

# Violeta Miqueli's Direct Action Against State Violence

Montse Feu, Sam Houston State University, USA

## Abstract

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Violeta Miqueli Mayoz de González (Key West, 1891- New Jersey, 1972) was an educator and an active member of Cuban-American, Spanish-American, and anarchist groups in the United States. She organized direct action and wrote for Spanish-language periodicals in Key West, Tampa, New York, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, and Barcelona. Miqueli addressed the state's systemic violence against workers in her writing: difficult access to education and healthcare, prosecution of dissenters, and disadvantaged legal defense for the poor. Like other anarchy-feminists of her time, she developed strategies of care to protect the people when the state did not. She contributed to workers' dignified education and health care and fostered solidarity among state prisoners. She also provided alternative sources of information to fight the state's systematic oppression through her publications in the anarchist press. This essay accompanies Miqueli's digital exhibit in "Fighting Fascist Spain—The Exhibits" (FFSTE)<sup>1</sup> but further interprets her direct action by building on archival, anarchist, and feminist historiography. It explores how anarchy-feminists disseminated alternative visions of society using the state's tools of freedom of association and the free press to fight against the state's structural top-down violence.

**Keywords:** anarchy-feminism; direct action; state violence; U.S. Latina; U.S. periodicals

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## Methodology: Post-custodial Management of an Anarchy-feminist's Direct Action

The emergence of a self-identified and transnational anarchist movement in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a philosophical, humanitarian ideal for an egalitarian society against authoritarian governments and laws, monarchies, and social and economic inequalities. From the creation of the International Workingmen's Association (IWA) in 1864, anarchists created personal and transnational networks that facilitated the self-organized direct action that brought tangible changes in people's lives without the mediation of the state.<sup>2</sup> Although anarchism has co-existed with other anti-systemic movements in their rejection of domination, anarchists' preference for direct action, horizontal organization, disinterest in pursuing power within the state structure, and sophisticated global print culture have distinguished their practice and culture.

By publishing in alternative periodicals, engaging in local and transnational activities, and traveling extensively, anarchy-feminists contested the gender norms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Applying transnational methodologies, scholars have found traces of Miqueli's anarchy-feminist contemporaries in anarchist periodicals. For instance, see the recent publications on Puerto Rican, Luisa Capetillo; Uruguayan, Virginia Bolten; Mexican, Caritina Piña; and Reynalda González Parra, or the Argentinian editors of *La Voz de la Mujer* (Castañeda, 2023; Fernández Cordero, 2014; Lomas, 1993; Guzzo, 2014; Hernández, 2021).

However, women's archives and their published works are not always available, as Nicolás Kanellos (2013) warns, "still missing, for instance, are the periodicals of Puerto Rican Luisa Capetillo (*La Mujer*); Mexicans Andrea Villarreal (*La Mujer Moderna*), Teresa Villarreal (*El Obrero*) and Sara Estela Ramírez (*La Corregidora*); Cuban American Violeta Miqueli (*Alpha*); as well as most of the issues of Mexican Isidra T. de Cárdenas (*La Voz de la Mujer*) and Colombian Blanca de Moncaleano (*Pluma Roja*)" (p. 588).

The first article I read by Violeta Miqueli was published in the antifascist periodical *España Libre* (New York, 1939-1977). She asked women readers to boycott U.S. businesses selling products from fascist regimes. As a recovery scholar aware of the importance of piecing together scattered records like Miqueli's, I posted queries about her antifascist call to action on social media, and her grandson, Tomás González, reached out to me. González shared his grandmother's archive, consisting of 30 newspaper clippings from U.S. Hispanic periodicals, which will be preserved by the Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Program (Recovery) at the University of Houston. A digital exhibit about Miqueli is also accessible at the open-source digital project FFSTE housed in Recovery's Digital Collections.<sup>3</sup> The interpretative exhibit contextualizes the family clippings while this article examines Miqueli's other articles preserved in several digital periodical databases to piece together her surviving print material and develop a timeline of her activist writings.<sup>4</sup> Miqueli's legacy is explored in three main sections devoted to her biographical information, anarcho-feminism, and direct action against the democratic and the fascist state.

### Biography

Violeta Miqueli Mayoz de González was the daughter of Cuban cigar workers with Spanish ancestors. The beginning of the Ten Years' War brought cigar factory owners escaping conflict to the United States, mainly to Tampa, Key West, and New York (Tinajero, 2010). As the southernmost port of the United States, Key West had great importance during this time and was considered one of the most productive cigar towns in the world. This booming industry also brought to Key West labor activists and anarchists who radicalized workers in the cigar factories and helped organize strikes. During his campaign for Cuba's independence, revolutionary José Martí also visited Key West on December 25, 1891 (Stebbins, 2007). Miqueli was born into this revolutionary context, which facilitated her involvement, as a young woman, in associations and periodicals with Cuban, Spanish, and anarchist ties.

