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Pedro Esteve (Barcelona 1865-Weehauken, N. J. 1925): A Catalan Anarchist in the United States
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PEDRO ESTEVE
(BARCELONA 1865-WEEHAUKEN, N. J. 1925):
A CATALAN ANARCHIST IN THE UNITED STATES

JOAN CASANOVAS I CODINA

PRELIMINARY NOTES¹

Pedro Esteve was the most prominent anarchist to have come from Spain to the U. S., where he was the editor of at least seven anarchist papers, a labor organizer and an orator in Spanish, Italian and English. However, he is almost absent from both the Spanish and American historiography. It seems that these two historiographical traditions have failed to explore the important exchange of people and ideas between Spanish and North American anarchism, an exchange in which he played an important role.

PEDRO ESTEVE'S BIOGRAPHY²

BARCELONA (1865-1889): SYNDICALISM, ANARCHISM AND
FREEMASONRY

Pedro Esteve was born in Barcelona in 1865, three years before the anti-bourbon revolution known as «La Gloriosa». This

¹ The following article appeared in the previous issue of CATALAN REVIEW in a version different from that the author authorized. We are pleased now to offer the definitive version of the article.

² The following articles are the main source for Esteve's biography: Salvador Espí, «RECORDEMOS A LOS MUERTOS» (C. O. 3, # 166, XI/7/1925), and «Un Recuerdo» (C. P. 2, # 27, IX/10/1927); Adrián del Valle, «Evocando el Pasado (1886-1891)» (L. R. B.; # 101, VIII/1/1927; # 103, IX/1/1927) and «Pedro Esteve (1892-1896)» (C. P. 2, # 27, IX/10/1927);

revolution initiated a period of vigorous social and political change, culminating in the establishment of the First Spanish Republic (1873-1874). «La Gloriosa» permitted the creation, in February 1869, of the Catalan provisional nucleus of the radical International Workingmen's Association (First International) in Barcelona; and, as a result of that, the Bakuninist «Federación Regional Española» (FRE) of the First International took shape in June 1870.

Esteve came from a working class background, and so, when he was only fourteen, he had to leave school to work as apprentice in «La Academia», a press founded some months before, where he became a printer in four years. According to the anarchist journalist Adrián del Valle, who was Esteve's best friend for several years, «The culture that he possessed he had acquired it [...] in his work as a printer, and he completed it by reading».³ Printer was a profession that stimulated intellec-

María [Roda] Esteve, «A LA MEMORIA DE PEDRO ESTEVE» (C. O. 3, # 210, IX/11/1926), and «Pedro Esteve», C. P. 2, # 132, 14/IX/1929). To avoid writing too many notes, there are notes only when I quote textually. Further information on Esteve and anarchism is in the following papers (their abbreviation for other notes is indicated in initials): *El Productor*, Barcelona, 1887-1893 (E. P. B.); *El Despertar*, NY-Paterson, 1891-1902 (E. D.); *La Alarma*, Havana, 1893; *Archivo Social*, Havana, 1894; *La Question Sociale*, Paterson, 1895-1908; *L'Era Nuova*, Paterson, 1908-1917; *Cultura Proletaria*, NY, 1st series 1910-1911, 2nd series 1927-1953 (C. P. 2); *Cultura Obrera*, NY, 1st series 1912, 2nd series 1912-1917 (C. O. 2), 3rd series 1922-1927 (C. O. 3); *La Revista Blanca*, Barcelona (L. R. B.). These papers have been consulted in the Biblioteca Arús (Barna), the International Institute for Social History (Amsterdam), Columbia University (NY), and the Tamiment Institute (NY), for which access I am very thankful. Furthermore, I would like to thank Prof. William Taylor and Prof. Fred Weinstein for their encouragement, comments and corrections. I would like to express special gratitude to Prof. Barbara Weinstein, who has carefully revised and commented the final draft of this article. Finally, I would acknowledge Prof. Paul Avrich for directing my attention to the life and ideas of Pedro Esteve as a subject deserving research.

³ Valle, «Evocando...», L. R. B. # 101.

tual development and implied contact with both intellectuals and a wide range of workers. Some of the printers could readily be seen as intellectuals by more formally trained intellectuals, and as workers by the workers; hence, their important role in the founding and leading of worker organizations.

