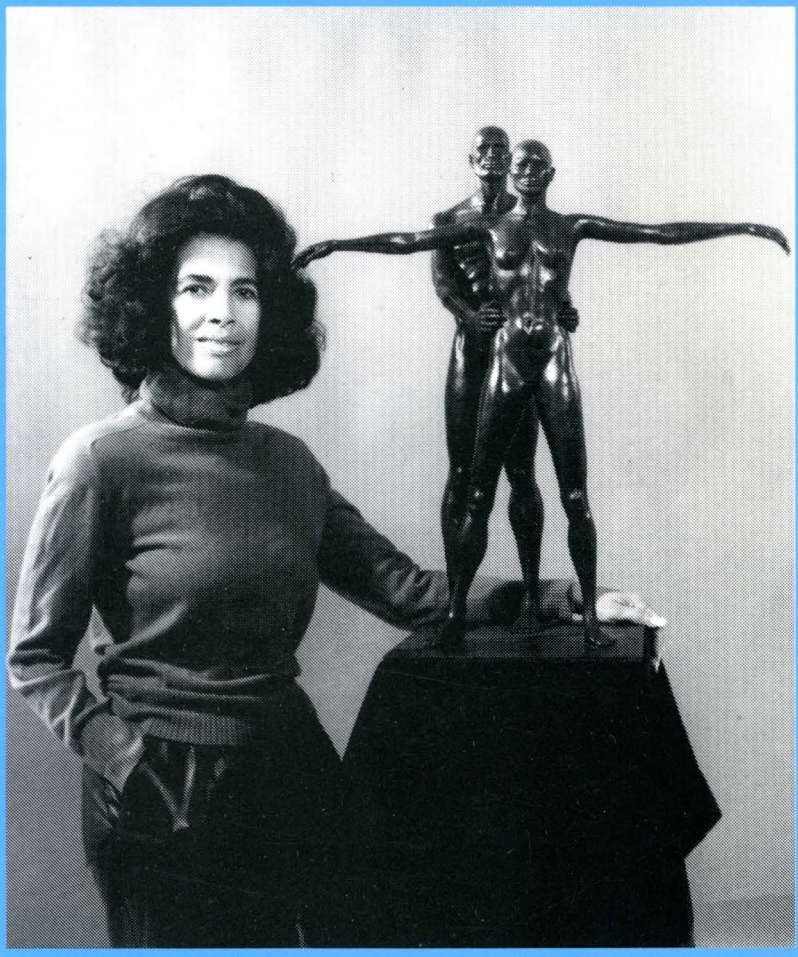
TIGER LILY

JOURNAL BY WOMEN OF COLOUR



Artis Lane and sculpture 'Release', 1982. Bronze. 26" high.

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WOMEN AND SOCIETY

TIGER LILY JOURNAL

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Journal by Women of Colour

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In this issue of *Tiger Lily* we focus on women, who through their commitment to their art and to their communities, have made a difference.

We are pleased to introduce a remarkable and talented Canadian artist, Artis Lane. Born and raised in Toronto, Artis Lane, who is a sculptor and portrait painter, has dedicated her life to portraying the strength, the beauty and the dignity of the Black race. The life of an artist has never been easy and in some countries it can be quite dangerous. In *Women Artists in Chile* by Marjorie Agosin, we learn about the courage and perseverance that women must have to continue to work as artists. *Marie,* fiction by Beth Brant, is about family and coping under stressful circumstances; and *Ajax La Bas* by Turkish writer, Yesim Ternar, is a story full of warm humour. The poems by Alejandra Pizarnik are rich and varied and satisfies all of us who love poetry.

There can be no doubt that the writing of history has omitted women and minority women in particular, from its pages. Yet, we do know that women have contributed to the settling of countries, towns and villages. In the essay, *But Women Did Come* by Dora Nipp, we learn about the lives and contributions of Chinese women in Canada. Temma Kaplan's superb essay, *Other Scenarios: Women and Spanish Anarchism,* shatters the myths of the passivity of Spanish women. It is not often that we see books published on Black Australians and Kathleen Gallagher's review of *Inside Black Australia* gives a better understanding of Australia's first people.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue as much as we did. For each time we read the newspaper or watch T.V. we get despondent as we monitor the rise of racism and sexism, the violence that surrounds us daily with the abuse of women and children and the destruction of our planet, we are reminded that there are people who still care. People who are dedicated not only to their art but also their communities and we gather hope. Together we can and *must* make a difference.

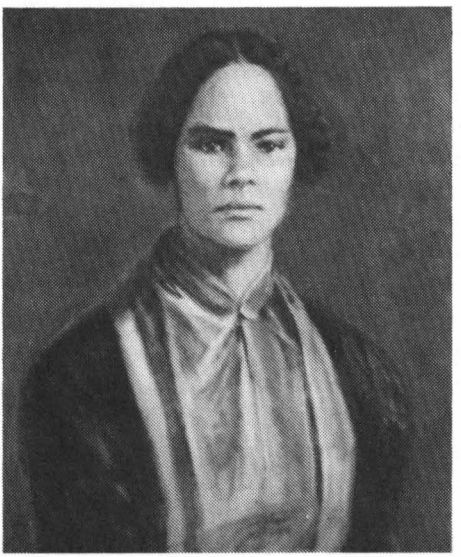
We wish to thank our contributors and subscribers for your continued support.

Ann Wallace

Portrait of an Artist: The Spiritual Search of Artis Lane

by Adrienne Shadd

MARY SHAD



Lane captures the spirit of abolitionist and newspaper editor Mary Ann Shadd Cary in this 1987 portrayal.

It is sometimes said that form created by an artist has artistic importance only if it incorporates spiritual values. For some thirty years, African-Canadian Artis Lane was known primarily as a portrait painter, but it was always the spiritual qualities of her subjects which she strove to capture on canvas above and beyond the physical likeness.

"I believe that man is created in God's image, and therefore I go for the spiritual qualities of the person — not the feature for feature, or surface representation. For me it is a spiritual search, and I can feel it when I connect."

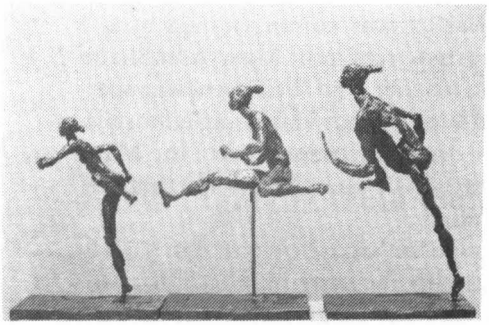
This search for the spirituality of her subjects was evident when, several years ago, the Los Angeles-based artist was commissioned by the Shadd family to paint a portrait of her great-great aunt Mary Ann Shadd Cary. Shadd Cary, a staunch abolitionist, teacher, and the first newspaperwoman in Canada, was known for her fiery speeches and biting editorials. The portrait which Lane unveiled at the opening ceremonies of the Mary Shadd Public School in Scarborough, April 1987, vividly captures this fire, as well as her strength and determination.

"There are all kinds of artists, and I'm not an analytical one, I'm strictly intuitive," explains Lane. In grappling with the only photograph available of Shadd Cary taken in the 1860s, and her biography, Artis created only three portraits. The third attempt — the one unveiled in Scarborough — combined the qualities of the first two: a young, searching Shadd Cary in the first attempt and a warm, loving personality in the second, coupled with her maturity and strength. Because Lane believes that painting is the artist's thought objectified, these different versions actually expressed what Artis went through in attempting to understand and come to grips with the fully-developed personality of Mary Shadd Cary. The final version, the one in which Artis felt the presence of her ancestor, "was all-encompassing."[1]

The work of Artis Lane embodies the spiritual elements of human nature, passion and emotion, but always from her particular vantage point as a Black and as a woman. This is no more evident than in Artis' first love — sculpture.

The inspiration for several figurative bronzes was based on her study of athlete Rene Felton, who was training for the 1984 U.S. Olympic trials as a hurdler. Here was a young police cadet, a UCLA student, and a volunteer helping delinquent boys rebuild old motorcycles (she'd get them donated from the police academy), who had recently undergone four operations for ileocolitis. Because the police academy was a two-hour bus ride from home, Artis offered her studio as a place to stay so that the young athlete would have more time to study. The end result was a series of studies portrayed in 'Waiting' and 3 pieces entitled 'Hurdler'. Renowned Olympic hurdler Edwin Moses, upon viewing the work for the first time, said that it was the first time he had ever seen that particular moment — when the hurdler's leg clears the hurdle while the other is touching the ground — frozen in time.

HURDLERS



Hurdlers I, II, III (r to l), 1983.
Bronze, 18", 16", 13" high.

CELEBRATION II

Celebration II, 1985.
Bronze, 37" high.

"They are symbolic works, even though portrayed as sports figures. When I did the hurdler, it symbolized the struggle of one human being overcoming the many obstacles of life."

While staying at Artis' studio, Felton got pregnant and the father backed out of the relationship. Despite her illness, and the stigma of being a young Black unwed mother, Felton was determined to bring a healthy, happy baby into the world. 'Celebration I and II' of a pregnant mother with her arms outstretched as if to embrace life express the courage of this young woman in the face of adversity. Ms. Felton is one of Artis Lane's heroes.

"My message is to portray the positive, the strength, the beauty, and the dignity of the Black race. But I find that my work has universal appeal. I gear it to be timeless and inspirational. In the two figures entitled 'Release' (a tribute to Lane's current husband and manager Vince Cannon) the man is releasing the woman to explore her full potential, thereby liberating himself from the tyranny of male domination. The figures are portrayed as Black, but are symbolic of the first man and first woman."

Artis Lane was born Artis Shreve in the small Black farming community of North Buxton, Ontario, one of the original stops on the Underground Railroad out of the United States into Canada. At the age of seven, she began sculpting her own dolls out of clay from the bank of a stream that ran through her grandparents' farm. The child creator sculpted doll figures

and intuitively laid them out to dry in the hot sun. It was at this point that the family recognized she had an artistic gift.

Early on, Artis' talent was nurtured by her mother, as well as by several teachers. "In the little two-room schoolhouse (in Buxton) — the same one that was built around the time of Mary Shadd — I was taught by Mrs. Marie Carter, and I would enter (art) contests and get the first prize ... And my mother would spoil me. The other girls would have to do housework and I wouldn't as long as I was drawing or painting. She just had a tremendous respect for the arts. All of us had to learn piano, and we were singers ...." In *Musical Buxton*, a history of musical groups and musicians in the village, Vivian Robbins remembers:

> The Shreve Trio — Norma, Artis and Carol, daughters of Albert and Julia Shreve — showed early signs that they possessed great potential. Their mother, ... largely self-taught, ... played for her three daughters when they sang at church programmes when they were very young. The girls attended the North Buxton Elementary School and later Chatham Collegiate Institute where they were members of the Glee Club. The Director of the Glee Club, Miss Bessie Bracken, discovered their talent and began having them sing at various school and civic functions. Their names appeared on the marquee of the Capitol Theatre, Chatham, when they sang for a war benefit held in that city. They sang over Radio Station CFCO and cut the record 'Paper Doll' at the station. Their singing careers ended when Norma married George Brown and moved to Detroit. Carol went to Teacher's College and Artis received a 4-year scholarship to study fine art at the (Ontario College of Art)....[2]

Prior to winning the scholarship, Artis was already earning extra money by painting portraits of her classmates. At fifteen, Shreve won the Dominion of Canada Award for portraiture and, with the aid of Miss Alice McCoig, a teacher in Chatham, received the Edith Chaplin Scholarship to the Ontario College of Art in Toronto, a scholarship which had always gone to an outstanding Canadian student who aspired to a career in law or medicine. For the first time, it would go to a student of art.

At the Ontario College of Art, then a strict college of European instruction and an emphasis on drawing and design, Artis continued to distinguish herself. For her work depicting the multicultural heritage of Canada through its historical development, she won the O'Keefe Fellowship. She was also voted "Queen of the Arts Ball". The year was 1949.

> Dusky, vivacious Artis Shreve, 21, of Chatham, today won the title of "Queen of the Ball" and will reign supreme over the annual ball of the Ontario College of Art in the Royal York tonight. Beautiful,

dark-skinned Artis captured the vote by a huge majority over five other contestants. She will also be known as the Artists' Cover Girl.[3]

News clippings suggest that it was an exceptional feat for the times. One Chatham reporter wrote:

> Still dubious about the whole thing, the happy Shreves last night made a great show of modesty when faced with cameras and newsmen. They just couldn't believe that their Artis had been named Queen of the Ball by the Ontario College of Art. It was the first time in 28 years they've been staging the event that a Chatham girl walked away with the crown. "Artis told us she'd been nominated," Mrs. Bert Shreve admitted. "But of course we didn't think — well, it's quite a surprise."[4]

Despite the distinction, Artis remembers the humiliation when the senior artist on staff refused to paint her portrait, an honour he had bestowed each year on previous Queens.

Yet, Lane also remembers the cameraderie among fellow art students like Jamaican Dorothy Henriques, the only other Black in the school, with whom she double-dated. There was also her close-knit group of 3 female and 4 male classmates who likened themselves to the famous 'Group of Seven' Canadian artists. Perhaps her most cherished memory was being nominated for the Governor General's Award and receiving a surprise phone call back in North Buxton from the President of the College, Fred Haines. He urged her to concentrate on her lettering (that part of the curriculum focussing on commercial design). "If you only do your lettering project, I know you'll win it," Lane remembers him saying. The fine art major had not been terribly interested in perfecting this aspect of her training.

At the end of her third year at OCA, however, Artis forfeited the Governor General's medal and the fourth year of her Edith Chaplin Scholarship when she married American, Bill Lane, a reporter for the *Michigan Chronicle*. He took her to Detroit. She used her O'Keefe Fellowship to enter Cranbrooke Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

To her knowledge Lane was the first Black student to enter Cranbrooke Academy and it required the assistance of the Detroit Urban League for her to gain admittance. While she was attracted to its reputation for being avant garde in comparison to the conservative traditions of OCA, Lane felt lost and totally isolated at elitist Cranbrooke. In Detroit, she, her husband and new baby lived in an apartment building which housed young Black professionals and civil rights leaders. But as a housewife, student and new mother, she still felt the outsider in a social circle in which many

of the women had accomplished careers. She was forever dreaming of paintings and sculpted figures.

The Lanes' marriage ended after seven years. Artis began to paint to earn a living, supporting herself and her young daughter as a portrait artist at J.L. Hudson's Gallery in downtown Detroit. She met fellow artists like sculptor Oliver LeGron and painter Hughie Lee-Smith, and through them, Langston Hughes, who did a poetry reading at Artis' home.[5] Two sisters, Norma and Dolores, had also moved to Detroit. (Three of the four Shreve daughters are artists.) Then singer-actress Diahann Caroll came to town in the musical *'No Strings'*. Artis wanted to meet this fascinating woman. Diahann told Artis that if she ever wanted to move to New York, she could stay with her. About a month later Artis called to ask if she was serious. She was.

In New York, Diahann Caroll and Verily Morrison, a dress designer she had known in Toronto, introduced Lane to people who wanted their portraits painted. She also joined Portraits Incorporated, an agency that matched painters and subjects. M.J. Hewitt writes in the *International Review of African American Art*:

> She joined ... when they represented about four hundred artists, none of them Black until Artis came along ... But she felt alienated again — like being "the first one" at Cranbrooke. However, she remembered something the great Mary McLeod Bethune once said about the responsibility that accompanies being "the first one" — something about being there so they know there is someone of colour in every field.[6]

In 1958 the Booth family (founders of the Cranbrooke Institutions) commissioned Lane to do a portrait of one of the founders' daughters who lived in California. Artis loved the climate there and decided to stay. The late Cary Grant was the first important commission Artis received after deciding to stay in California. He became a good friend and mentor, paving the way for other commissions. Grant also bought several still lifes, warning her not to devote all her time to portrait painting.

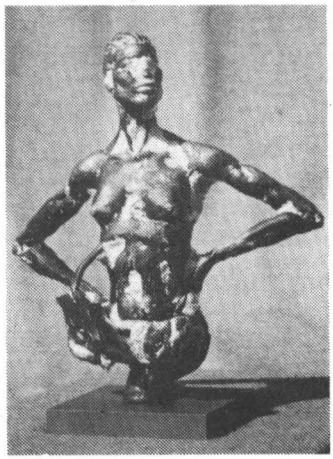
But portrait painting had become her survival mechanism. Her client list grew to include such celebrities as Johnny Mathis, Ann Margret, Charlton Heston, Barbara Stanwyk and Linda Evans, to name a few. She became known as the "artist to the stars", a label she detested because it made the subject more important than the art. An affiliation with the Greg Juarez Gallery sent her art to homes all over the world. She also became the official portrait artist of the National Art Association. In this role, she portrayed those who were honoured because of their love of art.

Mrs. George Bush, Clare Booth Luce, Nancy Kissinger, Mr. and Mrs. Armand Hammer, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Getty are among those painted by the brush of Artis Lane.

In the late seventies and early eighties, Lane went back to study at UCLA under Jan Stussy, who had returned from Egypt and was offering a master class in "Figurative Painting." Although she had led an often exciting life as a portrait painter, she was not creatively satisfied. "I had to make statements that were timeless, that had to do with my experience as a Black woman — I don't see enough images out there." Consequently, Artis was catapulted back into sculpture — her earliest creative impulse as a child.

Actually, it was Stussy's love of Egyptian painting and sculpture — he feels it is the highest art form — that drew Artis to his class. In fact, one of the criticisms of her sculpture is that it is too elongated, too Egyptian in its influence.[8] However, Artis thrives on the comparison. "To me, Africans are the greatest, the most powerful sculptors in the world. Their work speaks. It has great design. If we had more education about our own art, then every black home would have a piece of African sculpture."