Beginning in 1907, Violeta Miqueli wrote for several periodicals in Key West: *Cubana*, *¡Despertad!*, *El Arte*, *El Centinela*, *El Hogar*, *El Internacional*, *El Popular*, and *Pinos Nuevos* (Miqueli, n.d.-c). Her family archive includes four *Hogar* clippings dating from 1907 to 1909. These seem to be the first writings of young Miqueli because she confessed to being nervous about sending her contributions to *Hogar* (Miqueli, 1907). This response might have been expected in her patriarchal circles; however, she accepted the invitation to send contributions. In those early years, Miqueli published a regular column illustrated with birds on pages three or five of the weekly *Cubana*. She seemed to have been well-known, and she had admirers. For example, under the pen name El Corresponsal, an unknown author lauded Miqueli as an educator in the *Postal de Key West* (n.d.). In response, Miqueli crossed out three words from El Corresponsal's article and wrote "total nonsense" in the margin, providing a glimpse of her strong personality. In the same article, Miqueli also crossed out the word "latina" and wrote "española," possibly because she was the granddaughter of Spanish migrants to Cuba. Her written reference to her Spanish ancestors and her participation in Cuban American and Spanish American organizations show her diverse background.<sup>5</sup> In 1915, El Corresponsal again complimented the

"young teacher" because of her enthusiasm for literature, perseverance, intelligence, and journalism; it predicted a fantastic future for her (El Corresponsal, 1915).

Along with covering women's news, Miqueli wrote about education throughout her life. Access to secular, accessible, and quality education was challenging for working-class families like hers. Anarchists believed education was a revolutionary tool and invested in critical pedagogy that provided educational alternatives to religious or state schools. Anarchists aimed to raise literacy among workers with affordable periodicals available to them in worker's associations, educational talks, lectures and plays in their *Ateneos*, and *lectores* read texts to them in factories. Anarchist periodicals reprinted literary classics in installments because anarchists believed in the power of fiction, foregrounding new perceptions of the world.<sup>6</sup> These were non-institutional educational practices that educated workers and globally disseminated anarchist thought during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In "Páginas femeninas" in *Cubana*, Miqueli (n.d.-b) expressed her progressive pedagogical views. For example, she sadly acknowledged that children tend to lose their happiness and joy when they lose their innocence. She cited Mark Twain and invoked laughter as a remedy: "If we are condemned to live in such a mean world, we can continue with the ever-going mascaraed carnival of feelings, or we can loudly laugh at humanity's miseries, and like the celebrated Mark Twain's laughter, ours can be of indifference, contempt, or sadness" (Miqueli, n.d.-b, p. 3). Grounded in the anarchist tradition, Miqueli prefigures a world in which sharing and harnessing affective experiences through literature and humor help us recognize each other in critical and practical dimensions of everyday pleasure and joy.

Miqueli earned a bachelor's degree from Havana University and a master's degree in education from the Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee and taught English at the San Carlos Institute in Key West.<sup>7</sup> The institute was well known for being an educational Cuban civic center, and the location where José Martí launched the final phase of his campaign for Cuban independence (Miqueli, n.d.-c; Kanellos, 2014). Her talks and her family efforts were lauded: "Ms. Miqueli is the daughter of poor workers, which has been no hindrance to her parents, who willingly sacrificed for the education of Violeta" (El Corresponsal, n.d., para. 6). Miqueli, like other anarchists of her time, often exhorted workers to learn and to "break the walls of ignorance; only this way can we win, and we, enthusiasts of progress, will make ourselves worthy of our century" (Miqueli, 1907, para. 8). Similarly, in her weekly woman's column "Consciencia Femenina" in Tampa's periodical *Nueva Vida*, Miqueli invited workers to *Nueva Vida* headquarters. Those who wished to read and learn would find newspapers, magazines, and books at their disposal (Miqueli, 1924). Once in New York in the 1930s, Miqueli announced similar educational talks organized by the Centro de Estudios Sociales at 198 Lenox Avenue in Harlem. Aware of the United States' neglect of its linguistic and cultural diversity at the time, Miqueli taught Spanish at the Centro.<sup>8</sup> The Harlem Centro's activities—conferences, dances, lunches, and assemblies—were regularly announced in anarchist periodicals. Her daughter, Violet González continued her educational activities in the *Nueva Vida* group in New York.<sup>9</sup> Besides literature, anarchist education emphasized a scientific and rationalist education. With her civic involvement, Miqueli contested state linguistic and educational discrimination and provided access to bilingual education for working-class families.

