Federative Futures: Waterways, Resistance Societies, and the Subversion of Nationalism in the Early 20th-Century Anarchism of the Río de la Plata Region

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The discussion of anarchists' relationship to nationalism and internationalism is often marred by the omission of a key tenet of their ideological disposition: the rejection of political and territorial nations, and of the institutional guarantors of their hegemony in social life. In the spirit of the First International, the Argentine FORA (*Federación obrera regional argentina* – Argentine Regional Workers' Federation) adopted the term "regional" in 1904 precisely to designate its range of spatial and organizational activism as *trans*- (rather than *inter*-) national. In the early years of anarchist longshoremen's labor organization into resistance societies, delegates from Uruguayan and Brazilian ports were regularly present at meetings and involved in strikes; not as representatives of national movements but as fully equal participants in a drive to extend the geographic tentacles of the FORA, which routinely sent agitators across borders to Paraguay, Chile and even Peru. This was theorized in a "Solidarity Pact" according to which localities were to be freely associated with local federations, provinces with provincial federations, nations with regional, national federations, and, the entire world with an international federation – the International Labor Association (*Asociación Internacional de Trabajadores* – AIT, revived in 1922). Social solidarity was thus represented as inherently supra-national (i.e., oblivious to parliaments, bureaucracies and borders), while activism to transform capitalist society into a more cooperative and egalitarian model of economic and political organization

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was grounded in local situations and circumstances. In the case of the Argentine FORA, local activism (not all of it nominally "anarchist") was connected with far-flung networks of working-class militancy throughout the Río de la Plata region, as powerful labor organizations among longshoremen and mariners in Buenos Aires sustained the circulation of information and solidarity throughout the Paraná and Uruguay rivers and along the Atlantic coast.

Martha Ackelsberg has noted that anarchists "pointed to railways, international postal services, and other forms of communication as models of networks, set up by voluntary agreement to provide services to people without the intervention of some higher authority." In Argentina, ports and merchant marine flows were viewed by anarchist resistance societies as such a network, and the theoretical "federalism" of classical anarchist thinking was to be achieved through what Ackelsberg calls "federative networking" – bringing together

> representatives of local groups (unions, neighborhood associations, consumer groups, and the like). In this configuration neither individual groups nor the larger coordinating body could claim to speak or act for others. Ideally, they would be more forums of discussion than directive organizations. Spontaneous organization would demonstrate in practice that those who had experienced oppression were still capable of rational thought and action, able to come to know what their needs were and to develop ways to meet them.[2]

In the spirit of Piotr Kropotkin, "voluntary associations" would "substitute themselves for the state and all of its functions." They would

> represent an interwoven network, composed of an infinite variety of groups and federations of all sizes and degrees, local, regional, national and international – temporary or more or less permanent – for all possible purposes: production, consumption and exchange, communications, sanitary arrangements, education, mutual protection, defense of the territory, and so on; and, on the other side, for the satisfaction of an ever-increasing number of scientific, artistic, literary and sociable needs.[3]

Thus organized anarchist workers were, to quote the expression of Samuel Clark, "imminentists in the sense that they regard[ed] […] the industrial workforce organized into voluntary and federalized syndicates, as both the instrument of revolution and the form of utopia, already present within current arrange-

ments."[4] Decentralization was meant to prevent the growth of hierarchical and centralized forms of self-perpetuating bureaucracy; self-governing associations should remain small, self-reliant and self-motivating, generating improvisation, cooperation, and solidarity; federalism should guarantee coordination while preserving local independence; and the fragmentation, as well as the flexibility, of organizational structures was desirable, because it avoided the institutionalization of roles and prevented a polarization between the leaders and the led.[5] While anarchist resistance societies remained small and organizationally discontinuous, and were usually dissociated from State-centered politics, they did not view these realities as necessarily debilitating; instead, they saw them as a source of regenerative militant intervention in societal change, a reflection of perpetual movement.[6] Regardless of the national theatre in which they operated geographically, they were equal, sovereign, and bound by the imperative of solidarity.

The seemingly irresistible rise of modern political nationalism has drawn attention away from the historical relevance of anarchist federalism. The anarchist tradition in the Río de la Plata region – designated as "Argentine" because Buenos Aires was its nodal base of operations – is often dismissed as an ideology of immigrants with little interchange with or lasting impact on the culture of the political State that, from the Great Depression onward, stymied its growth; or, it is teleologically viewed as a primitive stage in the development of more "modern," industrial labor unions. Moreover, the cataloguing of explicitly anarchist organizations and campaigns tends to limit our understanding of the ideology's range. Anarchists who were present in strike movements led by others allied themselves at times with socialists and social Catholics, and occupied influential positions within larger syndicalist movements that viewed them as competitors, such as the Argentine *Federación obrera marítima* (FOM). This ubiquitous, flexible quality, which emerges clearly from the case study of longshoremen and mariners in Argentina, was a feature of anarchist militancy seldom considered by historians who chronicle its sectarian fortunes: "(We) consider as a definitive mistake," wrote Piotr Kropotkin "a programme which demands full agreement among participants of all details of the ideal and, besides that, the organization of an extensive group of participants before proceeding to activity among the people."[7] Thus when Ruth Thompson observes the "pragmatic" orientation of Argentine anarchists and their constituencies, asking "whether the organizations described as anarchist are properly so-called,"[8] or when she identifies "economic grievances" as weighing more heavily on the choices they made than ideology of any sort,[9] she is missing a key point: that anarchists inserted themselves into popular struggles and working-class movements with the aim of transforming the larger society in clearly understood ways.

To understand this, one must first be prepared to evaluate the anarchist's view of labor activism on its own terms. Following the debacle of the First International, the anti-authoritarian Congress of Saint-Imier stipulated that workers should participate in the destruction of all political power, support strikes as a means of struggle without illusions regarding their economic outcomes, organize themselves in autonomous and free federations, and engage in economic direct action. Soon the Bakuninist belief in the spontaneous freedom of individuals living collectively was replaced by the organizational principles of "anarchist communism" – the key influence in Argentine anarchism, one that represented a continuation of Bakunin's social doctrine while modifying its tactical precepts. Errico Malatesta, who while in Buenos Aires contributed to the genesis of Argentine resistance societies,[10] believed in trade-union activity only if bureaucracy and paid functionaries were eschewed, and saw local and general strikes, economic sabotage, boycotts, and insurrection as a means toward the anarchist goal of a classless society, rather than as the end in itself. He believed in the emancipation of all human beings, not just workers, but identified workers as a vanguard in the movement.[11] Some key aspects of anarchist thinking about organizing workers were that they should not aim to organize permanent structures of authority; that coordinated solidarity between them should be based on mutualism, reciprocity and federalism beginning at the local level; that true individual freedom could be achieved only in and through community; that the federation of local groups should be non-coercive and open to other forms of association as well as ideas and affinities; that social order was to be achieved through the voluntary aggregation of locally-based, decentralized groups rather than formal political structures; and that regionalism and trans-national coordination would restrain the centralizing institutions of State oppression and control.

