-laws and regulations underlined their character as that of "instructional and recreational centers for workers" were places where individuals could learn, read and discuss, but also deal with "their concerns and situation and exchange impressions about their interests and well-being." These pursuits did not overshadow their commitment to the goal of solidarity "in case of need or stoppage," or the use of the centers to address matters "of general interest" to workers.²⁹ As required by the rules, "the corresponding permit" was requested. In other words, these were associations that served a double purpose: on the one hand, they encouraged contact between the diverse workers within a trade via the meetings that took place on their premises; and on the other, they served as venues for the important literacy training which the anarchists carried out among working class men, women and children.

Any given group becomes a distinct entity in the places of sociability it frequents. The places of sociability were where these workers shared and developed their own culture, and where they engaged in their leisure time activities apart from the tastes and preferences of the well-off classes. They were places which, according to Agulhon, could have an informal character; that is, places where individuals would gather regularly without established formal norms or written by-laws or rules.³⁰ Spanish cities at the end of the

²⁸ Archivo Histórico Nacional (henceforth AHN), serie A, leg. 2A, exp. N° 15. Correspondence between The Ministry of the Interior and the provincial governors, January 23, 1892.

²⁹ Archivo General Militar de Segovia (henceforth AGMS), s-9, box 2366, doc. 18855. Estatutos del Círculo de Trabajadores de San Fernando.

³⁰ Although research about sociability has remained rooted over time in association, the latter no longer constitutes the center of attention. In the last few years sociability has been approached from a wider perspective. Concretely, interest in formal relations has expanded, but also, and in a special manner, it has increased with respect to informal relations. On the other hand, the methodology has tended to broaden its approach to a comparative, multidisciplinary perspective. With respect to this, we might point out the work carried out by the French historians belonging to the Grupe de recherche sur l'histoire des intellectuels and the Grupe de Recherche d'Histoire at the University of Rouen. About the period of time covered in this article, see, in addition to the previously mentioned works by Maurice Agulhon (1988) ; (1992); M. Ralle, "La sociedad obrera en la sociedad de la Restauración (1875-1910)," in *Estudios de Historia Social* (Madrid, nos. 50-51, July- December 1989): 161-199; *Peuple, mouvement ouvrier, culture dans L'Espagne contemporaine. Culture populaires, cultures ouvrières en Espagne de 1840 à 1936*, eds. J. Maurice, D. Bussy Genevois (Saint Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vicennes, 1990), 99-114 ; Jean-Louis

nineteenth century were excellent spaces for the development of two types of sociability. The two types of sociability complemented each other and sometimes one type of group preceded the other. Informal places such as theaters, cafes, and taverns... were often the prelude to more formal groups such as athenaeums, circles or workers' associations.³¹

Among the various spaces of formal sociability, the work centers should be emphasized first. Migration from the country to the cities as a result of the industrial development experienced by cities such as Barcelona, meant the creation of workers' neighborhoods where working class families with similar needs lived. The workers concentrated in the factories or workshops, both of which were perfect places for solidarity and for political and class awareness among the working population to increase. In these places, the anarchists found the ideal medium for the spread of their ideas using the daily labor problems as practical referents to demonstrate the unfairness of bourgeois society. In these factories and workshops, the most aware individuals pushed for the affiliation of workers in the labor associations. In this manner, the first mutual assistance societies emerged. These societies, in addition to providing support to individual workers, would bring together members of a particular trade and would encourage them to organize while, simultaneously, providing opposition and resistance to those in control.³² The workers' associations at the end of the nineteenth century had as their main objective proving to workers the need for a collective organization in order to defend their rights. In this context, the dissemination and reading of the anarchist press during the long working days were considered fundamental requirements for the expansion of the libertarian ideal. Teams of workers would divide labor so that one of them would be free to read anarchist literature. At the end of the day, they all shared the wages that had been earned.

Guereña, "La educación obrera en las Casas del Pueblo," in *Sindicalismo y movimientos sociales (Siglos XIX y XX)* ed. Manuel Redero (Madrid: UGT, Centro de estudios históricos, 1994), 51-72.