EMERGING WOMAN



In the groundbreaking 'Emerging Woman,' 1989, bits of ceramic shell (from the ceramic mold of the bronze cast) are left over the figure's eyes and body, giving it the appearance of having been dug up after centuries underground. Bronze, steel, resin, ceramic shell, 16¾" high, 14½" wide, 6¼" deep.

Thanks to her new career direction, and the emerging world-wide market for "Black" art, particularly in the African-American community, Artis Lane has cultivated a whole new client list among whom Bill Cosby, Sidney Poitier, Oprah Winfrey, Cicely Tyson and Quincy Jones are collectors.

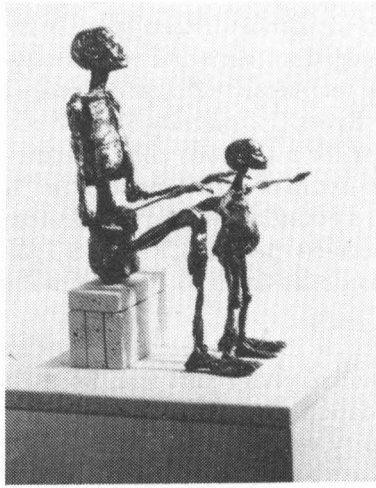
In recent years Artis and her second husband Vince Cannon (to whom she has been married for almost fifteen of their 29 years together) have welcomed underprivileged students and community groups to their studio to expose them to the technical and creative process of art. For this, she received the Medgar Evers Community Service Award in 1986. She has also donated her work for numerous charity auctions which have benefitted the Links, the Museum of Afro-American Art, International Orphans, Exceptional Children's Foundation, and the United Negro College Fund. In April, 1990, she received the NAACP ACT-SO Award (West Coast Region) for her dedicated enthusiasm to the community in the field of the visual arts.

Life has come full circle in many ways for Artis Lane. In January, 1990, she unveiled her tribute to civil rights icon Rosa Parks and donated it to the Rosa Parks Foundation. It is a depiction of Mrs. Parks sitting on that historic bus almost forty years ago in Alabama after refusing to stand in a near-empty White section because the Black section at the back was full. This sole act of courage triggered a national resistance movement. At the Black Women's Forum honouring Mrs. Parks, Lane described how this demure, unassuming woman had affected her at a reception some thirty years earlier in Detroit. "She reminded me of myself in some ways — quiet, physically small — but she had this encompassing smile and a totally centred presence that filled the room. Her strength was inspirational!" Anheuser Busch has since sponsored a bronze bust of this great lady which will be housed permanently at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

Lane also designed the Nelson Mandela Courage Award on behalf of Trans Africa Forum, a non-profit corporation and leader in the fight for increased U.S. sanctions against South Africa. The award, a lucite sculpture with the image of Mandela — fist raised in the ANC salute — embedded inside, was presented for the first time on April 1, 1990 to anti-apartheid activist and entertainer Harry Belafonte.

Despite all the successes and honours bestowed upon her over the years, Artis Lane has always been acutely aware of the struggle to gain acceptance in an art world that has been so dominated by White males. Yet the power and generosity of spirit ever-present in the outlook of this philosopher-artist is probably the key to her unique career. As she explained in a recent article in *American Visions*, "I am extremely proud to be a (B)lack female artist. There is that tangible reality that I happen to live and work in (W)hite, male-dominated systems, but the older I get, the less I am willing to focus on the differences between people. I am of the firm belief that there is a unified energy — the energy of the mind, if you will — that is whole and healing and everyone's birthright. If we connect with it, issues of race and ego fall away. That's the energy I want to tap in my work, whatever the subject I'm dealing with."[9]

"MOTHER AND CHILD"



Lane explores human dignity in the face of tragedy in her comment on Ethiopian famine, 'Mother and Child', 1989. Bronze, marble. 14½" H, 12" W, 12" D.

The author would like to extend a special thank you to Artis Lane and Vince Cannon for innumerable resource materials, as well as their patience and support. Thanks also to Diana Myers of the Ontario College of Art, Toronto and Hazel Da Breo, art history consultant.

Adrienne Shadd is a Toronto writer.

FOOTNOTES

[1] A dismaying update concerning the portrait is that in Autumn, 1989 vandals scratched a large x over the face of Mary Shadd which restoration efforts have not completely removed. The incident took place on a weekend when a group of youth using the grounds for a sports tournament were allowed access to the washrooms and hall inside the school. At production date, no one had been apprehended, although a community group has taken responsibility for the crime. School officials have offered no known motive for this act of vandalism.

[2] Vivian M. Robbins, *Musical Buxton*, prepared in conjunction with the 1969 Labour Day Celebration, North Buxton, Ontario, 1969, p. 24.

[3] "Vivacious Artis Shreve Chosen Arts Ball Queen", *Toronto Star*, March 3, 1949.

[4] "Artis Named Queen of Ball, Family Just Can't Believe It", *Chatham Daily News*, March 3, 1949.

[5] M.J. Hewitt, "The Release!", *International Review of African American Art*, Volume 6, Number 2, 1984, p. 49.

[6] Ibid. Just prior to production, Lane was commissioned by Anheuser Busch to sculpt a bronze bust of her hero Mary McLeod Bethune.

[7] Margaret Ann Cross, "Beauty From Within", *Heritage. A Journal of Grosse Pointe Life*, October 1988, p. 38.

[8] M.J. Hewitt, "The Release!", op.cit., p. 50.

[9] Marlena Doktorczyk-Donohue, "The Soul of Artis Lane", *American Visions. The Magazine of Afro-American Culture*, Volume 5, Number 2, April 1990, p. 23.

"But Women Did Come": Working Chinese Women in the Interwar Years

by Dora Nipp

There were few Chinese women in Ontario prior to World War Two. In 1911 some thirty years after the arrival of the first Chinese in Toronto, women were only 2.9 per cent of the Chinese population in the province. By 1921 the proportion of women had increased modestly to 4.6 per cent, but not until the 1960s did the sex ratio begin to reach a balance.[1] Impersonal statistics tell nothing, however, of those they represent, of who the women were and how they lived. For the Chinese community the arrival of the women symbolized the final stage of the transition from villager to settler. The arrival of a wife and the immediate responsibilities for dependents strengthened the immigrant's economic and social interests in Canada.

Chinese began to arrive in Ontario well before the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) had been completed, but it was not until the western section was finished that significant numbers began leaving British Columbia for central and eastern Canada. For Canadians the CPR provided a much needed national transport system. But for the Chinese navvies who had been recruited to work on it, its completion resulted in large-scale unemployment. Unable to accumulate enough savings to return to China, the Chinese found themselves not only unemployed, but also caught in a depression. The depression further aggravated already existing anti-Chinese sentiment. As a result a series of laws and regulations designed to

limit the economic, social and political participation of the Chinese was implemented. Those who left British Columbia found their way to the small communities that dotted the provinces, and many migrated to the urban centres of Ontario, which did not display the same degree of xenophobia found in the west coast. This, as well as the opportunities in the cities to establish one's own business enterprise, made Toronto a particularly attractive settlement.

Early immigrants were mostly involved in the service industries and were found in either laundry or restaurant work. Unlike either Vancouver or Victoria, in the early days Toronto had no discernible ethnic enclave. It was not until some time later that the perimeters of a "Chinatown" were set out.[2]

Immigration records noted the arrival of the first Chinese female in Canada in 1860, docking in Victoria. Mrs. Lee Chong, who had come via San Francisco, was a wife of a prominent Victoria merchant. It is not clear when the first Chinese woman arrived in Ontario. The 1901 census tract enumerated 629 Chinese in Ontario, but did not differentiate the sexes. Over the next ten-year period, seventy-nine women appear in the records as being born in China, with 2,638 men. The greatest number of women was found to be living in Toronto.[3]

Although it is not possible within this discussion to detail the factors responsible for the paucity of women, it is necessary to provide a summary of the main explanations for the imbalance during this early period. First, it has been argued that the Chinese were not true immigrants; that is, that throughout their stay in the country, they possessed a "sojourner" mentality. Their actions were supposedly proof of their intent to earn as much money as possible as quickly as possible and return to China. The sole reason for being in Canada was to support the family they had left behind.

Another explanation is that restrictive Canadian immigration policies actively discouraged Chinese immigration. The graduated head taxes that were levied — $50 in 1885, $100 in 1900 and finally $500 in 1904[4] — made it virtually impossible for most Chinese labourers to have the luxury of a wife and family. By 1923 the tax was abolished to be replaced by almost complete exclusion with the Chinese Immigration Act. Regardless of these restraints, the decision to send for a wife and children, as with the decision of the men to migrate, was ultimately a personal choice.

Much of the information found in this paper is extracted from the memoirs of Mrs. Anna Ma — the wife of Rev. Ma T.K. Wou, Toronto's first Chinese Presbyterian minister — and from the as yet incomplete autobiography of a Canadian-born woman who shall be referred to as Mrs. L. In her memoirs the latter describes with sensitivity her mother (Mrs. Y) who arrived in Canada in 1898. From taped conversations with the

children of some of the early women also comes a partial glimpse of the pioneers' lives. Their roles as mothers, wives and business partners were defined by their position as women who circumvented imposed restraints and came to terms with life in Canada. For example, women widowed in Canada all chose to remain as permanent settlers and became breadwinners and decision-makers. Regardless of a woman's status prior to her arrival, her status within the immigrant community would be redetermined by her husband's social standing.

This paper focusses on the interwar years. One woman, however, Mrs. Y, arrived before this era and so discussion of her experiences in Ontario will begin before the First World War. The experiences of Mrs. Y who lived in North Bay and her youngest daughter (Mrs. L) who was born there were quite different from those of women who resided in larger urban centres. The women in this discussion had, however, shared a common experience as Chinese Christians. Unlike their sisters in British Columbia, Ontario Chinese women were actively involved with the church. The presence of China-trained Chinese missionaries and the concentrated effort of the United and Presbyterian churches among the Chinese were influencing factors. For the only Chinese family in North Bay, Christianity complemented their Chinese heritage and the mother devoted much time and effort to combine the two into a working model.

At the time of her arrival in the east, Mrs. Y was twenty years old, her husband a number of years older. He had worked on the CPR before moving east, first to Boston, then to Montreal. Mrs. Y was the first Chinese bride in Montreal, and she and her husband settled into a laundry that Mr. Y's relatives operated on Ontario Street. The family lived in Montreal for seven years during which time Mrs. Y had four children. Her second son was the first Chinese boy born in Quebec. Little is known of her life during this time until the family moved to North Bay. Here they joined Mr. Y's relatives who also ran a laundry. There were no other Chinese families in the community, nor were there any single Chinese women. In North Bay Mrs. Y had four more children, before her husband suddenly died of a heart attack at the age of fifty-one.

Mrs. Y was left to care for eight children with the youngest only eighteen months. Mrs. Y's children remember her as a deeply religious woman who struggled to support the young family. Her informal support system consisted of an uncle and other of her husband's male relatives. By her son and daughter's accounts, Mrs. Y immediately assumed the dual role of mother and father, relinquishing the responsibility of raising her children to no one.

Mrs. Y was fortunate to have received an education as a child in China. Although this was not highly unusual, at the same time it was not a common practice. Mrs. Y was anxious that her own children would also receive

a solid education and this meant returning to China. Her daughter recalls that her mother "saved frugally" and the entire family left North Bay with their "uncle."

Shortly after returning to her husband's village, Mrs. Y found that the parcel of land her children were to receive could not possibly support her family. She was not one to dwell on misfortunes over which she had little control. Mrs. Y enrolled the older children in schools close to the village, and with the two youngest she travelled in the countryside before leaving for Hong Kong and then back to Canada. "Mother returned to Canada to earn money to educate the family." With her she took the eldest and youngest sons, and the youngest daughter. Returning to North Bay, Mrs. Y continued with the small laundry. Again, "an uncle assisted mother in providing for the large family, and we were never hungry or lived on relief ... we survived on our little laundry for our livelihood."[5]

Mrs. Y had no intention of returning again to China, but chose to raise her children in North Bay. It would appear that she led a somewhat insular life and that her efforts were directed entirely toward her family. Hers was the only Chinese family in the town, and she does not seem to have had any contact with Chinese women in other areas. Work seemed to consume every moment of her time. Her son says that she did not sleep much because she did not have the time, and instead stole naps in between tasks. To be able to pay for the children's studies in China and eventually to pay for their return passage, Mrs. Y gave up the laundry and opened a small restaurant. Known as the New York Restaurant, like most Chinese restaurants of that era it did not serve Chinese food. To assist their mother, the children came home during lunch hour. Mrs. L remembers that, "Sometimes we were kept so busy that at noon hour we did not have time to lunch, so we stood up to eat our sandwiches before returning to school."[6]

Mrs. Y's decision to leave the laundry and set up a restaurant was most likely due to the higher returns that the latter offered. During the early years of Ontario's Chinese community, laundries and restaurants were the preferred investments. Both allowed those involved to keep business expenses to a minimum. This ensured that they were able to make at least a small margin of profit. According to one study of Chinese in Toronto, if they could choose most Chinese would operate restaurants rather than laundries because while the initial capital investment was two to three times greater, the profit margin was also more significant.

Even before she immigrated to Canada, Mrs. Y was a devout Christian who wanted very much for her children to grow up as good Christians: "She brought up her children with a Christian upbringing, and taught us to be thoughtful of others. At the time she received much criticism [in China]. When our brothers and sisters graduated village school, she sent the girls to the Anglican mission in Fat Shan and the boys were enrolled in

the school in Canton City."[7]

Mrs. Y's efforts, however, were ill-rewarded, not because she did not succeed in business, but because repeated tragedies struck the family. Her son and two daughters who were studying in China succumbed to tuberculosis. Later on the youngest son, who had also returned to continue his education, contracted TB and died in 1921 in a sanatorium in North Bay. In 1921 a burglary attempt left Mrs. Y grazed by a bullet, but the second shot proved fatal to her eldest son. At his funeral service she "sobbed that each son she raised to manhood had been taken away from her. She told us of a vision she had had one night. She dreamt an angel entered through the back window and took something away."[8] No suspect in the burglary was ever caught.

Mrs. Y's youngest daughter (Mrs. L) spent little time in China, and unlike her brothers and sisters grew up in North Bay. In her reminiscence of the mother-daughter relationship of a young woman caught in the conflicting demands of growing up Chinese in a Canadian society, Mrs. L recalled that Mrs. Y tried to impress upon her children that they were Chinese, and that it was important not to forget one's heritage. In their interaction with non-Chinese children in the community, they were taught to remember that they were "different" from everyone else and had to act accordingly.[9]

Mrs. L spoke of the difficult position in which her mother's attitude placed her:

> In my strict upbringing I was not allowed to associate with many of my age, so I have very few friends. I was reminded that I was Chinese and discriminated against. Being a Canadian-born Chinese [sic] I tried to follow the ways of Canadians. Yet I found it difficult at times because of my respect and obedience to my mother.[10]

Although her companions were not many, Mrs. L did have friends with whom she felt very close. From them she learned Canadian ways. "I remember the first Christmas on our return. Everybody at school was talking about Santa Claus and his bag of toys. So on Christmas Eve, D and I hung our stockings but found nothing the next morning. Mother did not understand the Western customs. I considered it a real treasure when my schoolmate ... presented me with a beautiful used doll."[11] Mrs. L was taught proper table manners, and how to play the piano. To her these were important steps to her "Canadianization." One special friend was a major influence in her life. From her she learned to enjoy her studies at school and received much religious teaching. "When I told mother how much she meant to me as a real friend, mother used to remind me we had no friends because we had no money, but I thought otherwise."[12]

In her memoirs, Mrs. L reveals one of many obstacles facing not just

Canadian teenagers, but in particular a Chinese-Canadian teenager:

> By the time I was going to high school, I was interested in my studies and in sports. I was on the basketball team. At this stage, like all others I became interested in boys, but could only [sic] admire them at a distance and was taught I was not one of them. I felt discriminated. So with a strong upbringing with Chinese customs, I was not allowed to associate with them. I recall a beautiful Chinese girl. Her mother was French. Her father was transferred to the CNR telegram office. She fell in love with a Canadian boy [meaning European Canadian] but later he gave her up because she was too ashamed to introduce him to her Chinese father. Her sister was a clever student, but lived a most unhappy life. Among the French she felt unaccepted and like-wise she was not accepted among the Chinese because of her mixed blood, but both sisters were beautiful.[13]

In her career aspirations, Mrs. L was not unlike other women of her age. In her memoirs she stated that:

> It was time to decide what I would like to be. When I mentioned nursing to mother, she was stunned. That was one of the lowest professions one could consider next to being a soldier ... Financially, I knew I could not afford a college education, so I took up business administration and a commercial course. On graduation, I worked in an insurance firm.[14]

One of Mrs. L's pastimes was writing to pen-pals. Between studies and working for her mother she had little time for other activities. It was through corresponding with friends that she met her future husband. As Mrs. L was one of the few Chinese women in Ontario of marriageable age, it was only a matter of time before young men would seek her out. Mr. L was living in Brockville some miles from North Bay when they began corresponding. Mr. L had arrived in Canada at the age of twelve to help his father and uncles in their laundry business. Mrs. L's family was not very pleased with her choice of husband. Her mother and brother were afraid that Mr. L, who was eleven years Mrs. L's senior, already had a wife in China.

After Mrs. L married she returned with her husband to Brockville. On the day she arrived she was wearing the sable coat Mr. L had given her as a wedding gift. "It was the hit of the town," she recalled. The environment Mrs. L found herself in contrasted with the more insular life of her mother. Mrs. L moved in with an extended family which included a father-in-

law, bachelor uncles and one uncle with his wife and children. In later years, Mr. and Mrs. L established their own restaurant. The uncle and his family lived in Brockville till approximately 1918 when they moved to Iroquois, Ontario, where they too entered the restaurant business.