## Anarcha-Feminism

Marriage as an economic arrangement was a common and global concern among anarcha-feminists. One of the most circulated anarchist objections to marriage as an economic arrangement was the seminal work of Emma Goldman's (1910) "Marriage and Love" in *Anarchism and Other Essays*. Earlier periodical texts also elaborated on the subjugation of women by matrimonial state laws and the Church. For example, feminist Ana María Mozzoni's (1884) talk "Alle fanciulle che studiano" ("To the Young Women Who Study") was translated and published in six installments in the anarchist periodical *El Corsario* (A Coruña, Spain) in 1894, and in anarcha-feminist periodicals *La voz de la mujer* in 1922 (Buenos Aires) and *Nuestra Tribuna* in 1896 (Buenos Aires). Mozzoni (1884) condemned matrimony because it forever kept women as slaves of men; the feminist author called for "sowing the seeds of justice and freedom" while encouraging women to organize (as cited in Ledesma Prietto, 2017, p. 11). Mozzoni's talk was also well-known in anarchist Paterson, New Jersey (Guglielmo, 2010). The calls made by Juana Rouco Buela, a Spanish-Argentine anarcha-feminist and the founder of *Nuestra Tribuna*, are among the many indications of the international circulation of feminist ideas. In 1924, Rouco Buela asked her "sisters" to get "anarchist wings to reach the life they deserved" (as cited in Ledesma Prietto, 2017, p. 115). In other words, anarchist periodicals facilitated the global circulation of feminist ideas among workers, like the contestation of marriage laws that subjugated women at the time.

Miqueli's feminist voice also developed in the "Comités de Damas" in Florida's cultural and mutual aid societies advocating for women's education and freedom. In 1913, she started her *Crónicas sociales* in the periodicals *Arte* and *Anagrama*, as well as part of her column "Páginas femeninas," in *Cubana*.<sup>10</sup> Miqueli engaged in the rich exchange of ideas in the available print media; for instance, Cuban and Spanish feminist authors' reprints were often disseminated in U.S.-Hispanic periodicals.<sup>11</sup> An undated clipping reviews Miqueli's talk "Mujer antigua y mujer moderna" at one of these events. She cultivated this topic throughout the years and ultimately published a monograph, *La Mujer en la mitología y en la historia* (Miqueli, 1962). The book had two editions in English and was reviewed in the English-language press.<sup>12</sup> Miqueli's conference and book overlap ideologically with Spanish philosopher María Zambrano's (1940) conference, "La mujer y sus formas de expresión en Occidente," further demonstrating the circulation of feminist ideas in the Gulf through the decades.

Recalling governments' constant invocation of freedom, Miqueli contended that "to reach this prized goal, an overlooked requisite is crucial: the enlightenment of women in the same way as men. If people disagree on this requirement; if not turned into law, human misery and shame will continue to be our only accomplishment" (Miqueli, 1914a, p. 6). Miqueli blamed the Catholic Church for the subjugation of women, too. Instead of being under "the obscurantism of the confessional," (Miqueli, 1914a, p.6) she advocated for women to be free of the shackles of marriage and the violence of men. Women's liberation began in the domestic sphere: "Why wreck a precious life? Why put up with the disdain of an ungrateful man? Do men, by any chance, forgive a mean partner?" she asked (Miqueli, 1914a, p.6). Miqueli condemned marriage as a commercial transaction: "Compra-venta" (Miqueli, 1914a, p.6). An expression reminiscent of Puerto Rican anarcha-feminist Luisa Capetillo's interpretation of marriage as a business. Coincidentally, Capetillo visited anarchist circles in Tampa and Key West in January 1914 to promote the second edition of her book *Mi opinión sobre las libertades, derechos y deberes de la mujeres* (1913) (Meléndez-Badillo, 2021). Capetillo, like Miqueli, was a cigar worker, educator, anarchist, and feminist, and her work and deeds were covered in the Hispanic and mainstream press (Castañeda,

2023). Capetillo also published in the New York anarchist periodicals *Cultura Obrera* and *Fuerza Consciente* on women's rights between 1913 and 1914, further showing the circulation of U.S.-Hispanic feminist ideas across states.

However, writing about feminism was not easy. A defeated Miqueli confessed, "It is time for me to write my column, but I have nothing because feminism is dead" (Miqueli, n.d.-b, p. 3).<sup>13</sup> She laments how she cannot talk about the Spanish author Emilia Pardo Bazán or the Italian author Matilde Serao because Key West male workers were not interested in feminism. However, Miqueli reminded her readers that ultimately women endure the consequences of any "masculine" actions. Her reference to women authors from two countries shows that she built her persona as a writer in conversation with classical reprints and radical texts accessible to her in Spanish-language periodicals.