³¹ Also in Spain, historians have felt the need to investigate sociability in order to get closer to the object of their research. Recently, various research groups have been created with that end in mind. An example of this would be the Grupo de Estudios de Asociacionismo y Sociabilidad (GEAS) which published *España en Sociedad. Las Asociaciones a finales del siglo XIX* (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1998). Other groups have been formed in the universities of Valladolid, País Vasco, Málaga, and Cádiz. See Jordi Canal, "La sociabilidad en los estudios de la España contemporánea: una revisión," in *Sociabilidad en la España contemporánea. Historiografía y problemas metodológicos*, coord. Elena Maza Zorrilla (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2002); *Sociabilidad fin de siglo. Espacios asociativos en torno a 1898*, coords. Isidro Sánchez, Rafael Villena and GEAS (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1999); *Estado, protesta y movimientos sociales*, coords. Santiago Castillo and José María Ortiz (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 1998).

³² Manuel Tuñón de Lara, *El movimiento obrero en la Historia de España* (Madrid: Taurus, 1972).

All of these efforts to promote workers' solidarity were anchored in labor conflicts. The demands promoted by the anarchists, in addition to proving the strength of the group when facing the problems that affected an entire class, taught a method of resistance that connected readily with their ideology, direct action. This concept, aside from the interpretations that link it to violence, involved the refusal to use intermediaries in resolving conflicts. That is to say, the concept rejects any social or political representation or any other system of official arbitration. In the end, strikes, as the maximum expression of working class claims, provided as much cohesion to the group as any action geared to unleash social revolution.

However, the anarchists did not limit their actions to social causes which were considered a means, much more than an end, to the achievement of their goals. They did their best to extend their ideology and develop a shared culture. In their associations, athenaeums, and workers' circles they encouraged the spread of both through varied activities and initiatives in which all members of the group, men, women and children, participated. Their behavior was similar to that of other groups, such as the socialists, though the anarchists differed from the socialists in important points. They were apolitical in opposition to the socialists' belief in electoral participation; they espoused direct confrontation and the use of violence in their resistance to any kind of power versus socialist representation and negotiation; and the final and main goal of revolution implied for anarchists the construction of a new, more just and supportive society via the destruction of the state. The socialist, in contrast, aspired to conquer and reform the state. Ideological differences between these two groups were present at all times and marked the development of the activities undertaken by each of them in these places of sociability. It could not have been any other way.

In these centers, special attention was paid to literacy and to the workers' education, as a first, but indispensable, step towards the creation of a new society, that is to say, as a first, but indispensable, step towards revolution. Thus among the main tasks of the local federations was teaching workers to read and write. These locations were the only places where the most humble classes could overcome their illiteracy. Other places, such as charitable and religious centers, were scarce and beyond their means.³³ Workers' centers had libraries where the writings of the main anarchist ideologues were housed, as well as newspapers, a fundamental vehicle for their ideas, and a good number of novels that taught a way of life, an ethic, that rejected the prevailing social order.

Culture and ideology were also extended via many other types of activities, such as theater performances, concerts, lectures, and tours. Dramatic and musical theater presentations with a strong social content, such as the creation of choirs for interpreting revolutionary songs, marked the difference

³³ Lida, "Hacia la clandestinidad."

from other more popular spectacles, such as *zarzuelas*, or other more cultured performances, such as operas. Theater plays in which the workers themselves participated, such as *Els Encarrilats* or *El Primero de Mayo*, gave them an on-stage view of their lives and the problems that plagued them. The lectures could be about scientific matters but also about subjects related to various aspects of workers' daily lives, such as education in the free school, naturalism or sexuality. The rural excursions enabled workers to fraternize and, in addition to food, there was invariably exposure to anarchist propaganda.³⁴ In short, these places of sociability where the workers' culture developed and where their leisure time was employed were an alternative, and existed in opposition, to the places frequented by the bourgeoisie such as casinos or Catholic circles.