With the collapse of the republic and the Bourbon Restoration in Spain, the FRE was declared illegal (Jan. 1874), beginning a period of clandestine activity. The secret Bakunist «International Alliance of Socialist Democracy» was constituted at that time in the Iberian Peninsula. In July 1881, the 10th General Congress of the First International, which was anarchist, took place in London. In this congress, anarcho-communism, promoted mainly by Peter Kropotkin and Errico Malatesta, emerged as the predominant position in European anarchism except in Spain. There, the Bakunist anarcho-collectivism remained paramount for many years, isolating the FRE from the mainstream of the First International.⁴ Anarcho-

⁴ The main anarchist theoretician in the 1860s and 1870s was Michael Bakunin, who did not develop systematically his theories later known as «anarcho-collectivism». After the death of Bakunin in 1876, Peter Kropotkin became the foremost anarchist theoretician in the Western world. Bakunin used the term collectivism in two senses. First, collectivism was the anti-centralist and antistatist alternative to Marxism. Second, the term indicated «popular control of the means of production as opposed to individual possession of the means of production under capitalism». Kropotkin mainly accepted Bakunin's collectivism but «he was critical of Bakunin's inability to deal properly with the issue of wages». Bakunin maintained «that although the ideal of the social revolution was labor without wages and the free distribution of products to the society on the basis of need, there would have to be a transition period for some years after the revolution during which a system of remuneration would be necessary». On the other hand, Kropotkin maintained that revolution had to establish without a transition period «the free and voluntary distribution of productive necessities, the common use (not ownership) of land and institutions of production, together with the abolition of the entire wage system» (Martin A. Miller, *Kropotkin*; Chicago, 1976; 144-145). In 1880, Kropotkin termed this project «anarcho-communism».

Finally, Errico Malatesta was an Italian anarchist leader and activist both

communism proposed distribution of goods according to each individual's necessities, whereas anarcho-collectivism stressed on distribution of goods according to each individual's contribution to the process of production.

In February of 1881, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta and the Liberal party replaced the conservative government, creating more favorable circumstance for the labor associations. As a result, the Labor Congress meeting in Barcelona, in September of 1881, substituted the underground FRE for the legal «Federación de Trabajadores de la Región Española» (FTRE). Within the FTRE, anarchists of Barcelona once again united anarchist and syndicalist tendencies, causing a new direction in the Spanish internationalist movement, which formally opened the possibility of exploring alliances with other organizations. Therefore, this new direction reinforced the possibility of a two-pronged anarchist militancy, both within the labor movement and within the Masons and the freethinkers,⁵ one that in fact never ceased to exist. Through Masonry, Spanish anarchists could ally with people opposed to conservative political forces during the Spanish Restoration (1874-1923), such as «spiritists, spiritualists, positivists, materialists, atheists, on the philosophical side; republicans, socialists and anarchists, on the political one».⁶ Consequently, the anarchist relationship with Masonry was formally presented as purely tactical,

in Europe and the Americas, who proclaimed Kropotkin's position that a massive popular insurrection would bring about social revolution. Therefore, he travelled to several places trying to transform insurrections into revolutions. Furthermore, Malatesta supported anarchist organization, which was a tendency opposed to anti-organization anarchism.

⁵ Enric Olivé i Serret, «El movimiento anarquista catalán y la masonería en el último tercio del siglo XIX», in Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, *La masonería en la historia de España*, Zaragoza, 1985, 135. See also Pere Sánchez i Ferré, *La lògia Lealtad: un exemple de maçoneria catalana (1869-1979)*, Barcelona, 1985.

⁶ Valle, «Evocando...», *L. R. B...*, # 101.

though individual anarchists were genuinely enthusiastic. As Esteve wrote in 1894, to achieve the anarchist ideal,

unos entran en los Ateneos, otros cooperan en las sociedades librepensadoras, aquellas *trabajan* en la Masonería y esotros, si hallan ocasión propicia, se deslizan hasta en los clubs políticos. Pero entran en estas corporaciones, burguesas por excelencia, no negándose a sí mismos, sino afirmándose como anarquistas.⁷

The evolution of the labor movement greatly influenced Esteve's youth. Some time around 1882, just after the founding of the FTRE, a group of printers intended to compel the «Sociedad de Obreros Tipógrafos» (SOT) to join the FTRE. Failing to achieve this, they created «Solidaria» in mid-1882, a syndicalist faction whose leaders worked in the press «La Academia». This group of printers was very important in spreading anarchism in Spain, Cuba, Mexico, Argentina and the U. S., and most of them were Masons.⁸ We can therefore conclude that about mid-1882, at the age of seventeen, Esteve already was an anarcho-collectivist militant, and probably a recently initiated member of the Masons. His role in the SOT was to supervise «learning and entertainment». Moreover, in 1883, at the age of 18, he was an important member of the

⁷ Pedro Esteve, *Memorándum. A Los Anarquistas de España y Cuba: Memoria de la Conferencia Anarquista Internacional celebrada en Chicago en Septiembre de 1893*, Paterson, 1900, 46.