Miqueli wrote about her anarchist activities as well. The anarchist paper *Nueva Vida* was co-edited by Herminio González (her husband) and Rogelio Miqueli (her brother). The weekly was published in English, Italian, and Spanish to "extend the reach of anarchist propaganda" among the *torcedores* (cigar rollers) in Tampa and "to amend errors done in the past; the greatest of all consisted in giving more importance to coercive forces than to the free-thinking of the people" ("Como pensamos", 1924, p.1).<sup>14</sup> A Frente Único (United Front) group was created to promote unity and collective solidarity with labor societies in Cuba, such as the Hermandad Ferroviaria, which was being persecuted by the authorities. To encourage the collection of funds in tobacco factories and stores, *Nueva Vida* celebrated that the *Torcedores de la Habana* had raised \$5,000 to help imprisoned workers. The call-for-action was successful and the Frente Único sent \$225 to Havana for attorney fees ("Balances," 1924, p. 4).<sup>15</sup> Miqueli was the Secretary of the Pro-Prisoners Committee and possibly wrote this regular column on behalf of the committee. Another \$225 was sent to Boston for the Defense Committee of Sacco and Vanzetti.<sup>16</sup> At the time, the case of Sacco and Vanzetti "galvanized the Ybor City radical community...they collected money for defense funds, held rallies, sent telegrams and petitions, and staged protest strikes in support of two anarchists" (Mormino & Pozzeta, 1998, as cited in Cannistraro & Meyer, 2003, p. 259). Sharing account statements with readers was common among anarchist periodicals for transparency and encouraging other contributions. Fundraising also helped print their periodicals and support workers who had lost their jobs or needed medical assistance.

Miqueli was well-known for her anarchist ideals; her "Marcha ascendente" was reprinted in the weekly *¡Despertad!* at a subscriber's request (Miqueli, n.d.-a). The newspaper was "sent around the Caribbean Basin, where it ended up being read as far away as Costa Rica" (Shaffer, 2020, p. 102). In her article, she claimed that the workers were "onward bound to social justice" (Miqueli, n.d.-a, p. 2). The fight for civil rights, according to Miqueli, would institute fraternity in the world. She proclaimed that workers had the best weapons to advance their anarchist ideal in education and the freedom of association (Miqueli, n.d.-a, p.2). For her advocacy, Miqueli hid from assassins in a Tampa cemetery with her husband for several nights. Supposedly, the assassins were hired by cigar factory owners because the couple was rallying cigar makers.<sup>17</sup> The hitmen (or the rumor about them) might have been why they moved to New York in the 1930s, another hub of Hispanic anarchists.

Miqueli continued organizing workers and became a community leader in New York as she had done in Florida. In 1934, she claimed that Spanish workers brought the anarchist ideal to the United States: "Not long ago, the miners of this country had no idea of the social movement carried by the workers of the world" (Miqueli, 1934, p. 958). Her article "Consideraciones sobre

el momento presente en Norteamérica” reported on children's poverty in the Pennsylvania-Ohio mines due to low wages and the expensive food in the company's shop (Miqueli, 1934). Another article, "En defensa de *Cultura Proletaria*," proves that she was a board member of the anarchist group *Cultura Proletaria* since the summer of 1934 (Miqueli, 1935b). Her response to readers' complaints attests to readers' high expectations for the periodical and the group's lack of resources (Miqueli, 1935b). Miqueli was also part of a committee convened to reach out to anarchists in the United States. She encouraged anarchists to join the *Federación de Grupos Anarquistas de los Estados Unidos* (Miqueli, 1935b). Additionally, Miqueli was a founding member of a *Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista* (SIA) youth group in New York. Miqueli's "Youth Section" column for the anarchist newspaper *Challenge* (New York 1938-1939). The author covered the activities of the SIA Youth group, denounced the persecution of anarchist Marcus Graham and his newspaper *MAN!*, and asked for U.S. visas for Spanish refugees. Herminio González, also a member of the Youth section, was invited to write on the need for antifascist unity.<sup>18</sup>

Miqueli also wrote about social justice, international politics, and fascism in the anarchist weeklies *Cultura Proletaria* (1927-1953), *España Libre* (1939-1977), *La Revista Blanca* (1923-1936, Barcelona), and *Tierra y Libertad* (1944-1988, Mexico City). These anarchist periodicals were long-running and of large format and readership. In *Cultura Proletaria*, her texts appeared on the front page, quite a feat considering the patriarchal publishing practices of most anarchist periodicals then.<sup>19</sup> On May 25, 1940, Miqueli responded to Jacob Siegel, who declared that Goldman would fight Hitlerism if she were alive. Correcting the director of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, Miqueli pointed out that Goldman had already been a warrior against Hitlerism in Spain and had traveled Europe giving speeches and fundraising against Hitler and Mussolini. At 67 years of age, Goldman helped the National Confederation of Labor and the Iberian Anarchist Federation (CNT-FAI) write letters of support to the English-speaking world in 1936. In 1939, Goldman worked to secure political asylum and financial support for women and child refugees (University of California Berkeley Library, n.d.). Miqueli suspected that Goldman's heart stopped precisely because the United States did not help the antifascists in Spain. Dated on Mother's Day, Miqueli's article assured that "[a] good mother is not praised with affected sentimentalism, but with the deed, respect, support, and the love she deserves. In the same manner, we cannot sadly and sorrowfully say goodbye to an anarchist woman...we must show our love through our commitment to follow her example and remember her work. This way, she will never be forgotten" (Miqueli, 1940d, p. 2). Miqueli taught Siegel how to honor Goldman, not for what she could have done, but by remembering her inspiring deeds. Direct action empowered anarcho-feminists like Goldman and Miqueli, who took matters into their own hands and scorned men who disregarded their contributions.

