

**MEETING OF WOMEN FROM LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN,
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We present below a testimonial written by PhD. Ivet Echevarría Velásquez who participated this year in the Second Meeting of Women of Latin America and the Caribbean in Ecuador. This reading offers a viewpoint with which will quickly and easily show the reader the coincidences between the meeting in Argentina described in the article on this site, "National Conferences of Women: A Critical Vision," by Patricia Barrio de Villanueva before, and the one herein on the international scene.

"My experience in a Marxist and communist meeting"

Through colleagues, I learned about the Second Encounter of Women of Latin America and the Caribbean. I checked the web page they sent me and noticed the Marxist and Communist ideological trend; I never saw it as an impediment or barrier to participate in the Meeting. On the contrary, I thought we had possibilities of opening a dialogue and understanding their positions on some issues that I work on every day.

I was surprised that they claimed the legacy of Micaela Bastidas, Juana Azurduy, Manuela Sáenz, Policarpa Salabarrieta, Manuela León and other anonymous fighters for giving their best to achieve equal rights for women, and regarding the 20th century, the legacy of the international movement of revolutionary women inspired by Clara Zetkin, Olga Benario and the Mirabal sisters.

For people who recall the the history of the American continent in its fight for independence from the Spanish Crown, the names of Micaela Bastidas, Juana Azurduy, Manuela Sáenz, Policarpa Salabarrieta, Manuela León mentioned in the previous paragraph will come to mind, since they participated in different and earlier struggles

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whose objective was to achieve independence from Spain, but not to secure the equality of women. Making this arbitrary and forced linkage leads to historical error for readers and participants in these meetings.

These examples are meant to illustrate how these Meetings intentionally try to link the precursors of American struggles for independence with those of the twentieth century, who are more than two hundred years apart. The names of Clara Zetkin, Olga Benario and the Mirabal sisters belong to women who had a communist ideology and political militancy in communist parties.

The communist ideology came onto the scene with Karl Marx towards the middle of the 19th century. Obviously, then, the female characters previously mentioned did not coincide historically or ideologically with him for the simple reason that between them there is a span of more than two hundred years, since the communist ideology makes its appearance in history around 1848.

I was also surprised that they referred to women as the most punished by an unjust and repressive system, which is why they say they fight against exploitation and oppression. They fight against gender violence, for "sexual education to make decisions", contraception to avoid abortion and "legal abortion to avoid dying," among other things. All this information generated in me a seeking to know how they would make the historical, ideological connection of the before mentioned women with the issues to be worked on: women's integral health, violence against women, women and work, etc.

At the Meeting that took place on September 28, 29 and 30 of 2018 at the Central University of Quito, Ecuador, I noticed that the organization was very poor. This was evident from the first day at the time of registration of the participants, in the delay in the start of the meeting and in the orientation of the objectives of the "Symbolic Takeover of Quito": a march for the claim for women's rights "to decide", meaning a march for the legalization of abortion in the different countries of the American continent, the objective of which was for the media to report it.

In the plenaries and in the workshops I realized that there was a line aimed at giving a view of women and other minorities divorced from the social reality of their countries, with a clear intention to overshadow the social, economic, and political problems that could be going on throughout the countries of America and the Caribbean. The look towards the reality of the countries is negative and without offering a solution away from the violence and conflict between women and men and the different actors of society.

The majority of those who participated in the plenary sessions mentioned the supposed high rates of violence suffered by women on a daily basis and the criminal law systems that prevent women from exercising their right to bodily autonomy, and they put the blame on the State, capitalism, the ultraconservative sectors to maintain the repression against women, etc.

They considered that the fight that must be carried out by each of the feminist groups or movements is "to eradicate, break the rules and the culture of subordination, exploitation and oppression of women until the defeat of capitalism, patriarchy and chauvinism which will allow building a more just and democratic society, destroy the sexist structures promoted by capitalism and sustained by the ultraconservative sectors. To do so, States should be required to decriminalize abortion, sexual and reproductive education for adolescents, access to medicines, cut out any legislative initiative in favor of the family and the nasciturus".

As I made a balance of my participation to discuss with scientific arguments in search of truth, good and justice a vision of the person, social problems and alternative solutions to the problems with sustenance in the reality that our countries live, I noticed that the link between the legacy of seventeenth-century women and the issues of violence against women, reproductive health, etc. was also missing.

What has become clear to me is that they manage a closed discourse on the relationship between men and women, about the family and the unborn under the Marxist and communist ideology.

Participating in this Meeting has made me reflect and increase my commitment to young people, it has given me greater conviction and responsibility to work in favor of understanding and good relations between men and women, to foster the strength of the family and the defense of life.

All in all, after getting into the reality of the Argentine and Latin American encounters, it is easy to glimpse their similarities. The intention of this publication is to provide tools and realities that can help to understand certain current socio-political movements, their projections, their roots and foundations to be able to recognize them and work accordingly.