

A tribute to María Antonia Viñals Carrera

By Francisco Viñals Carrera



On 1 March 2011, after a three-month stay in hospital fighting cancer, we lost my sister (and sister-in-law to my wife Mariluz), María Antonia Viñals Carrera just shortly after celebrating her 58th birthday on 14 February.

María Antonia, like Mariluz, was the eldest sister in the family. Their respective families were also neighbours (near the Plaza Calvo Sotelo, today Francesc Macià), and were families characterized by the happiness of the children, with exemplary parents who ensured that the children grew up as positively as possible, promoting the development of their skills and aspirations. Within the limits of

that period and circumstances, they would impose, without neglecting their sense of responsibility, the discipline and order that characterized them, which is why the children also shared the social and humanitarian vocation of their parents and grandparents.

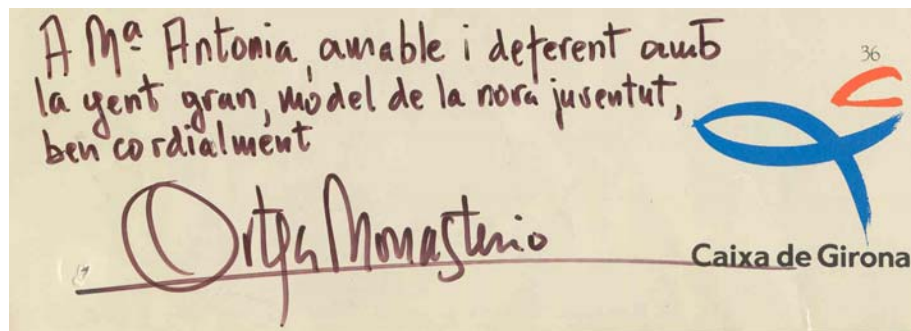
As a child, María was also like her mother's helper and voluntarily looked after her younger siblings. Her protective instinct led her to the health sciences, and when she entered university she trained as a psychologist, earning her Bachelor's Degree from the Psychology Department of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Barcelona in 1978; at the same time as enrolling as a clinical and organisational psychologist she specialized in Psychometry and Projective Techniques, earning her Diploma from the Paediatric Neurology and Psychology Centre in 1985 under Dr P. Castells Cuixart.

As a student, she volunteered in various hospitals and mental health centres under the leadership of Dr A. Pursell and Dr Torres, and as a clinical psychologist with D. Rayo, she also continuously gave her assistance, acting as psychologist to the entities collaborating with the Association of Consultant Graphoanalysts in Spain, and always in a humble and silent fashion.

On 2 July 1992, José Luis Ortega Monasterio (a recipient of the Cruz de Sant Jordi award from the Generalitat and creator of habaneras such as: “El meu avi” inspired by his grandfather, captain of the ship “El Català”, whose trail he would follow in being a much loved and widely accepted army colonel at the service of society, who was a co-worker of our UAB colleague Professor Juli Busquets, and later the founder of humanitarian organisations) wrote to his esteemed colleague María Antonia:

*“To María Antonia, kind and respectful to the elderly, a model of the youth of today,
Best regards”*

Ortega Monasterio



Both she and her husband followed a healthy, macrobiotic lifestyle; even as a young couple, they drank fruit juices instead of soft drinks. They say this lifestyle can cure tumours and cancer, but it appears it was all for nothing: a completely healthy youth, free from contamination as they had a house in the countryside surrounding Sant Quirze; they were sporty, very aware of nature, they were volunteers in the civil defence organisation and

Carles also played an active role in extinguishing forest fires.

Quite honestly, among the major losses we have suffered, one that was very similar to Maria Antonia’s case, succumbing to cancer, was that of Esperanza Fonta who also followed a scrupulously macrobiotic lifestyle – it brings to mind the expression: “it’s always the good ones who have to die”.

We are grateful for all the condolences we have received, among these a very emotional letter from Professor Jaime Tutusaus, with whom Maria Antonia also occasionally worked as a psychologist in some of his HR affairs and who also indicated it was a hard blow for him. Many thanks, Jaime, and to all our good friends and colleagues.

From the City Council of Sant Quirze del Vallès, Elisabeth Oliveras i Jorba included a few words to its resident María Antonia Viñals Carrera in the municipal magazine INFOSQV No. 159 of March 2011:

María Antonia was and will be for all of us a woman who, with the example and life experiences she leaves us, must be remembered and not forgotten. A valiant, just and supportive woman, full of pleasant conversation, intelligent, with a gentle smile and open face, she enjoyed participating in activities pertaining to the world of women and education.

Her fight in the limited time life granted her, the effort she put in to accompany Mariona, her daughter, to protect her, to help her to grow, to not leave her alone, made her a WOMAN in capital letters. Living as she lived and doing so with dignity, tenderness and determination as she did, is no easy thing. This space is dedicated to her memory and to that of all the women we have lost too soon, and who we most certainly do not want to forget: Joana, Marta, Teresa, Alba, Milagros, Raquel, Nani...

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Thank you for what you have taught us.

Elisabeth Oliveras Jorba

La Maria Antònia ha estat i serà per a totes nosaltres una dona que amb l'exemple i el testimoni de vida que ens deixa cal tenir present i no oblidar. Dona valenta, justa, solidària, de conversa agradable, intel·ligent, de somriure dolç i mirada transparent, gaudia participant en les activitats del món de la dona i de l'educació.

La seva lluita amb el temps escadusser que la vida li va atorgar, l'esforç que ha fet per acompanyar a la Mariona, la seva filla, per protegir-la, per ajudar-la a créixer, per no deixar-la sola la converteixen en una DONA en majúscules. Viure el que ella ha viscut i fer-ho amb la dignitat, tendresa i enteresa com ho ha fet ella no és gens fàcil.

Aquest espai és per la seva memòria i la de totes les Dones que ens han anat deixant, massa aviat, i tossudament no les volem oblidar per la Joana, la Marta, la Teresa, l'Alba, la Milagros, la Raquel, la Nani....

Gràcies pel que ens heu ensenyat.

Elisabeth Oliveras i Jorba

Thank you all for your support and sympathy on the loss of María Antonia

Both Mariluz and I, our 14-year old niece Mariona and all the family wish to thank you for your condolences on the death of María Antonia Viñals Carrera.

If it is possible, within this misfortune, that we pick up the optimism that my sister had right up to the end of those three months in hospital, we would maintain not only an extraordinary mental clarity, but an extraordinary faith and physical and spiritual fortitude.

These events change your life, but in María Antonia's own vision we end up believing how adaptation is necessary and certain, which brings other perspectives on life that overcome the neurotic state of not understanding the reason and strives for the sacrifices for hope that go hand-in-hand with this internal fight; finally, new spiritual rewards are also discerned in the personal growth that we must make — after all, as graphoanalysts, we work precisely on something as exciting as the human being, in the dimension of one's personality.

We leave the sadness behind in order to assume, with renewed happiness, a new path in memory of María Antonia and her husband Carles, who also died of cancer a couple of years ago.

Francisco Viñals Carrera