The leaders of resistance societies in Argentine ports, which were strategic locations in the agro-export economy of the time, inherited a long tradition of European anarchist thinking, and applied it to local conditions in fluid and creative ways. While anarchists borrowed from the classical socialist repertoire of promethean collective emancipation and workers' struggle, they recognized – with Malatesta – the broad diversity of expressions of working-class identity, and saw the overcoming of class antagonisms through economic struggles for equality and control as only one aspect of the necessary abolition of all oppression rooted in private property.[12] Anarchists extended the revolutionary subject to include intellectuals, women, rural workers, ethnic groups, and other sectors, including – to paraphrase José Moya – "the lumpenpropletariat, petty delinquents, and ruffians," […], "elevating, rather than disdaining or dismissing, as socialists normally did, "the dregs of society."[13] The Spanish historian and chronicler/protagonist of Argentine anarchism, Diego Abad de Santillán, acknowledged

that while "the rebel emerges from the proletariat," workers also provided support for reaction, for fascism, and for totalitarianism – reflecting a suspicion of deterministic discourses of "class consciousness," and a belief that only tireless idealism and education would elevate the society morally.[14]Moreover, anarchists were not immune to the cultural context in which they acted. In 1904, long before nationalists appropriated the figure of the Argentine "gaucho" as an iconic figure of struggles for freedom and independence, Alberto Ghiraldo – who began his militancy in the port and collaborated with the anarchist organ *La Protesta* – created a magazine, *Martín Fierro*, depicting these epic frontiersmen as precursors of anarchist rebellion; reflecting efforts by libertarian intellectuals in the mostly foreign city of Buenos Aires to connect with the culture and symbolism of creole traditions in the interior. As Maura Laura Moreno Sainz has shown, the Argentine anarchist labor movement, by immersing itself in the federative organization of native workers throughout the hinterland – a notable achievement of the longshoremen's and mariners' resistance societies in the early decades of the century – translated the practices, language, and modes of identification of a European ideology into novel "autochtonous" discourses of myth and belonging, blending class and "popular" identities by rooting their militancy in local settings and oppositional movements.[15]

Local and provincial rebelliousness personified in the folk image of the self-sufficient "gaucho," as well as in the "montoneras," popular, anti-central government rebellions often commemorated through their leaders – such as Manuel Artigas – continue to pervade the political imaginary of the Río de la Plata region. They are remembered by some as evidence of the "native" presence of a "creole" strand of anarchic anti-Statism grounded in horizontal political authority and decentralized campaigns for freedom against an oligarchy, which, based in the capital city of Buenos Aires, was supported by British capital and bent on modernizing the capitalist State.[16] The libertarian socialist tradition of anarchism, which emerged in Europe as a critique of the State and an ideal of working-class self-emancipation and individual sovereignty, entered the region through the promotion by positivist liberals of massive European immigration to the Americas, a phenomenon described in the Argentine constitution of 1853 as necessary to resolve the "racial inadequacy" of Latin societies. The result was the dissemination of 19th century European anarchist traditions, but also the staging of a counter-cultural and pedagogical agenda aimed at translating them for popular audiences and interpreting local realities. Anarchists appropriated traditional folk songs and changed their lyrics, seizing on popular nostalgia for rural singer-poets known as "payadores," and producing a popular "gauchesca" literature imbued with libertarian themes; they embraced creolized musical genres such as the milonga, the tango, the guajira and the habanera.

As historian Juan Suriano has shown, they not only appropriated many popular cultural forms, but also sometimes fought against those that went against their model of revolutionary moral elevation and dignity of workers, such as the debauchery of carnival, grotesque theatre, manifestations of drunkenness and sexual exploitation, even popular sport – emphasizing instead a "high culture" of modernist performance art and didactic expression.[17] Revolutionary theatre was a preferred genre of political and cultural production in Buenos Aires, where the *Academia Philodramática Ermette Zacconi* and the company *Los Caballeros del Ideal* performed regularly for large audiences of workers in the early years of the century; and in Montevideo, which gave rise to the most prominent playwright of the region, Florencio Sánchez. Longshoremen's and mariners' resistance societies, which were founded in the early 20th century by Spanish and Italian activists, respectively, were at the forefront of disseminating these cultural developments. They carried the heritage of the industrial world's two largest anarchist hubs into remote areas of the region by way of riverine navigation and seasonal migratory networks, sowing the seeds of a new emergent popular culture that was cathartically staged and enacted through the frequency of strikes on the ships and in the ports. It would be a mistake to read the history of specific labor traditions, such as the one generated by workers in the ports of Buenos Aires and the littoral, as isolated from these larger understandings of social change, cultural identification, and utopian transformation.

The discovery that solidarity and concerted strike action among workers in the port of Buenos Aires could yield effective results during the summer months (December-January) of each year, when employment was abundant and economic stakes were high, occurred in the mid-1890s. After longshoremen began refusing to load ships until the day wages paid for casual work on the piers were raised, the salaried mariners, who performed stevedoring tasks, facilitated the flow of operations as tugboat and lighter crews, and operated incoming ships from the upper reaches of the Paraná River, capitalized on their power of disruption to paralyze the port, and by extension the entire agro-export economy. The braziers, caulkers and riveters who repaired vessels, a tightly-knit community of Genoese skilled workers with stable roots in the cosmopolitan quayside community of La Boca del Riachuelo, also walked out, creating a euphoric mood of belligerence among anarchist and socialist organizers who observed this show of strength.[18] This pattern was to be repeated almost annually throughout the first half of the twentieth century. It emerged at a time when pre-existing local networks of patronage and clientelism at work were challenged by the decline in sail and the rise of steam, the modernization of the port complex and its urban contours, and high volumes of both overseas immigration and seasonal migration from

the interior caused tens of thousands of workers to descend on the traditionally settled Italian local population, who were increasingly cosmopolitan.

The microcosm of the city's South End, roughly delineated by the piers along Pedro Mendoza Avenue, the riverside warehouses of Barracas to the Central Produce Market, and the legendary immigrant tenements of La Boca del Riachuelo immediately south of the Catalinas railway depots, had been the industrious nerve of Buenos Aires in the age of sail before it became a focal point of labor unrest and oppositional politics in the twentieth century.[19] In 1900 employers and government agencies responded to another massive stoppage by importing blacklegs from the interior provinces and Montevideo, hiring drifters and small children, even employing municipal firefighters to counter the movement.[20] La Boca quickly became a focal point of informal reunion, with local shopkeepers, market vendors and tenement dwellers organizing material assistance and providing community protection during outbreaks of violence between strike commissions and the mounted police. The young longshoremen's and mariners' resistance societies mobilized all available means to enforce compliance with the strike, as well as to coordinate movements in other port cities along the littoral. By organizing free meals and festivities for striking workers, and mobilizing the resources of the community in defense of their cause, anarchist sympathizers among the strike leaders imposed their authority and took credit for a resounding victory.[21]The workers had proven that a two-week long general strike in the port of Buenos Aires could bring the shipping establishment to its knees and the economies of the region to the brink of collapse.

Shipping concerns in Argentina had been forced to make considerable concessions to barely organized workers from the slums of Buenos Aires, who had responded massively to anarchist-inspired labor campaigns. They became acutely aware of the stakes involved in their own organization as interest groups with the power to undermine unions, enforce laws and assert control over the labor process. In their counter-offensive, the country's main agro-export capitalists proved as transnational as their workers. Nicolas Mihánovich strengthened his control of coastal navigation along the rivers of the interior by purchasing the *Mensajerías Fluviales*, and obtained a virtual monopoly over ship repair in the region through the acquisition of the Salto shipyards in Uruguay. Pedro Christophersen, a shipping magnate with close ties to the Argentine government and foreign capital, launched the *Centro de navegación transatlántica*, an oceanliner lobby dedicated to protecting foreign shipping lines from unionized mariners, seamen and longshoremen along the South American Atlantic seaboard. Meanwhile, local activists accelerated the organization of distinctly anarchist-oriented resistance societies among longshoremen, mariners and all related trades, the momentum for which came from the distant ports of San Nicolás, Ramallo, La

Ensenada and Bahía Blanca, as well as Montevideo (Uruguay) and Asunción (Paraguay), where workers declared a series of largely successful and coordinated strikes for higher wages, shorter work days and better working conditions. From the beginning, networking and coordination among resistance societies beyond the confines of the capital city – especially in the hinterland provinces where seasonal laborers were recruited to work in Buenos Aires, but also across national boundaries – was central to the effectiveness of anarchist activists regionally.