All of these activities created a universe that disconcerted and in some cases provoked admiration among those who opposed it. For example, a Portuguese policeman who had infiltrated anarchist groups exclaimed in a report to his superiors: "What society! What extraordinary people! Men and women swim naked in front of each other at the Barceloneta beach (at 11:00 pm). They even forced me to swim with them."³⁵

But it was in these same labor workshops, associations, and circles that those responsible for anarchist violence were trained. This appears in the greater part of the indictments issued by the authorities. It was pointed out repeatedly that there were two groups in attendance at the places of sociability favored by the working class. There was a large assemblage of individuals who participated in the activities described above as well as small bands who were the perpetrators of the violent acts. This is reflected in an investigation undertaken by the police into a shady matter concerning an alleged attempt to place two explosive devices in the Chamber of Deputies in Madrid, on the eve of May 1, 1892. The investigation which followed uncovered a workers' circle which, according to the declaration made by one of the accused individuals, included members of a secret organization named "Cosmopolita" made up of "men of action," that is, the more aware and radicalized members, proponents and perpetrators of violent actions.³⁶

Similar revelations were included in the indictment against those accused of planting the bomb that exploded at the Corpus Christi procession of the Church of Santa María del Mar in Barcelona, in June 1896, and which led to the famous Montjuich trial. According to the police, there was a strong group of anarchist men of action who gathered in cafes or bars, among them the Café de la Esperanza or José Bisbal's *cervecería*, but also on the premises belonging to workers' associations, such as the Cart Drivers Center. The

³⁴ *El Corsario*, June 12, 1903; *El Productor*, April 11 and 14, 1904; Paniagua, "Una gran pregunta," 22.

³⁵ Joaquín Romero Maura, *La rosa de fuego: el obrerismo barcelonés de 1899 a 1909* (Barcelona Grijalbo, 1974), 263.

³⁶ *El Imparcial*, December 28, 1893 and January 3, 1894.

police reported that there were two types of meetings at this center. Some were public meetings where money was gathered for needy fellow workers, but part of that money was used to finance violent attacks. The other meetings were secret and in these it was decided what violent actions to undertake.³⁷

The anarchists, for their part, did not have any qualms in pointing to the state, the bourgeoisie and the Catholic Church as truly responsible for these actions and believed these entities' interpretations of the actions as simple fallacies meant to hide their actual goal: the destruction of any opposition to the established social order.³⁸ Although the police were definitely interested in linking these acts of violence mainly to the workers' organizations in order to have a reason to destroy those organizations, it was not always possible for the authorities to establish that connection. Nevertheless, it is logical to suppose that direct action anarchist groups met and structured themselves there.

At these meetings the anarchists cultivated one of the most characteristic features of their culture: solidarity. At all gatherings there was a plate passed in order to collect voluntary economic contributions (never established or forced) meant to assist fellow workers who were on strike, ill, or incarcerated.... The solidarity was extended to the families of workers who had fallen fighting those in power and it went beyond economic contributions. Some anarchists took in the children of workers executed for their involvement in terrorist acts. Juan Montseny (whose pseudonym was Federico Urales), founder of *La Revista Blanca*, anarchism's cultural icon, who had been exiled to England as a result of the bomb that exploded during the Corpus Christi procession in Barcelona, did just that. He took in a daughter of Paulino Pallás, who was executed for his involvement in the attack against General Martínez Campos, until the child's mother found the means to provide for her care.³⁹

Supportive actions, frequently including endogamy, are characteristic of groups with high levels of self-consciousness, closed to a large extent, and encouraging of alliances in their midst. This is exemplified by the actions of Francisca Saperas who, after her husband, Martín Borrás, committed suicide in jail, lived with the main defendant of the Montjuich trial, Tomás Ascheri, who was eventually executed. The daughter of the well-known anarchist Anselmo Lorenzo--a fundamental icon in the spread of the First International in Spain, and who also endured exile for the bomb that exploded during the Corpus Christi procession in Barcelona--was married to Francisco Miranda, one of the figures in a group indicted for the placement of bombs in Barcelona. Another person caught up in this type of relationship was Loreto

³⁷ AIHCM, file 157. Relatorios del Consejo Supremo de Guerra y Marina, April 29, 1897.

³⁸ This was indicated in the anarchist press at the time, in publications such as *La Anarquía*, October 26, 1895; *El Corsario*, June 18, 1896; *El Productor*, July 13, 1901.

³⁹ Antoni Dalmau, *El procés de Montjuich. Barcelona a final del segle XIX* (Barcelona: Base, 2010).

