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An Appeal to the Young: Some thoughts on a best seller

Anarchist pamphlets can pose all sorts of problems to the researcher. There's always that constantly nagging question of who actually read them. I rather sense that some of the best pamphlets, that can, a hundred or fifty years on, take our breath away by their prescience were probably only read by a mere handful of people and we have come to bestow an importance upon them that was not reflected both in their original readership or in their effect on the movement. But we can't say that when we talk about Kropotkin's *An Appeal to the Young*. It proved to be a most remarkably popular pamphlet that crossed political tendencies and continents with apparent ease and was, unarguably, a best seller.

Originally published in *La Revolte* between June and August 1880, its first pamphlet publication appears to be that published by the Imprimerie Jurassienne in 1881. Editions of the work rapidly spread as pamphlets or serializations in newspapers. An 1884 German language edition was published by Moritz Bachman in New York and another was published by Johann Most in 1887. It was a staple diet of German language papers, being serialized in *Der Socialist* 1893, *Freie Wacht* (Philadelphia) in 1895 and Rudolph Grossman's *Wohlstand fur Alle* (Wien) between May and October 1911.

The first English translation appears to have been in the London-based Social Democratic Party paper *Justice* between August and October 1884 with a translation by H. M. Hyndman. He would go on to publish it as a pamphlet in 1885 and it would run to numerous reprints. In the same year it was published in San Francisco with the title *To Young People* by the International Workingmans Association (IWMA) in a translation by Marie LeCompte and it would be regularly reprinted in English language pamphlets in the years that followed, including editions in Australia, India, and elsewhere.

A Spanish translation was published in Granada in 1885 and during the next decade or so editions appeared in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Santiago, Cadiz, and Madrid. It was published regularly in Italy with the first Italian edition appearing in 1884. An interesting Italian edition was also published in West Hoboken, New Jersey in 1899 with an introduction by the individualist Giuseppe Ciancabilla. The pamphlet was influential among Korean anarchists during the nineteen twenties, while in Japan, Osugi Sakae was

imprisoned in 1907 for the act of translating it into Japanese.

Some have left written record of the change this pamphlet made to their lives. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn spoke of its effect on her and how it propelled her towards a life of militancy. Manuel Komroff, the writer who was associated with The Modern School in New York said that "It served as a compass and gave me direction". Ba Jin read the 1918-19 Chinese translation by Li Shizeng and was profoundly affected by his reading. We could go on: Frans Masreel, Upton Sinclair, Victor Serge and others – all have asserted its influence on them. One can only guess as to how many felt the passion of Kropotkin's words without writing about them. Suffice it to say that Hyndman, it's first English translator, described *An Appeal to the Young* as "the best propagandist pamphlet that was ever penned" (*Record of an Adventurous Life*, p.244-5)

The pamphlet is a call to arms. It's earnest, scathing, condemnatory and passionate – often all at once – as well as being imbued with a fierce morality. At first reading we could easily imagine Kropotkin writing this as a stream of consciousness, such is the outpouring of anger, frustration, and, above all, hope that bounces off the page. Only after a few more readings do we appreciate the patterns and structures that are in place to guide the reader to the realization that piecemeal reform will not alleviate the mental and physical hurt of capitalism in any profound way whatsoever. It is a clever and potent piece of writing and it's not too difficult to appreciate the passions and commitments that we know it aroused in some of its readers.

At least two thirds of *An Appeal to the Young* is aimed at what we would call "professionals" – the young middle class who are training or have trained to be doctors, scientists, lawyers, engineers and teachers, as well as the artist, the sculptor, and the poet. The impossibility of reform is stressed in the practice of each profession. Unless we get rid of capitalism people will continue to die because they are poor, the law will unjustly punish those who are dispossessed and try to take matters into their own hands to make redress, while scientific and engineering progress will be used to garner wealth for the already wealthy and increase poverty amongst those already suffering. Even in a clunky English translation Kropotkin's prose crackles with anger. "What will you prescribe for this

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sick woman, doctor? ... Say a good beef-steak every day, a dry and well-ventilated bed room?... If she could have afforded it this would have been done long since without waiting for your advice.” *An Appeal to the Young* identifies itself totally with the poor and exploited. The only moral answer for these young professionals is to join the cause of Socialism, to become Revolutionists and bring about the Social Revolution thus helping destroy the poverty and hurt that capitalism has brought about. Kropotkin suggests that if you are an altruist, if you are a moral person, then there is no other course of action for you to take unless you abandon all semblance of empathy and join the rich. There is no middle ground in this situation that makes any logical sense.

I don't think we are being fanciful if we say that much of the passion and emotion in the first two thirds of the pamphlet are a product of Kropotkin's own experiences. Coming from a position of privilege he, himself, had crossed his own particular “river of fire” by joining the Chaikovsky circle in 1872, committing himself to the “people” (whatever that rather complex term means) at a slightly older age than many of the circle's members and suffering imprisonment in 1874 for having done so. I rather think that many of the examples he gives in this section are based on the experiences which his comrades had lived through – those men and women who “were not theorists about socialism but had become socialists by living no better than the workers live..... and by refusing to enjoy for their own satisfaction the riches they had inherited from their fathers” (*Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, p.307). We are also aware that at the time Kropotkin was writing this pamphlet similar people to the Chaikovsky group, as members of Narodnaya Volya, were waging war against the Tsar and the Russian security apparatus, and showing extraordinary courage while doing so.

Kropotkin also writes about another group of people he knows well – the radical working man already committed to the Revolution – and in doing so presents us with a blueprint for revolutionary change. These workingmen have read wisely and been able to apply their reading to their lived experience. They form small groups, realize the importance of internationalism by forging links overseas and create newspapers by depriving themselves of “sleep and food”. This is how the revolutionary message will spread. When the time is right they will move to the barricades where their blood will probably be spilt. All of this, carried under the most oppressive economic conditions Kropotkin can imagine, is, he suggests, worthy of our respect. Indeed there can be no question of Kropotkin's profound admiration of these men who are, if you like, the stormy petrels of change. He has met men like these and, indeed, it is men like these who have influenced, and will continue to influence, his

thinking and writing (and the writings of many other anarchists!) and we should recognize them as the fulcrum of this pamphlet. When he appeals to the professional young he is appealing to them to join these men who, though small in number, offer hope for the future of the world.

Such appeals do though raise an interesting question. What do these young people do once they have joined the social revolution? What is their relationship to the working class and poor (and I sense these can be two different categories in Kropotkin's mind) that Kropotkin describes in his pamphlet? He suggests that their role is “not of masters, but as comrades in the struggle.” Their job is not to govern or teach but to “grasp the aspirations of the many: to divine them, to give them shape. Only then, he suggests, “will you lead a complete, a noble, a rational existence”. Presented in, I sense, deliberately general terms this appeal, as we have seen, struck chords all over the world. It offers a mission, a life of worthy and honourable purpose and many would walk the path he had cut through their privilege for them.