Resistance societies, as defined by the first Argentine workers' congress of May 1901, were to be "working-class collectives organized for the economic struggle of the present" devoid of organic ties with either socialist or anarchist movements.[22] Five months later, in the aftermath of the mariners' strike, seasoned Spanish anarchist Francisco Rós spearheaded the creation of the longshoremen's *Sociedad de resistencia obreros del puerto de la capital* – SROPC; it quickly became the single largest such organization in the country. The SROPC would play a central role in the radicalization of craft-based resistance societies throughout the decade, and in their spectacular recovery following the First World War. With countless highs and lows in its effectiveness and range of influence, twists and turns in its strategy, methods, tactics, and ideological alignments, the anarchist longshoremen's society continued to play a significant role in labor conflicts and community organization in Buenos Aires and throughout smaller ports of the region, well into the 1940s.[23] The federative proclivities of resistance societies were recognized early on by Antonio Pellicer Paraire, who saw them as models of organization, propaganda, communication, education, and economic direct action, in the spirit of local autonomy and grass-roots empowerment; and as nuclei for the diffusion of libertarian socialist ideals throughout the region, across national boundaries and above institutional politics.[24] In effect, the resistance societies, quickly abandoned by socialist unions, became an anarchist movement under the umbrella of the *Federación obrera regional argentina (*FORA), one of the most influential in the history of the anarchist movement worldwide.

After the departure in 1902 of ten unions from the second congress of the *Federación obrera gremial argentina,* the SROPC alone provided 3,200 affiliates, or 42 per cent of the 7,630 workers still represented by 31 unions; it was, and would remain for decades thereafter, the largest component of the anarchist labor movement.[25] Yet it is important not to overstate or reify, as labor historians often do, the divisions and sectarian quarrels between organizations. In everyday life, interaction was fluid, places of reunion were shared, constituencies overlapped, and leaderships often cooperated in the coordination of strikes. Anarchists would, as they did in the early social Catholic-led mariners' society, cooperate at times with seemingly antagonistic movements, irrespective of their formal ideological or political alignments – a central tenet, as we have seen, of their ideological

approach to working-class struggles. Moreover, anarchists alone never reigned over the labor movement on the waterfront; cooperation was commonplace, for example, between the SROPC and the socialist warehouse workers' union or with switchmen, crane operators and other railway workers who worked in the port. The latter, most of whom were employed by the *Ferrocarril sud* in which socialist trade unionists were firmly established, chose, in 1902, the anarchist dockworkers' union headquarters on Ayolas 23 to form what eventually became the powerful railwaymen's *Confederación de ferrocarrileros* led by Antonio Zaccagnini.[26] Shared places of reunion were commonplace among anarchists and socialists, who argued bitterly in their newspapers over doctrine, early on; the SROPC would, over the course of several decades, host the headquarters of many autonomous and syndicalist unions as well. In 1903, Italian-born sailor Sinforiano Corvetto used the headquarters of the SROPC to establish the anarchist *Sociedad de resistencia de marineros y foguistas* (SRMF) on the ruins of the earlier Catholic and mutualist mariners' society. The new organization would be a powerful vehicle of anarchist influence among mariners for decades to come, even after its absorption, in the ensuing decades, by the powerful syndicalist FOM. Leaders of the conservative social Catholic longshoremen's union created to undermine the SROPC, the *Sociedad argentina de estibadores del puerto de Buenos Aires* (SAEPBA), paradoxically shared podiums in 1904-1905 with anarchist orators during protests against the arbitrary violence of the state and private contractors. In the midst of a seismic general strike in 1902, even negotiators from the Argentine Chamber of Commerce walked the floors of Ayolas 23, a building located in the least hospitable riverside quarters of La Boca, where the "*gente decente*" from the business districts of downtown Buenos Aires literally never set foot.

Even after the 1902 Residency Law caused a massive deportation of anarchists (including Francisco Rós) and forced resistance societies underground, the SROPC, under naturalized leadership, claimed 5,000 members in Buenos Aires and wielded influence in at least ten other ports of the Argentine littoral. It also made plans for the federation of longshoremen between Argentina and Uruguay.[27] The resistance society had sufficient material resources to publish a weekly bulletin, *El Reporter del Puerto*, which combined anarchist propaganda, essays by such renowned radical publicists as Alberto Ghiraldo, and denunciations of abuses by foremen and non-compliance with informally established work rules. For the celebration of the society's second anniversary in the prestigious *Teatro San Martín*, a full house of several thousand male dockworkers listened attentively as anarchist orator and polemicist Virginia Bolten lectured them on the evils of exploitation, the equality of men and women, and the virtues of sobriety.[28] The anarchist resistance society fostered inter-ethnic solidarity and

anti-clerical activism amongst overwhelmingly disenfranchised men and women from crowded tenements of La Boca, artisans and laborers who spoke foreign languages and dialects as well as native workers from the interior who sought work in the capital. For all the precariousness and instability of family and residency patterns in the quayside community, the presence of a powerful oppositional subculture among longshoremen and related trades provided substantial protection from chronic labor market insecurity and male licentiousness. In a social environment prone to widespread alcoholism, petty crime and cheap sex, the SROPC glorified the masculine qualities and virtuous toil of manual quayside work, and derided what it perceived as a hostile campaign to manipulate the ignorance of illiterate *criollo* day laborers toward political ends. The role of the SROPC in fomenting oppositional working-class activities among the quayside community, including theatre presentations and open-air poetry readings, had survived the brutal repression of organized labor and anarchist agitation the year before, a pattern that would continue for decades despite ebbs and flows in the illegal movement's ability to organize from positions of strength.

When the longshoremen were weakened, by repression or division, in their ability to pressure employers, the solidarity of mariners and seamen was often critical; movements with which anarchists were ideologically at odds could also be pivotal to sustaining the vitality of strike movements in the port. In 1903, for example, Antonio Zaccagnini's socialist railwaymen's union again collaborated closely with the leadership of the SROPC, and by paralyzing railway traffic between Rosario and Buenos Aires prompted ship owners to seek a rapid settlement with the SRMF.[29] The anarchists rebounded on this successful exercise of federative networking to reorganize longshoremen throughout the littoral, launching the project of a Stevedore's Federation consisting of Argentine and Uruguayan resistance societies. In the winter of 1904, during the congress which replaced the Argentine Workers' Federation by the FORA, the aforementioned "solidarity pact" organized existing resistance societies into local and provincial federations.[30] The SROPC was the second largest component of the FORA with roughly 6,000 affiliates (second only to the 10,000-member strong shoemakers' union).[31] Even at this conjuncture, when socialist and anarchists were at odds over labor movement organization, federative networks of solidarity and cooperation provided the momentum for the powerful workers' struggles. A strike in Rosario snowballed throughout the country as the two bulwarks of the anarchist FORA and socialist *Unión general de trabajadores* (UGT), the longshoremen's resistance society and railwaymen's federation (10,000 members), succeeded in bringing the movement of goods to a halt in ports throughout the littoral. This occurred before the Radical Civic Union *coup* attempt in 1905 led by Hipólito

Yrigoyen, provided the authorities with a pretext for another state of siege, twice prolonged because of widespread labor agitation.[32]

The anarchist longshoremen's union emerged from the state of siege with restricted range of action, but continued to claim a membership of 8,425 affiliates, or nearly 75 per cent of all workers on the docks.[33] Under the leadership of Estebán Almada, it began resorting to the localized boycott weapon rather than full-fledged strikes to enforce its authority. The SROPC had lost its leader, Constante Carballo, to exile, as well as sections of labor market control to the social Catholic SAEPBA; it faced violent workplace reprisals from the labor exchange created by employers' lobbies, the so-called *"Protectora"* or society for the protection of "free labor," presided over by shipping magnate Pedro Christophersen.[34] Although the much-clamored leitmotiv of international coordination between all South American transport sector workers failed to materialize as a durable movement, its serious discussion by delegates from Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil in a June meeting of the *Federación de estibadores y afines* underscored the redemptory ambition, transnational coordination, and belief in the infallibility of longshoremen's power, of an anarchist federation visibly decimated by state repression. The radicalization of the FORA and of the SROPC under Almada's leaderhip, exemplified by the adoption, during federation's Fifth Congress, of "anarcho-communism," durably splintered the organized labor movement nationally.[35] In the port of Buenos Aires, however, a core of anarchist activists continued to harangue crowds in marketplaces and on street corners, to place work teams with foremen in the taverns and tenements of La Boca, to canvass the quayside with revolutionary propaganda, to organize rationalist educational groups, to send messengers upriver and across the bay to Uruguay, and to harass employers who failed to abide by the informal rules established in past strike settlements. The mariners' resistance society still had the power to obtain pledges from the most reluctant stevedore foremen and shipcaptains that *Protectora* affiliates would be banned from shape-ups in the Riachuelo area.[36]