Rull who lived with the anarchist José Sans. She was a sister of Juan Rull, who was executed for his involvement in the explosion of devices placed in the Catalan capital in the early years of the twentieth century.⁴⁰

This solidarity extended well beyond the groups that met in associations and in workers' centers. It reached those like-minded anarchists ("compañeros de la Idea") who arrived from other countries. They were often given jobs, shelter and documents to help them avoid police action⁴¹ and were furnished as well with the means necessary to carry out terrorist acts. Michele Angiolillo, the individual responsible for Cánovas del Castillo's murder, had to flee Italy after being accused of publishing subversive articles.⁴² He reached Barcelona at the end of 1895, and lived there until the attack on the Corpus Christi procession. He stayed in contact with important anarchists, among them Ascheri, who later would be convicted for this attack.⁴³ After a long journey through various European countries, he arrived in London where he attended crowded meetings organized to protest against torture and the executions carried out in Spain as a consequence of the Montjuich trial. There he was also present at private gatherings in which some of the torture victims, such as Francisco Gana and Juan Bautista Oller, told of their misfortunes and showed the resulting scars on their bodies. It appears that at this moment Angiolillo decided to attack the individual whom anarchists believed to be most responsible for their mistreatment, the Spanish prime minister, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo.⁴⁴ On the trip to his destination, Angiolillo stopped in Paris in order to contact well-known anarchists such as Tarrida del Marmol, Charles Malato and Henri Rochefort. The latter, according to all indications, appears to have financed his mission.⁴⁵ He received money, as well, from the delegate to the Cuban Revolutionary Party, Ramón Emeterio Betances, who was particularly interested at the time in destabilizing Spanish politics in order to promote Cuba's independence.⁴⁶ It is clear that the great mobility of individuals like Angiolillo, who crossed frontiers and avoided police controls with ease, was possible only because of the solidarity among the anarchists of the world. Angiolillo's experiences are just one example among the experiences of others.

⁴⁰ Herrerín López, *Anarquía, dinamita y revolución*.

⁴¹ Manuel Gil Maestre, *El anarquismo en España y en especial en Barcelona* (Madrid: Imprenta de los hijos de M. A. Hernández, 1897), 103.

⁴² Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores de Madrid (henceforth AMAEM), H 2750. Letter from the Embassy of Italy in Spain to the State Minister (Ministro de Estado), August 11, 1897.

⁴³ Archivo de la Prefectura de Policía de París (henceforth APPP), BA 1511; and Archivo National de París (henceforth ANP), F/7/12725. Report from the especial commissioner E. Luienement from Barcelona to the Direction générale de la sécurité in Paris, August 9, 1879.

⁴⁴ Rudolf Rocker, *En la tormenta: años de destierro* (Buenos Aires: Tupac, 1949), 60-64.

⁴⁵ *Le Peuple*, March 6, 1938; Federico Urales (Juan Montseny's pseudonym), *Mi vida* (Barcelona: Publicaciones de La Revista Blanca, 1932), 229.

⁴⁶ Fernández, *La sangre de Santa Agueda*, 92-93; Luis Bonafoux, *Betances* (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1987), XX; Tamburini, "Michele Angiolillo," 101-130.

Sociability in Rural Areas

Although rural areas had very different characteristics from large urban centers, they maintained common spaces quite similar to those in the cities. Among the informal locations were taverns, barbershops or barracks, places of leisure and relaxation for the peasantry. The most frequented formal centers were workers' associations and circles.

These groups carried out functions aimed at the organization of labor and they promoted libertarian education and culture, as was done in cities such as Barcelona. But they did experience problems related to the environment in which these tasks were pursued. The dispersion of work sites was a difficulty added to the lack of political consciousness of rural workers, the low levels of literacy and the poverty in which Spanish peasants lived. As a consequence, the workers' federations organized "propaganda tours," during which the militants would crisscross the countryside carrying books and pamphlets which they would read to the peasants in the fields. There were also "propaganda committees" that would visit rural estates during strikes to prevent strike breaking and thus reduce possible impediments to those who had mobilized.⁴⁷

