



**‘An Affirmation of that for which I have fought.’[1]**

A review of ‘Salvador Puig Antich: Collected Writings on Repression and Resistance in Franco’s Spain.’ Edited by Ricard de Vargas Golarons and translated by Peter Gelderloos. AK Press, 2021

<https://www.akpress.org/salvadorpuigantich.html>

When we learnt the news of the execution of Salvador Puig Antich in March 1974, it hit those of us in and around the Anarchist Black Cross with the force of a hammer blow. To be more precise we learnt of his cold-blooded garroting at the hands of the Spanish state whose determined cruelty and malevolence shocked even the most experienced of us. The Spanish and international campaign created to save his life had failed and, as a consequence of this state murder, Puig Antich entered the list of our martyrs. The date of his execution can be commemorated on Facebook with the requisite sad faces. That simply won’t do. The importance of this moving and informative book is to allow us to see Puig Antich as much more than a victim. It allows us to place him as part of a rich movement seeded by working-class militancy which was constantly assessing just how we can defeat capitalism and create a better world.

The book, ably edited by Ricard de Vargas Golarons – himself a member of the MIL (Movimiento Ibérico de Liberación – Iberian Liberation Movement)[2] with Puig Antich – consists of various sections. The first pieces are, as we might expect, about Puig Antich himself. They include an evocative piece by Jean-Marc Rouillan describing his friendship with Salvador and the expropriations they took part in. Rouillan also describes the chats they had in various cafés and bars which gives us a sense of Puig Antich as a person rather than a cipher. Felip Solé’s piece re-inforces Rouillan’s and helps challenge the picture of Salvador as the eternal victim. Solé also writes about the campaign in Barcelona that attempted to save Salvador dating from his sentence of death in January 1974 until his eventual execution on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1974. Without doubt the most harrowing piece in this section – and the book – is the piece by Puig Antich’s sisters chronicling the night before Salvador’s murder and the hours they spent in the prison chapel with him. It’s a moving and remarkably dignified piece of writing that stays with the reader for a long time. His sisters also write about defending his legacy and their attempts to persuade the Spanish

government to hold a re-trial on the basis of autopsy reports and the actual events of his capture. Events that led to the shooting and killing of one of the police involved in Puig Antich’s arrest as well as the wounding of Puig Antich himself. There is a detailed, informative and thoughtful chapter on the activities of the MIL and OLLA [Organització de Lluita Armada – Armed Struggle Organisation] by Ricard de Vargas Golarons which is an impressive narrative of the complexities of the MIL and those groups around it. It is essential reading. There is also a chapter on Puig Antich in the MIL by Sergi Rosés Cordovilla that makes some telling points. Statements on Puig Antich dating from various anniversaries of his death are included also. There are some moving letters from Puig Antich himself and a chapter featuring his unpublished writings. Two useful chronologies and a fine introduction by Peter Gelderloos – ‘The Context and Significance of Salvador Puig Antich, the 1,000 and the OLLA’ complement the volume. Gelderloos also does a very good job in translating the volume. Above all there is a most useful glossary that helps us make sense of the events, organizations and people from this period.

I am guessing that for most people this book is a piece of history with little relevance to them. It might be an interesting read but the activities of the MIL are firmly part of the past as are those other armed struggle groups who took up the gun and carried out actions and expropriations. We cannot though, apply that characterization of ‘armed struggle group’ to the MIL. They were born out of the exploding workers movement in Barcelona and other parts of Spain – a workers movement that opposed the hierarchy of trade unions and the hierarchy of political parties that would try to control them. This militancy on the part of the working class in factories and neighbourhoods came at a terrible cost as numerous strikers were killed for simply exercising basic human rights in Barcelona and throughout Spain in the late nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies. The MIL, primarily based in Barcelona and Toulouse, France supported this autonomous movement and some some of them were part of it.