There was unanimity in the ranks of the FORA on the question of the need for local craft unity to be supplemented by transnational working-class solidarity. One strategic area where the mariners' and longshoremen's resistance societies were most likely to jointly display the efficiency of "solidarity pacts" was in the ship repair industry on the Riachuelo banks of Isla Maciel, which was connected with Uruguayan anarchist activism by the presence of shipyards in Salto and Montevideo that shared the same owners. Forgers, metalworkers and caulkers frequently shared the company of mariners on board the ships while they were moored in Buenos Aires, and some shipyard owners, Mihánovich in particular, also possessed a fleet of lighters, tugs and barges on which SRMF affiliates and inspectors were present. Braziers, carpenters, painters and occasional

work hands were casually employed, and many sought hire in other quayside occupations when work was unavailable in the yards. When in September the braziers' union walked out to protest violations by Mihánovich of a 1903 strike settlement, provoking an open-shop drive in retaliation, the longshoremen's, mariners', sawmill workers', cartmen's and painters' unions called solidarity strikes in unison;[37] and this despite the formal recommendation by the FORA to hold back strikes until the height of the high export season, which was ignored by Estebán Almada (exemplifying the deliberative autonomy of resistance societies in relation to the larger anarchist federation).[38]

Here again, networks of solidarity and coordination created during previous years gave strength to the movement. A police informant embedded in the anarchist labor confederation reported that socialist trade-union leader Antonio Zaccagnini was in Rosario promoting an extension of a strike in conjunction with Estebán Almada in Buenos Aires, again in defiance of the FORA.[39] The conflict in Rosario was widely discussed in La Boca after the return of SROPC leaders Serafín Romero and Francisco López from a propaganda tour through the interior provinces, which gave the resistance societies the opportunity to activate solidarity pacts and mobilize port workers in general against the interference of the *Protectora*. In the *Teatro Iris*, a core of 250 SROPC activists voted in an assembly to threaten to stage a general strike in Buenos Aires if a favorable settlement was not reached in Rosario. Days later, on September 27, the FORA commissioned a group of prominent naturalized activists (Estebán Almada, Francisco Laquet, Orlando Lavagnino, Ángel Robile and Alfredo Durán) to organize the pending general strike in the provinces, and Zaccagnini, leader of the socialist railwaymen's confederation, met with Almada in Rosario to coordinate their actions.[40] Longshoremen actively canvassed working-class homes throughout the Riachuelo district, linking their wage demands to the rise in the cost of living and seeing popular support; they honored a request by the charitable *Sociedad de beneficiencia de la Capital* that coal destined for hospitals and asylums be handled for the full duration of the strike.[41] Before 600 workers assembled in the mutualist *Salon Unione é Benevolenza,* in downtown Buenos Aires, the Christian democratic former mariners' leader Ángel Capurro shared a tribune with anarchist orator Serafín Romero, soon to succeed Almada as leader of the SROPC, to denounce the incursions of the *Protectora* and support a general strike. This seasoned adversary of anarchists uncharacteristically praised the fairness of the workers' demands calling forced recruitment by the yellow union "a violation of individual freedom." He then looked on as Romero, following a ritual incantation of libertarian ideals, presided over the formation of anarchist commissions to patrol the port.[42]

It is evident that the anarchist approach to galvanizing and coordinating labor conflicts in which diverse political preferences were represented, and federating protest movements dispersed in far-flung localities, bore tangible fruits in the theatre of conflict staged by longshoremen against fierce State-supported repression. Even after the violent defeat of the larger general strike, the movement in the ports continued for months through informal assemblies, targeted boycotts, economic sabotage, and the assertion of workplace control.[43] Almada, whose popularity in La Boca and among the 8,000-odd striking longshoremen had soared during the conflict, was able to strike an informal deal with a majority of foremen that they refrain from hiring *Protectora* affiliates, transforming, much to the astonishment of the authorities, a forced resumption of work on October 18 into a quiet victory for the SROPC. The resistance society subsequently continued its obstruction of business-as-usual by supporting an ongoing coal heavers' strike against British interests in the port, which brought refueling operations to a virtual standstill.[44] Finally, the transnational dimension of the strike was critical to the movement's success: the shipyard workers of Isla Maciel boycotted the Mihánovich yards throughout the state of siege, and numerous anarchist deportees were reported to be reentering the country through Montevideo and Salto Oriental (Uruguay) with help from the anarchist shipyard braziers' resistance society. As the date of expiration approached and the unions prepared for a lifting of the state of siege, police informants, stevedore contractors, ship captains and patrons of the *Protectora* expected nothing less than a full-scale renewal of anarchist disruption in the port.[45] Clearly, neither the shipowners' and contractors' offensive against resistance societies, nor police repression during the state of siege, had succeeded in undermining the effectiveness of direct action tactics or dismembering anarchist unionism in the port, despite the organizational weakness of the broader FORA and the lack of formal channels for collective bargaining between capital and labor.

When the *Centro de navegación transatlántica* launched another open-shop drive in 1905, the 18,000 workers who went on strike throughout the Argentine littoral were led by a coordinating body or *"comité directivo"* that was co-chaired and equally staffed by the clandestine anarchist resistance society and the conservative social Catholic union. This seeming paradox was in fact consistent with anarchist doctrine and its separation of working-class advocacy from politics; as soon as State arbitration in the conflict became an option, the two movements parted ways. A pattern emerged in which anarchists in the port of Buenos Aires periodically shared tribunes, and cooperated during major work stoppages and community mobilizations, with socialists, syndicalists, Catholics and autonomous labor unions as well as ethnic societies; even when, at times, they engaged in violent turf battles with them, or in ideological polemics in the pages

of the labor press. While their authority and visibility were sometimes reduced by repression, sectionalism, disorganization and the competition of larger industrial unions, their presence in the community remained strong, and their informal control over parts of the labor process guaranteed a degree of continuity in their effectiveness as labor leaders and agitators.[46] The organization of cultural activities by the SROPC, SRMF and other related resistance societies, the most popular of which were Sunday picnics and open-air marketplace theatre presentations, added to their advocacy of rationalist education and other labor-initiated social campaigns, served both as platforms for ideological proselytizing and bridges between migrant quayside workers of multiple nationalities and ethnicities and the broader working-class community.[47] Low-income families of precariously employed men and women crowded the neighborhood's pluri-ethnic tenements; seasonal migration swelled their numbers and slum conditions worsened by the year. Thriving boarding houses and makeshift shelters built on vacant spreads of mud along the waterfront completed the grim picture of life on the waterfront for the laboring poor, a social landscape which colored anarchist depictions of an implacable ruling class conspiracy against hard-working common people. The establishment of a *Centro socialista* on Olavarría in 1898, the election of Alfredo Palacios to parliament in 1904, socialist-inspired sanitation and temperance campaigns, and the popularity of such cultural associations as the *Sociedad Luz* rallied support among skilled workers, craftspeople and petty entrepreneurs for social reform;[48] anarchist resistance societies, on the other hand, served as vehicles for an oppositional working-class culture of revolt and transgression of authority, which they attempted to channel into a discourse of solidarity, direct action and workplace insubordination. Insofar as this culture enabled uprooted workers to evade the stigmas of nationality and ethnicity within which existing institutions – governmental, religious, capitalist or mutualist – framed their rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion, it legitimated the emancipatory representation of individual freedom and collective force offered by anarchist propagandists linked to the FORA, across national boundaries and irrespective of origins: "The foreigners," stated a *Federación obrera local* flyer condemning the shipowners' efforts to hire all-native work teams, "are those who preach hatred and practice exploitation, not the hard-working and brave men who come from distant lands to offer each other friendship and solidarity in the valiant endeavor of work."[49]

In periods of relative prosperity for the resistance societies, or in the aftermath of successful strike mobilizations, the role of anarchists in community festivities, such as fundraising picnics, marketplace harangues and popular theatre representations, was enhanced. Conversely, persistent open shop drives and unyielding State repression eroded these nascent bonds between individual migrant workers and the wider collectivity. In a local society where face-to-face

relationships predominated over the indirect authority of suffrage or bureaucratic delegation, craft-based resistance societies were, for the men they federated, a means of attaining a form of virtual citizenship and exerting true power, while also securing a degree of regularity in their earnings. While modernization, urban growth, industrial expansion and male suffrage would gradually alter workers' experience of place and enhance their opportunities for political expression within the nation-State, anarchist resistance societies continued to agitate throughout the region's ports, maintaining their federative networking capabilities and transnational linkages well into the following decades. They were surpassed, but not eclipsed, by the powerful syndicalist organizations that built on their legacy in the 1920s and beyond. Their relationship was as complex and multi-layered with the *Federación obrera marítima* (FOM – formed in 1910 as an alliance of historic craft societies of mariners and merchant seamen), in which anarchists retained influence through the sailors' section, as it had been with socialist and social Catholic rivals in the first decade of the century.