⁸ In the group of «La Academia» there were people such as Rafael Farga Pellicer, Antonio Pellicer Paraire, Josep Lluas, P. Esteve... A. Pellicer (1851-1916), like Lluas, was a Mason, who left Spain in 1875, and «*durante cuatro años vivió en México, Cuba y Estados Unidos*»; in 1891, Pellicer emigrated to Argentina, where he played a significant role publicizing anarchism (Josep Termes, *Anarquismo y sindicalismo en España*, Barcelona, 1971; 264 ftn. 96, 275 ftn. 122). In this trip, Pellicer established the connections, that later, Valle, Esteve, and others will follow, and he probably contacted the staff of *La Lluanera*, published in New York (1874-1881) in Catalan, which had connections with Masonry.

unions of Barcelona; he was named representative of the «Sección de Trabajadores de Barcelona» to the «Congreso de Delegados de todas las Uniones de Oficio» of the FTRE in Catalonia. About 1885, he contacted Anselmo Lorenzo, another important figure of Spanish anarchism and a true Mason.⁹ Salvador Espí, another friend of Esteve, points out that Lorenzo «governed» «La Academia», where Esteve «was one of the outstanding members»; furthermore, «in the freethinking circle, Pedro [...] supported of the anarchic principles».¹⁰ Finally, Esteve himself noted that «La Academia» «was not only dedicated to revolutionary typographic art, but to emancipatory ideals as well».¹¹ As Enric Olivé points out, «La Academia» «played a decisive role in the attempt to establish the compatibility between anarchism and Masonry, between militant laity, freethinking and anarchy, and even between Catalanism and the libertarian movement».¹²

In July 1885, «The Cosmopolitan Congress of Barcelona» took place to reverse the tendency toward isolation in the Spanish anarchist movement, and to «reinforce the position of the collectivist tendency, predominant in Spain, through public and open debate with the anarcho-communists». The Congress was almost ignored internationally, and only a few organizations gave it support; among them, there was «the Anarcho-collectivist Association of workers who speak the Spanish

⁹ Lorenzo, was a printer from Madrid and a founding member of the First International in Spain. In 1874 he went to Barcelona, where he was expelled from the FTRE in 1881 for ideological reasons; in 1883, Lorenzo became a Mason, improving quickly his rank. Finally, Lorenzo, abetted by «La Academia», was admitted in the FTRE, in 1885 (Olivé, «El movimiento...», 143, 148). Valle affirms that Esteve played a major role in Lorenzo's acceptance (Valle, «Evocando...», *L. R. B.*, # 101).

¹⁰ Espí, «Un Recuerdo».

¹¹ P. Esteve, «Anselmo Lorenzo», *C. O.2*, # 93 (I/9/1915).

¹² Olivé, «El movimiento...», 136-137.

language, resident in New York». ¹³ Consequently, this congress failed in its purpose, which divided the Spanish anarchist movement more deeply. Collectivism remained dominant among Catalan anarchists, who were the most influential group within the FTRE. However, the rise of opposition from anarcho-communist sections compelled the collectivists to increase their propaganda.

Under these circumstances, in 1886-1887, Esteve worked to organize the anarchist group «Benevento», which promoted the publication of what would become the most important Spanish anarchist paper during this period, *El Productor*, along with its cultural center, «Regeneración». Espí relates that it is at this point that he «made himself known in public, taking a very active part as an orator in the meetings that anarchists held [...] in many Catalan towns». Finally, in May 1888, anarcho-collectivists constituted in Barcelona a syndical confederation usually called «Pacto de Unión y Solidaridad de la Región Española» (PUSRE), in which Esteve participated. In September 1888, he was named to represent the «Federación Barcelonesa» of the FTRE Labor Congress of Valencia, to debate the suppression of this latter organization, because of its division and weakness. In Valencia the FTRE dissolved, which implied the extinction of the First International in Spain. ¹⁴

In November 1888, Esteve became involved in a conflict with the authorities because of the use of Catalan in an anarchist meeting commemorating the Chicago martyrs executed one year before. While he was speaking, a policeman interrupted the meeting «requesting him to speak in Castilian to manifest his opinions», because «he [*the policeman*] did not understand

¹³ Teresa Abelló i Güell, *Les relacions internacionals de l'anarquisme català (1881-1914)*, Barcelona, 1987, 47, 53-54.

¹⁴ Clara E. Lida, *Anarquismo y Revolución en la España del XIX*, Madrid, 1972, 258-259.

Catalan and it was not permitted in public gatherings to use any language other than Castilian». The public protested, but he had to continue in Castilian. *El Productor* used this event to attack the «Catalanist Party», for not protesting this aggression against Catalan, arguing that this party was interested in protecting the language only in bourgeois activities, such as «Excursions, Lligas, Centres, Jochs Florals, etc., etc.», and not in activities related to the labor movement.¹⁵

EUROPE (1889-1892): MALATESTA, THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL AND DEPARTURE TO THE U. S.