### Direct Action Against the Democratic State

German philosopher Rudolf von Inhering first defined the state in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as "any institution that claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of coercive force within a given territory" (as cited in Graeber & Wengrow, 2021, p. 359). Social scientists have defined the state as "top-down structures of command to co-ordinate everything" (Graeber & Wengrow, 2021, p. 359).<sup>20</sup> David Graeber and David Wengrow (2021) agree that modern states have had a monopoly on violence and information control. Anarchists like Miqueli contested the coercive force of the state. In the Spanish anarchist *Revista Blanca* (Valencia), Miqueli (1932) mocked the U.S. mainstream press when it called for law and order.<sup>21</sup>

A self-professed reader of Goldman, Miqueli built on Goldman's (1911) "Prisons: A Social Crime and Failure" to demonstrate that "law and order" were, in fact, words devoid of justice when applied to the poor or to the worker, who had no social or political capital. For example, Miqueli mentioned the execution of Eddie Marsch in Milledgeville, Georgia. Marsch was a sixteen-year-old African American accused of killing a man. Miqueli asserted that the same law that allowed for white supremacy did not feed or educate Marsch and ultimately called for his execution. She provided another example: A poor mother of four in Michigan who sold alcohol to sustain her family and was later sentenced to life imprisonment. It was evident to Miqueli that well-to-do families did not need to risk their freedom to make alcohol; instead, they bought it from the poor. She felt embarrassed for a country that proclaimed its democracy to the world but never put it to the test. Miqueli provided more examples of injustice: An Italian American mother died after being evicted because lawmakers "[knew] little of and [had] never experienced the unsettling worry of a day without bread, without a future, without hope" (Miqueli, 1932, p. 672). Beyond the political repression or police brutality suffered by anarchists, Miqueli provided examples of the state's violence against ordinary people in the form of judges' elitist interpretation of the law.

Miqueli's interest in prison reform was already present in her early articles in *Cubana*. Her "Páginas femeninas" asked politicians to spend money on children's education rather than jails (Miqueli, 1914b). Miqueli built on the classic deconstruction of the field of criminology by anarchist thinkers, who claimed that "capitalism was the source of crime and criminal behavior and immense human suffering" (Nocella et al., p. 2).<sup>22</sup> Miqueli believed a freer society was possible with more educational policies and less repressive approaches.

### Direct Action Against the Fascist State

Not surprisingly, Miqueli wrote against fascism from a global perspective in the 1930s and 1940s. She published on the intervention of fascist Italy before and during the Spanish Civil War in Spain by quoting Mussolini's *Il Popolo*. This Italian newspaper regularly published evidence of the official Italian meddling in Spain (Miqueli, 1940e, p. 3). She also denounced the British Foreign Secretary's endorsement of trade into Franco's zone in 1937, which according to Miqueli, was "a magnificent example of what patriotism means for bankers, the aristocracy, and the privileged, namely international military cooperation with Nazi-Fascism to exterminate European workers' hopes" (Miqueli, 1940e, p. 3).

Miqueli showed how anarchists alerted workers about the spread of fascism. For instance, she reported on the visit to the United States of anarchists Serafin Aliaga and Félix Martí Ibáñez, who represented SIA at the Second World Youth Congress held in New York (Miqueli, 1938a). The Congress brought together "500 delegates from 52 countries and 18 international organizations, representing more than 40 million young people worldwide" to discuss political, economic, social, and religious needs and find ways to cooperate for world peace (Miqueli, 1938b, p. 4). The SIA closely worked with U.S. Hispanic workers' associations and mutual aid societies affiliated with *Sociedades Hispanas Confederadas* (SHC), which fought fascism during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the Francisco Franco dictatorship (1939-1975) through education, activism, and print culture. *Frente Popular* and *España Libre* published regular calls to boycott products of fascist countries and to picket U.S. businesses that sold such products.<sup>23</sup> Women were highly involved in these boycotts and refugee activism.<sup>24</sup> Miqueli was one of the leaders of this direct action. In a beckoning call to mothers in *España Libre* on March 15, 1940, Miqueli addressed "Spanish, Czechoslovakia, Polish and Finnish mothers, all mothers who have suffered the horror

of seeing their children torn apart by the bullets of Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, and Stalin" (1940a, p.10). Miqueli's call-to-action also addressed the SHC's goal of involving workers in the antifascist fight: "Women can do much good when we ignore the conventions of bourgeois society and accept the responsibility of our destiny as the vanguard of the people" (Miqueli, 1940a, p. 10). Because of her advocacy, *España Libre* published numerous announcements encouraging the boycott of products from fascist Spain.