Following the end of the European war, when the glowing economic prospects of reconstruction and renewed high seasonal employment restored the exceptional bargaining leverage traditionally enjoyed by waterfront unions, the anarchist SROPC would play a key role in the revival of craft-based anarchism as enshrined by the historic FORA, particularly among localized communities of port transport workers. At the same time, the FOM spearheaded an unprecedented wave of industrial labor agitation nationwide, under the aegis of the breakaway syndicalist federation known as FORA-IX.[50] Both unions claimed the Riachuelo district of Buenos Aires as their birthplace and bastion; they were equally effective in reviving past networks of community influence and labor process control, and in coordinating actions with workers in neighboring countries. In order to properly comprehend the enduring influence of the anarchist traditions generated during the first decade of the century, it is important to underscore the confluence of libertarian and syndicalist practices – what historians often refer to as "anarcho-syndicalism" – and to point out that organizational differences and ideological quarrels notwithstanding, the successors of the resistance societies that held sway in the ports during the first decades of the century would continue to rely on anarchist-inspired federative networking tactics, forms of direct action, and methods of community organizing.

The ideologues of syndicalism, which in Argentina would play a central role in working-class struggles during the period leading up to the Second World War, developed a theory of direct action and organizational autonomy as the assertion of a revolutionary counter-culture within capitalism but outside of its institutions (parliaments, political parties, schools), rooted in the experience of class struggle and workplace solidarity. This theory conceived of the emanci-

patory future as an ongoing creation of everyday life, collectively embodied in the internal democracy of trade unions organized – in contrast to the craft-based and community-centered tradition of anarchist resistance societies – by industrial branches.[51]The ideas generally associated with revolutionary syndicalism became familiar to local trade unionist circles as early as 1898, when, against anarcho-individualist tendencies, Italian anarchist Pietro Gori lectured his Argentine pupils on the virtues of organization, education and propaganda among workers, revolutionary general strikes, boycotts and sabotage.[52] The first congress of the *Federación obrera argentina* in 1901 formally enshrined, in Gori's presence and under the direct impulse of Antonio Pellicer Paraire, the principle of organizational independence, excluding partisan politics – most notably socialist – from resistance societies. Another Italian figure, socialist writer Walter Mocchi, published revolutionary syndicalist polemics in *La Vanguardia* in 1903, and translations of Georges Sorel and Hubert Lagardelle reflecting the radical views of the French *nouvelle école* appeared intermittently the following year.[53] In 1905, syndicalist proponents of a unified federalist labor movement unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile the anarcho-communist FORA and the socialist-leaning UGT, which had adopted revolutionary syndicalist precepts in August of the same year. In 1906 the socialist party expelled its syndicalist faction, leading to the creation of an *Agrupación socialista sindicalista* and the increasing influence of syndicalist propagandists on the fringes of the labor movement, both within and beyond the sphere of anarchist influence. Railway union leader Francisco Rosanova, recalling these foundational years, contrasted the ideological proselytizing of socialist electoral committees and anarchist neighborhood agitational groups, with the syndicalist emphasis on the power of "producers" to generate revolutionary action by simply becoming aware of their existence as a class.[54]

The tens of thousands of workers who manned the coastal shipping vessels and lighters, tugboats and other smaller craft of the port of Buenos Aires organized into powerful, mostly anti-political unions. These unions caused the "social question" in the ports of Argentina, and in the merchant marine throughout the country, to be framed either as contentious showdowns over the control of the labor process and the independence of labor, or as direct negotiations between workers' representatives and the national State. Between the creation in 1903 of Sinforiano Corvetto's anarchist SRMF and the emergence seven years later of the revolutionary syndicalist FOM, sailors and firemen of the coastwise shipping trade had played an important role in the coordination of labor movements throughout the port cities of the Argentine littoral. In La Boca, they cultivated solidarity pacts with local anarchist resistance societies and developed a cosmopolitan constituency among foreign and native, equally disenfranchised seafar-

ers who, because of their volatile and miserable condition, lacked the strategic ability to bring the shipping establishment to its knees by simply withholding tugboats and lighters and blocking the mouth of the Riachuelo river. As a result, the struggles of these foreign and native disenfranchised seafarers were often highlighted in the national press, and their plight debated in welfare-minded and philanthropic circles. Socialists and Radical Civic Union reformers took an early interest both in promoting social legislation on their behalf, and, after the promulgation of universal male suffrage in 1912, in wooing their votes by extolling the proud maritime traditions of the quayside community and the virtues of developing a strong merchant marine.

While mariners' unions, which had begun to cooperate with the government-sponsored *Departamento Nacional del Trabajo* (DNT) in the aftermath of successful anarchist strike in 1906-1907, drew organized labor nationally into a dialogue with the authorities from 1916 onward, anarchists both within the sailors' section of the FOM and the rival FORA never ceased to deride the government's professed social policies and push for neutrality from politics and the State. Thus even when syndicalist waterfront unions seemingly engaged in negotiations with the abhorred enemy, their strength and prerogatives were informally recognized by the ruling establishment, their legitimacy among workers reinforced by practical results, and their potentially controllable labor market in constant expansion.[55] The successor of the anarchist SRMF and predecessor of the syndicalist FOM, the *Liga obrera naval argentina* (LONA), created in 1907, remained committed to preexisting organizational bonds between mariners, longshoremen, cartmen and other resistance societies not only in the Riachuelo district, but throughout the littoral and beyond the boundaries of Argentina. Its drive for the federation of maritime craft unions nationwide, however, brought it into frequent conflict with anarchist labor organizers who rejected the territorial state and privileged local federative networking on a cross-regional, transnational scale. For example, when LONA delegations were sent to organize regional sections in the interior provinces of the littoral, they encountered opposition from the local federation in Rosario, which continued to encourage the recruitment of stevedoring sailors, as well as other related trades, into the anarchist-led resistance societies under the umbrella of the *Federación obrera local*. At the first pro-unification congress held in 1907 by the rival anarchist FORA and syndicalist UGT, representatives of the LONA argued that the local federations should be replaced by nation-wide craft federations, with the understanding that the various unions of each locality, representing the numerous subgroups of maritime workers, would establish solidarity pledges between one another. The LONA also proposed that the labor movement circumscribe ideological quarrels to areas outside the union halls, and suggested that propaganda be centered on immediate economic demands.[56]

Foreshadowing the increasing pragmatism of mariners' unions in the second and third decades of the century, these developments set the stage for their contentious relationship with the SROPC and FORA, both of which persisted, consistent with the aforementioned ideological traditions of anarcho-communism, in the view that labor struggles represented but one dimension of a broader ongoing, revolutionary transformation of society.