This autonomous action, then, on the part of the workers encouraged future members of the MIL to begin publishing radical texts that, they hoped, would

**Inside: Anarchist lives (and mugshots)**

make sense to this new generation of militants. Others, in 1970, had formed the Exterior Team, initially based in Toulouse, which became the armed agitation wing of the struggle while other militants had also created the Workers' Team who were members of unions opposed to 'Stalinist manipulation by their own bureaucrats'. Using weapons from hidden caches left by Sabaté and other anarchist guerrillas they embarked on their path of armed agitation from 1972.[3] Money was expropriated to pay for publications and to give to striking workers and their families. They created a publishing company, Ediciones Mayo del 37, which reflected their awareness of the importance of this month for the anarchist movement in Barcelona and rest of Spain. Fittingly their first publication was a work by the Italian anarchist Camillo Berneri as he was murdered by Communist Party members during those May 1937 days. Numerous other publications followed.

For some in the MIL there was a critical distinction between armed struggle and armed agitation. They disdained the idea of armed struggle with its elites who constantly appeared to be telling people what to do. All too soon, it was felt, the armed struggle group became as important as any activities going on in the world around it. When the MIL dissolved itself in their August 1973 Toulouse conference it was partly because they could not reconcile this tension between theory and practice and partly, perhaps, that the organization was becoming too important for its own good. The use of armed agitation had led to realities that caused problems. As activities grew the need for secrecy, safe houses, money to live on, all took them away from the immediacy of the workers' lives which had driven them. When Puig Antich was captured in a police trap on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1973 he was on his way to a meeting to consider the fusion of ex-MIL members with OLLA, a network of armed autonomous and anti-capitalist groups in an attempt to work out these tensions of theory and practice.

The MIL was determinedly anti-capitalist. Capitalism could not be reformed and was the source of economic, emotional and social pain; so much of their efforts was working out ways of getting rid of it. Wildcat strikes led by the workers themselves, rent strikes, publishing literature, armed agitation were all attempts to prod the capitalist beast and identify the weaknesses in its armour. Those in and around the MIL had to consider who they could work with in these tasks and it could not be any organization on the left that believed in any hierarchy. Partners had to be involved in, and supportive of, the autonomous and anti-hierarchical workers movement as much as they themselves were. This was not the time for leaders. Ediciones Mayo del 37 published council communist, and left communist material as well as writings by MIL members which argued for autonomous class action and the avoidance of parties and their

hierarchies. Like anarchists today they struggled with the constant tension between theory and practice. Like anarchists today they walked the tightrope between ideological purity and practical necessity in times of struggle but they could not and did not believe in the permanency of any organization – including their own. That way would lead to seeing the organization as important as the struggles around it. Consequently there was a fluency of members and supporters. They were part and parcel of the struggles around them and their actions were guided by the ebbs and flows of these struggles. They were not separate or different. In the light of these thoughts the scattered writings from Salvador Puig Antich included in this volume are very important as he struggles with many of the points I have just mentioned. They are fascinating sketches from a militant attempting to find a unity in his ideas and practice.

We should remind ourselves that, as well as Salvador Puig Antich, other people in and around the MIL were imprisoned and tortured with 1974 proving to be a very bad year. Members of ETA[4] and other armed struggle groups were also arrested and some executed. On April 6 1976 Oriol Solé Sugranyes, an early member of the group, is gunned down 900 metres from the French border by the Guardia Civil a day after escaping from Segovia Prison. Puig Antich's murder stands out for its brutal cruelty but this volume challenges in every way the image of him as a victim frozen in time. His ideas and those of the comrades around him still need to be thought about and reflected on. I see him and his friends and comrades as those who realized, in the words of British anarchist George Barrett written well before they were born, that 'In some near future more of us will see the beauty of the days we let slip so uselessly.'[5] I like to think that they sensed that beauty and went to try to keep it alive and growing.

This is an important volume that leaves us with much to think about.