The largest concentration of Chinese families in Ontario was in Toronto. The city appeared to offer women already in a limited circle greater opportunities and interests in their personal lives than those who lived in the smaller communities had. The number of women in Toronto was, of course, an important factor. The internal social structure included wives, mothers and children. Another area which set those in the city and smaller communities apart was the strong Christian involvement of the Chinese in Toronto. The influence of the church helped foster a closer community.

Recent graduates from mission schools in China provided the single most significant influence on the Chinese families. The wife of the first Chinese Presbyterian minister, Rev. T.K. Ma, who had arrived with her husband in 1914 was active in church work with the women of the congregation. In July 1914 the couple had set sail for Canada aboard a Russian liner. By this time they had had a son. Rev. and Mrs. Ma settled into living quarters in Toronto that were part of a laundry owned by two church members. Later that year, the congregation was growing so quickly that the church needed larger premises. Another location was soon found at 187 Church Street. The rent at the time was $187 per month. The Ma family lived upstairs on the third floor, and the lower sections of the house were used for holding Presbyterian services, meetings, social functions and Chinese school: "We had a full program every Sunday. Our congregation consisted then of twenty to thirty males." Below is a typical Sunday program:

10:00 a.m. Sing-song led by Mr. Dong
11:00 a.m. Service
2:00 p.m. Bible Class led by Rev. Ma and Mr. Mark
3:30 p.m. Open-air meeting in Chinatown
5:00 p.m. Evangelical meeting
6:00 p.m. Dinner in the basement of the church
7:00 p.m. Evening service[15]

In 1919 the congregation purchased another building to accommodate the growing number of members. Their new address was at 124 University Avenue.

Less than two years later, in 1916, three Chinese women joined the church in Toronto.[16] This group eventually became the women's auxiliary. The members included: Mrs. W.L. Mark, Mrs. Lock Kwong and Mrs. Mark Park. In her memoirs, Mrs. Ma records that they met regularly at the Knox

Presbyterian Church: "Because of an Old Chinese custom which did not allow women to meet in public, the women got together without the presence of men." She also states that separate meetings for women only were necessary before the women could even be encouraged to attend without going against this practice.[17]

Her church work kept Mrs. Ma very active, apparently leaving little time for the domestic chores normally expected of women. The cooking was Mr. Ma's responsibility, not because of Mrs. Ma's busy schedule but because she "simply couldn't cook." Shopping for groceries which would have required a trip to Chinatown was also left to Mr. Ma. In recalling his childhood, one of the Ma sons told how there were missionaries constantly at the house to help look after the family of six boys (one later died in childhood) and four girls.

In 1927 the family went to Hong Kong on furlough. On their return to Ontario in 1930, they moved to a three-acre farm situated behind present-day Humber Golf Course in Toronto. Mrs. Ma, at this time, was less active in church work and spent most of her time caring for the family, growing vegetables and giving Chinese lessons to missionaries at the farm.

One young woman from the Toronto Presbyterian Church, Miss Dickson, asked Mrs. Ma if she would be interested in continuing her work in the city looking after meetings and teaching four women to read the Bible. For her services, Mrs. Ma received $15 a month which was later increased to $20.[18]

> It was rewarding work. Two months later, five women asked to be baptized. When Miss Dickson heard this, she was quite surprised ... Miss Dickson, who was then working with the kindergarten began to join me in the afternoons visiting Chinese in Toronto; every fortnight we made a trip to New Toronto. Miss Dickson was a fine and dedicated Christian. We got along famously and worked for a year or so together until she left to return to her home in Edmonton. To increase our number, I asked the Women's Missionary Society if they could supply volunteer drivers to help bring the young mothers and their children to our meetings. They found three volunteers for three Sundays of every month. For me it was a period full of joy and happiness — to be doing God's work.[19]

But her husband died suddenly, leaving Anna Ma with a young family to raise on her own. Her son recalls: "Mother held the family together. She learned how to cook after father died. We ate fish heads for a long time ... managed to get these fish heads from people at almost no cost and they were nutritious."[20]

In her memoirs, Mrs. Ma records:

> I was left with nine children all still at school. Miss Mathew was in charge of the women's work. She[sic] came to visit me, and [sic] suggested I apply for welfare to which I replied, 'I'd rather die than take charity.' When the minister of Knox came to see me, he found I only had twenty-five cents in my purse; he gave me $3.00. At a further meeting he handed me $20. Everyone was very kind. The church gave me $100; the relatives helped a bit; the Mission Department continued to pay my husband's salary and rent supplement of $140 for three months. When Rev. David Smith who was in charge of the Chinese work across Canada came on tour, he asked me to carry on the work for the next few months and he would pay me $45 a month.[21]

Mrs. Ma continued supporting her family by renting out rooms in her house. She also kept on working for the church, though perhaps less actively than before. By this time the number of Chinese families in Toronto had increased to at least thirteen.

In her study of Toronto's early Chinese community, Valerie Mah found that by 1933 thirteen families lived in the Chinatown area. She concluded that most of the marriages were arranged — that is, the couples were brought together by their families after the background and compatibility of the man and woman had been thoroughly checked. Of these women, three came to Canada to be married; three arrived with their first child; one was the minister's wife; and for six information was unavailable.[22]

Of the thirteen families, all were housewives and three had received a missionary education in China. It is difficult to classify these women simply under the category of "housewife" because, with the exception of one in the group, they all worked alongside their husbands in the family businesses. The following are samples of case studies conducted as part of Valerie Mah's research.

It was the norm for a Chinese widow in Toronto either to continue with the business her late husband began or to enter into her own. After the death of her husband, one young widow opened a small laundry at St. Clair and Lansdowne Avenues, which she operated with the help of her two sons and an assistant:

> E had a bicycle for picking up socks from other laundries which needed repairs. T used to help out front. T and E turned collars and cuffs and darned socks. Mrs. X started the business with money borrowed from a Chinese credit union. Those who wanted a loan bid for an amount saying they would repay with so much interest every week. Mrs. X obtained the capital and was responsible for repayment.[23]

At the time, to start up a laundry required anywhere from $500-$600 up to $2,000.[24]

Mrs. X's laundry was open until "at least suppertime" and often as late as 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. when the day's work had been completed. She did not handle large orders such as those from restaurants or hotels. Instead she dealt mainly with families and unmarried individuals who lived in nearby rented rooms.[25]

The laundry was not a large operation, and therefore Mrs. X was able to keep the overhead to a minimum. This also meant, however, that the profit margin was not large. In the mid-twenties laundries were charging twelve cents a shirt, fifteen cents a sheet, five cents a collar and three cents for hankies.[26] In her laundry Mrs. X and her helper did the washing, starching and ironing themselves. "The irons were not electric. They were the kind that leaned against the stove. They couldn't afford the electric ones."

The Chinese laundries were known for their fine hand wash. Tom Lock, the son of one of the widows, told Valerie Mah:

> To make the linen white, we used to put the soiled clothing into a big square steel tank, 4′ × 4′ × 6′ deep, on top of the coal stove. We would fill the tank using a hose and add bleach, stirring the washing with a big stick. After, Ma would stand on a stool, reach into the boiling water and drag out the clothes with a stick. She would then drop them in a pail and transfer them to the washing-machine. She was less than five feet tall and her feet were once bound.[27]

If one was prepared to put in long hours, the laundry business was fairly stable. Although, compared to restaurants, the profit margins were small, laundries seemed less affected by general business fluctuations. During hard economic times, for example, it seems that laundries did not suffer as badly as restaurants and rarely lost money.

In addition to the domestic responsibilities of caring for the children, managing household affairs, cooking, cleaning and sewing, women worked: "All mothers worked in their husband's businesses, mostly in the laundries — except the wife of a merchant. She was seen as an upper-class woman because she was educated. She was one of my mother's former pupils in Hong Kong." Family outings were not common because most Chinese businesses operated six or seven days a week. On Sundays, the women and children would attend church, and later in the day, after services, the married men went to Chinatown to shop and exchange news.[28] One Chinese laundry was located at Mortimer and Pape avenues:

> My mother helped out for many long hours in the laundry. She did not go out even to shop. She worked the longest. My mother worked

six days and also Sunday. We worked until eight or nine each night. There were eight children in our family and we had two to three helpers. Sometimes she had to cook for thirteen. She was too busy to belong to any group. She didn't go to Chinatown. Besides, she didn't know the way.[29]

The 1920s, 1930s and 1940s witnessed the emergence and maturation of a generation of Canadian-born Chinese from the original thirteen families. By 1931 Chinese children were enumerated in the Toronto Board of Education records.

The growing number of local-born children also inspired the establishment of Chinese language schools in Toronto, Windsor and Hamilton. The Exclusion Act of 1923 made it no longer feasible to send sons and daughters back to China for their Chinese education. The responsibility thus rested with the community itself. In his study on Chinese schools in Canada, Gordon Taylor states that there were children who were classified under three groups for whom these schools were established. The largest group was the Canadian-born of purely Chinese parentage. Although immigration legislation discouraged and then completely excluded the arrival of women, "The families here have been prolific and as a result the native-born Chinese are comparatively numerous." He further notes that, "in practically every case the father has been Chinese. Only two cases are known, both in Ontario, of white paternity and Chinese maternity, and in at least one the parents were married in China."[30]

Toward the end of the 1930s an increasing number of Chinese began to arrive in Toronto. By 1940, after the depression, some 1,500 arrived from the four western provinces looking for greater opportunities. While some were China-born, a large number were second-generation Chinese who migrated to Toronto because Ontario's attitude concerning the Chinese was less harsh and legislation was not as restrictive as in British Columbia. Unlike the Chinese in British Columbia, the Chinese in Ontario had not been disenfranchised and could enter the professions of law, pharmacy or accounting, which afforded increased social mobility. This, coupled with the active Christian Chinese groups, resulted in a community that had a greater vested interest in Canadian life than British Columbia's Chinese community. By the 1940s Toronto's Chinese Christian population accounted for approximately 40 percent of the total number of Chinese in Canada.[31]

When British Columbia refused to admit Chinese women into the health professions, the prospective students approached schools in Ontario. The Women's College Hospital in Toronto admitted Agnes Chan,

the young ward of the missionary-run Oriental Home and School in Victoria, B.C. In 1923 she graduated from nursing with honours and continued her studies in Detroit. In the same year, another Victoria woman graduated from the University of Toronto medical school. Entering on a scholarship with the help of the president of the Women's Missionary Society, Mrs. Steele, Victoria Cheung graduated with an M.B. and became the first woman to intern at Toronto General Hospital.[32]

On July 1, 1923 Canada passed the Chinese Immigration (Exclusion) Act which effectively ended Chinese immigration for the next twenty-four years. Its effect on the community was reflected in the rapid decline of the number of Chinese in Canada. Many returned to China, and the thousands who remained had to endure decades of separation from families and friends. Those who stayed probably did so for economic reasons. They existed in a peculiar ambience without the comforts of wives and families. One informant says that when she arrived in Toronto, there were seven Chinese familes in the United Church and about eight in the Presbyterian Church. The scarcity of women resulted in relationships or marriage with non-Chinese women. The interviewee observed that many mixed couples were married at the Presbyterian Church because the deaconess insisted that the children be recognized.

The impact of the act was also felt in business enterprises. In 1923 there was the greatest number of restaurants (471) in the history of Toronto, but by the 1930s restaurants numbered only 104, and the number of laundries fell from 471 to 355.[33] From the mid-1930s and into the 1940s there appeared a gradual stabilization of Chinese businesses but without the vigour witnessed in the 1920s' period of growth.

The act stunted the growth of the community, but it could not curtail the inevitable acculturation of the local-born Chinese, nor could it deprive them completely of attaining specific goals. It is unfortunate that so little has been written of the people who grew up during this era. Individuals who grew up in Canada during the 1920s and 1930s describe a small and tight group of "hybrid" Canadians who essentially "set the stage" for generations of Chinese Canadians to come. One such person, Mrs. J, like Mrs. Y, Mrs. Ma and all the other working mothers discussed here, was typical, yet remarkable in her accomplishments as wife and mother.

Mrs. J arrived in Toronto in 1935 from British Columbia. As with many who left the west coast for employment opportunities, Jean had come east looking for work. She had been born in Nanaimo, British Columbia; her mother was the first Chinese bride in that coal-mining town. Mrs. J worked from the age of twelve when her father had to take her out of school so that she could help support her family of twelve brothers and sisters. She was sixteen years old when she came to Toronto to work with her sister. When she arrived in the city, Mrs. J recalls that there were about twelve to fourteen Chinese women in Toronto. Less than three years later in 1937,

she and her cousin borrowed $200 from relatives to start up their own business. Together they opened a fruit store at St. Clair and Bathurst Streets, called Wong Brothers. She recalls that it took them two years to pay off their debt. Mrs. J was the first Chinese-Canadian woman in Toronto to have her own fruit business. The two did well enough to bring Mrs. J's parents and brothers and sisters to Toronto. Soon after Mrs. J and her cousin branched out to open stores in other areas of the city.

The twenty-year-old was fast gaining business experience, but in spite of her success, Mrs. J's mother still felt it necessary to find a husband for her daughter. The time came when her mother told her it was time to get married. After thoroughly examining interested parties, they thought that a certain gentleman was the most suitable. "You will meet him today and he will come over for tea," was what she was told.[34]

> My mother chose for me. I was one of the last of the six in the family to be chosen. When it came to my brother, my mother chose for him. He went out to meet her and said, 'No, I don't like her.' And my mother said, 'The nerve of him!' My father and mother were a little more lenient with me [sic]. They said, 'We've checked him out thoroughly ...' I knew they wanted the best for me.[35]

Mrs. J had been taught from childhood that the wife was to work beside her husband. For the forty-four years of their marriage, she and her husband worked as a team in the family businesses.

Like many young Chinese-Canadian women of her age, Mrs. J was very active with the Young Christian Group and the Women's Auxiliary in raising funds for the war effort. Later on, even with a young family to care for, she still worked closely with the community. In cultural areas — she was a member of one of the Chinese dramatic associations — and political involvement, she represented Chinese-Canadian interests. During the talks with the federal government for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Mrs. J was the only woman delegate to Ottawa. "I was speaking on behalf on Ontario, but I was really representing Chinese women across Canada. It was important to have a woman delegate because we were fighting for family unity."

Far from an in-depth analysis of the world created by Chinese-Canadian women in the prewar decades, this article explores, through perhaps the only research available, the bits and pieces of reality as remembered by eye-witnesses. Chinese-Canadian women were few, but the presence of these few women resulted in the creation of a community from what was essentially a society of bachelor migrants. It is commonplace that cultural mores and values are established in the basic family unit and that women in all societies bear the greater responsibility for their preservation. The Chinese women in Ontario were no exception. Caught between the con-

flicting demands of children who wished to become more Canadian and husbands who saw them as their link with traditional Chinese culture, these women were ultimately responsible for resolving those demands and establishing what it meant to be Chinese Canadian.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] *Seventh Census of Canada*, 1931, Vol. 1, Table 24, "Birthplace of Population by Sex."
[2] In Toronto, the early Chinese businesses and shops were found in small pockets rather than localized in a certain area. For example, in 1910, groupings were located along Queen Street West and York Street. Later on shops extended from Queen Street to Terrauley, near Denison. (See further, Valerie Mah, "The Bachelor Society: A Look at Toronto's Early Chinese Community from 1878-1924," April 1978).
[3] *Sixth Census of Canada*, 1921.
[4] Canada, Parliament, Sessional papers.
[5] Memoirs of Mrs. L, n.d. n.p., p. 6.
[6] Ibid., p. 9.
[7] Ibid., p. 15.
[8] Ibid., p. 24.
[9] Ibid., p. 30.
[10] Ibid., p. 31.
[11] Ibid., p. 22.
[12] Ibid., p. 27.
[13] Ibid., p. 32.
[14] Ibid., p. 33.
[15] Memoirs of Anna Ma, n.d. n.p., p. 58.
[16] S.S. Osterhout, *Orientals in Canada. The Story of the Work of the United Church of Canada with Asiatics in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1929), p. 185.
[17] Memoirs of Anna Ma, p. 62.
[18] Ibid., p. 73.
[19] Ibid., p. 74.
[20] Interview with D.M., September 1985.
[21] Memoirs of Anna Ma, p. 79.
[22] Ibid., p. 23.
[23] Interview with D.M.
[24] See Mah, "The Bachelor Society," p. 23.
[25] Ibid., p. 24.
[26] Ibid., p. 24.
[27] Ibid.; interview with Tom Lock, p. 23.
[28] Ibid., p. 35.
[29] Ibid.; interview with Dorothy Soo, p. 25.
[30] Gordon Taylor, "Chinese Schools in Canada" (M.A., McGill University, 1933), p. 70.
[31] Edgar Wickberg, et al., *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982). p. 127.

Women Artists in Chile: The Conscience of a Country in Crisis

by Marjorie Agosin

translated by Janice Molloy

A woman draws crosses on the pavement in defiance of traffic laws and the government's authority. Little by little, the cities, highways and roads fill with the crosses she creates. Sometimes, these drawings bear a strange message: "Peace for Sebastián Acevedo, a man who sacrificed himself in 1979 in front of a mesmerized crowd for wanting to know the whereabouts of his two children."

This unusual woman, Lotti Rosenfeld, is one of the many individuals in Chile today who defy the authoritarianism of Augusto Pinochet by means of a unique art full of social significance, an art that disrupts the official order of a censored yet unsilenced country. This essay seeks to bring from the confines of their restricted country women who, like Rosenfeld, defy authority each day, so they may reach us and tell us about themselves, their art and the forms in which they have survived and found a shared fulfillment. In addition to Rosenfeld, we will focus on the arpilleristas, women who create hauntingly beautiful tapestries from scraps of cloth, and two photographers: Paz Errázuriz and Roser Bru.