These activities demonstrate the connection between the structures in existence in the city and those in the country. Both spheres were meant to implement a joint effort which would allow social revolution to triumph.⁴⁸ This link was clearly reflected in the events that took place in 1892 in the city of Jerez, in the province of Cádiz, when two hundred men armed with shotguns, scythes and knives occupied the city for an hour. During this action, the assailants murdered two city residents, while one of them was shot dead by a soldier. The rebels fled the city and were disbanded by an army unit. The authorities arrested hundreds of individuals and opened two cases in order to try the events. The first Court Martial tried the first eight individuals accused of the crimes, of being leaders of the rebellion and authors of the murders. Five of them were sentenced to death, and the other three to life in prison. On February 10, 1892, four of them were executed while the fifth one died suddenly in his cell the same day the executions were carried out. The second Court Martial tried forty-six arrested individuals. Of these, twenty-nine were acquitted, nine were sentenced to life in prison and the remaining eight received sentences ranging from eight to twenty years in jail.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Lida, "Hacia la clandestinidad."

⁴⁸Concerning the problem in Andalucía, see Juan Díaz del Moral, *Historia de las agitaciones campesinas andaluzas* (Madrid: Alianza, 1979); Jacques Maurice, *El anarquismo andaluz: campesinos y sindicalistas, 1868-1936* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1990); Tema Kaplan, *Orígenes sociales del anarquismo en Andalucía: capitalismo agrario y lucha de clases en la provincia de Cádiz, 1863-1903* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1977).

⁴⁹Herrerín López, *Anarquía, dinamita y revolución*, 76-83; Juan Avilés, "Mileranismo y propaganda por el hecho: la marcha anarquista sobre Jerez de 1892," in *Historia política y*

The judge in charge of the hearing organized to look into the occupation of Jerez pointed out in his report that the catalyst for the action was a group gathered in a barbershop owned by José Fernández Lamela, a correspondent for various anarchist newspapers. The mutiny's origin, according to the judge, was the circulation in the countryside of city papers such as *La Anarquía* and *El Productor* which led the peasants to believe that a revolution was close. This propaganda was carried out in places of sociability in nearby villages. That is the explanation that was presented at the hearing when Félix Grávalo, *el Madrileño*, was charged. He had been the reader of the press in taverns and barbershops in the area. Members of the instigating group would gather, as well, in order to spread "the Idea," in places where workers met, such as the "Farmers' Center" or the "Bakers' Center," where anarchist clusters were beginning to develop into structured groups. The judge specified the existence of messengers who covered all the Jerez countryside and called all peasants to the Llanos de Caulinas, where the two hundred men who occupied the city in the province of Cádiz had gathered during the night of January 8, 1892.⁵⁰

These individuals who would travel over the Andalusian countryside carrying with them anarchist ideology became the so-called "apostles of the idea," such as Fermín Salvochea. The writer Vicente Blanco Ibáñez accurately portrayed this "lay saint" in his novel *La Bodega*, where the character Salvatierra, who represents Salvochea, appears as an ascetic and committed individual who "only drank water, and to eat, he would reject anything other than a piece of bread and a piece of cheese." His dedication was to the thousands of dispossessed individuals who inhabited the earth and he would maintain his way of life "for as long as social disorder prevailed and thousands of his fellow men died slowly due to the scarcity of food..."⁵¹

The new "apostles" would travel through the fields to the country houses of Jerez, taking to the hearts of humble folks the word of anarchy and the paradise of revolution. But they also criticized any custom that might hamper the implementation of their ideas such as the consumption of alcohol. The spread of the anarchist ideology was contingent on a culture and lifestyle that was meant to change the state of things. Blasco Ibáñez, through his character "Salvatierra," expressed the opinion of many anarchists when he "cursed the influence that alcoholic poison had over people," which contributed to the enslavement of the masses.⁵²

The anarchist press waged an authentic war of words against the leisure sites where alcohol was consumed such as taverns. However, these

cultura. Homenaje a Javier Tusell (Vol. I, coord. Juan Avilés (Madrid: UNED, 2009), 183-212.

⁵⁰ Archivo General Militar de Segovia (henceforth AGMS), S-9, box 2362, exp. 18854. Proceso de Jerez.

⁵¹ Vicente Blanco Ibáñez, *La Bodega, Obras completas* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1978), 1216-1217.