Barry Pateman

## Notes

- 1, From a letter to 'Joaquim' by Puig Antich after he learnt of his death sentence. (p204-5)
- 2, Movimiento Ibérico de Liberación – Iberian Liberation Movement is a later name for the MIL. Originally they were MiL which means 1,000 in Spanish and was an indicator of the group's anonymity
- 3, Almost certainly from anarchists like Maria Lozano Molina (Mombiola). You can read Nick Heath's biography of her here: <https://libcom.org/history/articles/1914-1999-maria-mombiola> and Imanol's at <https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/pc882q>.
- 4, Euskadi ta Askasatuna – Basque Country and Freedom, an armed group that fought from 1959-2011 for an independent socialist Basque state.
- 5, From his article 'Night and Morning' in the April 1911 edition of the London based anarchist paper

'Freedom'. You can also find it in 'Our Masters Are Helpless: The Essays of George Barrett' ed. Iain McKay. Freedom Press, 2019. ■

## Two faces, two lives (anarchist mugshots of the 1890s)

We have just posted two biographies illustrated by mugshots by Alphonse Bertillon. Both anarchists, both involved in the 'trial of the thirty'. Elisée Bastard was (according to Rudolf Rocker) 'one of the best known orators' in Paris; while Maria Zanini seems to have stuck to 'no comment'. The papers summed up her trial testimony as '*Knows nothing and never as much as saw the faces of people who arrived to doss in her home.*'

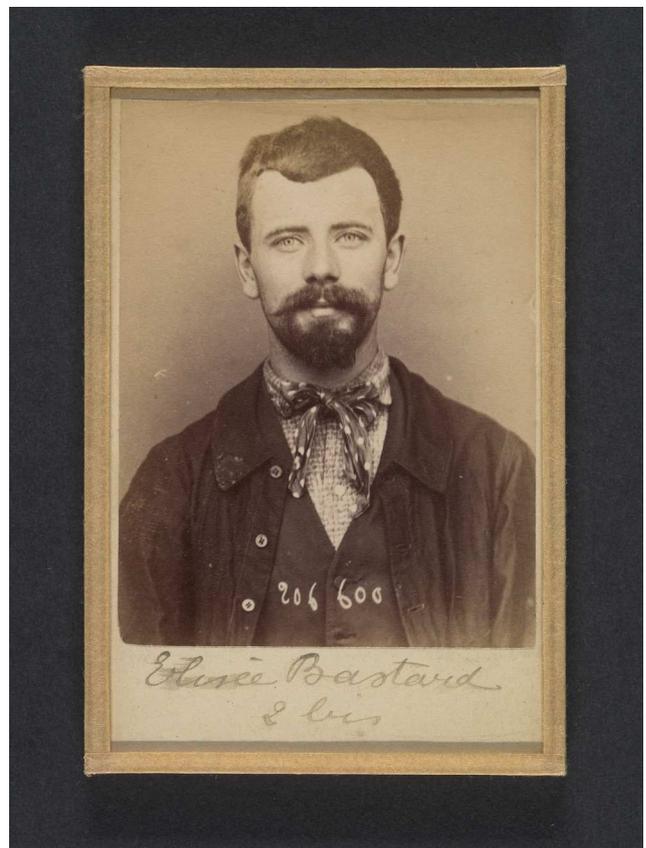
There are many more anarchist mugshots in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search#!?q=anarchist%20bertillon> You might also want to see the 'Special surveillance album' <https://criminocorpus.org/fr/bibliotheque/doc/1781/> French-speakers might like to chase down some of their stories at the dictionnaire des militants anarchistes site: <http://militants-anarchistes.info/>. For English-speakers, there's an article about Émile Pouget (another one from the 'trial of the thirty') by Constance Bantman in the third issue of *Black Flag Anarchist Review* <https://www.blackflag.org.uk/>. Bantman has also recently written *Jean Grave and the networks of French anarchism, 1854-1939* (Grave was in the same trial). ■