Between 1889 and 1896, the anarchist movement struggled to participate in the Second International, trying to avoid its exclusion by the Marxists. The anarchist movement was hampered in this struggle by its failure to form a unified and well organized movement. The Congress of London rejected the formation of an international revolutionary structure, and only in Italy were there attempts in this direction, beginning in 1887, but to effect in the short run.¹⁶ At this point, in September 1889, Errico Malatesta wrote his famous «Appello» «with the purpose of forming a *socialist-anarchist-revolutionary* international party», with which Malatesta, who previously had declared himself anarcho-communist, wished to overcome the division among the main anarchist tendencies: collectivist, communist, and individualist.¹⁷ We will refer to this organizational tendency as

¹⁵ «El Idioma Oficial», *E. P. B.*, # 118 (XI/16/1888).

¹⁶ Abelló, *Les relacions...*, 60.

¹⁷ Max Nettlau, *Errico Malatesta, vita e pensieri*, Preface by Esteve, New York, 1922, 211-212. «Anarcho-individualism» is a tendency that has depended on U. S. natives for its creation and promotion. Individualists held that the collective society was impossible without the eventuality of authoritarianism, and adhered to the concept of private property insofar as the term could be defined as the total product of a given individual's labor (James Martin, *Men against the State*, Colorado, 1970; x).

«anarcho-socialism»; it represented a reinforcement of the anarchist participation within the unions, because it provided an organizational basis.

Malatesta's «Apello» attracted the Catalan anarchist movement, since the latter had collaborated with syndicalism from the founding of the FRE in 1870. Therefore, the «Appello» was immediately reproduced in *El Productor* (Oct. 1889), and from this moment on, the staff of the paper became fully committed to Malatesta's project. Accordingly, Esteve, who referred to Malatesta as «a new Christ», asserted that

Comunismo, colectivismo, mutualismo, individualismo, cuantos sistemas conciba la mente humana, no son más que [...] diversos modos de efectuar la producción, el cambio y el consumo que caben en la práctica del principio anarquista.¹⁸

In Spain, the struggle between Marxism and anarchism did not weaken the latter, rather the contrary, and among the Catalan urban workers, anarchism remained dominant. Therefore, it is not surprising that in 1890, at the age of 25, Esteve was recruiting members for trade societies of the Barcelona metropolitan area, and helping to organize a May Day general strike to demand the eight-hour day. Because of its participation in this mobilization, *El Productor* was closed by the authorities, along with its cultural center, «Regeneración», and several trade societies. The celebration of May Day, in 1890, included a sharp confrontation over the leadership of the mobilization between anarchists, who promoted the indefinite general strike, and Marxists, who did not promote such a radical strike. The fact that the strike lasted for several days indicated the anarchist predominance in Barcelona.¹⁹

Furthermore, Esteve participated in the attempt to avoid

¹⁸ Esteve, *Memorándum...*, 38.

¹⁹ Abelló, *Les relacions...*, 81-83.

the removal of anarchists from the Second International. In August 1891, at the Brussels Congress of the Second International, the Marxist sector excluded the anarchists. Esteve and Fernando Tarrida del Mármol arrived in Brussels as the PUSRE delegates, only to be, like the other anarchists, excluded from the Congress.²⁰

Sometime around September 1891, Malatesta arrived in Barcelona, and throughout his sojourn in Spain, Esteve had an important role in helping him to propagate his ideas. Malatesta's stay in Barcelona encouraged a new orientation among anarchists, as he recruited many militants for his tendency. As Abad de Santillán notes, Malatesta lectured in many Catalan cities accompanied by Esteve; these lectures were followed by a propaganda tour around Spain in which Malatesta claimed to be anarcho-communist, and Esteve anarcho-collectivist, but the two leaders agreed on anarcho-socialism.²¹ In January 1892, in the middle of the tour, in Madrid they were surprised by the news of an insurrection in Jerez, Andalusia. Malatesta travelled to Andalusia, but the fear of arrest prompted him to escape to London, and Esteve came back to Catalonia. In Barcelona, Adrián del Valle invited Esteve to go with him to London to meet Malatesta and other leaders. During the trip, they contacted prominent anarchist theorists and activists, such as Jean Grave, Severino Merlino, Louise Michel, Kropotkin and Malatesta. Only one month later, in February 1892, Esteve came back to Barcelona, and Valle went to New

²⁰ Just after the Congress Esteve and Tarrida wrote «Memoria de la delegación española al Congreso Internacional de Bruselas 1891 representativa del [PUSRE]» (*E. P. B.* # 263, IX/10/1891). Tarrida and Ricardo Mella were two of the main Spanish anarchist intellectuals during the Restoration period, who played a notable role in introducing U. S. individualist thought to Spanish anarchism, establishing an important relationship between both movements.