⁵² Blasco Ibáñez, *La Bodega*, 1295.

premises, informal sites where workers usually gathered after long days of labor, were important places for the group's sociability. Families and neighbors would get together in them, play cards, dice and slot machines, which had been first installed in Barcelona early in the twentieth century. Those who could read had access to different publications in these sites, while those who could not would listen to others who read the newspapers out loud.⁵³ Taverns, in spite of the opposition they generated among some anarchists, were popular places where, in addition to expansion and relaxation, folks could discuss work problems and social questions and where anarchist ideas were presented and spread, where proselytism could be carried out.

Taverns were also places where violently active anarchist groups, when operating clandestinely, could pass "unnoticed." For this reason, it was not strange for bars and taverns to appear in police reports as gathering centers and for the police to raid them first when a violent attack had taken place.⁵⁴ These interventions by the police frequently unmasked the double function of the taverns. They were leisure sites and places where militants could be recruited. José Nin, a professional bartender, serves as a good example. He was arrested for selling anarchist newspapers and pamphlets in the tavern Germinal, which was managed by Pedro Vidal, also an anarchist.⁵⁵

It is also important to keep in mind the importance of the places dedicated to informal sociability, such as taverns, in moments of repression. In those moments, clandestinity was fundamental and relationships became much more difficult. Sites where workers' associations met were targets of the state's repressive actions, and it lashed out with special harshness against the structures created by the labor movement. Other places such as athenaeums, circles or leisure associations enjoyed some permissiveness. However, when anarchist actions became particularly bloody, closings were imposed equally on everyone. That is what happened after the spectacular attacks in Barcelona, such as the one against the Teatro del Liceo or the one during the Corpus Christi procession from the Church of Santa María del Mar. In this latter case, the repression was not limited to anarchist centers. The government took advantage of the situation and proceeded to close workers' associations which were in no way connected to anarchists, such as socialist and even republican centers, including the *Círculo Federal de la Región Catalana* (Federal Circle of the Catalan Region).⁵⁶ The characteristic repression of the times, in addition to its most bitter aspects involving executions, arrests and torture, entailed the closing, sometimes even the disappearance, of those places of sociability. It was in those moments that the informal spaces would become of key importance for the survival of anarchist groups.

⁵³ Romero Maura, *La rosa de fuego*, 150.

⁵⁴ *Diario de Barcelona*, June 10, 1896

⁵⁵ AGMS, sec. 9, N-27. Court Martial against José Nin and others.

⁵⁶ Archivo Histórico Nacional (henceforth AHN), secc. Gobernación, serie A, leg. 44 – 2ª, exp. 9. Sesión del Congreso de los Diputados, August 20, 1896.

The Role of Women in Anarchist Sociability

Women were a key element in the anarchist cultural framework of the time. There were places of sociability for them as well. Among the formal ones, there were workshops and repair shops; among the informal ones were the sites where they would regularly meet with neighbors such as public laundry facilities or patios where they could talk and discuss a variety of matters. In the anarchist press there were always articles written for women urging them not to limit their world to domestic chores and to become emancipated from the social conventions of a society that the anarchists labeled as hypocritical and false.⁵⁷ Liberation had to arrive to that new and egalitarian society by means of instruction. The egalitarian society had to be “up-to-date with respect to the meaning of the libertarian ideal.” However, liberation had to arrive also through action in order “to spread it to all those other women who might not know about it, in the factory, in the workshop, while strolling, and everywhere without fear.”⁵⁸

Women also played a prominent role in strikes and uprisings. It was not unusual to see women heading demonstrations and mutinies while stirring spirits. Following public disturbances in Alcalá del Valle, in 1903, a judge reported that in the town square three bonfires fueled by oil were built, and “in this task women stood out as they did in their attempt to burn some houses.”⁵⁹ In the following clashes with the security forces, early in the century, in towns in the province of Cádiz such as Puerto Real, San Fernando and Chiclana, the anarchist press noted that when some men hesitated in front of the fray, women appeared and provided an example as to how conflicts should be settled: “throwing themselves at bourgeois homes.”⁶⁰ Women also played a significant role in major events of the period such as the general strike of 1902 and the Tragic Week of 1909. In both events they participated massively, in the picket lines which closed down factories and commercial shops, and in the erection of barricades. One of their obsessions during these conflicts was to prevent the supply of meat from reaching wealthy families. This would prove to those in power that without the daily concurrence of workers they too would be hungry. Hunger was what motivated assaults on the maids of the rich during the 1902 strikes. Working class women would take groceries and shopping money away from the maids. They also assaulted bakeries, in particular those that had recently raised the price of bread.⁶¹

⁵⁷ *El Rebelde*, October 19, 1907.