Women in Chile have not traditionally played a prominent role in the arts. Even today, most of the works exhibited in museums and galleries were created by men. However, the majority of the country's rural artisans

have always been women. Today, women in the countryside still embroider lovely, elaborate tapestries, and create traditional clay casseroles and dishes. Yet, for the most part, women's handwork is not highly valued as a means of artistic expression, and women artisans are poorly paid.

The women artists introduced in this paper are making a strong impact on the Chilean art world while maintaining their ties to traditional women's art. Each group has taken an established medium — needlework, photography and drawing — and has made it its own by adding certain innovative and subversive touches. As we will see, the political and social overtones of these works have had an important effect both within and beyond the Chilean art world.

Perhaps one of the most amazing phenomena of the Pinochet dictatorship, which has lasted almost thirteen years, is the fact that, in spite of the state of terror, "*Chile vive*," Chile lives. Chile's streets and people, including their ways of speaking and their behaviour, are as lively as ever on the surface, masking the underlying terror. Where and how does one express oneself in a country that has been overwhelmed by fear? Where does one take refuge amidst the pain and despair? These are some of the questions that have been posed by artists, from popular artisans to those with works in the most exclusive galleries. Artists in both the cities and the countryside have begun to challenge the silence and defy the contemptible system that has been established by the military authority.

Many unofficial street performances have been achieved in Pinochet's Chile in which an individual places him / herself in the core of a city in crisis. In this way, the city's inhabitants become the central theme of the art. They become the objects and material of a creation that is vital and alive. From this are born what are called "art actions."

Among the actions that are now a part of the collective memory is one in which milk trucks blocked traffic and then drove with bottles of milk toward the neediest sectors of the city. The public observed the trucks, and immediately deciphered the subtle message behind the action: the truck drivers were defying the dictatorship by distributing milk to the poor. Similar art actions have occurred sporadically since 1981.

These first attempts at transforming the censured reality of the country stem from popular art, and are declarations of a silenced people who refuse to keep quiet. Another example of this process are the arpilleras of Chile, which are a reinterpretation of a folk tradition. They are spontaneous creations of art, born from the need to express the new metaphors operating in society, and whose cultural messages relate to the real, historical situation of the inhabitants.

Arpilleras are appliquéd wall hangings that are made from leftovers, unused objects, and pieces of thrown-out cloth. Beautiful, detailed tapestries, full of colour and sun, are constructed from things that have been discarded.

The arpilleras project an image that is absolutely clear, and transmit specific messages such as "No More Torture," "Zone of Hunger" and "Zone of Pain."

The arpilleristas, the women who create arpilleras, began as a group in 1974, the year after the military dictatorship came to power. The Vicaria de la Solidaridad, a Catholic organization, sponsored workshops where women could go in the evenings to make arpilleras and earn money to help support their families. In many cases, the husbands of these women had been kidnapped and killed by the repressive government.

The messages transmitted by the arpilleras immediately capture the urgency of the women's situations. The women who make arpilleras are leading the way in challenging the system by using something purely traditional — needlework — as a weapon that defies silence and the imposed order. Because of the defiance of censorship and the subversive themes represented in the arpilleras, the arpilleristas must remain anonymous to protect both themselves and their families.

The arpillera also integrates itself into a very interesting phenomenon in Chile today: the utilization of one's own body in the creation of an artistic object or, better said, the creation of living art. Often, the women who make the arpilleras do not possess the necessary materials, so they fabricate art from their own bodies. For example, hair, fingernails and skirts become part of the textile on which they are working. In this way, the body and the created object are metaphors related to the essence of the creator, and are not acts distanced from the country's socio-historical reality.

In the areas of needlework and popular arts, daily scenes have become part of the artistic creation; in the field of photography, something similar has occurred. Perhaps in this area more than in any other, under authoritarianism, the artist has had to rethink the way in which photography can respond to a new social system that manipulates the country's entire reality. Two visual artists have been instrumental in this process: Paz Errázuriz and Roser Bru.

Paz Errázuriz is a young Chilean photographer who won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1986. Errázuriz was born in Santiago, Chile in 1941. After working as an elementary school teacher, Errázuriz dedicated herself to photography in 1972. In 1973, she published a children's book, *Amalia*, for which she both wrote the text and provided photographs. Errázuriz has had exhibitions in Chile, France and Germany. Several of her photographs are in the permanent collection of the Fine Arts Museum of the University of Santiago, Chile. Errázuriz does not name her photographs; she believes the images speak for themselves.

Errázuriz's work is characterized by her focus on the marginal areas that the authoritarian government has tried to eradicate. For example, Errázuriz photographed prostitutes in hospitals on the verge of death. Beggars, people

considered to be anomalies by a fascist society, unveil themselves before the spectator. The viewer, disarmed by the sharpness and clarity of the photographic image, now participates in an unseen, marginal world that makes itself visible.

There is a great respect and delicacy in the photographs of Paz Errázuriz in that the photographic negative does not manipulate or tamper with reality. Errázuriz lets the image float at random; for this reason, the subjects, like the beggars and the patients in the psychiatric hospital, are captured exactly as they are in their essence. Sometimes these people are blinded and are not able to see themselves as they truly are, because they are living under inhumane and deceitful conditions.

Marginality, in all of its turbulence, forms the nucleus of Paz Errázuriz's photographs. Poverty and hunger often appear as if these horrible metaphors of misery were part of the minutiae of everyday living. The characters that Errázuriz's camera selects are part of a circus of deaf people, one-eyed people and mutes. They embrace, wander and pass time in a country where treatment of life resembles a circus of death. Paradoxically, the mental patients, street-walkers and drug addicts go out into and live in the streets of Santiago. With their eccentricity, they occupy another space in the invisible sector of society, but they also exist in the visible and true reality of poverty, marginality and hunger.

The disturbing space occupied by the milk trucks also forms part of the strategy and defiance of Paz Errázuriz. Evil is part of the world; we all know it exists, but we do not want to get near it. Paz Errázuriz is successful in that the viewer is unable to maintain distance from the image that she transmits. On the contrary, the spectator cannot remain indifferent. In this way, the anomaly and the forbidden are integrated into a fascist order that maintains itself by cleaning the walls of the city, watering flowers, and manipulating spaces for a semi-perfect peace. Faced with the images produced by Errázuriz, no Chilean can deny the existence of an oppressed and neglected sector of society.

Roser Bru was born in Barcelona, Spain in 1923. In 1939, she boarded a boat for Chile, now her second country. Bru has been a painter of international renown since 1973. Her works have been exhibited in Santiago, Barcelona, Madrid, Mexico, Buenos Aires and Berlin. Bru's photograph/paintings can be found in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro, and the Museum of Modern Art of Santiago. The city of Barcelona recently published a catalogue of her work entitled, *Roser Bru: una mirada desde Fora* ("Roser Bru: A View from the Outside").

Like Errázuriz, Bru works with photography as a way to reclaim space taken and mutilated under authoritarianism. For Bru as well as for Errázuriz, photography is a record, a way to save and preserve, without intervention, daily events in the country. One of the techniques used by both artists is the

superimposition of different fragments of reality. For example, in one of Bru's works, we see newspaper clippings that speak of the prosperity of the nation juxtaposed with a photograph of a small, undernourished girl with flaccid breasts prostituting herself for a crust of bread.

The fragmented, discontinuous and sketched reality assumes, then, a singular importance within the visual and graphic scope utilized by Chilean artists. In the same way, the use of video as a means of documentation has increased in the years of authoritarianism, and filming during demonstrations has been used constantly.

One of Roser Bru's most striking works, which has reached the cities as well as various international centres, is the photographic collage entitled "Lila Valderrama." Bru uses a painting of Lila's face as a background, depicting her with her eyes blindfolded and bloody. On the side of the portrait is a license photograph with Valderrama's identification number and an inscription that says: "Disappeared." The photograph testifies that this face exists. In seeing it, we are forced to practice the art of remembrance.

In a single artist, Lotti Rosenfeld represents the diverse ways in which art actions in Chile since 1973, particularly actions accomplished by women, have begun to form a legacy or tradition of opposition to authoritarianism and its manifestations. Her physical presence, kneeling and drawing lines on the pavement from the White House in Washington, D.C., to the Andean mountains between Argentina and Chile, to the barracks of General Pinochet, is a form of defiance and interruption of order. Rosenfeld not only disrupts the flow of traffic, but rebels against everything the authoritarian government represents. She uses systems of destruction and deconstruction to sketch out, for example, vertical lines instead of horizontal ones on traffic signs. In this way, the artist commands instant attention from the passersby and the automobile drivers. By altering street signs, she creates an optical illusion that leads to a questioning of all prevailing codes of communication.

In an interview in Santiago in 1986, Lotti Rosenfeld summarized the motivations behind her art: "To alter a symbol that regulates transit is to demonstrate the symbol's international significance, and to reveal the daily forms of power where it operates in terms of the imposition of order. Also, to make crosses on the pavement is to disrupt our routine submission to symbols, and to create an appreciation for the symbolism in our surroundings."

From the women who make arpilleras to record, save and help their loved ones to the photographs of Paz Errázuriz and Roser Bru that search for and reveal hidden structures and the stories of the invisible members of society, we observe women who, in times of profound social, economic and historical crisis, transform their realities by means of an artistic object. They do not intend to obscure the reality in which they find themselves.

On the contrary, they intend to restore reality and show it to the spectator. By making visible Chile's current reality, they defy the power of the oppressors.

We have noted how women artists have found a way to express themselves in repressive Chile. Women have left their homes and the private sphere to participate in the public, political life of their country. Their forms of expression — needlework, photography and drawing — have become true channels of political and artistic expression. With the exception of the arpilleristas, these artists were born into a privileged position, but have managed to give a voice to those who had been silenced by repression and poverty. The women cited in these pages confirm that, in times of historical turmoil, art redeems and transforms a society that has been mutilated by injustice and pain to make it fully human and sane.

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PROPHESYING WOMEN

by Alejandra Pizarnik (1936-1972)

translated by Susan Bassnett

RECOGNITION

You make the silence of lilacs swaying
in the tragic breezes of my heart.
You made my life a tale for children
where deaths and shipwrecks
are pretexts for splendid parties.

SIGNS

Everything makes love with silence.

They promised me a silence
like fire, a house of silence.

Suddenly the temple is a circus
the light a drum.

FIESTA

I unfurled my homelessness
across the table, like a map.
I traced my journey as far
as my place in the wind.
The ones who get there never meet me.
The ones I wait for don't exist.

And I drank wild spirits
to change faces into
angels, into empty cups.

FOUNDATION STONE

I cannot speak with my voice but with my voices.

His eyes were the entrance to the temple for me, wandering here, loving and dying. And I would have sung until I became one with night, until I stood naked at the start of time.

I go through that song like a tunnel.

Disturbing presences,
gestures of shapes that seem to be alive through
the vital language that names them,
signs which strike uncalmable terror.

A tremble in the cement, a quiver in the foundations, drains, bores through, and I have come to know where she stays, that other being which is myself, waiting for me to become silent to take me over and drain me, bore through my cement, my foundations,
the one who is my opposite, plotting to occupy my waste land

no,
I must do something

no,
I must do nothing,

something in me cannot give in to the ashes which rain down, which well up inside the woman who is me, with me being her and being myself, unspeakably separate from her.

In the sameness of silence (not in the same silence) swallowing night, a vast night steeped in the secrecy of lost footsteps.

I cannot speak to say nothing. We lose ourselves that way, the poem and I, in a useless attempt to write out burning feelings.

Where will this writing lead? To darkness, to sterility, to fragmentation.

Dolls, torn to pieces by my ancient doll-like hands, the disappointment of feeling raw stuffing inside (raw steppes, your memory); a father, who wanted to be Tiresias, floating in the river. But you, why did you let them kill you as you listened to stories of snow white poplar trees?

With those doll-like fingers of mine, I wanted to really feel the keys. I did not want to skim along the keyboard like a spider. I wanted to sink in, dive deeply, fix myself, solidify. I wanted to become part of the keyboard, so as to enter into music and get myself a homeland. But music moves, it hurries along. Only when a refrain repeated itself, did I feel inside myself the slight hope of being able to establish something like a train station. I mean, a firm, sure point of departure, a place from which to leave, from the place, to the place, at one and together with the place. But the refrain was so short that I could not set up a station, I could only count on one, somewhat derailed train, that coiled and uncoiled. Then I gave up music and its betrayals, because music was more above or more below, but not in the centre, in the place of blending and meeting. (You who were my only homeland, where could I look for you? Perhaps inside the poem I write).

One night in the circus I recovered a lost language in the instant when riders with torches in their hands galloped round fiercely, mounted on black steeds. Not even in my dreams of happiness could there exist a choir of angels that could offer my heart anything comparable to the burning sounds of hoofbeats against the sand.

(And I say to myself: Write: because these words are honest and true).

(Poetry begins with a man or a stone or a tree....)

And there was a softly quivering tremor (I say this to instruct her, the one who lost her musicality in me and trembled with more disonnance than a horse driven wild by a torch on the sands of a foreign land).

I was embracing the ground, speaking a name. I believed I had died and that death was saying a name without end.

Perhaps this is not what I want to say. This saying and being named is not welcome. I cannot speak with my voice but with my voices. Sometimes a poem may be a trapdoor, one more scenario.

When the ship shifted its rhythm and vacillated on rough waters, I stood there like an Amazon, who can tame a rearing horse just with her blue eyes (or was it just with her blue eyes?) The green water in my face, I need to drink of you until night opens. Nobody can save me because I am invisible even to the me who calls with your voice. Where am I? I am in a garden.

There is a garden.

Alejandra Pizarnik, an Argentinian poet, was born in Buenos Aires on April 29, 1936 into a family of Eastern European immigrants. She studied philosophy and letters at the University of Buenos Aires. She lived in Paris (1960-64), studied literature at the Sorbonne, and contributed to many different journals. Her major volumes of work are Works and Nights, Extraction of the Stone of Folly, Musical Hell, *and The Bloody Countess (prose). In 1972 Pizarnik died from a self-induced overdose of seconal.*

Marie

by Beth Brant

She felt the thud before it registered in her mind that she had struck something in the road.

She braked the car, turned off the motor and sat. It couldn't have been a child or a dog — though god knows, she thought angrily — there are too many of those kind of species on this god-damn island. The woman's mouth formed into a straight, bitter line. She pushed her dark, long hair over her shoulders and sat, staring out the front windshield at the full moon that seemed to be careening down on top of her. The Harvest Moon, the whites called it. She had forgotten the Indian words for this kind of moon. There was a lot to harvest around here, she thought — kids, dogs, booze, the occasional gunshot heard on a Friday or Saturday night; the plentiful yelling, screaming and fighting that came before the occasional gunshot. The Harvest Moon.

Granny died this morning.

The woman unbuckled her seat belt, irritated that she was so careful of herself inside a car, when she was never so careful inside her life. She opened the car door, listening for a sound that might identify what it was she had hit with her car.

There were no whimpering sounds like a child or dog would make. Or the screaming that rabbits make when dying. The woman had a sudden rush of memory of the first time Grampa had taken her out to shoot rabbits.

"You have to be fast," Grampa had said. "Rabbits freeze for a second or two, but then they move very fast, so you only got that second to take good aim."

He had demonstrated his technique four times — each time a true shot,

each time an instantly dead rabbit. The girl she had been had carried the canvas sack filling with rabbits; the sack warm against her side. Grampa had wanted five rabbits that day. He had decided that was his quota. Grampa's quotas were never the same, and the woman never got to ask him how he came to his decisions. He had died before she remembered to ask.

The fifth rabbit jumped in front of them. Grampa raised his rifle and shot. The rabbit fell into a cover of tall weeds. Then — the screaming began. The girl she had been had looked at her Grampa, hot tears beginning a course down her cheeks. Grampa had run to the weeds, pulled out the rabbit and wrung its neck. The rabbit was silenced.

"This is a bad thing, Granddaughter. I did not kill this rabbit proper. I made it scream in pain. No animal should scream like that."

Grampa had buried the rabbit, rather than putting it into the sack. He had said it wouldn't be right to leave it for the crows. It had not died proper.

He took her hand, saying, "I am tired Granddaughter. Take me home."

It occured to the woman standing outside the car, that Grampa had become old that day. And she hadn't remembered to ask him about his system of rabbit quotas. It seemed important that she should have asked him.

She heard a rustling noise on the right side of the car. As she carefully walked around the car, the rustling became louder. She saw it. A Blue Heron. It was struggling to rise, to attempt a flight that even the woman, who could not fly, knew was impossible. The woman felt a scream pushing through her body. 'My first time back on this god-damn island in five years and I kill a heron! I hate this place. Even the herons are cursed. They walk in front of cars and get killed. I hate this place. I didn't want to come back here. I didn't. I didn't."

This is a bad thing, Granddaughter.

The woman was crying, her hands drawn into fists that she raised to the moon, as if to smash the light into splinters. But the moon's brightness remained steady, its face relentless on her powerless fists. She walked toward the heron. It tried to rise, the eyes a terrible thing to look upon. Its long neck was trying to unfold, the beak moving back and forth, back and forth with a jerky rhythm. Its legs could not move. The bird made no sound. The woman reached out, her long fingers wanting to touch the bird. She touched it. The heron's neck sprang forward, then receded. The heron was still, its opaque eyes on the woman. The woman put her arms about the bird and sat on the road. She could feel a heartbeat under her fingers.

Granny, I hate you for dying today. When Brother called me this morning, I knew what he was going to say. I tried to keep him from saying it.

She's dead, Sister. Our Granny is dead. Are you drinking Sister? Please don't drink when you come to say good-bye to our Granny. I don't drink anymore, Brother. How dare you say that to me. What makes you so special that you can say that to me? I loved Granny too. Maybe I'm not perfect like you, the *good* Indian, the *good* grandchild, but I loved her too. You think you're so great. *You* take after Granny, *I* take after Mum, isn't that what you think? Isn't it? Brother didn't say anything, waiting for her to wind down from the old anger, the old quarrel she always started and never finished. We'll be waiting for you, Sister. It will be good to see you again. I have missed you. Then Brother began to sob and the woman was stunned, then angry all over again, that her older brother could cry over the wires while she stood helpless in her apartment, holding on for dear life to the telephone. And the woman realized that her older brother would have no way to know she didn't drink anymore. She never talked.