²¹ Diego Abad de Santillán, *Contribución a la Historia del movimiento obrero Español. Desde sus orígenes hasta 1905*, Buenos Aires, 1973, I, 424-425.

York where he became the editor of the anarchist weekly *El Despertar*.

Esteve soon got into trouble upon returning to Barcelona and was compelled to leave Spain. The press where he worked, «La Academia», closed in May 1892, and he probably suffered police persecution. Therefore, in July 1892, Esteve decided to leave Spain and go to the U. S., where he started to work with Valle on *El Despertar*.

UNITED STATES AND CUBA (1892-1925)

When Esteve arrived in the U. S., he encountered an American anarchism which had a double tradition—native and immigrant. As George Woodcock explains, the native tradition was strongly individualist, whereas the immigrant one was collectivist and, later, anarcho-communist. But some years before Esteve's arrival in the U. S., anarchism had become principally a movement of immigrants. It was mainly among the Jewish, Italian and Russian population of the larger cities that anarchism survived.²² Nevertheless, the anarchist groups in which Esteve became involved were those that emerged from the Cubano-Spanish tobacco workers' communities. Valle reveals that Esteve's prestige and capacity as an activist «provoked an increase in anarchist propaganda within the Hispanic community, and more connections with [...] the Italian community».²³

In New York, Esteve joined Cubans and Spaniards in a group named «Parsons» (after the name of one of the Chicago martyrs), which published the Brooklyn based *El Despertar*, the most important Spanish-language anarchist paper in the U. S. during those years. Two years before his departure to the U. S., the impending anarchist Conference of Chicago had been announced. *El Productor* encouraged participation in it, because

²² George Woodcock, *Anarchism*, New York, 1969, 453, 465.

²³ [Valle], «Pedro Esteve...».

it was interested in finding out about «ideals little known in Spain, such as mutualism and anarchic individualism».²⁴ *El Despertar* was closely connected from its founding in 1891 with *El Productor*, which explains why both papers acted together in this campaign, and from March 1893, they jointly promoted the collection of money and the election of representatives. Esteve was elected to represent the Spanish and Cuban anarchists, and Valle to represent the «Parsons» group. Finally, in September 1893, the Conference took place; its participants attempted to unify the different anarchist tendencies, and gave support to the «individual attentat» as a revolutionary tactic (including, for instance, the one against Martínez Campos, Captain General of Catalonia, undertaken by the printer Paulí Pallàs in Barcelona). Those were the years of militant anarchist «propaganda by deed», which was countered by a wave of governmental repression.²⁵

Just after the Conference of Chicago, in December, Esteve went to Cuba to report personally to his Havana comrades, and started to write his *Memorandum, A los Anarquistas de España y Cuba: Memoria de la Conferencia Anarquista Internacional celebrada en Chicago en Septiembre de 1893* (Paterson, 1900), which was not printed entirely until 1900. In Cuba, he lectured in many working-class centers, collaborated on some newspapers and founded *La Alarma* (Dec. 1893), and when this paper closed, he founded *Archivo Social*. He tried to return to Spain, but

²⁴ E. P. B., # 342 (III/16/1893).

²⁵ It is important to note that it was in the 1890s that Barcelona earned the reputation of being a violent city. Just after this attempt, in November another bomb was thrown in the Barcelona Opera House, killing twenty people. But this process was parallel to other countries: on December 9, 1893, a bomb thrown by August Vaillant exploded in the Chamber of Deputies, in France, and a wave of repression started there; on June 24, 1894, Carnot was stabbed to death by the Italian Caserio. The U. S. was not exempt from this process: in July 1892, Alexander Berkman had attempted the assassination of Henry Clay Frick, a businessman.

some of his friends wrote him that the police were looking for him there. Finally, economic and legal problems in the spring of 1894, once more, compelled him to escape from Spanish territory and go to New York. On his way to New York, he spent some days in Ybor City, a borough near Tampa (Fla.), which had a significant Cubano-Spanish anarchist movement. In Ybor City Esteve met his companion, Maria Roda, with whom he lived till 1925; together they had five children. Roda, an eighteen year old Italian, had just arrived in the U. S., escaping from the repression that followed the assassination of Sadi Carnot, President of the French Republic, by the Italian anarchist Santa Caserio. Maria became involved with Caserio's anarchist group through their friendship in school; hence her need to escape persecution in Italy.²⁶