## Bastard, Elisée Joseph Michel aka 'Francois Pichancourt'

Born in Bornel (Oise) 20 January 1871 – Polisher – Saint Denis (Seine Saint Denis) – London

On record as an anarchist in August 1893, Elisée Bastard who had previously lived in Villeneuve-la-Garenne and then on the Rue du Canal in Saint Denis, was brought before the Assizes in 1891. He was regarded as 'very militant, given to moving around'. On 19 February 1891, at the time of the drawing of lots\* in Saint Denis, a number of anarchist comrades, of whom Elisée Bastard was one, had mounted a noisy demonstration, shouting 'Down with the fatherland! Long live anarchy!', as a result of which he was prosecuted on 23 March that year along with Arthur Voyez, Nestor Ferrière, François Collion, Henry Decamps, François Pernin and Charles Galau. Bastard had previously been convicted of stealing a joint of meat from the butcher's at which he was working.

In the autumn of 1892, he was mentioned as living in New York (at 108th Avenue, West Street 76).



On 29 October 1893, at a meeting held at the trade hall to protest at the execution in Spain of Paulino Pallas and with regard to what Léauthier had done, Bastard had turned to the superintendent present at the meeting in these terms: 'They tell me that we have a superintendent flanked by three goons in this hall. If he has come here to hear us out, then get this: let me you offer you a bit of good advice: when you get back to your office this evening, give the table a good kick and curse your lousy profession; and revert to living like a working man, like us.' Then, before ranting against the bourgeoisie, he had also incited the journalists present to stop writing their lies and closed by saying 'You journalist swine, try to make a good fist of your calling as informers!'

On 1 January 1894, at the time of the clampdown in the wake of Vaillant's attack on the Chamber of Deputies Elisée and his father, Joseph, had his home searched and the police seized various anarchist pamphlets, but had let the pair walk free. Elisée had escaped the February 1894 raids during which nearly 2,000 militants had undergone searches and arrests throughout France and he had been declared 'on the run'.

According to Rudolf Rocker who was living in Saint Denis in 1894 and who had been introduced to him by Jean Wollmann, Bastard was then 'one of the best known orators at that time and an excellent comrade'. In August 1894 Bastard was implicated in the Trial of the Thirty, a rag-bag of anarchist theorists (19) and common criminals [or 'illegalist' anarchists] (11). He, like most of the accused, was acquitted and fled to London. In the 1890s his name appeared on the list of anarchists drawn up by the railway police,

with an eye to monitoring the movements of such militants.

He may be the same Bastard who had been arrested in 1893 with another 4 comrades, including Roussel, whilst putting up posters near Maurice Barrès's private hotel and who came to blows with members of Barrès's staff eager to tear down the posters. Barrès had brought a complaint against them accusing them of having tried to ransack his hotel. At the trial in the autumn of 1893, Bastard, and Roussel, had been let off with just a 50 franc fine.

In the 1920s, the police had him living in Paris on the Rue Pia (20th arrondissement). It was alleged that he was using the name *François Pechancourt* (or *Pichancourt*).

#### Note

\*This refers to the selection of conscripts by random selection.

From <https://militants-anarchistes.info/spip.php?article7753> Image by Alphonse Bertillon from <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/306644> ■

## Maria Zanini (1865-?)



Born in Turin (Piedmont, Italy) on 23 June 1865, the anarchist illegalist Maria Zanini aka *Maria Milanaccio* from the name of her deceased husband. Daughter of Antonio Zanini and Paolina Bourgnio. She made her living as a seamstress and cook. Settling in Paris in 1892 and 1893, she was part of an illegalist anarchist gang led by Léon Ortiz (The Ortiz Gang) in