I'm holding a dying bird. I'm sitting in the road like a crazy woman, talking to myself. But that's who I talk to. Myself. I hate you for dying, Granny. I hate you for telling me I was special, I was *Nishnawbe*. That I was different from Mum. You said I wouldn't make the same mistakes she made. I made them, Granny. Just in a different way. I hate you and Grampa for making excuses for her. The time I ran after her, begging her to come back in the house. 'You care more about your friends than you do about us,' I yelled at her. Mum kept on walking, looking for the booze and the party. She didn't even look back at me! Granny, you and Grampa and brother came to take my hands and pull me away from the night, from the picture of Mum walking down the road, not looking back at me. Granny, you said that Mum had forgotten how to be an Indian, that she would learn. She didn't, did she Granny? But me and Brother learned plenty. How to live with a drunk for a mother. How many drinks it takes before you pass out. How to avoid your Mum if she has a hangover. How to smooth things over so no one remembers anything. How to hope that maybe *this* night your mum would stay home and be a real mother. Granny, Mum didn't forget how to be an Indian. She *was* being an Indian!

The heron fluttered, its feathers brushing against the woman's wet cheek. She inhaled the scent of the bird, the smell of marshwater and fish. The bird remained silent, a calm look of terror in its eyes. Without wanting to, the woman remembered a day when their mother had washed and braided the brother's and sister's hair. Mum sang a song about *Fly me to the moon*. She said she had the most beautiful children and that their hair was the tenth wonder of the world. Brother and sister had laughed in each other's faces and had sung along with their mother.

The smell of the bird also reminded the woman of how she had loved it here as a child. Grampa, her and Brother going fishing, the children's

lines getting tangled in the Pickeral-Weed. Brother getting so excited he'd cry out — 'Fish, Fish, come and jump on my hook. I want to eat you!' The terns circling above them, their raucous voices crying out for a piece of whatever the trio might catch. The marsh wrens clattering as they delicately flew from reed to cattail. The red-wings whistling and giving chase to anything that threatened their nests. Grampa paddling further and further into the channels where everything was quiet, except for the startled croak of an heron or egret. They would sit for hours and fish, and grow sleepy under the sun while reciting stories of *Nokomis* and *Nanabozho*.

Brother never stopped loving it here. Why did I, Granny? I've missed you so much. But I couldn't come back here. Not here! I'm thirty-five, Granny. I have no children. I wouldn't have children. I was afraid to. I'm so lonely, Granny. I go to my job, I come home, I eat, I watch tv, I go to sleep. I dream. You told me that when we dream, our souls fly and experience the dream. My soul doesn't fly, Granny. It's a lead sinker that pulls me down till I can't breathe and I wake up crying and alone. You told me lies, Granny. You told me I was a proud Nishnawbe. Standing at the cookstove, putting together the fry bread, you told us lies. Brother believed you. *He* stayed behind to keep himself an Indian. As if living in a run-down shack on a god-forsaken island is something special, something the whites don't have, something that makes us better than them. It's a lie. It always was a lie. Wasn't it, Granny?

The heron moved. Its eyes looked into the woman's eyes. Its feathers rustled in her arms. Again, she caught the scent of the marsh. And another memory interfered — Granny laughing as she mended some clothes and Mum had sat next to her making a pair of beaded earrings for the child the woman had been then. There hadn't been enough red beads, and Mum had to start all over again, so the pattern would be consistent and perfect. The girl she had been then had watched her mother patiently threading the beads, the kerosene lamp hanging above her mother's head, casting lights on her fingers as she slowly beaded the earrings and talked with Granny. Brother had sat in the corner of the room, reading books and, looking up from the pages, had smiled at his sister.

"Come home."

The words hung in the air like the Harvest Moon. The woman stared into the eyes of the heron, seeing her reflection and something more. What was it? The heron stared back, steadily and clearly, the terror gone in its eyes, only her face looking back at her.

What do I have to come home to? What happened, Granny? What did I do wrong? I never thought you'd die. I wished and wished for Mum to die when she was drunk. Then she did. I didn't mean it! I'm afraid to touch your dead body when I remember how warm and alive you used to be. I'm afraid of death, Granny. I'm afraid of life. Everytime I look in the

mirror, I see my mother's face. I haven't touched a drop in five years, yet here I am, holding a dying bird, and wanting to feel the hot taste of whiskey in my mouth. I am scared without you, Granny. Even living in the city, I knew you were there for me. I am so scared! You held us when Mum couldn't. You talked to us when Mum couldn't. You yelled at her only once. You told her she was making shame in front of the Creator's face. She laughed at you, but then she cried. She pointed at me — 'Don't let her become like me. Don't let Marie be like me.' Granny, you tried to pull her into your arms, but she ran out of the house, hair still matted from the night's sleep; her make-up smeared and dissolving. She ran out, Granny. And she came back dead. I didn't mean it!

"Come home."

The heron's heart was beating, erratic and small against Marie's fingers. She rubbed her wet face on its feathers and touched the beak. The bird shifted, its weight falling more on her. The eyes regarded her, the moon's reflection staring out at her. Her own face looking out at her. Her Granny's face looking out at her.

"Come home."

Forgive me, bird. I am ashamed that I have added to the ugliness of the world by killing you. Granny, you told me that herons were magic birds. If you saw a heron, you said, it meant there was another chance for you. It is a bird of beginnings, you said. It is my totem, you said.

"Come home."

The words floated above Marie's head, above the heron's head. She could touch them, if she only reached for them. The heron's eyes held hers, almost like an embrace.

The last time I saw a heron was five years ago. I saw one sitting in a willow tree as I left the house and was driving toward the road that would take me over the bridge and into the city. I laughed when I saw it. It was so big and awkward, perching on a willow branch. When I got closer, the heron squawked and flew out of the tree. I stopped the car and watched it — the graceful legs floating behind its body, like strings across the sky. I watched until the blue-grey wings disappeared beyond the sun. I stopped drinking that day. Maybe it was a magic bird, Granny. But I still see my mother's face in the mirror, and I am lonely for her.

Forgive me, Mum. I did love you so much.

Forgive me, bird.

"Come home."

The words became the Blue Heron's low croak. The bird shuddered in Marie's arms, the eyes, the powerful eyes, never leaving Marie's own. The bird's heart stopped beneath Marie's fingers. The moon's light intensified as it focussed on the pair sitting in the road. Marie's sobs the only sound on the marsh road.

I didn't ever want to leave this place. Forgive me, Granny. I thought I wasn't strong enough to be like you. I thought I wasn't strong enough to stay. I ran away from you. I ran away from myself. I ran away from everything that ever mattered to me.

Marie lay the bird aside and went to open the trunk of the car. She got out the tire iron, the only thing she had to dig a grave. She fought the hard dirt, scooping and struggling to make a shallow hole. She picked up the bird, once again breathing in the smell of the marsh and the island. She laid the heron into the earth and plucked a few of its feathers. She covered the grave with dirt and reeds. She touched the grave and looked up at the moon. The moon looked back, its light touching her face.

Six more miles to Granny. And to Brother, who would be holding out his hands to her, standing in the open doorway. Beyond him would be Granny, waiting to be washed and covered with sweetgrass. They would tend her together.

"Come home."

Clutching Heron's feathers in her hand, Marie put the car in gear and headed up the road.

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Ajax La Bas

by Yesim Ternar

Saliha Samson sits on one of the empty washing machines in the basement and lights a cigarette. There are three loads of wash in the machines. The wash cycle takes 35 minutes; the drying cycle another 25. The French couple who employ her are very nice people. They leave for work early in the morning, as soon as she arrives at 8:30. They trust her with everything. They know she is a conscientious worker, that she doesn't slack off like some of the other cleaning women.

Madame Rivest tells Saliha to eat whatever she wants from the refrigerator. She always leaves some change in the ceramic vase on the telephone table just in case Saliha needs to get extra detergent, cigarettes, or whatever. Madame Rivest knows she likes to snack on strawberry and blueberry yoghurt, so she always make sure there is some in the refrigerator for her. This morning she has told her she hasn't done her weekly shopping yet, so she is leaving some money for Saliha especially to buy fruit yoghurt.

Now that's a nice gesture! I wish everyone were like that, thinks Saliha as she takes a deep puff from her cigarette. The Rivests live a long ways off from where she lives. She has to take the 80 bus from Park Extension, then the metro at Place des Arts to Berri, and then change metros at Berri to go to Longueuil; afterwards she has to take yet another bus to come here. But the trip is worth it because some of the people she works for close to home treat her so badly that she'd rather lose an hour on the way and work for Madame and Monsieur Rivest. That's a lot easier than working for the two old spinsters on upper Querbes.

Saliha notices the unbalanced load signal flash on one of the washers, and gets off the washing machine she is sitting on to straighten things out.

As she untangles the heavy blue cotton velour bedspread from the black rotor blades of the washing machine, she thinks it was lucky she decided to take this cigarette break in the basement because if she had gone straight upstairs to continue her vacuuming, she would have lost an extra 25 minutes by having to wait for this load after all the others were completed. That would have thrown her schedule off perhaps by an hour because she would have had to take the elevator up and down twice more and delay other tasks in the meantime. That's how cleaning jobs are. You have to plan what you're going to do and how, and in what order. Otherwise... Well, the machine starts churning again and she jumps back on the machine she was sitting on before to finish her cigarette.

She has her period again. It's crazy, she thinks. Madame Rivest calls her every two weeks. And every other time she has to work for Madame Rivest, she gets her period. It's either the first day or the second day of her period when she has to make that long trip to come here. I've never had any luck with my periods, thinks Saliha as she massages her back with her left hand. Saliha's dream is to be able to lie in bed the whole day when she gets her period. But it never works that way.

The first time she had her period when she was eleven, she was in Istanbul then, she ran up to her mom to announce it. Her mother slapped her. "Why did you do that?" Saliha asked. "So that you won't lose your wits." Saliha went to her room and cried less for the mess of blood than for the fact that she was getting too old to play hopscotch. That was fifteen years ago. Saliha cannot remember when she stopped playing hopscotch, but it was at least a year after she got her first period.

Some things in life are like that. First they come to you like big worries, and you spend days and nights worrying about them, but they have the life span and personality of a soap bubble. They grow and grow like a wart in one's heart and just when you're sure they are big and strong and will never go away, they pop out of your life not even leaving a rind, not even a speck of dust, but the dry flake of a single detergent grain.

Canadians are funny, thinks Saliha. They have detergents and lotions and soaps for everything. Everything has its own cleanser here. And every cleanser has its own name. Like Mr. Clean. But Mr. Clean is also M. Net. Wisk! What a strange way to call your laundry detergent. And Ajax. Particularly Ajax. George, the Greek depanneur at Park Ex told her Ajax was a Greek hero. Old heroes live on as detergents in Canada. Saliha smiles at her own joke. She thinks she should write this to her mom.

The wash is done in one of the machines. She opens a dryer and transfers the load there. Just as she starts the dryer, the other two machines go off. So she puts those loads in the dryers, too, and feeds quarters to the machines. It's time to go up and vacuum the Rivest's bedroom, she decides.

She goes up on the elevator, happy that no one else is on it. She hates to be seen in her work clothes. She is wearing a pink cotton jumper, a navy blue shirt with the sleeves rolled up underneath that, and knee socks and her red moccasins. She has tied a Turkish scarf on her head with a knot in the back to keep her hair away from her face. Madame Rivest says she looks like a school girl like that. But Saliha feels uneasy in her workclothes. After all, it is hard to resign herself to being a cleaning woman on the sly in Canada.

As she is vacuuming the Rivest's bedroom, she remembers her friend Frederiki's warning. Frederiki told her to be careful most when she is vacuuming because when you have the vacuum on full blast, you can't hear if someone is approaching from the back. Frederiki said she knows a couple of cases of rape that happened when the cleaning woman was vacuuming and the old geezer tiptoed and caught the cleaning woman and forced her on the bed... Saliha shivers at the thought. She drops the vacuum cleaner and goes to check if she locked both locks on the door. Not that M. Rivest would do anything like that. He has two married daughters, but you never know who else might have keys to the apartment.

On her way back from the door, walking through the living room, Saliha checks the time on the mantel clock that she guesses comes from Spain. The clock is set in a gold and black lacework metal fan that reminds one of Spanish flamenco dancers. The Rivests appear to be well traveled people. Scattered about the apartment there are several photographs of Madame and M. Rivest, in silver rimmed frames, from various countries. The one on the side table next to the love seat in the living room looks like it was taken in Spain. Madame Rivest, looking several years younger, is smiling in front of a white washed Mediterranean-type house with red gardenias blooming in clay pots along the window sill. She is slightly tanned. It is a sunny photograph, making Madame Rivest whose face carries many wrinkles from cold Canadian winters look out of place in that country where Saliha assumes the true residents greet the sunshine with less suspicion and distress.

Nevertheless, Madame Rivest smiles in that photograph as all middle aged tourists do on well deserved holidays. A straw hand bag hangs from her left shoulder, and in her right hand, she holds something like a camera lens cover.

Saliha notes that the dryers must have completed their cycle, so she goes back to the bedroom and quickly finishes off the corners of the room with the special attachment Madame Rivest has taught her to use.

She takes along the yellow plastic laundry basket to carry the wash. She gets unlucky going down. A young housewife and her son step into the elevator on the second floor and ride with her to the main floor. Saliha tries to act oblivious to the woman's presence, but she winks surreptitiously at the little boy. The boy responds with a blank face.

Saliha is relieved when they get out. In the basement she quickly piles all the wash together in the laundry basket and after turning the drums around and feeling around the ridges for a stray sock or handkerchief, she goes up to the Rivest's apartment to sort the clothes. She is folding the towels and the sheets neatly and mechanically when she looks up at the ceiling of the Rivest's bedroom for an instant and starts remembering.

She is back at fourth grade at her elementary school on the Asian side of Istanbul. It was late September, several weeks into the fall term when the school principal had given the all important Monday morning speech to the whole elementary school population: rows of fidgety kids lined up in twos behind overweight maternal teachers.

They had all finished pledging allegiance to the Turkish nation and Turkish morality. In unison, they had proclaimed the following verses with pride:

"I am Turkish, I am honest, I am industrious. My motto is: to love my inferiors, to respect my superiors, to love my country and my people more than my own life. May my existence be a gift to the existence of the Turkish people."

It was after the whole schoolyard had fallen silent that the old principal had cleared his throat, adjusted his glasses with a nervous push of the index finger of his right hand, and straightened the arms of his worn navy blue jacket by pulling at the sleeves. He had then solemnly said, more like a poet than the disciplinarian that the Ministry of Education demanded him to be:

"My dear children, today I would like to tell you about your counterparts in America. Little boys and girls your age in America are very different from you in some very important respects. For one, they are often more industrious, and they are better behaved. I felt it was my duty to remind you of this after the very grave accidents your wild running about in the schoolyard during recesses last week has caused. Several of your friends are not at school today because they gashed their heads or sprained their ankles from all the savage games they have been playing. The weather has been very nice. The school year has just begun. Your teachers and I understand that you are all happy to join your friends after the summer holidays, but school is not a place where you come to play unruly games of tag and hide and seek. School is a place where you come to learn about the vital skills that you will need for all your lives and where you receive the benefits of civilization. Your counterparts in America understand what school is all about. At recess, they don't run around like you, but make use of their time to practice the knowledge that they learn in the classroom. For example, when they go out into the schoolyard; and let me remind you that not all of them are blessed with a schoolyard such as ours; they examine their surroundings. Look at all the leaves on the ground about you. You have perhaps not noticed them during all your

frenzied horseplay. An American child; however, would pick up a leaf, examine it, do research to identify it, and record his observations in his notebook. An American child would do the same for an ant, a worm, or a spider instead of madly crushing it. If you, as young Turks, the adults of the future, learn to do the same, you will help to build a better nation and honour this country that our great Ataturk has offered to you as your most cherished gift.''

With this, the principal ended his speech. Saliha felt she was one of the few who had heard the true message of the principal's words. She looked about and saw, for the first time, the mounds of leaves in the schoolyard and the shady corners teeming with insects. After that day, every dry copper coloured leaf, every quiet ant bespoke of her new task to pay attention to the world.

Saliha went on to finish her primary school education with distinctions despite some uncomfortable failures in the science class of her fifth year. Then she went to teacher's college to become a primary school teacher. After teaching in remote Anatolian villages where she gained the awe and respect of the peasants, she came to Canada to join her brother who is an auto mechanic in Montreal. She is presently enrolled at Plato College on Park Avenue to learn English and French.

Saliha folds all the towels and linen neatly. She separates Madame Rivest's lingerie from M. Rivest's underwear and pairs up his socks. She puts away all of the clean laundry on the appropriate shelves in the closet and the dresser. She does not neglect to arrange what was already there before she puts away the new washed clothes. Everything looks fresh and clean! Only some light dusting remains to be done. Then she will clean the bathroom. First she'll throw away the dirty water in the pail from mopping the floors, then she'll rinse out the cleaning rags and put away all of the cleaning materials. Afterwards she'll take her shower and scrub the bathtub clean.

But before she finishes up the remaining tasks, Saliha decides to take a cigarette break on the blue floral patterned armchair in the living room. She makes some fresh coffee in the kitchen, brings her cup over to the living room and lights a cigarette. She unties her scarf and lets her wavy black hair down. As she sips her coffee in between puffs, Saliha goes over her cleaning appointments for the next two weeks. To remember the exact dates, she visualizes the Chrysler calendar in her kitchen with the picture of a different kimono-clad Japenese geisha for each month.

