



# AJOBLANCO LIBERTARIO 1977

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ENGLISH

Paris had its '68, Barcelona had its '77, a year of exceptional social, cultural and political upheaval after 39 years of Franco's dictatorship.

The new generations were desperate to break free of their elder brothers' hierarchical, authoritarian ways and bring about real change in their everyday life. Many *Ajoblanco* readers formed part of this libertarian movement and helped set up an extensive social network encompassing a wide range of collectives, cultural associations and other viable alternatives: self-managed means of production, soft energies, humanist urban planning, libertarian education, a full amnesty, sexual freedom, feminism, gay liberation, the struggle for abortion rights and an end to military service, as well as support for free municipalities, libertarian cultural associations and direct democracy.

Barcelona was the capital of this far-reaching, emancipating movement, which attracted widespread support. The CNT rally on Montjuïc on 2 July 1977 was the biggest mass meeting during the Spanish transition to democracy. It was followed three weeks later by the International Libertarian Conference, an anarchist congress attended by half a million people. And in September the city was brought to a halt by a strike at the city's petrol stations.

Forty years on, with the political framework created during that transition now in crisis, the creators of *Ajoblanco* are looking back at the magazine's role in the social movements of the time—a role that is just as relevant now as ever.



## GALLERY

### CULTURES

**Libertarianism.** For the young, being a revolutionary meant taking on the responsibility of inventing the future and delivering it through your relationship with others. Actions were what counted: it wasn't good enough simply to dream of a classless society free of barriers and taboos.

**Theatre.** Independent theatre broke free of the written text and closed performance spaces.

**Music.** Song lyrics became hymns codifying social behaviour, while poetry filled the walls of bars and universities.

**Popular festivities.** The early issues of *Ajoblanco* asserted the grotesque, pagan roots of popular Mediterranean festivities.

### MINIPIMER

*Minipimer* [blender] was one of the most popular sections in the magazine, with room for all manner of brief asides and current affairs features. Its often grotesque, merciless barbs could sometimes take on a humorous tone and become a hymn to freedom.

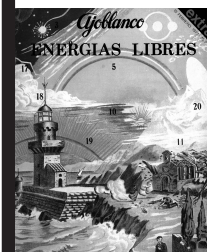
### EDUCATION

The magazine fought against *educastation* by producing dossiers, debates, studies, reports and proposals criticising an education system that drilled values such as competitiveness and control into students. The education collective carried on the legacy of Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia.

### ECOLOGY AND NATURAL CARE

Ecology and natural care were two key strands in libertarian thought in the 1970s. *Ajoblanco* published special issues on health and natural care, waste

minimisation, biological agriculture, free energy sources, humanist urban planning and degrowth. It also founded and funded the first ecology magazine in Spain: *Alfalfa*.



### SEXUALITY AND ANTIPSYCHIATRY

The lack of information, the years of repression and ultraconservative mores had created a deafening silence on the subject of sex. It was taboo. At *Ajoblanco* an avid correspondence gave rise to the free sex collective and special issues on sexuality. The antipsychiatry collective often carried out complementary work and fought to stop electroshock therapy.



### FEMINISM

*Ajoblanco* always provided a platform for radical feminism and sought ways to combat phallocracy and undermine patriarchal society. Feminists at the magazine worked to create a world for women free from the subjugation and economic and sexual power relations imposed by men.

### POLITICS

**Libertarianism.** Anarchists believed in educating the whole person, subverting established social roles and affirming life in the face of the current objectified struggle for survival.

**Elections.** The first free elections were held in June 1977, and the country's political parties and associated trade union centres signed the Moncloa Pacts at the end of the same year. The CNT called for active abstention in the elections and opposed the pacts.



### European repression.

Those in power and government used all the means at their disposal to stifle the libertarian revolution. European repression shut down free radios, collectives and cultural associations in countries all across Western Europe.

**Social prisoners.** The 1976 amnesty excluded the vast majority of the prison population. The magazine supported the struggle of ordinary prisoners and took part in many protests calling for a total amnesty.

**Squats.** British squatters inspired squatting movements in the 1960s and 1970s

across Europe, under the banner that houses are there to be lived in.

### COMMUNES

The new generations needed to escape from authoritarian families and conservative mores. There was a desire to change your life creatively and cooperatively by learning to live shared lives, growing organic vegetables, enjoying sexual freedom and living communally without the scourge of machismo.



### TRAVEL

The magazine's travel philosophy was shared by thousands of readers: travel was a privileged time for taking charge of your life and setting off in search of yourself and others. It was a quest for new experiences, meetings, adventure and life—the very opposite of the package holidays being offered by travel agencies.

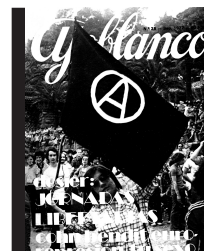
### LA CLOACA

*La cloaca* [the sewer] was the perfect name for this section of *Ajoblanco*, save for the fact that its rich mixture of contents was far from foul-smelling: contacts, travel, communes, rock groups and poetry readings, among others. There was room for everything, as readers readily appreciated by writing thousands of letters, in the days when the internet was yet to be invented. Flipping through the pages of *La cloaca* today takes you back in time to the lifestyle of those years.

### PATIO

### ANARCHY

The CNT's dream attracted more than 200,000 people to attend a meeting in Montjuïc on July 2, the largest gathering of the so-called Spanish Transition to Democracy. Federica Montseny and Josep Peirats returned from exile. They spoke against the social contract, in favour of a total amnesty and in support of the free municipalities.



### LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENT

From 22 to 25 July, Park Güell and the Saló Diana, in Barcelona, hosted the first International Libertarian Conference. It was a very crowded get-together at which speeches were made

calling for greater development of culture and festivals, the consolidation of historical memory and a total amnesty.

### CULTURE

A special report praising the subversive nature of the popular Mediterranean festival the Fallas, led to the suspension and closure of the magazine for four months.

The Saló Diana, run by the Assembly of Theatre Workers, hosted an uninterrupted series of activities committed to the performing arts, music and alternative cinema, as well as the debates of the International Libertarian Conference.



### DAILY LIFE

The transformation of everyday life, whether in communities, in the streets, in towns or in local districts, prompted a palpable change in patterns of behaviour. One of the proposals of the ecologists in their

commitment to non-polluting free energy and a new economic system was the construction of geodesic domes.

### THE FRACTURE

On 24 January, a Fascist commando unit attacked the office of certain labour lawyers in Calle Atocha in Madrid. Five people died. Some days later, a silent demonstration walked along the Passeig de Gràcia in Barcelona while similar vigils were held in several other cities.

The Libertarian Festival, (revived after 38 years of repression) held on 2 May in the Malsaña district of Madrid, in the vicinity of the monument to Daoíz y Velarde, ended in a pitched battle. The police brutally intervened resulting in four injuries, one very serious.



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Free entrance

### Hours

Monday to Friday: 11.00-14.00 and 16.00-20.00.  
Saturdays: 16.00-20.00.  
Closed on Sundays and public holidays.

### Guided visits

Individual or group visits can be arranged in advance by telephone or e-mail.

### Curation

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Mano de santo

### Translations

la correccional (serveis textuais)

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Cover image: Demonstration for the attacks in Calle Atocha in Madrid. Barcelona, January 1977. © Pilar Aymerich

Images: Covers of the *Ajoblanco* magazine: Free Energy special issue, nos. 23, 18, 28, 25 and Travel special issue, 1977 © Ajoblanco Archive