which she was probably a receiver of stolen goods. In October 1893 she moved into No 1, Boulevard Brune in the XIV arrondissement of Paris with some of the gang (Paul Chiericotti and his partner Annette Soubrié, Victorine Belloti and her son Louis) and the proceeds of their thievery were stored there. At the beginning of 1894 she took in her anarchist comrade Orsini Bertani. After the gang was broken up on 18 March 1894, she was arrested and jailed. Between 6 and 12 August 1894 she was tried along with the whole 'Ortiz Gang' before the high court of the Seine as part of the so-called 'Trial of the Thirty'. Defended by Blondeau, she was cleared of the charge of 'criminal association', but an order was issued on 2 May 1894 for her expulsion from the country. The date and location of her death are not known.

From estelnegre website:

<http://www.estelnegre.org/documents/zanini/zanini.html>

From same site, extract from the Parian newspaper *Gil Blas* 10 August 1894 during the trial: 'Knows nothing and never as much as saw the faces of people who arrived to doss in her home.'

Image from

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/307053> ■



## Jacinto Lives! Memories from St. Louis

This week we discovered sad news. Jacinto Barrera Bassols, anarchist, historian, and friend, had died in July of Covid-19 at age 65. We spent only a handful of days with this funny, inquisitive, warm-hearted man. He defied all our stereotypes of an academic historian, and left a deep impression on us.

On the hunt for lingering traces of Ricardo Flores Magon and his fellow Mexican anarchist expatriates, Jacinto and his photographer companion, Heriberto Rodriguez, retraced Magon's zig-zag route across the US. Here in St. Louis, they found the black-and-red flag flying on Cherokee Street and walked into the storefront of Black Bear Bakery. It was 2008. The timing couldn't have been better. The bakery collect-

ive was a lively bunch and the space and its library had become the gathering spot for the city's small but passionate collection of anarchists. Much to the delight of Jacinto, on the wall above the case of pastries, hung a large painting of Magon, arms outstretched – fire and destruction on one side, cooperation and utopia on the other.

After this chance encounter, we talked late into the night, sharing the forgotten histories of this city... Jacinto, a historian on the century-old trail of this man on the run from the Mexican authorities and plotting a Mexican insurrection from this bustling metropolis in middle America, and some anarchists trying to foment a present-day insurrection in the impoverished remains of that same metropolis. He asked about the possibilities of urban riots if Obama lost the election, and we asked where Magon had laid his head to rest every night while here. The next day we showed him around and introduced him to friends. He was a human being – unpretentious, loving, and gracious unlike any historian or academic we had ever encountered. He was a gentle and witty 50 year-old effortlessly lounging with all us restless 20-somethings. And with the 4-year-old child among us, he had the sparkle in his eye of an uncle and the glow on his face of someone who treasures the beautiful unbroken freedom that children exude.

He visited again in 2013, this time with his wonderful assistant Veronica. Age had taken a toll on his body, but his humor and engagement was as pleasant and sharp as before. He had just come from Leavenworth, visiting the cell where Magon had taken his last breath. He shared stories of the early 20th century May Day celebrations and anarchist study groups that remarkably took place in the hell on earth which was that prison. We brought him and Veronica to a party at an anarchist squat on the city's near northside, and later at a nearby restaurant, he treated us to jambalaya (something he couldn't find in Mexico). He mused on the cartel/state violence in Mexico, removing its cloak by describing it quite simply as a civil war – with only Mexico City immune to its cruelty.

We drove around the Gate District, him pointing out the abandoned lot where the printing press for 'Regeneration' was once housed and the public library with the Mexican newspapers that Magon would walk to everyday to stay abreast on the conflicts unfolding south of the border. He showed us the neighborhood (long destroyed by a highway) south of downtown where the Spanish anarchist immigrants lived – among whom Magon and the rest of the Mexican anarchists found comradeship. He explained the close relationship between the Mexican anarchists and the Catalan anarchist wobbly Francisco Basora, who also found a home in this city.