Consequently, SHC members often picketed shops that sold products from fascist countries. Miqueli was careful not to identify motherhood with the sacrificial and traditional maternal experience when she asked working women to be at the vanguard of the times. Instead, Miqueli addressed a subversive maternal force. By appealing to this maternal connection, she shared the possibility of a habitus of resistance and solidarity among mothers. She emancipated them from patriarchal and traditional limitations, a revolutionary take on motherhood.

Moreover, Miqueli supported the antifascist fight with articles, talks, and donations. She zealously insisted that eliminating fascism was not enough. It was necessary to establish a free society. She claimed that both the state and fascism oppressed workers who

[h]ad neither certainty, tranquility, sustenance, nor life in this valley of irresponsible, vain, and cowardly people, nothing protects us—neither the state's laws nor the unconditional brotherhood of the world's workers. The state calls us "outlaws," and the unwise look at us with pity because we do not want to dig into the mess of social pestilences. (1940b, p. 2)

In this respect, Miqueli (1940c) contested an article published in *España Libre* in May 1940, defending the Second Spanish Republic. She proclaimed that anarchist periodicals in Spain were numerous and of excellent quality. These newspapers criticized the Spanish Republic, as they did the monarchy, for their limits on workers' aspirations and the political persecution and imprisonment of the National Confederation of Labor (CNT) and Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI) members. To prove her point, she quoted Spanish President Niceto Alcalá Zamora, who stated in Mexico City's *La Prensa* (1936) that most workers distrusted the Republic.<sup>25</sup> Miqueli accused the Spanish Second Republic of funding the military and the Civil Guard after the workers' strikes of 1934, which would later facilitate the military uprising of 1936. In her essays published in the 1940s, she continued to criticize the state for defending the privileged. For instance, she called workers who voted for President Truman "modern slaves" (Miqueli, 1949, p. 1).<sup>26</sup>

On March 7, 1943, Miqueli gave the talk, "Reacción y Libertad," at New York's Ateneo Hispano. The advertisement for her presentation stated, "[t]he indomitable independence that characterizes this intelligent woman and her fight for good causes are plenty of reasons for attending what will surely be a complete success" ("Ateneo Hispano," 1943, p. 2). She began her talk by documenting the alliance of the State and the Church with capitalism. Miqueli argued that the Vatican supported Franco because the Second Republic eliminated the budget for the Church, passed several secularizing measures, legalized divorce, and implemented free, secular, and mandatory education. Also, she reported on U.S. shipments to the Francoist zone despite the non-intervention act ("Ateneo Hispano," 1943).<sup>27</sup> In a press conference, President Roosevelt admitted that Franco's bombs in Barcelona in March were probably of American origin (Tierney, 2007).<sup>28</sup> Contrary to the mainstream press, Miqueli denounced the support that Franco received from the Axis Powers.<sup>29</sup>



## Conclusion

Workers' periodicals and affiliated associations provided public spaces of protest and solidarity in the United States. Miqueli was an executive member of ethnic, anarchist, mutual aid, and social organizations in which local concerns were examined through geopolitical and global criteria that they learned through the anarchist press's extensive global circulation. Direct action was the backbone that held workers' groups together.<sup>30</sup> Like other anarchy-feminist contemporaries, her direct action and engagement with print culture were transnational and disrupted state, gender, and language norms of the era while implementing consensus-decision making, critical pedagogy, solidarity, and mutual aid. Anarchy-feminist direct action was gendered because women fought against the patriarchal society and comrades. Miqueli's anarchism helped her identify the structural inequalities that states perpetuated and created, and her feminist beliefs inserted her in a sisterhood of letters against the tyranny of patriarchy.

Miqueli was concerned with different forms of state violence. She demanded workers' access to education and universal health care and discussed gender issues, criminal justice reform, and the political freedom of workers. The anarchist periodicals in which Miqueli published her writing reached readers in the United States, Latin America, and Spain. As an author and journalist, she reported on themes that affected women workers, wrote calls to action, and encouraged workers to speak up, organize, study, and act politically and freely. Her obituary in *España Libre* remembered her as a "teacher, linguist, writer, known for her work. She wrote for important publications of the Americas...she devoted many years to helping the victims of repression as Secretaria del Comité Pro Presos. Violeta...was a brilliant speaker and an intelligent warrior of the freedoms and rights of women" ("Violeta Miqueli," 1972, p. 2). By writing about education, feminism, anarchism, and against fascism, Miqueli fought for a fair world and continuously encouraged workers to do the same.