I want to suggest, though, that despite all its strengths *An Appeal to the Young* reflects a central tension within anarchist ideas and propaganda that we continue to grapple with. Simply put it is the lack of experience of working class life on the part of many anarchist writers, and an inability on the part of those writers to address that experience and offer anarchy as a relevant and exciting alternative. By working class experience I mean the lives of those who haven't joined the movement, those who aren't in the small groups creating patterns of revolution: the poor, the unemployed, the outsiders who live lives most anarchists have not come into contact with or have difficulties understanding. Within this context the final quarter of *An Appeal to the Young* is a disappointment. It is clichéd and melodramatic with none of the intimacy and power of its earlier sections. The young woman seduced by the industrialist's son is straight from the pages of the sensationalist magazines. And the picture Kropotkin paints of working class life, in general, lacks conviction and reality. Working class people are one-dimensional, lacking any emotional and intellectual complexity – qualities they will only gain, presumably, by joining the movement.

We also have to accept that Kropotkin's portrayal of women is, to say the least, problematic, more so because he appears to ignore what is in front of his eyes within the revolutionary milieu he is such a part of. *An Appeal to the Young* does not appear to be able to understand that women might have their own agency, seeing them instead as appendages, however worthy, of their men. No working class woman, he suggests, wants to see her man broken by capitalism; he thinks that surely working class women must be

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impressed by the courage of the women of the Paris Commune who braved shells to encourage “their men” to greater action. Yet there were women of action and individual courage within anarchist and revolutionary circles, who acted from their own desires, not for “their men.” Kropotkin even mentions Vera Zasluich “who lodged a bullet in the chest of that rascally official” and the Spanish women who took part in the 1873 strike for the eight hour day in Alcoy. But he appears to have difficulty appreciating that women may have a political or intellectual life outside of their relationships to men.

After thirty or so years hovering around the pamphlet I have come to see *An Appeal to the Young* as the beginning of a search for a meaningful conversation between anarchism and the mass of the working class. At least Kropotkin tries, and if he doesn't quite find the right language who did? Who has? Beyond the known trope of the self educated working class radical who sits around cafes and chats (see Malatesta) no one, in the formation of what we know and call anarchism, had the right words, the right tone, even the right silences to bring the mass of the working class to this magnificent idea. Some got very close. In 1885, the same year as the pamphlet's first publication in English, some London-based anarchists were attempting to articulate this language themselves. Based in the Boundary estate in East London – one of the worst slum areas in the city – Frank Kitz, Charlie Mowbray, and others carried out an energetic leafleting and poster campaign with titles such as “Fight Or Starve” and “Revenge.” Speaking when and where they could, they attempted to draw the local population to what they saw as Revolutionary Socialism. Kitz himself was born into brutal poverty and both he and Mowbray were self-educated men. It may be that they had the necessary language skills that Kropotkin lacked, but it was an exhausting, uphill battle for them and one that appeared impossible to maintain.

Writing about this time in *Freedom* (between January and July 1912),[1] and still living in dire poverty, Frank Kitz explains how they had to convince the local population that they were not police spies and, after that, that they weren't crazy. After all what sort of sane person goes around spreading propaganda and trying to organize rent strikes?!!! Histories of British anarchism have tended to see Kitz as a link between German and English radicals and a man who played no small part in the development of the movement. I think we should also see him as someone who throughout his life attempted to offset the weakness in Kropotkin's portrayal of, and dialogue with, the working class. At a conference of Revolutionary Socialists at the Autonomie Club, London in August 1890 Kitz said “our chief enemies, strange to say, were amid the dregs of the populace” and “We were largely to

blame for this, because of the academic mode in which the propaganda had been carried on” and suggesting the revolutionaries were lagging behind the Christians in that regard. It was an issue he could and would not let go of. In January 1907 writing an article entitled “The Problem of the Slums” in the first issue of *Voice of Labour* he begins:

If we desire to reach the mass of the people, to place before them our principles, to refute the libels of the reptile press, and to stir the workers into direct voluntary action against their conditions our methods are not sufficient for the immense task we have before us.

He goes on to paint a brutal picture of life in the London slums and urges anarchists to adopt the tactics he had all those years ago in the Boundary Estate because at present radical tactics – the odd street meeting, radical journals sold full of internal bickering among the “comrades” “have about as much effect upon the masses as trying to tickle an elephant with a straw.”

Kropotkin found a kind of moral magnificence in his use of language in much of *An Appeal to the Young* and we know of the effect it had on many of its readers and the influence those readers went on to have on others. It may be our job to tickle the elephant again and by doing so create another type of magnificence. If Kropotkin cut a path for some I think Frank Kitz and other comrades tried to work out a parallel one for others; towards the poor, the outcast, the exploited – and we still need to find the right language to talk to them. Yet search we must. There are so many of them with so much to offer that we might do well to try and walk down Kitz's path as we search for this consistently elusive mass support for our wonderful ideal, because without it we are in constant danger of becoming yet another tiresome vanguard.

Barry Pateman

Notes

1, See Recollections and Reflections by Frank Kitz: <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/3r2368>

Two American anarchist newspapers online Libcom.org now hosts digitised versions of two vital American anarchist newspapers.

The Road to Freedom (1924-1932) – copies from 1924 and 1925 (as of July 2015).

<http://libcom.org/library/road-freedom>

Vanguard (1932-1939)

<http://libcom.org/library/vanguard-libertarian-communist-journal>

Both papers feature heavily in Paul Avrich's *Anarchist voices: an oral history of anarchism in America* (AK Press 2005).

Book review

La Nueve – 24 August 1944. The Spanish Republicans who liberated Paris by Evelyn Mesquida [Book review]

La Nueve was the ninth company – made up of exiled Spaniards, ‘most of them anarchists’ [1] – of the Free French 2nd Armoured Division. They exemplify the contribution of Spanish anarchists and other republicans to the fight against Hitler. It’s a remarkable story. These men fought on all fronts in the Spanish Civil War. Some had survived the *retirada* – the retreat over the Pyrenees in January and February 1939. Others had sailed on the *Stanbrook*, the last large vessel out of Alicante in March 1939.[2]

There were few options for these despised refugees. Going back to Spain meant a Francoist firing squad. Many of the men who would join *La Nueve* survived disease and hunger in the French concentration camps like Argelès-sur-Mer or Le Vernet[3]. The main way out was ‘volunteering’ for labour battalions or the French Foreign Legion. Those who made it or were sent to North Africa suffered too. One survivor of the Vichy regime’s Hajerat M’Guil ‘labour camp’ described it as ‘a French Buchenwald’ (p44).

But these exiles had two things going for them: they knew which side they were on and they knew how to fight. ‘The vast majority had no military mindset and were even antimilitarists, but they were magnificent soldiers, valiant and experienced warriors.’ (Raymond Dronne, Captain of *La Nueve*, p92). They also knew the art of ‘spontaneous transfer’: many deserted to join Leclerc. War makes for strange bedfellows. Leclerc, general of the 2nd Armoured Division, was a career officer from an aristocratic family. He’d welcomed Franco’s coup and would later fight in Indochina (now Vietnam). Few of *La Nueve*’s fighters followed him: ‘there was nothing of mine lost over there’ (Germán Arrúe, p149), ‘I told them that the Chinese hadn’t done me any harm’ (Fermín Pujol, p177).