Between his visits, like excitable children, we shared nuggets of history we uncovered about Magon's time here – old maps, court documents, ad-

resses of old anarchist residences, obscure manuscripts by private detectives paid by the Mexican state to track him down, drawings of old buildings... For us it made our city alive with ghosts, for him, we're not sure, but it was likely the satisfying clicking together of the puzzle pieces of his life's work. We're not sure what his relationship was to non-academics in San Antonio, Los Angeles, Toronto and the other places Magon found himself, but we think he found great joy and love that – for our own sake, not an institutional one – us modern-day St. Louis anarchists felt moved that these dream-filled anarchists had blessed our city a hundred years earlier.

But it wasn't all about Magon. We talked raising children, our health problems, Cajun food, Mexican ska-punk, the beauty of the ocean, the rebellion in Oaxaca, and the fantastical, contested story of if Trotsky's ashes were ever actually stolen by anarchists, baked into cookies, and mailed to people around the world.

'Mi casa es tu casa' – and there wasn't a doubt he meant it. Over the 13 years, two sets of friends made the trip to Mexico, one to visit him in Mexico City, the other to visit him at his peaceful spot in Puerto Escondido. And when one of us had a near fatal, catastrophic injury during the riots in Ferguson, without hesitation, he again offered his place in Oaxaca for us to recover from the trauma of it all.

During our last correspondence one of us regretted not scrawling 'Magon lives!' on the walls of Ferguson during the riots. We both understood the threads of histories, often disparate and short, that weave, patchwork, up to the present. The blood pulsing through us is mostly our own, yes, but we would be remiss not to appreciate, marvel at, and broadcast the tiny bits that come from our lived and learned histories – the bits that invigorate our hearts and pump that blood through us making us believe that utopias, that 'sueños de libertad,' are realizable. The history of the lovely Jacinto, like that of Magon, now forever moves through us.

A few sad anarchists in St. Louis, September 2021  
For more on Jacinto's life and work:

His life's work on Magon – photos, a map of his route, all issues of *Regeneration*, a compilation of the complete works of Ricardo Flores Magon, and so much more:

<http://archivomagon.net/>

Memories from his niece:

<https://mobile.twitter.com/Jaztronomia/status/1417848764488896517>

Memories from his cousin:

<https://www.jornada.com.mx/notas/2021/07/23/opinion/el-correo-ilustrado-20210723/>

Documentary on anarchism in Mexico City, 'Hay un lugar, Anarquistas de la Ciudad de México,' featuring interviews with Jacinto:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=xFswWQsaIM4> ■

# Tribute to Ross (Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty and the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh)

Sad News from Edinburgh. We must always remember and honour our own, we owe them, their contribution was not for themselves, but for us all.

## **We remember Ross**

Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty and the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh would like to pay tribute to Ross who died suddenly and unexpectedly on 2nd September 2021 following a hospital operation. We are very shocked and saddened by Ross' passing.

Over many years Ross worked tirelessly and selflessly in ACE and ECAP to further the struggle for social justice. His contributions were many. He did a huge amount of work in cataloguing, digitising and physically organising the Scottish Radical Library and the Autonomous Archive, both based at the ACE premises. He was the soul of both, and his spirit and legacy will live on in future SRL activities.

Some of us first met Ross at solidarity demonstrations in Dundee and elsewhere organised through the Scotland-wide Action Against Austerity network, Ross showing his commitment by travelling himself from Fife to attend the demos. We then got to know him and he became deeply involved in ACE and ECAP.

In recent years Ross was the principal person looking after the ECAP and ACE websites. This included liaising with providers, posting articles, developing the sites and much more. Ross was also one of the main activists involved in ECAP and ACE social media, posting many articles and conscientiously replying to messages and queries.

Ross set up the current ACE email, and monitored the messages, making sure that emails were responded to and that the ACE working group was informed of new communications. He equally did much invaluable work on the ECAP email.