Yet the context of these developments suggests that such differences did not obfuscate the affinities between the two movements, which are often conveniently contrasted for descriptive purposes in the teleological rendering of anarchism's decline. The mobility of mariners and merchant seamen brought them into frequent contact with working people throughout the country as well as in Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay. They often served as intermediaries in the exchange of experience and information within a broadly defined culture of the laboring poor. Seamen's unions rooted their local and national authority in syndicalist organizational forms and traditions that had been spread by anarchists during the heyday of the FORA, such as participatory workers' assemblies, sectional autonomy, federalism, concerted direct action, solidarity with other sectors of organized labor, ideological eclectism and ethnic diversity. Where they clashed was in matters of bureaucratic entrenchment and connivance with the political State. Under the leadership of former anarchist Francisco García in the 1910s and 1920s, the FOM broadened its constituency to include catering personnel (later a bastion of communism among maritime workers), and entered into alliances with machinists and white-collar officers' unions, many of whose members were voters of the governing Radical Civic Union. The effectiveness of revolutionary syndicalist practices was enhanced during the first presidency of Radical Civil Union leader Hipólito Yrigoyen by State neutrality in conflicts between capital and labor. The FOM acquired national status as a bulwark of the syndicalist FORA-IX, and waged memorable campaigns against the Mihánovich Company while extending its tentacular presence to the most remote ports of the Argentine interior. In a work culture where informal relations of trust and familiarity prevailed, ship captains, who in the labor process of the merchant marine played a managerial role, came to view FOM control over hiring as a shield against deskilling and incompetence. The integrative effects of both workplace cooperation and community solidarity, and the ominous presence of a vilified corporate enemy, united foreigners and nationals, skilled and unskilled workers, settled citizens and uprooted migrants, subaltern personnel and officers, union activists and small entrepreneurs, local tradespeople and political activists behind mariners' unions, their struggles and their lore.

Following setbacks in 1921, the decline of influential revolutionary syndicalist and anarchist labor movements nationally, and the unleashing of the

ultra-nationalist, anti-trade union *Asociación nacional del trabajo* (ANT) and neo-fascist Patriotic League in the port, the FOM entered into an era of conflict with the authorities during the pro-oligarchical presidency of Yrigoyen's successor, Marcelo Alvear, who represented the right wing of the Radical Civic Union movement. An improbable cross-section of ideological strains – the syndicalist *Unión sindical argentina* (USA), anarchist FORA, communist party, Christian democratic ship captains' unions, and Yrigoyenist political forces who were opposed to the pro-ANT tactics of Alvearist maritime prefect Ricardo Hermelo – rallied the FOM at different times in its numerous showdowns with shipping capital, at the close of the pre-Depression democratic period leading up to the 1930 military coup. Events in the 1920s showed that the apoliticism and strictly trade-unionist objectives of organized mariners did not necessarily isolate them from broader contests of civic allegiance, and craft-based anarchist resistance societies in related trades continued to play a radicalizing role among them. The longshoremen's SROPC in particular continued to play a significant role in the labor struggles that shook the ports of the Rio de la Plata, defending anarcho-syndicalist organizational forms and anarcho-communist ideals despite strong challenges from rivals and enemies, and fueling solidarity and direct action – always "supra"-national or across territorial boundaries – as they had in the past. Despite ebbs and flows in the organizational capacities and ideological influence of both the FOM and the SROPC, and notwithstanding their antagonistic visions of the path to social revolution, the combative traditions and emancipatory rhetoric of both movements, deeply anchored in the local community of the port of Buenos Aires and in the federative networking practices of their sections throughout the littoral, endured for nearly two decades thereafter.

Workers' organizations in the port of Buenos Aires were never immune to division and implosion, to challenges from within their own memberships and to orchestrated capitalist assaults on their leverage in the labor process. In the long run, however, they proved exceedingly difficult to silence or destroy. In addition, the pattern that emerges over time is one of unyielding adherence to the principles of autonomy, direct action and solidarity that were articulated by ideologues of the anarchist and syndicalist movements. Ultimately, these labor movements drew their power from the immersion of their rank-and-file in a world of work and community that crystallized oppositions and ideational boundaries in concrete, perceptible ways. Longshoremen, mariners and merchant seamen, as well as shipyard workers, displayed a remarkable propensity to resist assaults from employers by resorting to strikes. Their unions, well anchored in the labor process and constantly connected through maritime flows with their comrades in neighboring countries, would negotiate for them while simultaneously "collectivizing an attitude of resistance and rebellion"[57]through ritualistic invocations

of social revolution and class emancipation, and formulating a hierarchy of explanations and events designed to inscribe the experience of strikes in social memory. These dramatic interruptions in the routine of exploitation, however ephemeral and illusory, were, to paraphrase Michelle Perrot, an "antidote to isolation, to the deadly chill in which the division of labor confined workers."[58] They provoked a strong sense of communion, among strikers, with the liberating language of "class" articulated by activists and leaders of the labor movement.

Due to the relative absence of spatial segregation, the numerical predominance of European immigrants, and the fluidity of ethnic and craft associations in Buenos Aires, the *porteña* working class, while overwhelmingly "foreign," was the product of "fusion" between multiple nationalities and cultures – including Uruguayan, Paraguayan, Chilean and Brazilian – rather than of "assimilation" into a well-established, "traditional" host society.[59] Insofar as ethnic traditions and nationalist stirrings did exist, they were the outcome of the social conflicts, ideological campaigns, and complex political realignments that accompanied the formation of unions, citizens' groups, and representative institutions of the State, rather than "objective" demographic or sociological factors.[60] Anarchist-inspired labor organization among longshoremen and mariners was cosmopolitan, inclusive, and counter-cultural, particularly in its opposition to nationalist trends. It proved powerful and resilient in the early 20th century because of the effectiveness of direct action in the ports, the immersion of resistance societies in the culture and everyday life of working-class districts of Buenos Aires and neighboring port cities, the federalist coordination of craft-based societies by the FORA along the rivers of the interior (including in Uruguay and Paraguay), and the constant flow of migrant workers and revolutionary activists between La Boca and the hinterland.[61] In the spirit of Spanish anarchist Antonio Pellicer Paraire's essays on organization, published in *La Protesta Humana* at the turn of the century, Argentine resistance societies were viewed as "receptacle(s) of the innate anti-capitalist consciousness of exploited workers," "embryo(s) of collective institutions" and "the basis for the future anarchist society.[62] The record shows that these claims resonated at times among workers in Montevideo and Asunción, along the Paraná and Uruguay riverways, even among indigenous and *mestizo* workers of the Argentine Chaco and northern province of Santa Fé.

The latter were the notoriously exploited *mensús* employed in the hardwood tree forests owned by the British company *La Forestal*, who benefited directly from anarchist "federative networking," regional and supranational solidarity. The FORA circulated an anarchist newspaper in Guaraní, *Aña Membuy*, in the period leading up to a major strike against the company in 1921, during which anarchist longshoremen and maritime workers were largely responsible for calling to the attention of other sectors of organized labor, and of public opinion in

general, the suffering of indigenous peoples in northern Argentina.[63] The most prominent advocate of these workers was the Spanish-born, Paraguayan anarchist Rafael Barrett, who participated in the elaborate anarchist coordination between Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Asunción, and whose writings were widely circulated by the FORA via networks of local activists who sailed the rivers disseminating propaganda. Barrett epitomizes the porosity of national boundaries for anarchist activists: he arrived from Spain through Buenos Aires in 1903, was the leading thinker of the *Federación Obrera Regional Paraguaya* (FORP), championed indigenous rights in both Paraguay and Argentina, and published most of his works in Montevideo, where anarcho-communist *Federación Obrera Regional Uruguaya* (FORU), founded in 1905, welcomed his internationalist activism.[64]

For José Aricó, the typical anarchist agitator in Latin America was "mobile, capable of swimming with the current of working-class struggles, moving from one corner of the country or even the continent, with a sharp intuition for perceiving signs of latent conflicts about to explode, who did not recognize the national boundaries that limited the reach of his eagerness for struggle and unlimited loyalty to the cause of the exploited.[65] It was precisely these characteristics (mobility and a range of propaganda and organization that ignored the physical boundaries, spatial confinement and cultural atavism of the nation-State) that allowed the Argentine FORA – the single most powerful such movement in the hemisphere, and, in the early decades of the 20th century, the second largest anarchist labor federation in the world – to develop local, provincial and transnational networks of solidarity, information, and mutual cooperation between far-flung movements along the littoral of the Paraná and Uruguay rivers and the Atlantic coast of South America. To understand that resistance societies deeply immersed in the flows of trade and migration, and in the epic labor struggles of mariners and longshoremen, created the networks within which such voices as Barrett's could move and be heard, is to acknowledge the historical importance of anarchist federative networking throughout the region, and the enduring legacy of the unique social experimentation in which they engaged.