⁵⁸ *Espartaco*, November 18, 1904.

⁵⁹ AGMS, box, 1058, exp. 8170. Alcalá del Valle Case.

⁶⁰ *El Productor*, April 11, 1903.

⁶¹ *La Vanguardia*, February 23 and 24, 1902; *Las Noticias*, February 24, 1902; Alfonso Colodrón, "Aportación al estudio de la huelga general (la huelga general de Barcelona de 1902)," *Revista de Trabajo*, nº 33, (1971): 67-119; Ángel Duarte, "Entre el mito y la realidad Barcelona, 1902," in *La Huelga General*, ed. Francesc Bonamusa, *Ayer* nº 4 (1991): 147-168; Romero Maura, *La rosa de fuego*, 206-217; J. Connelly Ullman, *La semana trágica: estudio*

Moreover, women undertook nonviolent tasks which were important for their libertarian goals, such as the transmission of the anarchist culture to their children. This education started at birth. Although “propaganda by the deed” has been closely associated with violence in people’s minds, the truth is that it also included some nonviolent approaches such as the rejection of any authority and the pursuit of a lifestyle that denied established social norms. These behaviors ranged from a refusal to serve in the military to the celebration of births, deaths and marriages without any type of religious ritual. Such acts served a double purpose; on the one hand, they were a public assertion of anarchist principles; on the other, they provided examples which showed neighbors and friends a different way to celebrate special family events, far from the tutelage of the Catholic Church. It was not unusual to read in anarchist dailies birth announcements of children with names such as Espartaco, Progress or Germinal for boys and Agripina or Acracia for girls. These children “were lucky to have avoided the drenching” – a clear allusion to baptism – and were not included in “any official registry.”⁶² The children of anarchists received a different education and often demonstrated their involvement in the problems of their social class. A good example was Manuel García who, at the age of nine, was able to address a group of two thousand people, harangue them and urge them to fight for anarchy, to protest the incarceration of workers, and to demand of those present that they act in order to pull out their comrades “from jail by sheer force.”⁶³

It is not surprising then that women were the target of the anger of the powerful or of religious intolerance. Women were frequently arrested after any violent act simply because they encouraged a lifestyle the norms of which were “different” from those established by the Catholic Church. It happened, for example, to Asunción Ballvé, the first woman arrested after the attack on the Corpus Christi procession of Santa María del Mar. She had been a companion of an anarchist who had died in jail. The press pointed out, as one of the facts in support of her arrest, that her son had been given the name of Anárquico in a civil ceremony and had been “taken to court wrapped in a red cloth.”⁶⁴

Other women suffered terrible ordeals as a result of their relationship with two of the men accused of perpetrating that same assault. Francisca Saperas and Salud Borrás were arrested and incarcerated at the same time as their companions Tomás Ascheri and Luis Mas, who ended up being executed as the author of the attack and his accomplice. Francisca, who was the widow of Martin Borrás (he had committed suicide in jail) and who lived at that time with Ascheri, had four daughters ranging from seven to eighteen years of age.

sobre las causas socioeconómicas del anticlericalismo en España (1898-1912) (Madrid: Ariel, 1972), 131-136 and 238-242.

⁶² *El Corsario*, June 11, 1896.

⁶³ *El Productor*, April 11, 1903.

⁶⁴ *La Vanguardia*, June 12, 1896.