Returning to New York, Esteve collaborated in *El Despertar*, in which he soon got into a contention with some of his companions. In February 1895, the Partido Revolucionario Cubano (PRC), led by José Martí, sent an expedition to Cuba, which provoked the beginning of the Spanish-Cuban War. From its founding in 1891, the PRC obtained support from some Cuban and Spanish anarchists, and the Cuban tobacco workers in the U. S. became the party's main source of income. This situation opened a debate among Cubano-Spanish anarchists over their relationship with Cuban separatism, which finally split the staff of *El Despertar*: the Cuban J. C. Campos and Valle supported the Cuban Revolution, while Esteve opposed it. According to Valle's view, Esteve and other people associated with *El Despertar* maintained that

siendo la Revolución Cubana un movimiento político, no ameritaba estimularla y laborar en su favor. Otros compañeros, menores en número, estimábamos que todo movimiento revolucionario de un pueblo oprimido por otro, merecía nuestras simpatías y apoyo, tanto

²⁶ Emma Goldman, *Living my Life*, NY City, 1934, 150.

por lo que tenía de lucha libertaria, como porque al quedar solucionada la cuestión nacionalista, se podían propagar nuestras doctrinas en el pueblo liberado sin que ofreciera tanta resistencia la preocupación patriótica.²⁷

As a result of this conflict, in February 1895, Esteve became the editor of *El Despertar* until it ceased to be published in 1902. This split within *El Despertar* reveals one of the main problems of anarchism in building a unified movement: the lack of a coherent principle of collaboration with other political movements—in the present case, Cuban separatism. This is a recurrent problem for any political movement, but especially for anarchism, and one which surfaced again during the First World War.

Other issues, aside from the War in Cuba, were creating problems for the anarchist movement. In June 1895, a bomb exploded in Barcelona in the Corpus Christi procession killing twelve people. The bomb thrower escaped, and the police launched a campaign of indiscriminate arrests and torture known as the «Montjuïc repression»—so named after the fortress where prisoners were held, tortured, tried and executed. Beginning in 1896, the Spanish government promoted specific laws against anarchists. In response, in August 1897, the Italian anarchist Michelle Angiolillo shot to death the Spanish Premier, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. Immediately after this assassination, *El Despertar* published the article «Séale la tierra leve» exalting Angiolillo's deed, which reveals its support for «the individual attentat».

El Despertar's rejection of anarchist collaboration with Cuban separatism caused the paper to become estranged from the Cuban community, compelling it to seek support from other

²⁷ [Valle], «Pedro Esteve...». J. C. Campos was a Cuban who was the U. S. reporter of *E. P. B.* from its founding, and a founder of «Parsons» group and *E. D.*

communities. Therefore, once the Spanish-Cuban-American War ended in 1898, *El Despertar* moved from Brooklyn to Paterson (NJ), a city with large silk industries, and where Italian immigrants constituted the main group of workers. Esteve referred to Paterson as «The Rome of Anarchism», because of its vigorous anarchist groups, who, from 1895 on, published *La Questione Sociale*. *El Despertar* solved its financial problems by using the press of *La Questione*, which had ties to Malatesta's group and *El Despertar* since its founding. However, after *El despertar's* establishment in Paterson, anarchists opposed to an organized anarchist movement (anti-organization anarchists) seized the editorial office of *La Questione*, which provoked a counteraction from the anarcho-socialist faction. Finally, the latter faction recovered control of *La Questione*, and it decided to give its editorial chair temporarily to Esteve in August 1899, hoping that he would be able to solve the split within the *La Questione*. Esteve then invited Malatesta to come to Paterson and take part in *La Questione's* conflict.

In August 1899, Malatesta arrived in the U. S., having arranged the trip with Esteve, and planned to stay in Esteve's house.²⁸ The anti-organization anarchists were excluded from the *La Questione's* editorial staff by vote, and Malatesta temporarily took over as editor of *La Questione*. This provoked a serious conflict between the two tendencies and, during a debate, an anti-organization anarchist shot at Malatesta, who was not seriously injured. Malatesta worked for the journal for some months; afterwards he travelled to Florida and Puerto Rico, and sometime around March 1901, he went to London. During Malatesta's sojourn in the U. S., Esteve was his closest collaborator: together they published the booklet *I Congressi socialisti internazionali* with articles by Kropotkin, Malatesta and Esteve, and when Malatesta left the U. S. in spring 1901,

²⁸ Letter from Malatesta to Nettlau, London, 4-8-1899.

Esteve continued to be the editor of *La Questione*, a position he held intermittently until 1906.