Mesquida’s book has a good photo section but needs a better map. It’s easy to read ‘It took us nearly a month to cover on foot the 4,000 kilometres between us [in Senegal] and the Gaullist units in Brazzaville’ (Fermín Pujol, p173); it’s less easy to imagine. And that’s before the long trek to Libya! This is the full story of *La Nueve*, not just their role in liberating Paris. Nor was that their final battle. The end of the war found them at Hitler’s ‘Eagle’s nest’ (and taking his chess set! – p139).

Their plan had always been to deal with Franco after Hitler. Mesquida doesn’t detail the ‘reasons of state’ that prevented that: ‘The Allied powers had not gone to war to “preserve democracy”: they had gone to war to preserve themselves’.[4] However, the recycling activities of *La Nueve* kept the Spanish resistance armed for years.[5]

The second half of the book is made up of personal testimonies, gathered by Mesquida in interviews with *La Nueve*’s survivors. Here they can speak for themselves: ‘We all had experience of our own war behind us and we were well aware of what needed doing without anyone’s having to tell us anything.’ (Germán Arrúe, p145). The anecdotal touches show their humanity, even after years of fighting: having captured a German unit ‘We had a worse time later with the priest because he wanted to see them all dead for having torched the church. We had to disarm him of the machinegun he had grabbed and one of the officers told him: “*Monsieur le curé*, this isn’t your job. These men are prisoners and they’re coming with us.”’ (Manuel Fernández, p205-6).

The anarchists and other republican exiles of *La Nueve* made history in conditions not of their own choosing. This excellent book means they’ll no longer be merely a footnote in a story told by others.

Notes

1 testimony of Luis Royo, republican veteran of *La Nueve* (p183).

2 Captain Dickson’s contemporary account of the rescue is at:

http://www.elpais.com/elpaismedia/diario/media/20090401/espana/20090401elpepinac_2_Pes_PDF.pdf

An alphabetical list of the 2,638 people rescued by the *Stanbrook* is at:

http://www.fpabloiglesias.es/sites/default/files/docsbi_o/stanbrook_lista_alfabetica.pdf

3 ‘While not to be equated with the death or slave labour camps that were later to surface in Nazi or Soviet territories, in many of these French camps there was a foretaste of the perverse, unrelenting brutality that characterised most of the concentration camps and their guards.’ (p24).

4 *I couldn’t paint golden angels*, Albert Meltzer (p124).

5 More details are given in ‘Leclerc’s Spaniards’ by Eduardo Pons Prades (translated by Paul Sharkey)

<http://www.christiebooks.com/ChristieBooksWP/2015/04/leclercs-spaniards-by-eduardo-pons-prades-translated-by-paul-sharkey/>

La Nueve – 24 August 1944. The Spanish Republicans who liberated Paris by Evelyn Mesquida. Preface by Jorge Semprún, four articles by Albert Camus and postscript by General Michel Roquejeoffre. Translated by Paul Sharkey. Published by Christiebooks ISBN 9781873976708, 264pp, 16pp photos., paperback. £15 / \$23 Publication date June 2015.

<http://www.christiebooks.com/ChristieBooksWP/2015/04/la-nueve-24-august-1944-the-spanish-republicans-who-liberated-paris-by-evelyn-mesquida-preface-by-jorge-semprun-and-afterword-by-general-michel-roquejeoffre/>

Spanish anarchists

Death of Eduardo Escot Bocanegra, Andalusian libertarian shipped to the Nazi Camp in Mauthausen

In the early hours of 23 May 2015 Eduardo Escot Bocanegra died at home in Rosny-sous-Bois in France of heart and lung failure. He was 95 years old and one of the last Andalusian and Spanish republicans deported to the Mauthausen camp. His death represents a huge loss in that it flags up the final extinction of eye-witnesses to the ghastliness of the Nazi concentration camps. And the question still lingers as to whether society and state institutions gave these victims their due.

Eduardo Escot was born on 16 December 1919 in Olivera in the highlands above Cadiz, into a “very impoverished, illiterate” farm-labouring family. But those circumstances (widely shared by many another in the farming village of Olivera, by-passed by even the most basic cultural amenities) did not prevent the boyish Eduardo from displaying a great appetite for study.

“I started learning the trade of shoe-maker but I always had this tremendous appetite for studying as much as I could. I took classes under a very interesting teacher by the name of Don José Sepúlveda; the fellow gave night classes and he was shot on the very day Franco’s troops entered Olivera. Shot that very day near where he lived. And there was another teacher, too, and he too was shot. So both the teachers I had at the school were shot.”

The second teacher to whom Eduardo was referring was Antonio Juarino and he, like his colleague, was a member of the Republican Left (*Izquierda Republicana*). The local incident was no freak, for, as the army revolt spread school-teachers proved to be one of the main groups slated for repression. The right to learning, to human and intellectual development, had been one of the main demands coming from the progressive organisations that had made such headway in the areas around Cadiz ever since the late 19th century. The social change they yearned for began with the self. In that respect, education was the most effective weapon against the poverty in which much of the population of Andalusia was trapped. Eduardo Escot fitted the profile of the self-educated, socially committed individuals from an early age, as so well described by Juan Díaz Del Moral, among others, in his irreplaceable *History of Andalusian Peasant Agitation*. Individuals with a tremendous sense of human dignity, individuals thrown up in lots of Andalusian villages under the sway of the libertarian ideal.

“At the age of 15 and 16 I was already reading the works of Victor Hugo in my home village ... And at that age, each night at home, in the kitchen of my parents’ home I would read from the newspapers while at least 15 other people listened.”

Eduardo developed a social conscience early on. The suffering and impoverishment of his family surroundings struck him as intolerable and he did not see them as necessary parts of the human condition. “Olivera was a village awash with poverty, where you could only eat on tick. I rebelled against the degrading poverty in the village. The ideal came along later. I was turfed out of the cobbler’s workshop where I was apprenticed, for being a revolutionary.” Those were the circumstances that led to his joining the CNT in the spring of 1936. At that point he had the chance to make the acquaintance of a prominent anarcho-syndicalist leader who inspired his deepest admiration. This was Ángel Pestaña, CNT veteran and founder of the Syndicalist Party. He saw him twice, at a talk Pestaña gave in Olivera in relation of the Popular Front election campaign in February 1936 and again in Seville, some months later, in a rally in the bullring alongside other leading anarcho-syndicalist speakers. Despite his youth, Eduardo served on the local defence committee that was formed on the very day that the army revolted against the republican government. The Civil Guard in Olivera sided with the *golpista* (coup-maker) rebels and took on the defenders of republican legitimacy.