Salud, the daughter of Francisca and Martin who lived with Mas and had a two year old daughter by him, was pregnant when arrested. The Amsterdam International Institute of Social History houses the correspondence between Mas and Salud during their last days in prison, and it demonstrates the anguish that swept over them at that moment.⁶⁵ Both women were arrested with their companions and incarcerated in a prison run by nuns belonging to the order of the Sisters of Charity. There they ran into other women who faced situations quite similar to theirs such as Asunción Ballvé and Teresa Maymi, with whom they shared a cell. There was an attempt as well to degrade these anarchist women by forcing them to share space in prison with prostitutes.⁶⁶

From the moment they entered prison, these women were harassed by the nuns for not baptizing their children who were with them in jail, and for living with men whom they had not married. The insults and the contempt of the nuns were the pressure applied in order to get them to “regularize” both situations. They were told the children would be taken away from them and placed in an orphanage. As a result Ascheri and Mas married Francisca and Salud in a religious ceremony the day before their execution, in prison, in the Castle of Montjuich. Simultaneously, both were forced to recant their ideas and convert to Catholicism,⁶⁷ and they had to do so in a “legal” manner, that is, by signing a document in front of a notary. In the document they requested forgiveness from “our mother the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church in whose bosom” they wanted to die.⁶⁸ The day following the marriages, May 4, 1897, the five men sentenced to death were executed in the moat of the Castle of Montjuich. The bodies of Ascheri and Mas were placed in a funerary car that bore above it “a cross as emblem of the Catholic religion” while the bodies of the other three were placed in a different carriage. The burial was also different. The first two were taken in by the cemetery’s chaplain and buried in “sacred land” while the others were buried in an unconsecrated enclosure.⁶⁹

The Catholic Church, behaving as described above, aroused the hatred of those who wanted to live free from religious precepts. Anarchist newspapers waged war against the churches that they compared to other negative places for workers, such as the taverns, because while people became “drunk or poisoned” in taverns, in the Church they prostituted themselves.⁷⁰ The anarchist attacks against the Church were motivated, they claimed, by the close ties of the Church to those in power and by its behavior, vastly different

⁶⁵International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam (henceforth IISH), The Salud Borrás Papers. Correspondence between Luis Mas and Salud Borrás.

⁶⁶*El Progreso*, campaign in favor of the victims of the Montjuich trial, 112-123. Teresa Maymi Sulé’s letter, February 11, 1898.

⁶⁷IISH, The Salud Borrás Papers. Luis Mas’ letter, from the Castle of Montjuich, to Salud Borrás, December 24, 1896 and January 9, 1897.

⁶⁸*La Vanguardia*, May 5, 1897.

⁶⁹*La Vanguardia*, May 5, 1897.

⁷⁰*El Productor*, August 13, 1903.

from the Gospel it preached. The hatred and desire for revenge on the part of those harassed by the Church were to become quite evident in later years: Barcelona's Tragic Week in 1909 was characterized by the burning of religious buildings, and religious persecution became very notable during the Spanish Civil War.

Conclusion

To conclude, the anarchist movement was, from the moment it appeared in Spain, hounded by the state in collaboration with the bourgeoisie and the Catholic Church. This made its introduction and establishment rather difficult. The attacks carried out by anarchists were used to justify the repression, while those in power did little to find a solution to the important social justice problems that were plaguing Spanish society at the time and that were motivating the violence. The long years of illegality, clandestinity, and harsh repression were not enough to eradicate anarchism in Spain. The libertarian movement was a world so exceptionally heterogeneous that it did not wear out, not even in its most visible even if marginal aspect, such as "propaganda by the deed" in its violent version. In this world, peasants, industrial workers, naturalists, freethinkers, rationalist, neo-Malthusians... coexisted, each with a different vision of life, but all of them with a single goal in mind: to do away with the unjust society of the time. This end was not circumscribed to the economic and political reality, but to the social and cultural reality as well.

In their struggle for survival and their attempt to spread a culture separated from that of the bourgeois, they organized and used all types of places of sociability: factories, country houses, workshops, athenaeums, workers' circles, study centers, rationalist schools, taverns, neighborhood patios and public laundry facilities. Frequently, relationships developed in these places under extremely harsh circumstances, due to the repression which forced the closing of a large number of these spaces. But if anarchism was able to survive, it was, to a great extent, due to the endeavors of its followers in each and every one of the places of sociability, where they were able to create a culture and establish a way of life that went beyond the existence of a simple workers' organization. This heterodox, complex, and innovative force that leaned on anarchist ideological, social and cultural bases contributed to its survival, but also, and much more importantly, it constituted a forerunner of future social movements in the Western World of the twentieth century.