During Malatesta's visit, in July 1900, Gaetano Bresci, an anti-organization anarchist from Paterson and a founder of *La Questione*, assassinated King Humberto of Italy. In spite of police surveillance, immediately after this «tyrannicide», Esteve published *A proposito d'un regicidio*, a booklet applauding Bresci's action as a good example of «propaganda by deed»:

Ciò che non aveva potuto raggiungere il migliore dei nostri pensatori; ciò che mai poté ottenere la più importante manifestazione anarchica, lo ottennero le bombe di Ravachol, Pallás, Vaillant, [...] Angiolillo e Bresci.²⁹

Malatesta's sojourn in the U. S. generated and outpouring of anarcho-socialist propaganda, and about 1902, *La Questione Sociale* published one of his booklets, along with one written by the anarcho-socialist group of New London (CT). Furthermore, *El Despertar* compiled several of Esteve's articles in what can be considered his most significant booklet, *Socialismo Anarquista: La Ley, La Violencia, El Anarquismo, La Revolución Social* (Paterson, 1902). This booklet, apart from promoting anarcho-socialism, was intended to counteract the wave of repression to anarchism following president McKinley's assassination in 1901, which created severe problems for the anarchist movement in the U. S.³⁰ Esteve argued that in fact

²⁹ Pedro Esteve, *A proposito d'un regicidio*, Paterson, 1900, 27.

³⁰ Leon Czolgosz, an alleged Polish anarchist, murdered McKinley in Buffalo, in September 1901, which precipitated the resurgence and merging of the anti-radical and nativist traditions of nineteenth-century American life, as the authorities assumed an alien, anarchist conspiracy. A repressive campaign against anarchists was launched by the U. S. government, and public sentiment was aroused against anarchists. Finally, the U. S. passed special legislation to suppress anarchism.

anarchists were not violent at all, with their actions they were only responding state-violence.

The wave of repression and several disasters that occurred in Paterson in February 1902, such as the Great Fire, a blizzard and a flood, left *La Questione* without funds, and Esteve had to leave Paterson and close *El Despertar* because of fear of an arrest during a general strike.³¹ From 1902 to 1905, he combined editorial work with lecture tours on labor organization and «rationalist education» (the movement created by Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia in Barcelona), which were extended to Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and other states. In 1905, he published some issues of the fortnightly *Doctrina anarquista-socialista*, in Paterson; in this same year he went to Texas to begin a new tour. During this trip, he stopped in Chicago and there participated, in collaboration with socialists of various tendencies, in the founding of the Industrial Workers of the World union (IWW Wobblies). The IWW intended to organize all kinds of workers, including members of many immigrant communities. This trend toward anarchist association with the syndical movement anticipated the resolutions of the Anarchist International (IA), which would be founded in Amsterdam in 1907. The IA created an international anarchist organization that stressed syndicalism as the leading instrument to accomplish social revolution. This can be considered a victory for Malatesta.³²

When Esteve was returning to Paterson, police agents picked him up and interrogated him for some hours. This wave of police persecution, apparently, forced him to move to another city. Hence, Esteve's family moved to Tampa in 1906. In Ybor City, Spanish, Italian and Cuban anarchists urged Esteve to run «Antorcha», a cultural center open to free-thinkers of all

³¹ George N. Carey, «The Vessel, the Deed, and the Idea: Anarchists in Paterson, 1895-1908», *Antipode*, vol. 10/11 (1979).

³² Abelló, *Les relacions...*, 129-130.

nationalities, which had a press where he published several newspapers. The club was like other centers founded by anarchists, but with more resources: it offered free classes on many subjects (e. g. languages, among them Esperanto), musical recitals, literary gatherings, a reading room with newspapers from Madrid, Rome, and Havana, and a gymnasium. Finally, in Ybor City, he founded a «Francisco Ferrer School», which attracted students from each immigrant group.³³

In Tampa, as in Paterson, Esteve experienced serious difficulties because of persecution by the authorities and right-wing groups. Firstly, in the process of transferral, his belongings were damaged intentionally, which Maria Roda interpreted as police harassment against him. Secondly, in September 1907, Esteve's ten-year-old son died as a result of a gasoline explosion. Maria Roda relates that it was not possible to know the exact cause of the accident, but that Esteve exclaimed: «They attack my children to manifest their hate and want me to abandon the country; but no! They are not going to achieve it!»³⁴ It is not known whether this was an accident or an attempt against Esteve. Finally, during the tobacco workers' strike of 1910, factory owners, in accordance with local political bosses, started to use ruthless repressive procedures, and the torture and lynching of labor activists took its toll. It was in this context that Esteve published a manifesto that outraged conservative groups in Tampa, who, enjoying the protection of a «Citizens' Committee», tried to lynch him in January 1911. At the beginning of the strike, he had become the Tampa correspondent for *L'Era Nuova* (Paterson), and *Cultura Proletaria* (Brooklyn); therefore, when the attempt at lynching occurred, Esteve escaped to New York with his family, where he began to edit *Cultura Proletaria*, working with its founder Jaime Vidal.

³³ Gary R. Mormino and George E. Pozzetta, *The Immigrant World of Ybor City*, Illinois, 1987, 150.

³⁴ [Roda], «Pedro Esteve».