Before the pandemic Ross would often journey through from his home in Fife to Edinburgh to staff and work in the ACE premises, including spending hours in the ACE 'tunnel' organising the archive.

Ross was a dear comrade for us, but probably you met him too in reading our social media posts or in receiving a reply from us about ECAP, ACE or the SRL. Please keep him in your thoughts as a wonderful comrade, activist and person who never sought the limelight or to promote himself but rather made an enormous contribution, without claiming any credit for it. He was completely committed to the cause. He was always very calm, great to work with and a good friend. We will always remember him.

Taken from

<https://radicalglasgowblog.blogspot.com/2021/10/a-loss.html>

## **[Links]**

Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty:

<http://edinburghagainstopoverty.org.uk/>

The Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh:

<https://autonomous.org.uk/>

Scottish Radical Library:

<https://autonomous.org.uk/groups-activities/50-2/> ■

## **Young Rebels against the Empire: the youth memoirs of Nestor Makhno & Voldemar Antoni [Book Review]**

Nestor Makhno is not an 'unknown' of anarchist history, but this is a valuable new source of information on the anarchist movement in his home village of Gulyai-Polye before 1917. Makhno's memoir has been translated from the 'relatively obscure' Russian-American newspaper *Rassvet* (*Dawn*). Antoni's manuscript sat in a local museum until it was transcribed and published by V.M. Chop in 2006.

Antoni was Makhno's mentor in the Union of Poor Peasants, an anarcho-communist organisation founded in 1906 which, alongside its educational work, 'engaged in an unequal struggle with the forces of law and order' [rear cover]. 'An unequal struggle' seems something of an understatement. Makhno recalls how 'Martial law had been applied to the whole country, which meant drumhead courts, punitive detachments and shootings.' [p13] Antoni returned with Aleksander Semenyuta from Paris to assassinate the policeman, Karachantsev. Antoni's account records their hunted existence: 'I asked Aleksandr: "Are we going to die today?" He replied: "We're going to die."' [p129-30] As it turned out, Semenyuta assassinated Karachantsev and Antoni would spend years in South America before returning to the USSR. Makhno tells how Semenyuta 'committed suicide after putting up nine hours of heroic resistance when his apartment was surrounded by soldiers and he realized that he had no chance of escaping alive.' [p49] He pays him this tribute: 'He was always ready for the worst that could happen and he helped others to be ready as well.' But, writing in 1926, adds 'Mind you, there are many contemporary anarchists, especially those who have never experienced the tribulations of underground existence, who disdain militants like Aleksandr Semenyuta and would probably disown him. But their opinions do not interest me.' [p27]

Elsewhere, Makhno recounts episodes in prison of mutual antagonism with intellectuals 'for whom the

ideas and resources of socialism were only a means to install themselves as bosses and rulers.’ [p63][1]

The thing I found most striking was how Makhno’s account of the February revolution of 1917 preserves the sense of uncertainty: Makhno and his comrades are liberated by revolutionary soldiers, but then sent back to wait for it to be approved ‘in an orderly fashion’. Yet ‘the guards had disappeared, and the broken doors of the cells were lying about.’ [p84]

To have uncovered and translated these memoirs is good work in itself, but Archibald is ever ready to aid the reader with maps, a glossary and footnotes. He is also able to point out the stories from his youth that Makhno does not tell – ‘It’s quite possible that in adulthood he was embarrassed by his youthful behaviour and found some episodes too painful to recount. [...] Small for his age he once took revenge against the kids who bullied him by hiding in a tree under which they gathered and dropping rocks on their heads.’ [p.vii, quoting Chop’s 1998 biography of Makhno] Makhno does not even record that he lost a lung to tuberculosis while in prison! [p.xiv-xv]

Antoni’s account, written after his return to the USSR in 1962 (and so ‘concerned to downplay his own involvement in the anarchist movement’) is supplemented by his letter to a relative of Makhno, which ‘gives a somewhat different’ and warmer picture [p93] of his relationship with Makhno.