NOTES

1 Martha A. Ackelsberg, *Free Women of Spain. Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991; p.22.

2 Ibid., pp.33-34.

3 Piotr Kropotkin, "Anarchism," *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, 1911, quoted in M.S. Shatz, ed., *The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; pp.233-247.

4 Samuel Clark, *Living Without Domination. The Possibility of an Anarchist Utopia* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007; p.149.

5 Matthew Thomas, *Anarchist Ideas and Counter-Cultures in Britain, 1880-1914. Revolutions in Everyday Life* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.

6 Cf. The foremost historian of this aspect of anarchism is the Brazilian scholar Jacy Alves de Seixas, in *Mémoire et oubli. Anarchisme et syndicalisme révolutionnaire au Brésil* Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1992.

7 Piotr Kropotkin, *Fugitive Writings* ed. George Woodcock, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1993; p.50.

8 Ruth Thompson, "The Limitations of Ideology in the Early Argentine Labor Movement: Anarchism in Trade Unions, 1890-1920" *Journal of Latin American Studies* vol.16, no.1, May 1984; p.98.

9 Ruth Thompson, "Argentine Syndicalism: Reformism Before Revolution" in Marcel Van der Linden & Wayne Thorpe, eds., *Revolutionary Syndicalism: An International Perspective* Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990; p.167.

10 Cf. Hugo Mancuso & Armando Minguzzi, *Entre el fuego y la rosa. Pensamiento social italiano en Argentina: Utopías anarquistas y programas sociales (1870-1920)* Buenos Aires: Ediciones Biblioteca Nacional y Página/12, 1999; p.40.

11 Jean Prépoiset, *Histoire de l'Anarchisme* Paris: Tallandier, 2002; pp.91-95, 234, 304-306.

12 Ariane Miéville & Mauricio Antonioli, eds., *Anarchisme et syndicalisme: Le Congrès Anarchiste International d'Amsterdam (1907)* Rennes/Paris: Nautilus/Editions du Monde Libertaire, 1997; pp.74-75 & 117.

13 José Moya, "The Positive Side of Stereotypes: Jewish anarchists in early twentieth-century Buenos Aires" *Jewish History* vol.18, 2004, p.22.

14 Diego Abad de Santillán, "La unidad de clase y sus derivados" *La Protesta*, March 16th, 1925.

15 Cf. Maria Laura Moreno Sainz, *Anarchisme argentin, 1890-1930. Contribution à une Mythanalyse* Doctoral Dissertation, Université de Grenoble II, 2003.

16 Julio Mafud and Enrique Fernández, *El Anarquismo argentino* Buenos Aires: Biblioteca José Ingenieros, n.d., (unpublished manuscript), p.34.

17 Cf. Juan Suriano, *Anarquistas. Cultura y política libertaria en Buenos Aires, 1890-1930* Buenos Aires: Manantial, 2001; and *Auge y caída del anarquismo. Argentina, 1880-1930* Buenos Aires: Capital Intelectual, 2005.

18 *La Vanguardia*, 01/12/1895.

19 Cf. Graciela Silvestri, *La fábrica, el rio, la ciudad: La construcción del eje portuario metropolitano en el período 1870-1930* Buenos Aires: Informe CONICET, 1991.

20 Sebastián Marotta, *El movimiento sindical argentino. Su génesis y desarrollo, t.1: 1857-1907* Buenos Aires: El Lacio, 1960; p.101; *El Diario*, 01/05/1900; *La Prensa*, 01/06/1900 & 01.15.1900; *La Vanguardia,* 01/12/1900.

21 *Huelga en el puerto: el despertar de la anarquía*, anonymous flyer, Buenos Aires: January 1900; *El Diario*, 01/18/1900; *La Vanguardia*, 01/20/1900; *La Prensa*, 01/19/1900 & 01/20/1900.

22 Diego Abad de Santillán, *El movimiento anarquista en la Argentina (Desde sus comienzos hasta 1910)* Buenos Aires: El Argonauta, 1930; p.79.

23 Cf. Geoffroy de Laforcade, *A Laboratory of Argentine Labor Movements: Work, Trade Unions and Social Identities on the Buenos Aires Waterfront, 1900-1950* Ph.D., Yale University, 2001.

24 Antonio Pellicer Paraire, "Carta abierta a los obreros estibadores de la República," quoted by Gonzalo Zaragoza, *Anarquismo argentino (1896-1902)* Madrid: Ediciones de la Torre, 1996; pp.298-299. Pellicer Paraire articulated his theory of anarchist working-class organization in a series of articles published by *La Protesta Humana*, November 17, 1900- June 1, 1901.

25 The congress was held from April 19 to 21, 1902, in the *Salon Vorwaerts*. Three socialist and seven autonomous unions pulled out after socialist leader Adrian Patroni, sent to represent a bakers' union in Córdoba, was turned away; they then went on to create a rival trade union confederation, the *Unión General de Trabajadores*. Even had they remained, the longshoremen of Buenos Aires would still have made up 34 per cent of the workers represented at the congress by 41 unions, which attests to their strategic importance at this early stage of an organized labor movement usually thought to have rested essentially on artisan and craft-based unions. Cf. Diego Abad de Santillán, op.cit., pp.83-84.

26 *C.G.T.*, 10/19/1934; Flyer entitled *Unidad en la estiba*, unsigned and dated March 1904.

27 The following resistance societies were represented: Obreros del puerto de la Capital, Obreros carpinteros para el transporte del ganado en pie en Buenos Aires, Trabajadores de barracas y mercado central de frutos, Obreros del puerto de La Plata, Estibadores de Zárate, Centro de obreros estibadores de San Nicolás, Centro de obreros estibadores de San Pedro, Estibadores de ribera de Rosario, Obreros estibadores de Villa Constitución, Estibadores de ribera del Puerto Colastiné, Obreros estibadores y de ribera del Puerto Borghi, Obreros estibadores y de ribera del Puerto Paganini, Obreros estibadores del Puerto General San Martín, Obreros estibadores del Puerto de Montevideo, Obreros estibadores y de ribera del Salto oriental. Cf. Diego Abad de Santillán, *La FORA: Ideología y trayectoria* Buenos Aires: Editorial Proyección, 1971; p.105.

28 *El Reporter del puerto*, 09/01/1903; *La Protesta Humana*, 09/05/1903.

29 José Elias Niklison, "La Federación Obrera Marítima", *Boletín del Departamento Nacional del Trabajo*, N°40, February 1919; p.22; *La Protesta*, 03/26/1904; *La Vanguardia*, 04/09/19; *C.G.T.*, 10/26/1934.

30 Diego Abad de Santillán, *El movimiento anarquista en la Argentina*, 1930, *op.cit.*, pp.148-154.

31 Figures issued publicly by the FORA and published in *El Diario*, 11/28/1904.

32 *La Protesta*, 01/24/1905 & 02/02/1905; *La Acción socialista*, 02/02/1905.

33 *La Vanguardia*, 08/05/1905 & 09/07/1905.

34 Juan Alfredo MacLaughlin, *Aspecto laboral portuario (1900-1960)* Unpublished manuscript, Buenos Aires: n.ed., n.d., p.6; Prefectura General de Puertos, *El trabajo libre en el Puerto de la capital* (mimeo), 1905.

35 *La Protesta,* 07/15/1905; Diego Abad de Santillán, *La FORA: Ideología y trayectoria, op.cit.,* pp.129-130 and *El Movimiento anarquista en la Argentina... ,* op.cit*.,* p.158.

36 Prefectura General de Puertos, División de Investigaciones, *Copiador interno n°6 (1905/1906),* pp.60-67, 12/01/1905; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21 (1905/1906)*, p.59, 09/25/1905.

37 *La Vanguardia*, 09/13/1905 & 09/15/1905.