Workers and ethnic headquarters often suffered from precarious conditions, lacked the funds to preserve their archives, and their members often suffered persecution; consequently, documents were destroyed to avoid incrimination or were lost for lack of means or institutional support. Despite having an archive with many gaps, Miqueli's legacy is reconstituted here. The remaining biographical information and print production are contextualized, preserved in a digital exhibit, and examined in more detail in this article.<sup>31</sup> Observing her relatively small archival record, we can acknowledge the striking contrast between Miqueli's tenacious anarchy-feminist life and her damaged clippings, surviving glued in a few yellowed papers. Emulating Miqueli's defense of Goldman's direct action, this article demonstrates her revolutionary deeds in fighting structural violence against workers in democratic states and denouncing their diplomatic relations with fascist ones. Her anarchy-feminist legacy of protecting and educating workers, particularly women workers, cannot be written out of the historiography and periodical studies.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> See, <http://usldhrecovery.uh.edu/exhibits/show/fighting-fascist-spain--the-ex/extraordinary-communities-/radical-women/miqueli>

<sup>2</sup> See, Graeber, D. (2011). *Direct action: An ethnography*. AK Press. (Original work published in 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Utilizing the Omeka platform, the post-custodial management of FFSTE allows for the online circulation of U.S.-Hispanic history and culture. Post-custodial management has been a paradigm shift in archival theory and practice traditionally designed to manage paper records (Suárez, 2021). The FAST award from the SHSU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs provided the funding for the exhibit configuration, with the assistance of undergraduate researcher Abigail Schafer. See, <http://usldhrecovery.uh.edu/exhibits/show/fighting-fascist-spain--the-ex/extraordinary-communities-/radical-women/miqueli>

<sup>4</sup> The archives consulted are Arte Público Historical Collections, Biblioteca Nacional de España, and Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage. I thank Tomás González for sharing the family archive. I also thank Spence Beswick, Nicolás Kanellos, and Amanda Gailey for their helpful comments on my draft. All errors are mine.

<sup>5</sup> Not all clippings provide enough information to identify the newspapers they belong to, except that most were Spanish-language publications. According to the *Tampa Tribune*, *El Arte* was launched in March 1912 ("Especial Notice"). *El Internacional*, with an oversized format, was the official journal of the Local Unions of Tampa Cigarmakers International Union of America, a bilingual weekly with a circulation of 5,000 copies. The periodical title, *Pinos Nuevos*, referred to José Martí's speech on November 27, 1891, in the Liceo Cubano de Tampa. Martí compared the cigar workers with new pines that survived a recent fire in Ybor City. These "new pines" would fight for the independence of Cuba. I thank Kenya Dworkin for this reference and her feedback on my draft.

<sup>6</sup> See, Cohn, J. (2014). *Underground passages: Anarchist resistance culture, 1848-2011*. AK Press.

<sup>7</sup> Dates unknown.

<sup>8</sup> She signed as "Secretaria" of the New York anarchist Cultura Proletaria group. Her night courses for children were advertised in *Cultura Proletaria* on March 16, 1935.

<sup>9</sup> For instance, on March 23, 1935, the group visited the American Museum of Natural History. The article is signed by Violet González. I think the author is her daughter, but it could be Miqueli using a married Americanized name (Miqueli, 1935a). Both have the feminist name Violet.

<sup>10</sup> The clippings show reviews of events, news about fundraisers, and plays organized by women members of the Centro Asturiano of Key West and Sociedad Cuba and presided over the "Comité de Damas Dolores Maig."

<sup>11</sup> See Kirwin Shaffer (2020) on Cuban anarchy-feminists, Jorell Meléndez-Badillo (2021) on Puerto Rican anarchy-feminists, and Sonia Hernández (2021) on Mexican anarchy-feminists.

<sup>12</sup> Miqueli died without finishing a second manuscript on an unknown topic.

<sup>13</sup> Miqueli also published the weekly woman's column, "Consciencia Femenina" in *Nueva Vida* (Ybor City, 1924), which kept close ties with Cuba, and edited *Alpha* in Tampa, but no copy of this periodical has been found yet (Kanellos, 2014).

<sup>14</sup> "El conceder más valor a la fuerza coercitiva que al libre desenvolvimiento del sentir popular." Translations are mine. The Ancestry database shows that Herminio was born in Spain in 1888. The spouses Americanized their names in U.S. directories: Hernan and Violet. According to the news of the launch of *Nueva Vida* in *Gaceta de Tampa* on April 7, 1924. I thank Ana Varela for the reference and her feedback on my draft.

<sup>15</sup> Namely by Vergara Y. and Pimienta C. I thank Carolina Villarroel, Brown Foundation Director of Research of the Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage program, for access to the copies of this periodical.

<sup>16</sup> However, the Financial Report does not list this collection by the Nueva Vida group and periodical. Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, & Sacco-Vanzetti New Trial League. (1925). *Financial report of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee: From the date of organization, May 5, 1920, to July 31, 1925*. The Century Press.

<sup>17</sup> Herminio González edited the IWW *El obrero Industrial* in Tampa (Shaffer, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista (SIA) started as a solidarity branch of CNT and FAI in 1937. In exile, SIA continued in France, Britain, and the United States. Miqueli's grandson thinks she is using a married Americanized name. Morris Brodie thinks it could be her daughter Violet González. I thank Morris Brodie for sharing his archive on *Challenge*. Brodie (2020) has recently published about SIA in *Transatlantic Anarchism during the Spanish Civil War and Revolution, 1936-1939*.