“I was sixteen and a half years old when the Uprising started, but, in spite of that, at the age of sixteen and a half, as of 17 July, when it broke out, I was on the village defence committee. I was present at the meeting with Olivera’s mayor, José María Sánchez Reviriego, a republican mayor, to decide what was to be done about the revolt and, even as we were assembled there, the Civil Guard commander made a phone call and told the mayor. ‘Look, I’m about to place my troops in strategic positions as a security measure.’ And, after hanging up, he looked at us and said: ‘No, no ... no troops. I don’t want to see troops.’ In spite of which orders from the mayor, out they came, firing shots into the air.

There was some shooting; three perished on our side. It seems the Civil Guard sustained one or two wounded, I cannot be certain. Two people fell down dead at my side and I dodged the bullets, I got away, got away from the shooting.

In the workers’ districts we held them off for a few days but then we had to clear out. I hid out on a small farm up in the mountains for seven days along with a socialist friend from Olivera before we fled for Ronda.”

The situation in the Sierra de Cadiz was very fluid as most places were under the control of the Civil Guard who were backing the rebels. However, republican column setting off from Ronda brought some pressure to bear, managing to overrun Olivera for a few hours on 27 July and inflicting eleven losses on the rebels. Next day, Gómez Zamacola’s rebel column entered the village. Ushering in a period of

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terror that stretched over several days and resulted in (documented, so far) ninety five deaths on the republican side.

In Ronda Eduardo Escot joined the 'Ascaso' Column led by the Seville CNT member Manuel Mora Torres, fighting in a number locations in the highlands. From there he moved on to Malaga where he witnessed the notorious "rout" that resulted in tens of thousands of people trekking along the highway to Almeria under shelling from land, sea and air by the rebels and their Italian and German allies. He then joined the regulars with the rank of signals lieutenant, serving in the 598th Battalion commanded by his friend Manuel Mora Torres. He spent a few months in Madrid as a student at the Palacio Real Military Academy. Then he was posted to the Jarama front and then to the Extremadura highway. His final tours of duty were on the Aragon and Catalonia fronts. In February 1939 he crossed the French border into exile along with a massive column of demoralised men and women. "The reception we received on entering France was appalling."

The Barcarès concentration camp is where he was placed for a number of months until he was conscripted into the Foreign Labour Companies. Come the German invasion of France in June 1940, Eduardo's company was very soon in captivity in the city of Belfort. After spending several months as a POW in Stalag XI-D near Hamburg, on 27 January 1941 he was deported to Austria and to Mauthausen which was known as the "Spaniards' camp" and there he was given the registration number 5151 that he was to carry sewn into his striped uniform which has survived. Eduardo toiled for some months in the notorious quarries in Mauthausen central camp, the scene of the cruellest tortures and bullying the SS could inflict on the deportees-turned-slaves and turned into real human wretches, many of whom would meet their ends in the crematoria. In the summer of 1941, Eduardo was transferred to Bretstein where a small camp had been set up occupied wholly by Spaniards. Located in a mountain valley in Austrian Styria, far from the mother camp, Eduardo Escot and another two hundred Spanish republicans were to labour in ghastly conditions due to low temperatures and short rations, on the construction of an Alpine highway. A year after that he was assigned once and for all to the Steyr sub-camp, working on car construction for the Third Reich. His physical condition had deteriorated considerably, as had that of most of the deportees, so that he weighed only 35 kilos when US troops entered Steyr on 5 May 1945.

Eduardo rebuilt his life in exile in France in the town of Rosny-sous-Bois near Paris where he was housed along with another 18 Spanish deportees. It was in Paris that he met his wife, Aimee, with whom he had two children. Initially he turned to his

cobbler's trade, only to wind up working for an advertising agency. For some years he kept up his connection with the CNT in exile, holding a number of offices. He was a member of FEDIP (the Spanish Federation of Deportees and Political Prisoners) as long it was up and running. He made three trips back to Mauthausen and was one of the inspirations behind the memorial to be found these days in Bretstein in Austrian Styria where there is a sad and moving tribute to Andalusian and Spanish republicans. In March 2007, at the instigation of commemorative groups, the town of Olivera paid an emotional tribute to him and two other Olivera natives Cristóbal Raya and Pablo Barrera (both of whom perished in the Mauthausen camp). Another plaque recording their names was unveiled at the La Cilla Cultural Centre in the presence of Eduardo and of relatives of deportees, friends and residents. On 19 March that year, the Cadiz Provincial Diputación honoured Eduardo Escot with the Gold Shield for his human rights work.

The death of Eduardo Escot advances the fading away of a generation unique in contemporary history, one that well encapsulates the foothold and vigour enjoyed by the libertarian ideal and cultural in Andalusia. His life story touches upon all the great dramas of the 20th century: poverty, emigration, repression, war, exile, deportation, slave labour, genocide ... as well as embodying the great ideals of justice, equality and freedom. Eduardo Escot was always ready to speak out to make a reality of the so called Mauthausen "Survivors' Pledge" which calls for remembrance of the victims and of the duty to remember. His testimony – in the documentary *Memoria de las cenizas* (Memory Out of the Ashes), dealing with the Andalusians in the Nazi camps (<https://vimeo.com/68386604>) – will stand as a warning sounded against repetition of the grave mistakes of the past that seems always to lie in wait for humanity. Hence the pointedness of his legacy. Never again! May he rest in peace.

Ángel del Río, Andalusia delegate of the Amical Mauthausen

(adapted) from *Rojo y Negro digital*, 25/05/2015

Translated by Paul Sharkey

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Marcelino de la Parra, Anarcho-syndicalist Guerrilla from León

In the Ferradillo hills of León in 1942, a band of guerrillas of varying persuasions came together for a single purpose: ending Francoist rule. And so was born the very first post-Civil War armed anti-Francoist resistance organization in Spain. A CNT militant, Marcelino de la Parra was appointed as its military advisor.

Marcelino de la Parra Casas was born in Las Ventas de Nava (León) in 1911 [1]; he was a mechanic by trade and had been one of the most prominent León guerrillas active in the armed antifascist struggle ever since the collapse of the Asturias-León front back on 21 October 1937, together with labourer and UGT member Manuel Girón Bazán, who was born in Salas de los Barrios (León) in 1910. The lives of these two fighters ran in parallel with each other: they had both seen action in the Las Murias area with the army of the Republic, operating behind the enemy lines on the León front, both of them being very knowledgeable about the terrain; together, they arrived in Asturias where they fought in the Recalde (or B) Division commanded by José Recalde Vela, again carrying out sabotage missions behind the enemy lines; they were still together when the war ended and, when the Northern Front collapsed, Marcelino de la Parra, Manuel Girón Bazán, Victoriano Nieto Rodríguez and some other former combatants set off from Pola de Leña and 14 days later reached Villaverde de la Abadía (León), Victoriano's home town. On arrival, Marcelino de la Parra was literally on his uppers and his comrade and friend issued him with new shoes.[2] From there, they headed for El Bierzo and Cabrer, the district of León best known to Girón. Up until mid-1939, a fair number of Asturian veterans had been massing in Casaio, that being a bit of a safe haven at the time, into which the forces of repression did not dare venture. From then on, Parra and Girón were inseparable. They were close friends and both had nerves of steel. Marcelino was an outstanding mechanic.