She has to clean the two spinster sisters on Thursday. She certainly doesn't look forward to that one. They are very messy people. They are also very careful with their money. Contrary to the Rivests, they always follow her around and check how much detergent and soap she uses. They never offer her much at lunchtime. Not that she would eat what they eat.

They always eat some strange food that she is unaccustomed to, things like blood sausage and sauerkraut; topping it off with stale May West cakes they buy at Steinberg or Provigo. Saliha prefers to keep to herself when she works there.

On Friday afternoon, she will clean the old Czech at Côte des Neiges. He is a kind and quiet man who doesn't demand much from Saliha. He is glad to have a woman clean up once every few weeks. When she is there, Saliha cooks a couple of light dishes for him. He is always grateful for that and gives her an extra two dollars.

Saliha hopes that Eleni will call her on the weekend to confirm a cleaning job next week. Eleni lives close to where Saliha lives in Park Extension. But the best part of working for Eleni is that at the end of the work day when she is done at her hair dressing salon downstairs, Eleni comes upstairs to have coffee with Saliha and trims her hair and manicures her nails as a gesture of appreciation. Eleni's house is large and demands all of Saliha's energy but the extra reward makes the effort worth it. Eleni expects the cleaning to be done well, but always offers refreshments like Kool-Aid and Tang. Last time Saliha worked there, Eleni gave her some of her daughter's old clothes. Saliha hopes she would receive a reasonable sweater next time because she badly needs something a little fashionable for the end of term party at Plato College.

Sipping the last of her coffee, Saliha rises from the armchair and looks around the living room to plan her dusting strategy. She will do just the outside panels of the display cabinet this time, leaving the silver goblets and British china for the next time. Then she will dust the buffet and the little figurines on top of it, taking care to dust off the folds of the Chinese jade Buddha. She decides not to waste too much time polishing the wood this time as all the wooden surfaces are still sparkling from the last time she did it. The Rivests don't seem to have invited anyone over for dinner in the meantime because the guest sets remain as she last arranged them.

Saliha has just finished drying her hair and changing into her street clothes after her shower when Madame Rivest comes back from work. She greets Saliha in French, glances quickly around the house and shows her approval with many "Ooh"s and "Wonderful"s, stretching her words to make Saliha understand her heartfelt appreciation. Then she says in French that she will call Saliha again next week to confirm their next cleaning date. As she says this, Madame Rivest gestures as if she were dialing and holding on to the receiver of an imaginary telephone.

Of course Saliha can understand everything Madame Rivest is saying without the added gestures, but Madame Rivest is being so kind and helpful that Saliha decides not to use a couple of appropriate French phrases she has recently learned at Plato College.

Madame Rivest goes into her bedroom and comes back with a sealed white envelope containing Saliha's thirty-five dollars. The Rivests are the

only people that put Saliha's earnings in an envelope. They are considerate people.

As Saliha takes the envelope, she says, "Merci beaucoup, Madame Rivest." Stepping out the door, she switches the plastic bag containing her work clothes from her right hand to her left hand and extends her right hand to Madame Rivest and says, "Bonjour, Madame Rivest," and smiles. These are the first real words she has uttered since she woke up that morning.

In the elevator, going down, Saliha is alone. She checks the contents of the envelope and smiles with satisfaction. Before the elevator reaches the ground floor, Saliha has time to reflect on her day. She has earned enough for the week's food and cigarettes. Last week, she paid the last installment for her tuition at Plato College. She is tired but life is under control. Her only regret is that she hasn't answered Madame Rivest in longer sentences. But she chases away her regrets with a light shrug and admits the reality.

We come here to speak like them, she thinks; but it will be a long time before they let us practice.

Yesim Ternar is originally from Turkey and lives in Montreal.

OTHER SCENARIOS: Women and Spanish Anarchism

by Temma Kaplan

In most of western Europe, reformers and revolutionaries addressed themselves to problems raised by industrialization. Spain presents us with an interesting departure, because it remained pre-industrial well into the twentieth century and yet was the scene of considerable political protest. Movements dedicated to the liberation of mankind from oppression by the rich, the state, and the church do not usually attract masses of women, who are among the most exploited by these institutions. Temma Kaplan asks why. In her answer, she notes that these institutions often mask their oppressiveness by providing some vital ameliorative services. Furthermore, she points out that custom and the Catholic religion shaped even anarchist ideology, which itself then continued to cast women in traditional passive roles. Finally, she suggests that in the anarchist movement, women were most radical and most unified when they formed their own sexually separate associations — a hypothesis that seems applicable to other revolutionary movements as well. A recurrent dilemma for political leaders is the need to unify men, whose identity derives from their work, and women, whose identity derives from their families.

The Spanish anarchists were more sensitive to the connections between socialism and the liberation of women from tyrannical sexual and family relationships than any other European political group. Libertarian ideology, espoused by the anarchists, effectively induced certain women to raise their own demands even when they conflicted with those of the

largely male movement. But what female anarchists won for themselves, they won by themselves, and they were better anarchists for their feminism.

In Spain as elsewhere women were victimized by two institutions — the Catholic Church and the family. Between 1868 and 1939 Spanish anarchists struggled to destroy the tyranny of these and all oppressive institutions. It might seem, therefore, that women would have been especially attracted to the anarchist cause. In fact, the reverse was true. When anarchists attacked the family and the church, women were offended. However exploitative the family and the church may have been, these institutions provided women with a sense of stability, status, and dignity. From the family women received protection, some degree of security, and the experience of cooperative activity. The Catholic Church was more than a place to commune with God and the saints. It was a gathering place where women could reassert female community norms through gossip and commiseration. Daily mass formed the core of poor women's society just as the local bar or café was the centre of poor men's social life. Working-class men never would have tolerated a demand for the abolition of their cafés; working-class women did not tolerate the anarchist demand for the destruction of their church. But male anarchists persisted in their attacks on both church and family without offering alternatives. Anarchists did not provide or promise desperately needed social services that women might control themselves. Unless male anarchists could create new opportunities for communalism to replace the old social structure and until they could create enclaves of power for women within the movement, there was no way to win masses of women supporters.

But male anarchists seldom even promised greater female participation in the struggle. They never specified how females, whom they considered victims of traditionally oppressive relationships, would break free to become revolutionary comrades. In fact, reading anarchist publications, one has the distinct impression that male anarchists never seriously considered making women equals. Harangues designed to gain women's support perpetuated old stereotypes and incorporated previous attitudes into the revolutionary movement. They demanded, for example, that anarchist women follow their husbands' orders without regard for their own needs. This callousness toward women seems especially ironic in this movement, which dedicated itself to achieving the autonomy of all human beings. Anarchists' repeated references to women as victims of traditional society implied the view that women were somehow retarded or not fully human. From this followed the opinion that women were incapable of overcoming their own oppression either individually or collectively with other women. Despite the call for valiant deeds by anarchist heroines, one discerns echoes of the condescending voice of the Catholic Church in most anarchist discussions of ordinary women.

When male anarchists addressed the problem of poor men, they generally spoke about them as oppressed people who, though inhibited by circumstances caused by the church and the state, were capable of acting spontaneously in their own interests once these constraints were removed. To tutor men's consciousness, anarchist ideology depended upon the transitional psychological mechanism of voluntarism, enlightened by secular education. Throughout the history of Spanish anarchism, the movement's leaders argued that will, catalyzed by a smattering of natural science and natural law, could overcome the brutalization caused by poverty. Then human beings could live in harmony with nature. Lurking behind this argument seems to be the traditional Catholic emphasis on free will. But, whereas the church had granted women the same ability and responsibility as men to understand what was correct and do it, Spanish anarchists seemed to believe that women were too ignorant and oppressed to understand what was right.

In part, male anarchists' failure to envision women in more aggressively revolutionary roles, and their general failure to make Spanish anarchism responsive to women's needs, was due to the movement's organization. The syndicate, a union of skilled and unskilled workers organized around their productive unit, formed the basic structure of anarchism. These syndicates were first and foremost economic and political bodies; social service and education played a less important role. At some time in the future, all the local Spanish syndicates would declare a general strike, thereby overthrowing capitalism and the state. Once the enemies of poor people had been overcome, the syndicates would become workers' collectives, which would be the only political or economic institutions in the anarchist society of the future. This vision of revolutionary change spoke to the condition of male workers and peasants. In traditional Spanish society, even an unemployed and unskilled male still considered himself to be a worker. If nothing else, he occasionally was a mason or carpenter — the careers most often listed by casual labourers on censuses.

But a woman, despite years of permanent work in the labour force, defined herself and was defined by others primarily in terms of her familial status. Anarchists were never able to deal with women in terms of that dual status, and therefore they sought to organize them around their work — in women's case as housewives — just as they organized other workers. Since housewives were isolated, in almost every town where anarchist trade unions existed, they attempted to gather women into the "miscellaneous" category of syndicates. The needs of these women, anarchists assumed, were the same as those of all other workers. But anarchist insensitivity to the actual situation of women, for whom work such as drawing water, washing clothes, and physically caring for children was subordinate to preserving the social institution of the family, led anarchists to attack the family. They did not understand that the emotional

relationships provided by the family gave justification to poor women's lifelong struggle against poverty and hardship. Such women simply would not heed the call to join a movement that promised to obliterate the family as a social unit.

Behind the anarchists' fiery rhetoric about the destruction of the family lingered a romantic vision. What anarchists hated was the bourgeois family, whose members were tyrannized by ties of money and paternalistic authority. One issue upon which early Marxists and anarchists agreed was that "the family should be based on love, liberty and equality."[1] The anarchists believed that their families ideally served to inculcate antihierarchic notions about cooperative behavior. It was generally believed that the authoritarian family provided the model for the authoritarian state. Natural cooperative relationships were perverted as women and children learned to acquiesce to the tyranny of the father. Having learned submissiveness literally at their mothers' knee, poor people became docile before authorities such as the church and state. However simplistic anarchists may have been about the mechanisms of power and authority, they were among the earliest theorists to grasp the relationship between family psychology, revolutionary personality, and political freedom.

When anarchists suggested an alternative to the bourgeois family, they proposed "free love," which was not as radical as the term may have sounded. They did not condone promiscuity but meant rather (in the words of Juan Montseny, writing at the turn of the century) that a couple ought to live together, each with equal rights, until such time as one or the other partner cared to end the relationship. This pattern of common-law marriage was quite common among the Spanish poor, who could not always raise the necessary money to marry in the church and, even if they had married officially, could never obtain a divorce. The notion of free love was consistent with anarchist principles about maximum individual freedom. But without birth control and without child-care facilities which were established only when a strong female anarchist federation emerged during the Spanish Civil War — the women in free love matches were little better off than if they had been formally married. In fact, they often suffered because convents, the chief source of home work for many women, frowned upon "wanton" women with their illegitimate children and withheld work from them.

Anarchists, therefore, frequently took up the cudgel by calling for the abolition of the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children and urging an end to discrimination against unwed mothers. This appeal had little impact on contemporary society. But anarchists argued that after the revolution, all babies, whatever the circumstances of their birth, would be considered members of the community. They would be nurtured and supported simply because they were natural beings. Rather than the life of

leisure and eroticism some historians have attributed to this utopian view of the future, one discovers a scene in which a woman performing hard work seems well fed and clothed because she receives the product she has created. Men work, too, and profit from their own labour. Children prosper as charges of the entire community.

The anarchists' utopia was a romanticized vision of traditional small-town Spanish life with the church, the state bureaucracy, and the rich people removed. In this ideal community all citizens would be equal and no administrative structures would be necessary to guarantee equitable distribution of resources. After the revolution, the anarchists argued, institutional change would occur automatically and power would be destroyed. Hence, by implication, once the church and the family were crushed, an egalitarian, sexually democratic collectivity would emerge and miraculously liberate women from fear and ignorance. In the tradition of Rousseau, anarchists believed that human beings would be basically magnanimous and harmonious if only institutional constraints that promoted greed and competition could be removed.

Anarchists like Ricardo Mella, one of the leading turn-of-the century theorists, argued that the abolition of the church, state, and bourgeois family would automatically end all power relations. Since power would be destroyed, never to emerge again, anarchists had no need to plan for its distribution. Such views caused anarchists to overlook the necessity of moving from traditional roles to more revolutionary ones by sharing decision-making in the present. This combination of naiveté and traditionalism was largely responsible for anarchism's difficulty in dealing with poor Spanish women. It also helps to account for women's general lack of interest in anarchism except in those instances where female anarchists tried to create new institutions that couched revolutionary goals in terms of old norms.

Certain female anarchists, realizing that without an alternative community women would fight to defend the only one they had, attempted to create new institutions for women with anarchism. While the most notable female anarchist leaders, such as Soledad Gustavo (pseudonym for Teresa Mañé), her daughter Federica Montseny, and Teresa Claramunt, were as oblivious as anarchist men to this need, others were more responsive. Female anarchists like Amparo Poch y Gascón, Eulalia Prieto, Lucía Sánchez Saornil, and Mercedes Comaposada, whose experience in anarchist politics came from organizing poor women, realized that anarchism could not achieve its own libertarian goals of human autonomy without giving power to poor women. Women alone drew upon anarchist ideology to teach other women to be self-reliant, to create paramedical institutions, child-care centres, and vocational training programs within anarchist municipal centres. Women thereby could learn to be creative by perform-

ing services from which they themselves would immediately benefit. Male anarchists responded to social changes such as the increased entrance of women into the labour force by uncritically reasserting traditional views about women's capabilities. Male anarchists' initial response to an increase of women in the work force came in 1871, when the Congress of Valencia went on record as supporting women's return to the household in future anarchist society. Though some representatives like Francisco Mora objected, calling this idea sentimental and blind to women's creative faculties, it recurred periodically among male Spanish anarchists. If girls and women were to be returned to the home, there was no need to train them to perform services useful to themselves nor to prepare them to exercise power in the larger community. The housewife remained the model of anarchist womanhood.

Examination of the actual conditions of women in the work force, analysis of how the anarchists tried to dissolve women's links to the church, and a review of women's collective attempts to work for a revolution that would meet some of their own self-determined needs will show how the reality of Spanish women's condition conflicted with the traditionalism of Spanish anarchism. Paradoxically, male anarchists' sharp break with tradition in demanding the destruction of church and family repulsed many potential female supporters. But the few women who did manage to enter the ranks, because they were attracted by other qualities in anarchism, were in turn repulsed by male traditionalism with regard to women's potential role in society.

By the first part of the twentieth century, roughly 10 percent of all Spanish women over fourteen were in the labour market long enough and regularly enough to be counted (see table). In Barcelona in 1905, 15 percent of the female population over fourteen worked outside their homes; they constituted 28 percent of Barcelona's work force.[2] The chart indicates only a partial view of the work force since occasional female labourers and those who worked in the sweated trades were not always listed.

Females worked in almost every kind of industry in Spain at the turn of the century. Numerous women in Burgos and Mallorca manufactured straw shoes — the finished cost of which was so low that they dominated the markets of impoverished Asian nations such as India, China, and Japan. In Medina del Campo and Palencia, women produced burlap bags, cloaks, gloves, and playing cards; they also picked and preserved fruits. Where conditions were worst of all, in Galicia and Asturias, women were employed as construction workers.

While most labour statistics focus upon the activities of urban workers, the percentage of women employed in Spanish agriculture far exceeded the proportion of industry until 1930. The trend toward employing women and children in agricultural work increased at the end of the nineteenth century. As male wages in agriculture improved, partly in response to the

strength of anarchist trade unions, growers turned to women and children who could be paid half salary. Men continued to dominate reaping, which was thought to demand more strength and skill than most women had. But women and children, who had always been employed to hoe and weed, began to work in forestry. They also planted and harvested olives, chickpeas, cotton, sugar cane, grapes, and beans. Harvesting was the most arduous agricultural employment, since speed was the critical factor. Women collected ripe fruit in Murcia, Valencia, Zaragoza, and Alicante, generally working eighteen hours a day and more without breaks, eating their meagre food on the run.[3]

TABLE 17-1
DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN THE SPANISH LABOUR FORCE

YEAR	TOTAL WOMEN WORKING	AGRICULTURE	INDUSTRY	SERVICE
1910	917,970	359,429 (39.15%)	178,443 (19.44%)	380,093 (41.41%)
1920	1,012,937	321,184 (31.71%)	277,146 (27.36%)	414,607 (40.93%)
1930	1,105,443	263,511 (23.84%)	314,496 (28.45%)	527,436 (47.71%)
1940	1,116,554	262,082 (23.47%)	296,241 (26.53%)	558,231 (50.00%)

SOURCE: Maria Laffitte, La mujer en España: Cien años de su historia, 1860-1960, Aguilar, Madrid, 1964, p. 357.

Chickpea harvesting was a task almost exclusively performed by women, who still do this work today. Harvests generally occurred at the end of June. Women arose at 3 A.M. and arrived in the fields by dawn. Before the sun was fully up, they worked briskly, in silence, under the gaze of male supervisors. By 11 A.M., the sun had dried the plants to such an extent that harvest, which required pulling out the entire plant, became torturous. With only head scarves or narrow hats to protect them from the blazing sun, the women moved slowly along the rows of chickpeas, which became so dry and razor sharp that, despite gloves and socks, the women's hands and legs were bruised and lacerated by the plants. Some women preferred to return home to their families each evening. Others remained in the fields, sleeping on straw but receiving their meals during the two-week-long harvest. A seventy-year-old woman recently recounted how she and other female harvesters had often worked for nothing more than two weeks' worth of meals: cold soup at 11 A.M., mixed vegetables at

3 P.M., and soup again at night. Their meagre wages might be paid in any form the owner chose. One employer paid his workers with combs because he inherited a comb factory that season.