*Young Rebels against the Empire* is full of historical insights on prison struggles, transnational activism, and even amateur dramatics. But let me end with Archibald’s assessment of the Union of Poor Peasants: ‘Like other anarchist groups in Ukraine at that time, the UPP had a very young membership, mostly 17 to 20 years in age. Although the organization was destroyed within three years, with its leading figures either killed or dispersed, the UPP can be credited with significant achievements. Its multi-ethnic, multi-cultural membership opposed the rampant chauvinism of the ruling circles, and protected their village’s significant Jewish population from the pogroms that ravaged other population centres in Ukraine at the time. The reactionary elements confronted by these young people enjoyed the full backing of the State with its punitive organs. And a decade later, the movement sprang to life again under more favourable conditions.’ [p91]

#### Note

1, I suspect this conflict is the cause of his ‘indigestibility’: he’s too well known to ignore but some anarchists would like to distance themselves from him. Levandovsky in 1926 was keen to paint a picture of Makhno as a dictator (‘The Struggle Between Marxism and Anarchism in the Russian Revolution’ <https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/1zcswr>). Skirda suggests the roots of his resentment lie in not having

being funded by the Makhnovist movement in 1920. (see Skirda, *Nestor Makhno: Anarchy’s Cossack* p331-2) Makhno’s attitude to Levandovsky’s request for ten million roubles to set up a university in Kharkov was ‘Yes, let your university be set up, but here among the peasants in dire need of education.’ (See Skirda, p332, quoting Ugo Fedeli ‘Conversing with Nestor Makhno’ *Volonta*, v.2, n2 [August 1947])

*Young Rebels against the Empire: the youth memoirs of Nestor Makhno and Voldemar Antoni* translated and edited by Malcolm Archibald. Black Cat Press, 2021. ISBN 9781926878249.

<http://blackcatpress.ca/Young%20Rebels.html>

[Black Cat Press have recently published *The Makhnovshchina and Its Aftermath: Documents from the Movement and its Survivors*, including a translation of the diary of Galina Kuzmenko, Makhno’s wife.] ■

## Library News (Nov. 2021)

We have added some new information to the chronology on the 1945 split. See

<http://katesharpleylibrary.pbworks.com/w/page/139511268/The%201945%20split%20in%20British%20anarchism>

New on the main Kate Sharpley Library website: Anarchist General: Nestor Makhno by Osugi Sakae (with thanks to Charlie Allison). Unfortunately Osugi and Makhno never met.

<https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/ncjvr9>

On the (critical) use of police sources by Mimmo Franzinelli ‘In conclusion, the police records may show everything or they may show the very opposite and we can find there whatever we want to find: we have to proceed painstakingly, with deliberation and logic.’ <https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/zpcb9d> Fanny and Aron Baron (two new photos from their ‘American years’), see

<https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/fn3078>

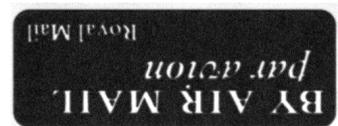
The Lyon Hold-Up and Its Impact on the Libertarian Movement in Exile by Imanol, covering not only the deadly events of 18 January 1951, but also the life stories of the militants involved:

<https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/3r23pp>

A biography of Alfredo López, Anarchist Founder of the Cuban Trade Union Movement ‘murdered on the orders of the tyrant Gerardo Machado on 20 July 1926.’ <https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/pg4gxn>

### A Life for Anarchy

‘Without freedom there would be no equality and without equality no freedom, and without struggle there would be neither’ – Stuart Christie  
American readers can now get hold of: *A Life for Anarchy: A Stuart Christie Reader* edited by the KSL. We’ll let you know when it arrives in the UK. <https://www.akpress.org/a-life-for-anarchy.html> ■



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[No, things are not back to normal.  
We are doing the best we can.]

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