According to one socialist guerrilla (Marcelino Fernández Villanueva) [3], Parra could take an ordinary handgun and turn it into a machine-gun.[4] According to surviving guerrilla Mario Morán García [5] who was constantly at Marcelino de la Parra's side, Parra and Girón were chalk and cheese in terms of temperament, but maybe that was the reason they got on so famously. For instance, Parra had absolutely no sense of humour; whereas Girón was forever wise-cracking. Parra was cold and calm, whereas Girón was much more emotional. Girón was a chain-smoker with a cigarette always dangling from his mouth. Parra did not smoke. But they had this much in common; they knew how to give their all for a friend.

César Ríos Rodríguez [6] another of those who came through the tragedy alive, corroborated Parra's calm, level-headed nature, for he stated that "if hungry, he ate, if sleepy, he slept, but he was not given to chat about ideologies and rarely engaged in any".

They remained in the hills above Casaio up until 27 July 1940, making final preparations for crossing into Portugal and on the chosen date Manuel Girón, Marcelino de la Parra, Enrique Oviedo Blanco (aka *Chapa*), José Vega Seoane (aka *Ánimas*) [7], Eduardo Pérez Vega (aka *Tamairón*), Abelardo Macías Fernández (aka *Liebre*) [8] set off along with a sizable group, but the persons named here turned back to the Casaio hills before reaching Portugal, whereas their fellow travelers pressed on, only to make their way back to the Sierra de Eje following a few set-backs and clashes with the Portuguese Republican Guard, sustaining a few losses. The Sierra del Eje was where the bulk of the Galicia-León resistance was. Since it was now plain that there was no way out for them, the need to organize guerrilla bands arose and this was a quite complicated matter, given the motley loyalties of the guerrillas, but a few of the ones from León, like Girón, Parra and Abelardo Macías Fernández, who had the greatest sway over the men up in the mountains, were resolute advocates of armed struggle against the Francoist regime.

In the summer of 1941 a goodly number of bands were launched and these were the embryos of future guerrilla units in El Bierzo, the Trives district (in Orense), Casaio, etc. The La Cabrera group was under the command of Marcelino de la Parra Casas.

In April 1942, some 25 guerrillas from León, Asturias and Galicia, representing the full spectrum of anti-Francoist sentiment – Marcelino de la Parra being one, of course – gathered in the Ferradillo hills near Ponferrada (León) to launch the León-Galicia Guerrilla Federation. The political breakdown of those attending were: 4 anarcho-syndicalists (Parra, Abelardo Macías Fernández aka *Liebre*, Abelardo Gutiérrez Alba aka *Abelardo* [9] and Victoriano Nieto Rodríguez [10]; 5 socialists, 6 members of the UGT, 4 communists and 5 of no particular political affiliation. With the exceptions of one blacksmith and one mechanic, they were all miners, labourers and farmers. Their statutes were approved unanimously. A Steering Committee was elected, chaired by Marcelino Fernández Villanueva (aka *Gafas*), chief of staff and top leader and Marcelino de la Parra (CNT), Mario Morán García and César Ríos Rodríguez (socialist) were appointed as advisors. At the time the communist members of the Federation were very much a minority, too few to aspire to membership of the Steering Committee.

This was the very first armed resistance organisation opposing Francoism launched in Spain

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following the civil war (it had about fifty members in all). The Communist Party was unable to exercise any hegemony over this first guerrilla organization, but it did manage to sink it later on. That was in 1942 with the appearance on the scene of the “false flaggers” (*contrapartidas*), teams of Civil Guards in guerrilla get-up, living in the hills just as the anti-Francoists did; these played a very significant role in the anti-guerrilla campaign. 1942 was the year when losses were sustained on both sides. On 4 September 12 guerrillas were to intercept a bus belonging to the Truchas-La Bañeza (León) line, but they were not to know that the bus was carrying a couple of Civil Guards. What they did know was that there was a tax-collector on board that day. At Kilometre 12 near the townland of Morla, the bus was stopped, but a fire-fight erupted in which the two Guards and four other passengers lost their lives, with a further five wounded. The attack was immediately chalked up by the authorities to lots of people who were then rounded up, and it was stated that the attackers had included Marcelino de la Parra, together with Enrique Oviedo Blanco (*Chapa*), acting on the instructions of Marcelino Fernández (*Gafas*). But the very next day, the military governor, Severino Pacheco amended this report, specifying that many of the alleged perpetrators were merely guerrilla couriers and that the responsibility for the incident would be clarified at their respective councils of war.

In June 1943 the guerrillas assembled in the Ferradillo hills again for the Federation’s second congress, attended by guerrillas operating in El Bierzo, plus the leaders of bands from eastern Orense and from northeastern Lugo. The Steering Committee was transformed into a High Command, with Marcelino de la Parra, Mario Morán García and top man Marcelino Fernández Villanueva reappointed to their posts.

A further Federation congress was held in the Casaio hills during 10 to 12 October 1944 and those three guerrilla leaders were again confirmed in their posts. But the communists, whose influence had been boosted by activists arriving from exile, saw to it that Francisco Elvira Cuadrado was appointed as High Command deputy commissar as representative of the PCE, the object being to establish communist hegemony within the Federation in short order. The congress was attended by a delegate from the Spanish National Union (UNE) and by Eusebio Azañedo Grande, representing the CNT.[11]

In mid-July 1945 in the La Bruña valleys (in the Casaio hills) another congress, dubbed the “reunification” congress was held; it was supposed to bring all the various factions together as one, especially the communists who backed the Spanish National Union (UNE) and others who preferred the ANFD (National Alliance of Democratic Forces). While the congress was in progress, a *contrapartida*

killed Francisco Elvira Cuadrado and Arcadio Ríos Rodríguez in combat.[12]

Even though the congress reshuffled the High Command and endorsed the ANFD, thereby “solving” the issues of unity and pluralism within the Federation “on paper”, in actual fact it set the seal upon a split, since the death of the two communists named (they had been staunch supporters of unity) thwarted any chance of agreement with the Stalinists and on 18 August a split occurred, led by Evaristo González Pérez (*Roces*) and Guillermo Morán García, [13] with the launch of an alleged and much trumpeted “Guerrilla Army of Galicia”. After that, most of the communists, be they militants or sympathisers, quit León and flooded into Orense province. Guerrillas disinclined to join said “Army” remained on the soil of León; they included people such as Enrique Oviedo Blanco (*Chapa*), Victoriano Nieto Rodríguez, Abelardo Macías Fernández (*Liebre*) and many others. However, Marcelino Fernández (*Gafas*), Manuel Girón Bazán, Marcelino de la Parra and Enrique Oviedo Blanco had, in the wake of the “reunification” congress, withdrawn to Casaio; they did though, make one last attempt at securing unity and, on their behalf, Marcelino Fernández Villanueva travelled up to Lugo in late 1946 in an attempt to enter into talks with the leaders of the Communist Party of Galicia so as to settle the issue of alliances and put forward a uniform plan for armed struggle; however, he was unable to get to talk to the Spanish Communist Party leaders and a number of circumstances prevented his returning to León.