Urban married women who needed work generally produced garments at home for piece rates. Even at peak times, wages were very low. For instance, the 1915 going rate for Barcelona's sweated trades was 1.25 pesetas for a dozen men's shirts. Women's blouses brought 1.50 pesetas a dozen. Women who made slacks or jackets could earn 3 to 4.50 pesetas a dozen, but it was a rare seamstress who could earn more than 1.50 pesetas a day, a sum government reports acknowledged to be insufficient to put food on the table. A 1918 government survey explained that

> *often women's wages are the only support of poor families now that many workers are widows or abandoned women with children to support or spinsters, with ailing old parents or a thousand other circumstances which could be cited to persuade one that women's wages are the only means of life for many families, so that they ought to be sufficient for that purpose... They should not be less than male workers' wages.*[4]

The report reflected a European-wide phenomenon, that women in home work, industry, and agriculture received proportionally lower salaries than men: In 1873, Spanish women were paid one-half to two-thirds the salaries paid to men for equal work, and in 1913 they were still receiving only one-half to three-fifths.[5]

Female factory workers were generally young, single, and sickly. Workers under fourteen seem to have been especially prone to tuberculosis as a result of poor ventilation in their workshops. Many women suffered from anemia and general malnutrition, which made them more susceptible to scarlet fever and other contagious diseases. They also experienced severe menstrual pain because of uterine deformities caused by crouching at machines; such women often had miscarriages later in life.

Given these execrable conditions, it is no wonder that the image of the female as victim predominated over that of female as autonomous human being among Spanish anarchists. However, men in industrial production and agricultural work gangs suffered many of the same kinds of exploitative conditions. Spanish anarchists tried to organize men into revolutionary trade unions that would give them power over their work and their own circumstances, but they failed to do this for women. In general, male anarchists stressed the detrimental effect female workers had on the syndicalist movement. In Spain, where few men held jobs all year round, even fewer women were regularly employed. Women in need of work could often be used as strikebreakers. While official anarchist policy demanded an end to pay differentials between men and women, individual anarcho-syndicalist leaders such as Juan Marti of Barcelona complained in 1913 that women stole men's jobs in the textile industry

because they were willing to work for less. Those men who could find work, he lamented, had to work for women's wages. Traditional male prejudices about women's work persisted despite far-reaching anarchist theoretical commitments to the liberation of all human beings.

Anarchists along with all other progressive groups were shocked by prostitution. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, it was quite common for poor widows or seasonally employed single women to engage in occasional prostitution. Also, as was seen earlier, common-law marriage — later called "free love" among the anarchists — was the norm in poor communities although, after 1870, the government even considered women in such permanent monogamous relationships to be prostitutes. One sociologist estimated that in 1872 there were as many as 17,000 clandestine prostitutes in Madrid. By the turn of the century, critics of that city claimed that there was one prostitute for every thirteen or fourteen men and that about 6 percent of the female population of the city were prostitutes. But many of these women worked as seamstresses, milliners, and garment workers when such work was available.

Virtually all liberals and radicals in Spain opposed prostitution, but the anarchists believed that it was unreformable because it was an integral part of capitalism, another way people sold their labour. For anarchist men like Juan Ortega, the degradation of whores was part and parcel of the oppression of the poor in society as a whole. Was it any worse to sell one's time or one's good health working under exploitative conditions? Furthermore, anarchists claimed, authoritarian marriages in which women submitted sexually and psychologically to their husbands in return for economic support were a form of prostitution. They viewed prostitution as another form of victimization under the capitalist state and said it would disappear with the collectivization of property and resources. In their view of prostitution, as in so many other opinions, male anarchists reflected traditional Spanish culture, in which occasional prostitution was recognized as one of the ways, like taking in washing, that poor women might support themselves and their families.

Anarchists responded to female working conditions and widespread prostitution in a manner consistent with their general views about reform. They ambivalently opposed it. Where protective legislation was developed for working-class women in Spain, it resulted from the efforts of liberal bourgeois and aristocratic reformers. Spanish social legislation lagged far behind that of Germany or Great Britain. The first laws concerning factory work passed only in 1873 and applied only to children under seventeen. No laws regulated work done by female miners, cigar manufacturers, or lace makers, for example, until the twentieth century. But by World War I, important statutes officially protected working women. A 1912 decree required employers to provide chairs for women whose jobs forced

them to stand; and legislation in the twenties allowed release time for nursing mothers. Night work was outlawed for women. In 1931, the Second Republic passed compulsory maternity insurance and the eight-hour day.

Spanish protective legislation, like similar liberal reforms elsewhere in Europe, was doomed by an inadequate supply of inspectors, general apathy toward working women, and the inapplicability of the laws to the majority of women, who worked as domestic servants, washerwomen, seamstresses, lace makers, or harvesters. Women who worked in their own homes were excluded from laws governing working conditions. Factory inspectors lacked enforcement powers. Where they could coerce owners into meeting codes, the cure was often worse than the ailment when employers decentralized their shops to avoid the expense of providing the protection required by law. Women who desperately needed employment were often forced to do the same work in their dimly lit, badly ventilated garrets that they had done in unhygienic factories. Furthermore, by introducing piece rates for home work in place of the hourly wages formerly paid in factories, employers effected a speedup.

Anarchists vigorously opposed all piecemeal reforms because they believed that so long as the state and the bourgeoisie were in control, there could be no true democracy, no workers' control, and therefore no genuine changes in workers' lives. Piecemeal reforms only reinforced capitalism. Therefore, the Spanish anarchists tried to keep their constituency from participating in struggles for protective legislation. But individual anarchist women such as Eulalia Prieto found that even anarchist workers needed immediate though short-term improvements in their daily lives. Prieto and others therefore attended assemblies of workers to urge them to fight for workers' control over production as well as for protective legislation.

Despite their many difficulties, some anarchist men and women did attempt to create a revolutionary community through independent women's organizations within anarchist locals. Spanish anarchism was the coordinating body for anarchist syndicates and a system of cultural and intellectual organizations, schools, and newspapers geared to the poor. The two movements were coordinated by local anarchist councils in hundreds of towns and cities predominantly in Catalonia, Andalusia, Valencia, and Aragon. Each local was a federation of the important anarchist trade unions in town and of agricultural organizations in the surrounding countryside.

For about half its history, Spanish anarchism was a legal economic and political organization composed of federations of revolutionary labour syndicates, but not a political party. Between 1868 and 1873, 1881 and 1905, 1911 and 1923, and 1931 and 1937, anarchists were relatively free to function. However, police might always sweep into a workers' district or an anarchist town and arrest large numbers of local men, for while the right to

associate was sometimes permitted, the right to be an anarchist was not. During the relatively free periods, Spanish anarchism tended to stress syndical organization toward a general strike that would destroy the state and bring about libertarian society or anarchism. In the intervening years, however, when the movement was underground, the local councils re-emerged as workers' and peasants' cultural societies, mutual aid associations, or popular schools. Often no more than the back room of a bar in a small and impoverished town, the centre served as a meeting place where members could discuss political and scientific tracts and hear the latest news from outside. Anarchist husbands encouraged their wives to attend such meetings in part to keep them away from the church. Although the centres functioned whether or not syndicalism was outlawed, stress on such issues as the democratization of the family, the development of new interpersonal relations, and the separation of women from the ideological control of the Catholic Church varied inversely with the relative strength of the syndical movement: When labour activity was legal, systematically organized, and therefore strongest, women received less attention; dreams of a revolutionary, egalitarian community also diminished in importance. The economic and political realities confronted by syndicalism conflicted with social aspirations about the future. Revolutionary ideals found better expression in anarchist cultural activities.

The movement's most profound cultural onslaught came in its attempt to spread what it called "integral education" to replace religious precepts. Throughout most of the seventy-year period of Spanish anarchism, education was in church hands. The poor received few scholarships, but the church did prepare poor children for communion and confirmation. Therefore, religious instruction was often the only formal education anarchist youths received. For girls, this meant that, if they attended school at all, they generally learned sewing, decorum, and religious ritual from nuns, who tied them to the church by a mixture of benevolence, power, and fear. In this context, Spanish anarchists advocated pedagogical views that seemed radical even though they owed a debt to traditional rationalist thought. As early as 1870, national anarchist groups called for free, public, secular coeducation for all children below the age of thirteen. The core of Spanish anarchist pedagogical theory was offered by Trinidad Soriano in 1873 when he presented his program for integral education, a curriculum that defined all subsequent male anarchist educational theory until 1939. The sequence was quite simple. All learning would proceed from the study of natural history and scientific method to psychology and logic and then to evolutionary theory. This sequence roughly organized human knowledge into secular categories of nature, mind, and change.

Such a theory attempted to replace a supernatural Catholic universe, interpreted by church dogma, with an anarchist cosmology that posited the continuity between nature and egalitarian society. Human beings,

women included, were creatures of nature. Human consciousness was subject to the scientific laws of nature rather than to God and the church. Integral education thus substituted evolution for the will of God, since, as anarchists were fond of saying, revolution was just the speeding up of evolution. Because egalitarian, libertarian society was preordained by nature, history was on the side of the anarchists. The pace of evolution remained to be influenced by anarchist politics, since the development of anarchism could be retarded by ignorance. Anarchist educational programs, therefore, attempted to challenge religious beliefs. The anarchist educational proposals challenged church-state authority, since it was widely assumed that adherence to religious precepts assured social order and the status quo. Even more important, anarchists tied the issue of secular education to revolutionary consciousness. Scientific education, they said, could tutor volition by liberating men from fear of the supernatural. But male anarchists never alluded to the possibility of tutoring female will, strengthening it to withstand exhortations by the clergy and to overcome internal fear based on superstition, let alone to confront their fathers and husbands over psychological or political issues. It seems as if they assumed an androgynous will and then behaved as if it were an exclusively male apparatus.

The anarchists did, however, pay lip service to providing formal coeducation, and failed more because of inadequate funds than because of simple prejudice. From 1873 on, anarchist locals tried to organize coeducational schools, buy books, and establish museums and laboratories wherever possible, but most locals could provide only meagre resources. While individual women may have benefited from all this, and while little girls sometimes attended classes, there is no evidence that the predominantly male anarchist locals actively recruited female children.

Yet some anarchist theorists emphasized female education as a means of reprogramming poor women, who anarchists believed were in the clutches of the Catholic Church. Anarchist José Torres Molina wrote in 1889 that his movement's female education program was designed "to transform women's social and moral priorities...to win them from religious superstition and apathy." But win them to what?

Some female anarchists made use of the potential communal opportunities offered by the anarchist locals to secure their own needs and to help win over their religious sisters by offering them institutionalized alternatives through the apparatus of anarchism. For instance, as a substitute for baptism, it was quite common for newborn infants to be initiated into the movement in the meeting place of the anarchist local council. In 1873, the Sanlúcar de Barrameda local initiated a boy called Gateway to Human Progress and a girl named Anarchist Europe. This practice continued among Spanish anarchists into the twentieth century. On Sunday, February 26, 1902, Electra (named for the Greek princess who challenged

the state), the natural child of anarchist parents, was ceremonially introduced to the assembled anarchist women at the Metal and Iron Workers' Headquarters in Cádiz. The child received books, money, and several choruses of anarchist medlies.[6]

Anarchist women realized that people do not change their lives overnight. Social habit may be more important than ideology in governing people's behavior. The social life connected with the church was as important as religion per se in binding women to Catholicism. So if the practice of secular baptism seems rather religious, it is because the anarchists adopted the forms of the old to teach the new. Anarchist men, however, appear to have been less successful than anarchist women in transforming church doctrine into progressive social theories. Consciously or not, male anarchists used religious arguments they had learned as catechumens to try to win women to anarchism. For example, anarchist Manuel Rioja, writing in 1903, suggested — in an adaptation of St. Augustine's advice to male and female Christians married to heathens — that if a spouse was more interested in the priest's opinion than in good politics, her mate should try to reason her out of religion. Failing that, he should leave her! At the same time as they attacked the institutional church, male anarchists overlooked the force traditional Catholic doctrine had even upon themselves. Unconscious attitudes and prejudices undercut official anarchist doctrines of human equality and dignity. Male anarchists often tried to dominate and direct the behaviour of women for the purpose of building anarchism just as priests tried to orient them in the name of preserving Catholicism.

Still, some anarchist women did find ways to adapt labour organization to their needs. Women of all trades and interests entered federations that came under the anarchist umbrella. Syndicates of miscellaneous occupations with women's sections have already been mentioned. For example, in Arcos de la Frontera in 1882 there was a female unit within the local. Other anarchist women's associations, such as Liberated Women, founded in Valencia in 1892, and the 1902 Feminine Society of Cádiz are only two of many women's organizations within the anarchist fold. Some women may also have been concerned with establishing feminist consciousness within the labour movement. Thus, in 1882 two women textile workers, Manuela Daza and Vicenta Durán, claimed to represent Seville's female work force regardless of trade. Women in the labour force did not eschew the syndical movement; they simply tried to run their portion of it themselves and tended to emphasize social needs more than the male sector of the anarchist labour movement did.

The most militant women in the anarcho-syndicalist movement were seamstresses, esparto grass workers, straw shoemakers, embroiderers, and olive pickers. In these occupations, women worked in isolation from men.

The only male with whom they came into contact was a foreman or supervisor. His presence tended to forge an alliance of opposition among the women, whereas the presence of male co-workers encouraged females to defer to the men. Spanish anarchism, like other western trade union movements, may have had some trouble winning women to sexually integrated unions, but it seems to have been successful in forming sexually segregated female unions even among seasonally employed female agricultural workers or mill girls. Once unionized, female anarcho-syndicalists faced conflicts with the national anarchist organizations similar to those confronted by men. On principle, anarchists opposed short-term strikes for improved working conditions, higher wages, or reduced hours. However, once they organized into anarchist syndicates, female and male workers for the first time held some bargaining power vis-à-vis their employers, power that prompted them to try to win immediate improvements. Anarchist national or local organizations could not prevent local syndicates from making demands upon their employers and from going out on wildcat strikes if their demands were rejected. A "council of 40,000 organized male and female factory workers" sent a set of proposals to the Cortes in 1873. Included in it were demands for equal salaries for women, minimum wages, the eight-hour day, factory safety procedures, and the introduction of mixed juries of workers and employers to govern labour disputes. The reformist proposals remained essentially the same up through the Spanish Civil War period. National anarchist organizations discouraged such narrow demands hoping, instead, to win workers to the view that nothing short of the revolution would solve their problems.

Even so, male and female wage labourers affiliated with Spanish anarchism went on strike for a variety of reasons. Women workers frequently declared sympathy strikes with men in town although male workers seldom reciprocated. Like men, female anarchists carried on strikes for reduced hours and increased wages. In 1873, sixty Palma de Mallorca seamstresses formed a union and affiliated with the anarchists. At the time, they worked a sixteen-hour day for about 18 cents. Once their own organization was relatively stable, the seamstresses helped unionize women who made the uppers for esparto shoes and those who plaited esparto grass, one of the lowest-paying occupations in Spain. Three groups, the seamstresses, the esparto grass finishers, and the plaiters, struck that year for higher wages, and only the plaiters won their strike.[7] Female agricultural workers in Alcalá del Valle and throughout Andalusia joined in attempts to carry on a general strike in 1903. When there was an upsurge of labour activity following World War I, significant victories were won by female olive pickers in Alcalá de Guadiara, Seville, and by female cigarette makers in Gijón, Oviedo. Further work in Spanish labour history may well demonstrate an extraordinarily high degree of militant activity by

anarchist women.

The most important of all the women's associations formed under the auspices of the Spanish anarchists was undoubtedly the Mujeres Libres or Liberated Women group.[8] In the spring of 1936, before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, a well-established female anarchist association in Madrid began to publish a newspaper called *Mujeres Libres*. The periodical was dedicated to many of the same issues the organization tried to promote, adult education, particularly vocational training, health care, including contraception and abortion information, and trade union protection for women.

The newspaper caught the imagination of other women's anarchist and feminist groups throughout Spain. Women, chiefly from Madrid and Barcelona but with a few representatives from outlying areas, came together in an umbrella association within the anarchist movement and continued to publish *Mujeres Libres*, the name they also adopted for their own organization. By 1938, Mujeres Libres was a 20,000-member women's federation with branches throughout the republican sector of Spain.

The Civil War (1936 to 1939) transformed Mujeres Libres in many of the same ways it transformed other anarchist groups. Convinced that the war was the initial stage of the revolution, female anarchists, like their male comrades, wanted to proceed as if they were living in revolutionary society. This meant that besides introducing women into the labour force Mujeres Libres tried to help women gain power within the anarchist movement, participate in decision making, and win better working conditions. Female anarchists were not content, as was the Spanish fascist women's organization directed by Pilar Primo de Rivera, merely to encourage women to do the civilian work men had abandoned when they entered the army. This difference is significant, because while other groups in Spain attempted to mobilize women, only Mujeres Libres consistently argued that winning the Civil War and winning their rights as women workers were mutually dependent.

Still more important, Mujeres Libres fought to maintain separate women's organizations even where anarchist revolutionaries seemed to be in control, in Barcelona and Valencia, for example. Mujeres Libres perceived that there was no autonomy for anyone, male or female, without power. To achieve that power they established paraprofessional schools and independent trade unions for women. Many of their adult education projects trained women in health techniques, including midwifery. They tutored women in new agricultural methods so that they could increase production, but they also insisted that all women engaged in such activities be given control over conditions of work, hours and compensation through producers' cooperatives. If they had ever heard the myth of female self-sacrifice to the revolution, they did not seem to have been affected.

As women became more active in the public sector of the economy — either through the auspices of Mujeres Libres or because of government recruitment, Mujeres Libres concerned itself with protecting these women and with promoting their own control of their work. For instance, in the spring of 1937, Mujeres Libres organized trade unions for female food and transport workers. Even in anarchist agricultural collectives in the province of Valencia, for example, Mujeres Libres insisted on maintaining separate women's associations. Perhaps this resulted not so much from a distrust of their male comrades as from women's continued shyness in integrated public meetings. When women were sexually segregated, as they often had been in the church, anarchist women were quite outspoken.