In the latter paper, he encouraged participation of workers in the IWW and other unions. *Cultura Proletaria* was closed by the federal government in October 1911; months later, he began to edit the bilingual *Cultura Obrera-Labor Culture*, as the organ of the «Marine, Firemen, Oilers & Watertenders' union of the Atlantic & Gulf of the Transport Workers of America», some editorials of which were collected in the booklet *Vest-Pocket Essays for the Laborer* (NY, 1912). *Cultura Obrera* was in constant friction with the authorities, and in mid-1912 it was banned for some months. He started to edit it again in November 1912, but exclusively in Spanish, probably as a strategy to avoid censorship. Aware of the police surveillance of the publication, he warned the readers:

El hecho es que ahora seguramente antes de admitirnos como «materia de segunda clase» en correos, se buscarán todos los apellidos, obligándonos a darles traducido una idea de cuanto se estampa en el periódico todas las semanas y a tener siempre a su disposición una lista de suscriptores al corriente de pago, y a otros mil detalles que no se exigen a los demás periódicos.³⁵

In May 1913, *Cultura Obrera* became the organ of the Maritime Transportation Workers' Industrial National Union and of the local Tobacco Unions (which adhered to the IWW), and a voice, though not official organ, of the IWW. *Cultura Obrera* was supported by an anarchist group with the same name as the paper. «Cultura Obrera», like other groups in which Esteve participated, promoted the creation of a cultural center similar to «Antorcha» in Tampa. Furthermore, during this period, he collaborated with several papers and magazines, among them *Mother Earth*—the monthly magazine founded by Emma Goldman.³⁶

³⁵ [Esteve], «Aún no asamos y ya pringamos», C. O. 2, # 2 (XII/2/1912).

³⁶ Emma Goldman (1869-1940) was one of the most famous figures of the U. S. anarchist movement. Born in Russia, she arrived at the age of seventeen in the U. S., where she met her companion, A. Berkman.

With the First World War, another deep split occurred within the international movement. Some anarchist thinkers, such as Kropotkin, Grave, Malato and others, published a manifesto inviting all anarchists to fight against Germany, and this provoked a strong reaction from several anarchists, among them, Malatesta and Esteve. Esteve published his «Open Letter to Peter Kropotkin», in October 1914, generating an intense debate. Esteve's position isolated him from some anarchist sectors, but this was hardly the only difficulty that he endured during the war. In November 1917, *Cultura Obrera* was outlawed by the authorities, probably because of Esteve's campaign against the war. Furthermore, following the Russian Revolution, the «Red Scare» began started in the U. S. It was a period of home inspection, arrest and deportation of individuals suspected of being socialists, which included, among others, anarchists and Wobblies.

The prohibition of *Cultura Obrera* forced Esteve to look for a new job, so he started to work as translator from English to Spanish in a publishing company. By 1922, the «Red Scare» had subsided, easing the pressure on radicals; in that year the second series of *Cultura Obrera* appeared, and some editorials of the paper were collected in the booklet *Reformismo, dictadura, federalismo* (NY, 1922). «Cultura» finally found permanent headquarters and «[Esteve] suggested the idea of bringing some books and having a little library, and he ordered the first books from Spain», creating a labor cultural center that expanded and operated for many years.³⁷

During his youth in Barcelona, Esteve used to take part in anarchist picnics and feasts, and beginning in 1894 he did this with his family. On Sunday of September 13, 1925, Esteve participated on one such picnic, organized by *Cultura Obrera*. A few hours after his departure, his companions received the message that he was seriously ill. Some hours later Esteve, «the

³⁷ Cosme Blanco, «Recordatorio», C. P., # 235 (IX/12/1931).

master of a generation», died because of cerebral congestion at the age of 59, in Weehauken, N. J., and his body was incinerated in Queens (NY). Just after his death, several anarchist papers wrote articles commemorating him, among them the one that from Italy Malatesta published in *Pensiero e Volontà*. *Cultura Obrera* dedicated a whole issue to Esteve, where expressions of condolence to his widow, Maria Roda, were printed. Among these expressions, there is the one from the «Club Separatista Català» of New York, which seems to indicate that Esteve had been in contact with Catalan separatists in the U.S. during the 1920s. This contact is similar to the one that he maintained with Cuban separatists in the 1890s. However, there are no more references in *Cultura Obrera* about its relation with Catalan separatism, and it can only be taken as an additional link between anarchism and republicanism.

After Esteve's death, *Cultura Obrera* had economic problems, which obliged the paper to close in May 1927. But, from March 1927, *Cultura Proletaria* (2nd series) began to be published as the «Voice of the Anarchist Federation of Groups of Spanish Language in the United States», continuing Esteve's labor until 1953.

In conclusion, we see that Esteve played a key role in linking the Spanish, Cuban and the U. S. anarchist movements, mainly through his activity in New York and Florida. In New York, the Hispanic anarchist press started in 1891 with *El Despertar*, and finished in 1953 with the end of *Cultura Proletaria*.