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Anarchism – Nudism, Naturism

Carlos Ortega

2003

Anarchism and the different Naturist views have always been related. This relationship was quite important at the end of the 1920s. The linking role played by the ‘Sol y Vida’ group was very important. The goal of this group was to take trips and enjoy the open air. The Naturist athenaeum, ‘Eclético’, in Barcelona, was the base from which the activities of the group were launched. First ‘Etica’ and then ‘Iniciales’, which began in 1929, were the publications of the group, which lasted until the Spanish Civil War. We must be aware that the naturist ideas expressed in them matched the desires that the libertarian youth had of breaking up with the conventions of the bourgeoisie of the time. That is what a young worker explained in a letter to ‘Iniciales’ He writes it under the odd pseudonym of ‘silvestre del campo’, (wild man in the country). “I find great pleasure in being naked in the woods, bathed in light and air, two natural elements we cannot do without. By shunning the humble garment of an exploited person, (garments which, in my opinion, are the result of all the laws devised to make our lives bitter), we feel there no others left but just the natural laws. Clothes

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mean slavery for some and tyranny for others. Only the naked man who rebels against all norms, stands for anarchism, devoid of the prejudices of outfit imposed by our money-oriented society.”

The relation between Anarchism and Naturism gives way to the Naturist Federation, in July 1928, and to the IV Spanish Naturist Congress, in September 1929, both supported by the Libertarian Movement. However, in the short term, the Naturist and Libertarian movements grew apart in their conceptions of everyday life. The Naturist movement felt closer to the Libertarian individualism of some French theoreticians such as Henri Ner than to the revolutionary goals proposed by some Anarchist organisations such as the FAI, (Federación Anarquista Ibérica). During the Republican period that split led to both orientations growing further and further apart.

Naturalism, as well as other ideas for change in sexual behaviour, have remained within the Libertarian Movements longer than they have been, if ever, in other labour oriented parties. With the fall of the Republican regime and the arrival of General Franco’s dictatorship, all that disappeared