So the ‘Reunification’ Congress set the seal on the end of anti-Francoist unity and thus also spelled the beginning of the end of the León-Galicia Guerrilla Federation. Some of its leading fighters managed to slip out of Spain during 1948 [14] and 1949, by a variety of means, but Marcelino de la Parra Casas, CNT member and advocate of a robust guerrilla organization, a man of great prestige in the armed struggle against Francoism, was not so lucky. He tried fleeing across the Catalan border, only to find himself arrested in Tarragona on 14 May 1948 just as he was in a post office in the act of sending off a letter to his guerrilla ex-comrades informing them that his departure from the country was imminent. He had sought shelter in the home of a sister of his, but she had disclosed his identity to her sweetheart who was a policeman. Marcelino de la Parra was transported to the capital of León and confirmed what the authorities already knew about the organizational model of the now extinct Federation. A lot of police reports on León opened with this formula: “According to Parra’s testimony ...” Some people say that Parra spilled a lot of beans, but if that was the case he was telling them nothing, for his information related to a now bygone stage and none

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of the guerrillas he named were (as Parra was quite well aware) in the province of León any longer. Parra uttered not one word about those whom he knew were still out there in the hills of León.

Marcelino de la Parra was sentenced to death and garroted on 8 November 1948. He was buried in León's civil cemetery. The burial records stipulate that death was from "strangulation".

By the time Marcelino de la Parra was being executed, Marcelino Fernández Villanueva (*Gafas*) and César Ríos Rodríguez were already some days safely on French soil. A month later, Mario Morán García managed to slip across the Spanish-French border precisely where Parra had failed to get across.

Other guerrillas – like the CNT's Abelardo Macías Fernández (*Liebre*) and Victoriano Nieto Rodríguez or the communist Oliveros Fernández Armada (*Negrín*) [15], among others – decided to carry on with the struggle.

Manuel Girón Bazán outlived his pal Parra by two and a half years and was only eliminated through an act of betrayal. He was murdered on 2 May 1951 in Molinaseca (León) by José Rodríguez Cañuto, a Civil Guard agent and infiltrator who received a 74,000 peseta reward for his treachery.

Antonio Téllez (Translated by Paul Sharkey)

NOTES

[1] Some say that Marcelino de la Parra was born in La Robla or in Leon city itself. We have plumped for the version mentioned in *Historia del anarquismo leonés* (León 1993, p 195)

[2] Secundino Serrano *La guerrilla antifranquista en León* (Siglo XX de España Editores, Madrid, 1968)

[3] Marcelino Fernández Villanueva was born on 10 March 1914 in Olloniego (Asturias) and died in Argentina in 1999. He was one of the 29 guerrillas evacuated through the port of Luanco on 20 October 1948 and who were put ashore in St Jean de Luz (France) on 24 October.

[4] Carlos G Reigosa, *La agonía del León* (Alianza Editorial, Madrid 1966, p. 51)

[5] Mario Morán García was born in Mieres (Asturias) in 1915. He crossed into France on 26 December 1948 together with the guerrilla Benigno García González (aka *Viejo*). In 1951 moved to Mexico where he died in 1992. He was a member of the Socialist Youth.

[6] César Ríos Rodríguez was born in Siero (Asturias) in 1915 and died in 1997.

[7] José Vega Seoane (*Ánimas*) was born in Xares near A Veiga do Bolo (Orense) and died on 9 July 1945 in the Sierra de Corbaceira (Zamora). See Antonio Téllez: *A guerrilla antifranquista de Mario de Langullo* (Ediciones A Nosa Terra 2000, pp. 81, 86)

[8] Abelardo Macías Fernández (*Liebre*) was born in Lago de Carucedo (Ponferrada) in 1912 and died on

12 March 1949 in Villasinde (Vega de Valcarce, León)

[9] Abelardo Gutierrez Alba (*Abelardo*) was born in 1912 in San Miguel de Cervantes (Lugo). He took to the hills during the very first days of the army revolt, together with his brothers Baldomero and Jovino, his sister Domitila, his mother Consuelo Alba Digón and an uncle Segundo Alba Digón. By late 1939, along with Marcelino de la Parra and Manuel Girón Bazán, he was leading an important guerrilla band. In 1947 he crossed into France with his two brothers thanks to a CNT escape network in the Basque Country. He later returned to Spain on two occasions to help the remainder of his family out to France.

[10] Victoriano Nieto Rodríguez was born in 1911 in Villaverde de la Abadía (León). In 1948 he was in charge of an independent group that refused to abide by the communists' directions., On 17 March 1949, Victoriano Nieto was caught unawares, along with his partner Elpidia Morán Alonso and the guerrillas Abelardo Macías Fernández, Hilario Álvaro Méndez and Oliveros Fernández Armada (*Negrín*). Nieto and *Negrín* managed to escape, but the others perished. He then managed to cross into France before emigrating to Mexico.

[11] Eusebio Azañedo Grande served as acting general secretary of the CNT National Committee in 1942. Arrested in 1943, his place was taken by Manuel Amil Barcía who was just out of prison. Azañedo served again on the CNT National Committee under Manuel Villar Mingo in 1947 and, the same year, was jailed again. An inmate of Ocaña, he was involved in the 8 May 1948 break-out by 12 CNT militants.

[12] Francisco Elvira Cuadrado, a native of Guadalajara, died on 27 July 1946 together with Arcadio Ríos Rodríguez in the Sierra del Eje (Casaio, Orense). The latter had been born in Evia in 1911.

[13] Evaristo González Perez (Roces) and Guillermo Morán García perished on 20 April 1949 in Chavaga in the Monforte de Lemos district, in a clash with the Civil Guard. See Antonio Téllez, *A guerrilla antifranquista de Mario de Langullo* (Ediciones A Nosa Terra, Vigo, 2000, pp. 131-134)

[14] Early in 1948 Laurentino Álvarez Rodríguez, Casimiro and Amable Fernández Arías, Hilario Martínez Largo and Etelvino Fernández Méndez managed to cross into France. Amadeo Ramón Valledor followed suit towards the end of that year. [15] In 1947 Oliveros Fernández Armada (*Negrín*) belonged to the guerrilla band of Silverio Yebra Granja (Atravesao), one of six bands belonging to the Second *Agrupación* of the "Guerrilla Army" set up by the Stalinists and which shattered anti-Francoist unity in León and Galicia. *Negrín* managed to cross into France in 1950.

Article published in *Polémica* No 84, April 2005

News & Library news – Anti-militarist history

Help AK Press & Friends Recover from Fire
Our comrades at AK Press in Oakland are currently dealing with the aftermath of a major fire. They're appealing for donations to spread between between AK Press, their neighbors at 1984 Printing, and building residents who have lost their homes and belongings.

