



In memory of Antonia Fontanillas Borrás

We regret to convey the sad and unfortunate news that compañera Fontanillas passed away on the 23rd of September.

Antonia Fontanillas Borrás, the last of a long list of anarchist women that lived, breathed and embraced the experience of the Spanish Social Revolution was born in Barcelona on the 29 May 1917. She was the daughter of the highly respected José Fontanillas Rión and María Borrás Saperas and the grand-daughter of the legendary anarchist couple Francisca Saperas and Martín Borrás.

In 1925, she moved to Mexico with her family, attending school for a period of six years. It was during these scholastic years that Antonia developed an appetite for all sorts of literature as well as the desire to devour anarchist literature, specially the anarchist magazine “Estudios”.

Her father was deported from Mexico in March of 1933 following his attendance to a symposium presented by his friend Rafael Quintero. The following year Antonia returns to Spain with her mother and siblings, she finds employment in a printing house and joins the CNT. In 1936 she was employed in the administration of the confederal journal “Solidaridad Obrera”. It was this same year that Antonia was appointed delegate of her section. She also was an active member of the “Juventudes Libertarias” in whose journal she began her writing vocation.

Following the “derrota” in 1939 Antonia remained in Barcelona and participated in the clandestine struggle: it was in her house that “Solidaridad Obrera” would be typeset (this went on until November 1945), she would also write articles for the clandestine anarchist magazine “Ruta” (from 1946-1948), and was also responsible for the liaison between anarchist prisoners and their defence lawyers. It was during one of these visits to the prison in 1948 that she met Diego Camacho (*better known by his nom de plume, Abel Paz*) who became her companion.

Diego was released from prison in 1952 and in 1953 he moved to France, a few months thereafter Antonia follows him to Paris and they reside in Brezolles and soon after they settle in Clermont-Ferrand. Antonia joins the MLE (*Movimiento Libertario Español Spanish Libertarian Movement in Exile*), the Grupo Artístico (*theatrical group*), she is elected to positions of responsibility both on local and regional committees, and maintains communication channels with the Sabaté group. In 1957 she was responsible for the publication of the “Boletín Regional de FIJL” (*Regional bulletin of the Iberian Federation of*

Libertarian Youths). In 1958 her relationship with Diego broke down and she settled in the township of Dreux with her son.

From Dreux, the township where she would reside until her death, Antonia inserted herself into the activities of the CNT in exile and its Intercontinental Secretariat, the Juventudes Libertarias, contributed articles to all the libertarian press published in exile, initiated the publication “Surco” and devoted what was left of her spare time to research and writing a number of books. She was also a member of the Faista group “Alfa” together with Antonio Cañete who would be her partner from 1960 until his death in 1979.

Following the relaunching of the CNT after Franco's death, Antonia concentrated her efforts in the area of propaganda and culture contributing articles in an innumerable number of libertarian and anarcho-syndicalist publications as well as participating at numerous libertarian public events organised around the Spanish State.

Guided by her anarchist convictions she took up an independent position with regards to the libertarian factional infighting within Spain, criticising the division and advocating the need for unity.

Some of Antonia's literary achievements have been:

- Introduction to Victor Garcia's book “Contribución a una biografía de Raúl Carballeira” (*Contribution to a biography of Raúl Carballeira*) published in 1961.
- “Testimonio sobre Germinal Gracia” (1992) (*Remembering Germinal Gracia (Victor Garcia)*).
- “Desde uno y otro lado de los Pirineos” (1993) (*From both sides of the Pirenees*).
- “Francisca Saperas” (1995)
- “De lo aprendido y vivido” (1996) (*Lessons from the learnt and lived*) published in the Italian journal Volonta.
- Contributes to the research on Luce Fabbri anthology “La libertad entre la historia y la utopia” (1998) (*Freedom in between history and utopia*).
- Contributes numerous chapters to the investigative book “Mujeres Libres - Luchadoras Libertarias” (1998) (*Mujeres Libres - Libertarian Fighters*).
- Co-author with Sonya Torres “Lola Iturbe - Vida e ideal de una luchadora anarquista” (2006) (*Lola Iturbe - The life and ideals of an anarchist fighter*)



I shall miss the long telephone conversations during which we recalled long gone compañeros and discussed events around the world, as well as the exchange of ideas and writings via snail mail.

Farewell compañera may mother earth be kind to your memory.



Grupo Cultural de Estudios Sociales de Melbourne