<sup>19</sup> Like her comrades, Miqueli, had limited representation in the anarchist press. According to Gloria Espigado, who studied 57 anarchist publications between 1868 and 1939 in Spain, women authors had an increasing appearance in anarchist periodicals but only reached 44% of the articles published (Espigado Tocino, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> This definition has often been attributed to Max Weber (Graeber & Wengrow, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> Her article, placed next to one by a prominent figure of Spanish anarchism, Germinal Esgleas, shows she garnered the respect of her peers in Spain too.

<sup>22</sup> For instance, anarchist Voltairine de Cleyre's "Crime and Punishment" (1903) delved into the social construction of crime and raised funds for the legal defense of her assailant.

<sup>23</sup> These businesses were called out in *Frente Popular* on April 8, 1938: Exporters: Emilio González, Julio Rojo Fabián, Ramón Garrido, Policarpo Gómez; shop owners: Carmen Moneo, Casa Vittori, La bodega de Paco, Juan Gallego, García y Díaz, Doctor Castro Viejo, Moure, Torres Perona, Juan B. Castro, Máximo Calvo, Lagueras, Alonso, Joaquín Quirons, Ulloa; and performers and empresarios: Hermanos Iturbi, Andres Segovia, Benito Collada.

<sup>24</sup> Violeta's brother, Rogelio (Roy) Miqueli, was a regular actor in the SHC antifascist plays.

<sup>25</sup> In an earlier article, she claimed that the Second Republic intended to change the Spanish agricultural oligarchy to provide workers with proper working conditions while fascist leaders defended the privileged life of the "grandes de España" (the Spanish nobility) (Miqueli, 1939a).

<sup>26</sup> The context for this statement was the 1948 presidential election, which caused a political fissure in the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Its president, Philip Murray, cemented an alliance between the industrial unions and the Democratic Party and expelled those who supported the Progressive Party candidacy of Henry Wallace by accusing them of communist influences (Freeman, 2019).

<sup>27</sup> She assured that 7,000 tons of iron were sent from New Jersey on December 21, 1937; the ship *Dafgred* sailed from New Jersey with Studebaker trucks on September 21, 1937; a German ship sailed from Carney's Point, N. J. with 20,000 bombs in May 1938; chemicals were sent from Baltimore on September 18, 1938. Miqueli also denounced similar shipments that were sent to Italy and Germany ("Ateneo Hispano," 1943). In *Challenge*, she reported that Norwegian sailors in Baltimore refused to load a ship with cargo for the Francoist forces to Spain (Miqueli, 1938b).

<sup>28</sup> I thank Andreu Espasa for the reference.

<sup>29</sup> Some possible sources are found in Martínez Ruiz, E. (2006). Guerra Civil, comercio y capital extranjero. El sector exterior de la Economía Española (1936-1939). *Estudios de Historia Económica*, 49, 5-105.

<sup>30</sup> SIA and United Libertarian Organizations (ULO) associations also worked through direct action. The SIA had 80 groups in the United States, and their activities were published in *Cultura Proletaria*. The most prominent Spanish-language periodical, *Cultura Proletaria*, and

the CNT-FAI, a confederation of anarcho-syndicalist unions and affinity groups, founded the ULO. The ULO's main activity was the publication of the periodical *Spanish Revolution* (1936-1938).

<sup>31</sup>See, <http://usldhrecovery.uh.edu/exhibits/show/fighting-fascist-spain--the-ex/extraordinary-communities-/radical-women/miqueli>

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**Montse Feu** ([mmf017@shsu.edu](mailto:mmf017@shsu.edu)) is an Associate Professor of Spanish and Integrated Studies at Sam Houston State University. She researches historical U.S.-Hispanic antifascism and U.S.-Hispanic periodicals at large. She is the author of peer-reviewed articles and books, *The Antifascist Chronicles of Aurelio Pego. A Critical Anthology* (2021); *Fighting Fascist Spain. Worker Protest from the Printing Press* (2020); and *Correspondencia personal y política de un anarcosindicalista exiliado: Jesús González Malo (1943-1965)* (Universidad de Cantabria). Feu has co-edited *Serving Refugee Children: Listening to Stories of Detention in the USA* (2021) and *Writing Revolution: Hispanic Anarchism in the United States* (2019). She is the curator of Fighting Fascist Spain—The Exhibits, an interpretative digital archive and collection with the mission to curate, interpret, and make accessible U.S.-Hispanic antifascist print culture. She is a board member of Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage, Research Society for American Periodicals, International Editorial Advisory, Migraciones & Exilios. Cuadernos de AEMIC, Grupo de Estudios del Exilio Literario (GEXEL), and Manchester University Press Contemporary Anarchist Studies Book Series.