Details are at:

<http://www.akpress.org/fire-relief.html>. The direct link to the fundraising page is:

<http://www.gofundme.com/akpressfire>.

Please help!

Thoughts on local anarchist newspapers in 1980s Britain

The Kate Sharpley Library have just had a donation of some 1980s local anarchist newspapers (all from north west England). We have *Black Cat : Crewe Anarchist Group News Sheet* (number 1, April 1983, number 2, May 1983), *Seizure : Crewe's Alternative Newspaper* (number 4, 'April 1983' handwritten inside), *Prisoners of War : Paper of the South Manchester Anarchists* (number 1, early 1984?) and *Love and Bricks* (number 2, Liverpool, 1988). We're always grateful for donations, and this one made me think about the importance of local papers.

How far in 1980s Britain would you have been from an anarchist group and its publication? Offset lithography from the sixties onwards made doing a national anarchist newspaper easier. Photocopiers in the 1980s had a similar effect at a more local level. All the text in these papers is done on a typewriter (the parts that aren't hand-drawn, done with letraset, or lifted from the mainstream press). *Black Cat* is duplicated, the rest photocopied. Only *Prisoners of War* has a cover price ('10 pence o.n.o.' [or near offer]) which probably suited how local anarchist papers were distributed: sold for what you could get or given away to the less keen or the less solvent.

How different was it producing a local paper like *Love and Bricks* than a national one, usually representing an organisation or at least a tendency within anarchism? Coming together to produce a paper requires resources and effort – and an agreement to agree to disagree on some things, if not all. How did that work, or not work?

These five papers cover a wide range of topics: the Marxist Left, sexual violence, strikes, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, nuclear power, local/ regional organising, Ireland, anti-fascism, squatting, prison solidarity, anarcho-feminism, sexuality, vegetarianism, policing, unemployment, politicians. Looking at other papers might change the picture. There's not so much focus on punk subculture in these, nor the pulling-the-tail of the local regular press I imagine went on in some of them (just look at the title of the *Bolton Evening Noose* for one).

It's interesting that the text isn't always polished, but gives the air of anarchists beating their ideas into shape. 'Anarchists supported the miners and the printers who were both overwhelmingly non-anarchist and we are involved in anti deportation campaigns to help people who, in many cases[,] have never heard of Anarchism so why should the Irish struggle be different?' ('Eniskillen and after...' by G.A. *Love and Bricks* number 2)

Both Libcom.org and the Sparrow's Nest (www.thesparrowsnest.org.uk) keep adding digitised materials. Even better is the Irish anarchist archive: they have scanned materials and also given some of the history behind them. You can see their 80s stuff at:

<https://irishanarchisthistory.wordpress.com/category/1980s/papers-magazines-1980s/> Did you work on a local anarchist paper? Why not write an account of it? Some pointers are in 'Tell me a story' at <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/p8d05b>

Colin Parker 1948-2015

Colin Parker was born in the pit village of Crook in Co. Durham on 15th December 1948. His father Martin was a miner. He apprenticed as a fitter-turner after leaving school at the age of fifteen. He worked as a lathe operator in the local factory owned by Marshall Richards, a manufacturer of wire and tube making machines.

At an early age he joined the local library and became an avid reader of books on politics, art and history. With three of his brothers he joined the local Labour Party and was associated with the Militant Tendency within it. He and his brothers were expelled for confronting a local Labour Party official, Colin being the most vociferous of all. He subsequently joined the Communist Party.

He was sponsored by his union to attend Ruskin College in Oxford in 1969. After the end of the course he moved to London to study a politics degree at East London Polytechnic. He then went to the London School of Economics and got an MA in politics in 1974.

The following year he took a teacher training course and in 1976 became a teacher at Barking College of Further Education where he worked until his retirement in his early sixties. As his son Martin noted: "He aimed to reach out and empower working class people to achieve greater educational success and get more from their lives".

In the meantime he had left the CP and flirted with various Trotskyist groups. The Workers Revolutionary Party considered him an important enough catch to send around Vanessa Redgrave to his council flat in central London but he was not convinced. He then attended Socialist Workers Party branch meetings but started asking too many questions about their politics. All of this was part of

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his evolution towards class struggle anarchism.

He began producing a duplicated magazine named *Virus* and subtitled *For Militant Anarchism* in 1984 during the height of the miners strike. He contacted the Libertarian Communist Discussion Group the following year and suggested that *Virus* become the mouthpiece of the Group. Regular meetings were held at Colin's flat and a network of contacts was built up around Britain, leading to the founding of the Anarchist Communist Federation in March 1986. He was active in the ACF, subsequently renamed the Anarchist Federation, until his death.

He took an active part in support for the miners strike and then attended many demonstrations during the Wapping printers struggle. He threw himself into the struggle against the Poll Tax and refused to pay. He was arrested during an anti-Poll Tax demo and subsequently fined. He was a stalwart of the London group of the AF for many years, always warmly welcoming new contacts and providing an uncomplicated introduction to its ideas.

After his retirement he returned to Crook. He died as a result of a brain aneurism on January 22nd 2015.

He passionately hated the police, the various Leninist outfits and former radicals who had sold out, which included some of his workmates who had accepted management positions. He remained devoted to revolutionary anarchist ideas to the end.

He was a warm and generous person, with a wide knowledge of politics, history and art, which he had acquired through his own reading. I was fortunate enough to have him as a close friend and comrade for thirty years. His death has come as both a loss to me personally and to the AF and anarchism.

Nick Heath <http://libcom.org/history/colin-parker-1948-2015>

International Anarchist Manifesto on the War [1915]

EUROPE IN A BLAZE, TWELVE MILLION MEN engaged in the most frightful butchery that history has ever recorded; millions of women and children in tears; the economic, intellectual, and moral life of seven great peoples brutally suspended, and the menace becoming every day more pregnant with new military complications – such is, for seven months, the painful, agonizing, and hateful spectacle presented by the civilized world.

But a spectacle not unexpected – at least, by the Anarchists, since for them there never has been nor is there any doubt – the terrible events of today strengthen this conviction – that war is permanently fostered by the present social system. Armed conflict, restricted or widespread, colonial or European, is the natural consequence and the inevitable and fatal outcome of a society that is founded on the exploitation of the workers, rests on the savage struggle of the classes, and compels Labour to submit

to the domination of a minority of parasites who hold both political and economic power.

The war was inevitable. Wherever it originated, it had to come. It is not in vain that for half a century there has been a feverish preparation of the most formidable armaments and a ceaseless increase in the budgets of death. It is not by constantly improving the weapons of war and by concentrating the mind and the will of all upon the better organization of the military machine that people work for peace.

Therefore, it is foolish and childish, after having multiplied the causes and occasions of conflict, to seek to fix the responsibility on this or that government. No possible distinction can be drawn between offensive and defensive wars. In the present conflict, the governments of Berlin and Vienna have sought to justify themselves by documents not less authentic than those of the governments of Paris and Petrograd. Each does its very best to produce the most indisputable and the most decisive documents in order to establish its good faith and to present itself as the immaculate defender of right and liberty and the champion of civilization.