38 Policía Federal, División de Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906*, pp.4-5; 09-19-1905; Prefectura General de Puertos, División de Investigaciones, *Copiador interno n°6 (1905/1906)*, pp.199-200; 09/12/1905.

39 Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906*, pp.25-31, 96-98 & 181-190, 09/22/1905, 09/27/1905 & 10/03/1905.

40 Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906,* pp.65-69 & 118-120, 09/25/1905 & 09/28/1905.

41 Hobart Spalding, *La Clase trabajadora argentina. Documentos para su historia, 1890-1912* Buenos Aires: Editorial Galerna, 1970; pp.428-429.

42 *La Vanguardia*, 10/03/1905 & 10/04/1905; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906*, pp.197-199, 10/04/1905.

43 Prefectura General de Puertos, División de Investigaciones, *Copiador interno n°6 (1905/1906)*, pp.317, 320, 335 & 339; 10/11-16/1905; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906,* pp. 255-259, 10/16/1905.

44 Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906,* pp. 263-264 & 267, 10/18/1905 & 10/20/1905; *Copiador de investigaciones n°24, 1906*, pp.503-504, 09/28/1906.

45 *Boletín del Comité Ejecutivo del Partido Socialista*, 11/18/1905; *La Vanguardia*, 01/26/1906; *La Protesta*, 02/01/1906; Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°21, 1905/1906,* pp. 377-379, 392-393 & 436, 12/04/1905, 12/15/1905 & 01/03/1906.

46 Cf. Geoffroy de Laforcade, *A Laboratory of Argentine Labor Movements*, op.cit.

47 Dora Barrancos, "Vita materiale e battaglia ideologica nel quartiere della Boca (1880-1930)" in Gianfausto Rosoli, ed., *Identita degli italiani in Argentina. Reti sociali/famiglia/lavoro* Rome: Ed. Studium, 1993.

48 Cf. Angel Giménez, *Obras completas. Higiene obrera*, Buenos Aires: Sociedad Luz, 1943. On the different ideological approaches to parliamentarism, see the public controversy between socialists Dino Rondani, Nicolás Repetto, and anarchist activists Orsini Bertani and Pascual Guaglianone, in *La Vanguardia*, 10/04/1902. An inciteful series of articles by R. Carratala Ramos on the differences between anarchism and socialism appeared in *La Vanguardia*, 04/26/1902, 05/10/1902, 05/17/1902, 05/31/1902, 06/07/1902, 06/21/1902, 07/05/1902, 07/12/1902 & 07/19/1902.

49 *¿Quénes son los extranjeros?*, loose flyer, undated; probably from the 1904-1905 period; consulted courtesy of the late Humberto Correale.

50 In early April of 1915, the ninth congress of the anarchist FORA officially proclaimed its unification with the syndicalist CORA, and adopted the fundamental precepts of syndicalist doctrine: reliance on direct action and the concerted general strike, independence from political parties and the State, organization along the lines of industrial unionism. Those unions that rejected the departure from anarcho-communist precepts, such as the SROPC and the *Federación obrera local bonaerense*, remained coalesced in the FORA-V, whereas the new syndicalist federation became known as the FORA-IX. Both the FOM and the SROPC enjoyed their most successful campaigns in the years immediately following this reorganization.

51 Wayne Thorpe, *"The Workers Themselves": Revolutionary Syndicalism and International Labour* Amsterdam: Instituut voor Sociale Gechiedenis, 1989; Marcelo Van Der Linder and Wayne Thorpe, "The Rise and Fall of Revolutionary Syndicalism" in Marcelo Van Der Linden and Wayne Thorpe, eds., *Revolutionary Syndicalism: An International Perspective* Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990; Jacy Alves de Seixas, *Mémoire et oubli: Anarchisme et syndicalisme révolutionnaire au Brésil* op.cit.; Hubert Lagardelle *et al., Syndicalisme et socialisme* Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1908; Julio Arraga, *Nociones del sindicalismo* Buenos Aires: Biblioteca de "La Acción Obrera," 1913.

52 Iaacov Oved, *El anarquismo y el movimiento obrero argentino* México: Siglo XXI, 1978; pp. 75-102.

53 Edgardo Bilsky "La diffusion de la pensée de Sorel et le syndicalisme révolutionnaire en Argentine *Estudos*" No.5, November 1986.

54 Francisco Rosanova "Por la organización sindical del proletariado" *La Organización Obrera* January 28, 1922.

55 In 1905, syndicalist proponents of a unified federalist labor movement unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile the anarchist FORA and the socialist-leaning UGT, which had adopted revolutionary syndicalist precepts in August of the same year. In 1906 the socialist party expelled its syndicalist faction, leading to the creation of an *Agrupación socialista sindicalista* and the increasing influence of syndicalist propagandists on the fringes of the labor movement, both within and beyond the sphere of anarchist influence. Efforts to transcend the existing loose federation of local inter-craft anarchist alliances and consolidate a parallel national federation of mariners' unions began after the failed 1905 machinists' strike, and culminated in the creation of the syndicalist *Federación obrera marítima* in 1910. See, in particular, Edgardo Bilsky, "Campo político y representaciones sociales: Estudio sobre el sindicalismo revolucionario en Argentina", mimeo, and "La diffusion de la pensée de Sorel et le syndicalisme revolutionnaire en Argentine" *Estudos* No.5, November 1986; Julio Arraga, *Nociones del sindicalismo* Buenos Aires: Biblioteca de "La Acción Obrera", 1913; and various issues of *La Acción socialista* and *La Aurora del marino*, 1905-1906.

56 *Por la unidad del proletariado, viva la Liga obrera naval!* Flyer dated 04/1907; *CGT*, 07/06/1934. The increasingly militant reporting on seamen's unionism in the socialist newspaper *La Vanguardia*, and revolutionary syndicalist organ *La Acción socialista,* reflected a growing confluence of views between the leadership of the SRMF and the syndicalist doctrine propagated by the UGT. At the same time, the anarchist FORA also increased its activism in favor of the mariners' cause. On January 18th, a cartmen's as-

sembly, responding to an appeal by the FORA, voted to send a financial contribution to Genoese seamen on strike in Italy; cf. Policía Federal, División Orden Social, *Copiador de investigaciones n°27, 1906/1907*, pp.323-325, 01/19/1907.

57 João Freire, *Anarquistas e operarios. Ideologia, oficio e praticas sociais: O anarquismo e o operiado em Portugal, 1900-1940* Porto: Edicoes Afrontamento, 1992; p.142.

58 Michelle Perrot, *Les ouvriers en grève. France, 1871-1890* vol.2, Paris: Mouton/Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1974; p.724.

59 Sergio A. Pujol, *Las canciones del inmigrante. Buenos Aires: Espectáculo musical y proceso inmigratorio, de 1914 a nuestros días* Buenos Aires: Editorial Almagasta, 1989; pp.32-49.

60 Cf. Geoffroy de Laforcade, "Repertoires of Memory: The Foreigner and the Nation in La Boca del Riachuelo, Buenos Aires, mid-19th to mid-20th Century" *Latin American Essays, MACLAS* vol. XIX, 2006.

61 Cf. Geoffroy de Laforcade, "Straddling the Nation and the Working World: Anarchism and Syndicalism on the Docks and Rivers of Argentina" in Steven Hirsch and Lucien van der Walt, eds., *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Post-Colonial World, 1880-1940* Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2010.

62 Antonio Pellicer Paraire ("Pellico"), "Organización obrera," *La Protesta Humana* 11/17/1900-06/01/1901.

63 Diego Abad de Santillán, *op.cit.*., p.63; cf. Gastón Gori, *La Forestal* Buenos Aires: Editorial Proyección, 1965.

64 Rafael Barrett, *Obras completas* (4 vols.), ed. Miguel Ángel Fernández and Francisco Corral, Asunción: RP-ICI, 1988-90; Jorge A. Warley, *Rafael Barrett, anarquismo y denuncia.* Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1987.

65 José Aricó, "Para un análisis del socialismo y del anarquismo latinoamericanos" in Aricó, *La hipótesis de Justo: Escritos sobre el socialismo en América Latina* Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999; p.38.