Mujeres Libres established parent-controlled child-care centres wherever they organized women into industrial, agricultural, or service jobs. They encouraged parents to help raise their children collectively, although there is little evidence that anarchist men actively engaged in child care. Amparo Poch y Gascón, a female physician and founder of Mujeres Libres, travelled throughout the country lecturing on prenatal care and treatment of infants. Mujeres Libres' notion of child and health care seems to have been that control over life, attainable through the acquisition of health-care skills, could provide a base for further independent behaviour and female autonomy.

For Mujeres Libres, as for many integrated and male-dominated anarchist groups during the Civil War, it may have seemed as if the old order was crumbling. Therefore, what seemed important was the creation of new social relations. However, Mujeres Libres promoted the additional notion that women as a group required protection against the force of the collectivity. Because anarchists were defeated first by the Communists and finally by General Francisco Franco, we cannot know how this insight might have been applied if the anarchists had succeeded in dominating a victorious Spanish Republic. But the persistence of traditional norms in anarchists' attitudes leads one to believe that had the anarchists triumphed, female anarchists as well as other women would still have faced a struggle.

It appears that the history of Spanish anarchism up to 1939 was the history of slowly changing attitudes about social and personal matters. While positing the most revolutionary programs for the reorganization of society, male anarchists remained ambivalent about how those changes would or should affect them as individuals. This failure was especially notable in Spanish anarchist writings and decrees about working-class women.

All through its history, the Spanish anarchist press displayed ambivalent views about poor women. Theorists such as Ricardo Mella exaggerated their degradation and portrayed them as ignorant, superstitious, servile

drones. On the other hand, anarchists also believed in the pedestal and romanticized certain "feminine" virtues. One anarchist praised the spirit of the lioness defending her cubs and hoped that this "female" sense of loyalty could be communalized. Many anarchists claimed that once the bourgeois family, maintained by patriarchal authority, was destroyed, love would replace force and power as means of preserving revolutionary anarchist society. Their arguments implied that love was somehow a female trait. In practice, however, some female anarchists had an instrumental view of women's relationship to anarchism. Teresa Claramunt, for example, was a popular trade union leader in the Catalan textile industry at the turn of the century. She and her comrade José Prats talked about women as mothers of future revolutionaries but seldom, if ever, as revolutionary comrades who might transform society through personal insights and collective action. None of the other anarchists quite made the theoretical jump to explain the connection between overcoming the state, creating workers' collectives, and transforming people's personalities. Aside from their faith in secular, scientific education and their belief in poor men's potential to develop a will, anarchists could not explain how that process might take place.

Anarchist theorists could not translate their own insights about the relationship between power and revolutionary psychology into political practice. Consuelo Bernardo and Doña B. Montefiore argued that a family was a microcosm of the state in which men, as economic providers who earned greater wages for equal work, held psychological as well as economic power over their wives and children insofar as they could threaten to withdraw support. All the poor were frightened into submission for fear of police repression if they struck against employers and of clerical sanctions, such as withholding home work from poor women, if they seemed to have strayed from the religious path. Anarchists like Milagro Rodriguez were perceptive in viewing sexual relations as a form of domination, but the male anarchists' mistake was to argue that free love without birth control or cooperative child care would redress the balance. Only Mujeres Libres viewed instruction in contraceptive techniques as a necessary part of female liberation.

The decentralization of the anarchist movement makes it difficult to determine just what the prevailing opinion was on any subject. But it is still more difficult to discover what the women prior to Mujeres Libres thought. Yet, from scattered references in anarchist papers and from the literature published under the auspices of Mujeres Libres,[9] it is possible to say that the women seemed to push harder on social-psychological issues, such as teaching women to function politically, to assume leadership positions, and to develop new self-images as potentially autonomous people, than on labour issues. Male anarchists generally gave low priority to social and psychological matters, especially when the trade union

movement was most active — a tendency that demonstrates that syndicalism seldom confronted the special condition of women who occupied dual roles as wives and workers. Failure to recognize the rewards women received from their position in the family and the social reasons for their attachment to the church led anarchist men to emphasize their victimization rather than their strength. Victimization denotes the need for charity, even for reprogramming, but not for the reallocation of power and influence. The Spanish anarchists, like other revolutionaries, often implied that since the revolution would ultimately improve the condition of women, good anarchist females would want to subordinate their individual and short-term psychological and social needs to the long-term economic and political benefits they might receive in future anarchist society.

Over the years between 1868 and 1939, the response from women seems to have been fourfold. Many women in anarchist enclaves or married to anarchist men emotionally supported male kin but remained faithful to the church, which regarded them as victims and breeders but gave them a place to meet and a reason for living. Others organized into women's social and intellectual circles within the anarchist local councils, providing themselves with some support in their struggle to continue fighting for survival against tyrannical husbands, excessive childbirth, and possible abandonment. Those who could work sometimes formed labour syndicates that affiliated with the largely male anarchist associations, but there is little evidence to show that their alliance with the male syndicalists won them any benefits they did not win for themselves. Finally, the most compelling response came in the institution of Mujeres Libres, which made a valiant effort to use the ideological force of anarchist doctrine for the benefit of women by giving them power. But more important, because Mujeres Libres seems to have had no illusions about the help they could expect from the great mass of anarchist men, they were not afraid of alienating them by their insistence on the primacy of social issues over economic and political matters even within the revolution. Moreover, by developing the talents of untutored, often illiterate poor Spanish women, by training them to speak out in public, first in small meetings of women, then in friendly anarchist mass meetings, Mujeres Libres in effect taught women how to express their needs and how to share their personal insights about society with the larger movement.

Ironically, women in Mujeres Libres and in many of the less well-known female syndicates and associations went further in implementing anarchist ideals than most sexually integrated anarchist institutions were willing or able to go. In part, their success lay in their ability to see beyond victims and to encourage strong, capable women who had a keen sense of what they needed. Moreover, since traditional village organization offered women virtually no chance to participate actively in any institu-

tions other than the family and the church, women, once mobilized, had fewer illusions about the desirability of transforming the old society into the new merely by removing the rich people, the church, and the state. Mujeres Libres and perhaps some of the earlier women's groups seemed to realize that if they were to break from the church, the source of much comfort and collective support as well as much misery and injustice, they needed a community that was equally powerful emotionally as well as economically. It appears as if Mujeres Libres, for one, was able to establish such a community, if only for a little while.

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NOTES

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[1] *Cited in Anselmo Lorenzo,* El proletariado militante, *Editorial del Movimiento Libertario Español, C.N.T. en Francia, Toulouse, 1947, Vol. 2, p. 196.*

[2] *Albert Balcells, "Condicions laborals de l'obrera a la indústria catalana,"* Politica i economia a la Catalunya del segle XX: 2 Recerques. Història, economia, cultura, *Eidcions Ariel, Esplugues de Llobregat, Barcelona, 1972, p. 141.*

[3] *Eliseo Bayo,* Trabajos duros de la mujer, *Plaza & Janés, Barcelona, 1970, pp. 109, 114-118.*

[4] *"Preparación de un proyecto de ley sobre el trabajo a domicilio," Instituto de Reformas Sociales, Secciones Técnicos Administrativas, Madrid, 1918, pp. 419, 446.*

[5] *Carlos Seco Serrano, ed.,* Actas de los consejos y comisión federal de la región española 1870-1874: Asociación internacional de los trabajadores: Colección de documentos para el estudio de los movimientos obreros en España en la época contemporánea, *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Universidad de Barcelona, Publicaciones de la Cátedra de Historia General de España, Barcelona, 1969, Vol. I, p. IxIx; Balcells, p. 141.*

[6] *"Movimiento Social,"* Tierra y libertad, *Barcelona, February 8, 1902;* El condenado, *Madrid, March 27, 1873.*

[7] El condenado, *March 8, March 21, March 27, 1873.*

[8] *Temma Kaplan, "Spanish Anarchism and Women's Liberation,"* Journal of Contemporary History, *6, no. 2 (1971), 101-110.* "Mujeres Libres". La doble lucha de la mujer. *Edición a cargo de Mary Nash, Tusquets Editor, Barcelona, 1975. The Nash volume came to our attention after this essay was completed.*

[9] *The Hemeroteca of Barcelona and the Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, are the outstanding places to study Mujeres Libres. Institute holdings in the R. Louzara (R. Lone) collection indicate the kinds of issues with which Mujeres Libres was involved: Amparo Poch y Gascón,* Niño, *n.p., Publicaciones Mujeres Libres, n.d.; Lucía Sánchez Saornil,* Horas de revolución, *n.p., Publicaciones Mujeres Libres, n.d.; and* Como organizar una agrupación, *n.p., Comité Nacional de Mujeres Libres, n.d.*

Inside Black Australia

by Katherine Gallagher

Inside Black Australia
(ed. Kevin Gilbert, 1988), Penguin Books Australia, Victoria, 3134, Australia. 215 pages. £4.95. ISBN 0-14-011126-3.

This Anthology of Aboriginal Poetry is raw, angry, and fiercely evocative. It is a corrective to those inside and outside Australia who saw the 1988 Bicentenary of European settlement wholly as celebration.

Not surprisingly, as predicted by Kevin Gilbert in his challenging introduction, the history and struggles of his people *were* often ignored amidst the plethora of bicentennial festivities ranging from a re-enactment of the First Fleet's arrival in 1788 to local woolshed hops. For those inside Black Australia, the only possible cause for celebration was their survival despite the acts of genocide and other injustices forced on them in the past and today. Gilbert points to some current abuses contributing to the sub-human conditions under which the majority of Aboriginals still live:

> many ... denied access to rivers and waterholes by pastoralists and miners; living in confined areas where they can no longer move camp and hunt; living permanently under scraps of tarpaulin and hessian and derelict car bodies; dying from curable eighteenth century diseases; blinded by trachoma; dying from malnutrition and dying in droves from Hepatitis B because the Gubba'ment won't provide the cost for the immunisations — $150 per person — so they die without a murmur of protest, except that of the thundering roar of outrage by the Flying Doctor Service ...[1]

and so on. These wrongs must be juxtaposed against the British Crown's initial dispossession of the first inhabitants following Cook's historic declaration of the land as being *'terra nullius*, wasteland and unoccupied'. The effects on the Aboriginal People of such a denial of their identity defies imagination. But from that initial 'possession' of the land by the British, there followed nation-wide massacres. Gilbert describes how a large group of his own people, the Wiradjuri, were

> herded and driven like sheep before the guns to the swamps near Bathurst. There they were 'dispersed' with guns and clubs, whereupon these pioneering head-hunting whites cut off a large number of the peoples' heads, boiled them down in buckets and set 45 of the skulls and other bones off to Britain ...[2]

The airing of such pain and iniquities leaves the reader numbed. This book is a collective political statement, and if I dwell briefly on the past and present wrongs cited by Gilbert, it is because to understand the history of injustices against the Aborigines is to comprehend perhaps a little the background to the anguish detailed throughout this anthology and in Australian Black Writing generally.

Gilbert has assembled work from 44 poets (24 women, 20 men) of varying ages, from different parts of Australia, almost all still living, most engaged politically. Some, like Colin Johnson[3], Oodgeroo Noonuccal (formerly Kath Walker), Jack Davis, Archie Weller and Eva Johnson are well-known internationally. In the introductions prefacing each poet's contributions, he or she is presented with a warmth and simplicity which would be unimaginable in a mainstream anthology. And for the most part, their poems sing, despite anger, loss, pain ...

It is often the pain of disbelief that everything should have come to desolation, as in Julie Watson Nungarrayi's *Sorry*, a poem about finding cave-paintings: 'Gone are those proud hunters, the women digging mata./Their language, their dance and song./All that is left of a people now/Tiny painted animals./' Or the pain of despair, as in Jack Davis' *Slum Dwelling:* 'The walls all cracked and faded, bare./The glassless windows stare and stare/like the half-dead eyes of a dying race ... /A sad but strange, compelling place./' It is often the pain of outrage, as in Colin Johnson's accomplished satiric six-part sequence, *Song circle of Jacky:* 'Don't tell me who I am:/A child cries in me too often,/To have many illusions./' (From *Jacky Sings Hit Songs*). Or in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's *Colour Bar:* 'When vile men jeer because my skin is brown./This I live down./But when a taunted child comes home in tears,/Fierce anger sears./'

Worse, there is the pain of recurring tragedy, particularly evoked in poems from prison by Robert Walker, (1958-84): 'The key turns — the day

dies./ ...' (*Unreceived Messages*) and 'I've lain in my own blood/in hotels/boys' homes,/and cop shops./I've cursed my skin:/not black, not white./Just another non-identity,/fighting to be Mr. Tops./ ...' (*Okay, Let's Be Honest*). A page or so later, there is a moving elegy for Walker following his death from beatings (so-called 'misadventure') in Fremantle gaol: 'Never blood/so red so red/never blood so red/as blood of the poet/the Kokatha poet/who lay in the pool/so dead./ ... whose cries for justice/bled/whose cries for justice/bled./' (*Never Blood So Red* by Grandfather Koori).

Gilbert notes that over the last two decades the Aboriginal voice has received a remarkable amount of attention and scrutiny in the European Australian world of literature. In two decades there has been an amazing transformation from oral to written form, especially remarkable given the limited access the Aborigines have had to education and the fact that English is not their native tongue. Gilbert anticipates critics who may try to dismiss the poetry in this anthology as rough-edged and unpoetic. However it would be presumptuous and misleading to assess this essentially 'new' freedom poetry by long-established white Europen canons of excellence. That is not what this poetry is about. Every emerging minority group looks to its literature to help to give it identity; here, in *Inside Black Australia*, personal experience, multiplied many times over, gives a charge of authenticity to the poems, making them a collective statement of passion and caring.

Time after time in the unremitting suffering described in this book, one is reminded of Owen's statement prefacing his war-poetry, 'The Poetry is in the pity'. *Inside Black Australia* is about war but a different sort of war — the struggle for understanding and equality between cultures. We need to heed the eloquent messages and reminders of these Aboriginal poets while there is still time.

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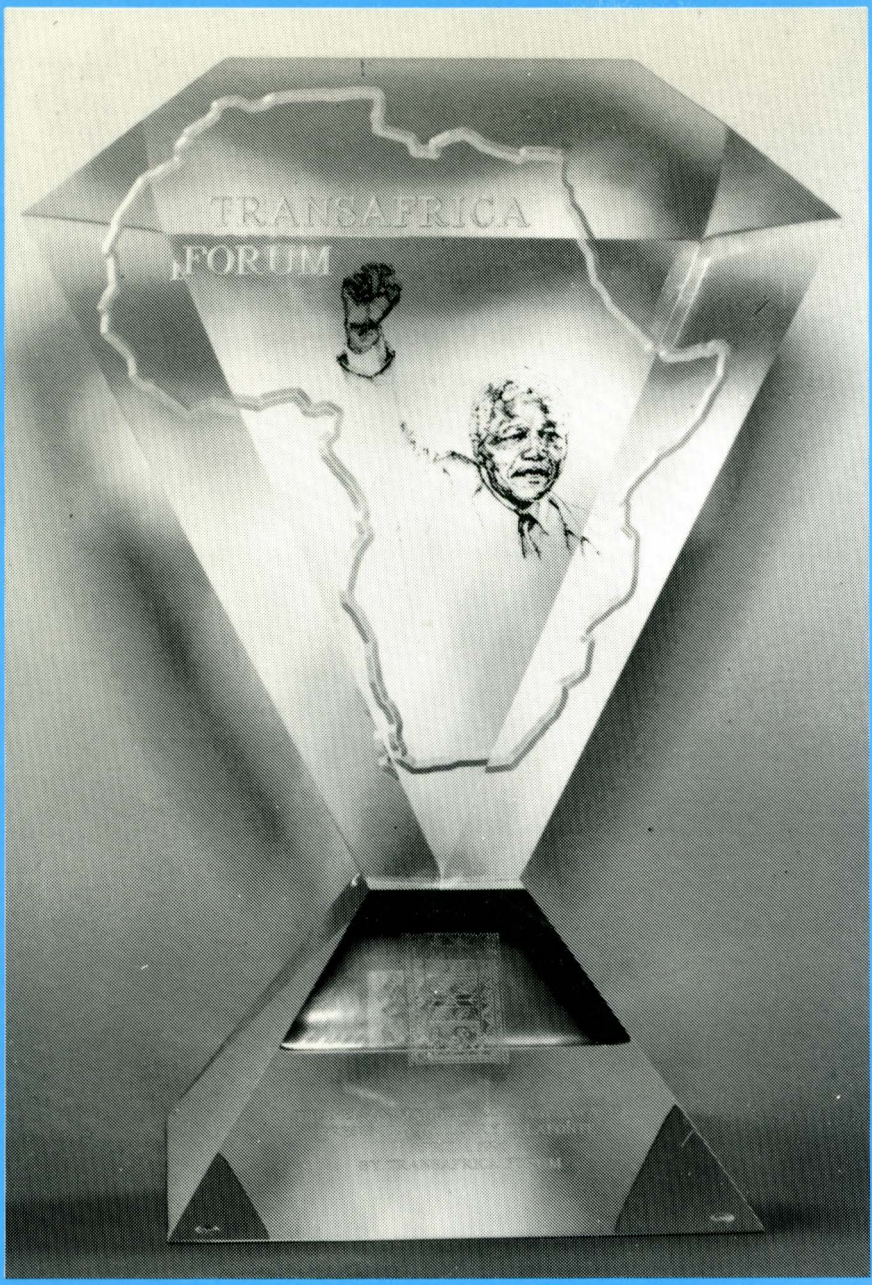
FOOTNOTES

[1] *Introduction*. pxxiii
[2] Ibid. pxxx
[3] Colin Johnson has now chosen to be known by his Aboriginal name, Mudrooroo Narogin.



Nelson Mandela Courage Award, 1990. Lucite. This diamond on a pyramid-shaped base signifies the wealth and genius of Africa, the image of Mandela, its heroism.

Artis Lane