Civilization? Who, then, represents it just now? Is it the German State, with its formidable militarism, and so powerful that it has stifled every disposition to revolt? Is it the Russian State, to whom the knout, the gibbet, and Siberia are the sole means of persuasion? Is it the French State, with its *Biribi*,^[1] its bloody conquests in Tonkin, Madagascar, Morocco, and its compulsory enlistment of black troops? France, that detains in its prisons, for years, comrades guilty only of having written and spoken against war? Is it the English State, which exploits, divides, and oppresses the populations of its immense colonial empire?

No; none of the belligerents is entitled to invoke the name of civilization or to declare itself in a state of legitimate defence.

The truth is that the cause of wars, of that which at present stains with blood the plains of Europe, as of all wars that have preceded it, rests solely in the existence of the State, which is the political form of privilege.

The State has arisen out of military force, it has developed through the use of military force, and it is still on military force that it must logically rest in order to maintain its omnipotence. Whatever the form it may assume, the State is nothing but organized oppression for the advantage of a privileged minority. The present conflict illustrates this in the most striking manner. All forms of the State are engaged in the present war; absolutism with Russia, absolutism softened by Parliamentary institutions with Germany, the State ruling over peoples of quite different races with Austria, a democratic constitutional régime with England, and a democratic Republican régime with France.

The misfortune of the peoples, who were deeply

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attached to peace, is that, in order to avoid war, they placed their confidence in the State with its intriguing diplomatists, in democracy, and in political parties (not excluding those in opposition, like Parliamentary Socialism). This confidence has been deliberately betrayed, and continues to be so, when governments, with the aid of the whole of their press, persuade their respective peoples that this war is a war of liberation.

We are resolutely against all wars between peoples, and in neutral countries, like Italy, where the governments seek to throw fresh peoples into the fiery furnace of war, our comrades have been, are, and ever will be most energetically opposed to war.

The role of the Anarchists in the present tragedy, whatever may be the place or the situation in which they find themselves, is to continue to proclaim that there is but one war of liberation: that which in all countries is waged by the oppressed against the oppressors, by the exploited against the exploiters. Our part is to summon the slaves to revolt against their masters.

Anarchist action and propaganda should assiduously and perseveringly aim at weakening and dissolving the various States, at cultivating the spirit of revolt, and arousing discontent in peoples and armies.

To all the soldiers of all countries who believe they are fighting for justice and liberty, we have to declare that their heroism and their valour will but serve to perpetuate hatred, tyranny, and misery.

To the workers in factory and mine it is necessary to recall that the rifles they now have in their hands have been used against them in the days of strike and of revolt and that later on they will be again used against them in order to compel them to undergo and endure capitalist exploitation.

To the workers on farm and field it is necessary to show that after the war they will be obliged once more to bend beneath the yoke and to continue to cultivate the lands of their lords and to feed the rich.

To all the outcasts, that they should not part with their arms until they have settled accounts with their oppressors, until they have taken land and factory and workshop for themselves.

To mothers, wives, and daughters, the victims of increased misery and privation, let us show who are the ones really responsible for their sorrows and for the massacre of their fathers, sons, and husbands.

We must take advantage of all the movements of revolt, of all the discontent, in order to foment insurrection, and to organize the revolution to which we look to put an end to all social wrongs.

No despondency, even before a calamity like the present war. It is periods thus troubled, in which many thousands of men heroically give their lives for an idea, that we must show these men the generosity, greatness, and beauty of the Anarchist ideal: Social justice realized through the free organization of

producers; war and militarism done away with forever; and complete freedom won, by the abolition of the State and its organs of destruction.

Signed by – Leonard D. Abbott, Alexander Berkman, L. Bertoni, L. Bersani, G. Bernard, G. Barrett, A. Bernardo, E. Boudot, A. Calzitta, Joseph J. Cohen, Henry Combes, Nestor Ciele van Diepen, F.W. Dunn, Ch. Frigerio, Emma Goldman, V. Garcia, Hippolyte Havel, T.H. Keell, Harry Kelly, J. Lemaire, E. Malatesta, H. Marques, F. Domela Nieuwenhuis, Noel Panavich, E. Recchioni, G. Rijnders, I. Rochtchine, A. Savioli, A. Schapiro, William Shatoff, V.J.C. Schermerhorn, C. Trombetti, P. Vallina, G. Vignati, Lillian G. Woolf, S. Yanovsky. [2]

This manifesto is published by the International Anarchist movement and will be printed in several languages and issued in leaflet form.

London, 1915

Notes

This manifesto was printed in *Freedom* and (in Spanish) in *Cultura Obrera* in March 1915. It was reprinted in *Mother Earth* in May 1915.

1 *Biribi*: a reference to the punishment battalions of the French army.

2 Notes on names, with dates for the signatories, and an attempt to pin down their location in 1915.

Leonard D. Abbott (1878-1953, USA), Alexander Berkman (1870-1936, USA), Luigi Bertoni (1872-1947, Switzerland), L. Bersani, G. Bernard, G. Barrett (born Ballard, 1888-1917, UK), A. Bernardo, Édouard Eugène Boudot (1886-1974, possibly in UK), A. Calzitta, Joseph J. Cohen (1878-1953, USA), Henry Combes (1887-1925, UK), Nestor Ciele van Diepen, Fred Dunn (1884-1925, UK), Carlo Frigerio (1878-1966, UK), Emma Goldman (1869-1940, USA), Vicente Garcia (alias Pamiro, 1866-1930), Hippolyte Havel (1869-1950, USA), Thomas Keell (1886-1938, UK), Harry Kelly (1871-1953, USA), Jules André Lemaire (1874-1957, possibly Spain or UK), Errico Malatesta (1853-1932, UK), H. Marques, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis (1846-1919, Netherlands), Noel Panavich, Emidio Recchioni (1864-1924, UK), Gerhard Rijnders (1876-1950, Netherlands), Iuda Solomonovich Roshchin (born Grossman, 1883-1934, possibly Switzerland), A. Savioli, Alexander Schapiro (1882-1946, UK), William Shatoff (or Shatov, b.1887, USA), Nicolaas J.C. Schermerhorn (1866-1956, presumably Netherlands), C. Trombetti, Pedro Vallina Martinez (1879-1970), G. Vignati, Lillian Gertrude Wolfe (born Woolf, 1875-1974, UK), Saul Yanovsky (1864-1939, USA)

For more info see v.3 of *Emma Goldman: a documentary history of the American years, v.3, Light and shadows 1910-1916*. Other sources: Paul Avrich, *Anarchist voices*, Libcom.org, authorities.loc.gov, militants-anarchistes.info, socialhistory.org

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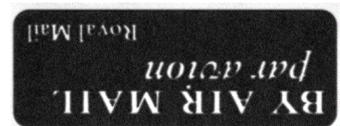
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