





























and demonstrates the contributions many women have made to poetry, to the novel, to the arts, in general, to the struggle and politics. Thus he teaches us how to judge women of the various classes and celebrities, pointing out their merits and shortcomings and showing what is principal in each individual case and what is more important, highlighting their contributions to women's advancement.

### 3. Feminist Movement

A central point that greatly important for today is the Mariátegui's proposal on the general problems of women, with his theses on the feminist movement, on which subject three parts are noteworthy: feminism, politicisation of women and organisation"

With respect to Feminism, Mariátegui held that it emerges "neither artificially nor arbitrarily" among us, but it corresponds with the incorporation of women into manual and intellectual work. In this viewpoint, he highlights mainly that feminism thrives among women who work outside the home and points out that the proper environments for the development of the feminist movement are the university classrooms and the labour unions. He then sets forth the directive of orienting ourselves towards these fronts to push forward the mobilisation of women. Although it must be decided that such orientation in no way implies discounting peasant women, since we must remember that Mariátegui considered the peasant women as the most important class in our process, no doubt peasant women too are a front of mobilisation and, even more, the main source which the entire feminist movement as well as the proletariat want to reach.

In Feminist Demands Mariátegui proposes the essence of the feminist movement:

"None should be surprised if all women do not get together in a single feminist movement, Feminism has, necessarily, several colours, various tendencies. In feminism three fundamental tendencies can be distinguished, three substantive colours: bourgeois feminism, petty-bourgeois feminism and proletarian feminism. Each one of these feminisms formulates its own demands in a different way. The bourgeois woman unites feminism with the interests of the conservative class. The proletarian woman unifies her feminism with the faith for the revolutionary multitudes in the society of the future. The class struggle — an historical fact and not merely a theoretical assertion — is reflected on the feminist stage. Women, like men, are reactionaries, centrists or revolutionaries. They cannot, consequently, all fight the same battle side by side. In the current human panorama, class differentiates individuals more than sex."

This is the essence of our woman question, the class character of the entire feminist movement. And we must keep this very much in mind, today more than ever, since once more the organisation of women is pushed forward, many groups arise, which, in general, are silent or hide the class characters sustaining them, that is the class which they serve, and preach a unification of women to demand their rights in opposition to men, as if to serve all women united, without distinction of class, for a supposed social transformation "humanist, Christian and in solidarity" social transformation, going through a few intermediate modalities of unclear or confused class positions. Substantially the problem is to ascertain the class root entailed by each women's group, organisation, front or movement, to delimit positions and establish whom they serve, which class they serve, and if they are truly or are not on the side of the people.

These questions take us to a crucial problem: according to whose principle which class criteria and orientation are we to build a feminist movement serving the people? Here Mariátegui's position

is brilliant and concise: "Feminism, as a pure idea, is essentially revolutionary." And to him, revolutionary essentially meant proletariat. That way the entire people's feminist movement, which truly wants to serve the people and the revolution, has to be a feminist movement adhered to the proletariat and today in our country adherence to the proletariat means adherence to the thinking of Mariátegui.

With respect to the Politicisation of women. The Marxist classics have always attached great importance to this point, since without it, it is impossible to develop the mobilisation and organisation of women, and without these women we cannot fight side by side with the proletariat for their own emancipation. Following his great example, the Peruvian working class like Mariátegui has pointed out the importance of the politicisation of women, and highlighted that its deficiency or lack thereof serves reaction:

"Women, for the most part, due to their little or no political education, are not a renovating force in contemporary struggles, but a reactionary force" (Furies and Aspects of Life in the World.)

This is sufficiently clear. What we must ask ourselves is this: what does this politicisation mean? For the founder of the Communist Party, it meant the determined and militant incorporation of Woman into the class struggle, their mobilisation together with the people's interests, their integration into the organisations, individually learning themselves the ideology of the working class and all this is part of, assessed by and under the leadership of the proletariat. In synthesis, to incorporate women into politics, into class struggle, under the leadership of the working class.

With respect to the Organisation of women. Marxism teaches that in order to face their enemies and struggle for their class interests the proletariat has no other recourse than to organise itself; this principle is applied to the people, who are strong only if organised and therefore also to women, who can only fight successfully when they are organised.

As a "convicted and confessed Marxist" Mariátegui applied these principles creatively. He paid very special attention to organising the women workers, as is seen in the proposals in the Manifesto of the CGTP referred to above:

"All this accumulation of 'calamities' weighing on the exploited woman cannot be resolved except by immediate organisation. In the same way that unions have to build their youth cadres, they must create their women's sections, where our future women militants will be educated."

Mariátegui showed the same concern when under his guidance the statute of the mentioned Confederation was getting ready to form a Permanent Women's Commission at the Executive Committee level. Unfortunately, these orientations have not been correctly put into practice; it has remained a purely bureaucratic union position, called "feminine affairs" or some similar name, when it exists at all, without organically accommodating the women's sections of the unions, thus it remains as a pending task,

Later, in March 1930, the Communist Party approved the following motion:

"First. Creating a Provisional Secretariat to organise socialist youth, under immediate control of the Party.

Second. Creating a Provisional Secretariat to organise the working women, under the leadership and control of the Party.

Third. Both secretariats will struggle for the immediate organisation of youth of both sexes, for their political and ideological education, as a preparatory stage for their admission to the Party." (Martínez de la Torre, op cit, Vol. II; our emphasis.)









