

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF
WOMEN'S AND GENDER ACTIVISM AND
SCHOLARSHIP**

SITE: PERU

**Transcript of Diana Miloslavica Túpac
Interviewer: Karen Bernedo Morales**

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Diana Miloslavich Túpac was born in Huancayo, likely in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Diana is the Director of one of the most important women's organizations in Perú, an expert on advancing women's policy, and an accomplished author with more than 40 years of experience working to advance women's political participation and human rights in Perú. She obtained a Masters in Literature at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, and was a Ph.D. Candidate in Social Sciences, specializing in History with the thesis "History of the Political Participation of Women in Perú." Diana has participated in the execution of numerous projects in the promotion of legal and political initiatives related to women's rights. For example, as part of the Women's Forum in Perú, she presented the first proposals for gender quotas and domestic violence in 1991. She was an advisor to the Women's Commission of the Municipality of Lima and of the creation of the Pro Equity Office from 1999 to 2002. In 2003, she was part of the team with the Ministry of Women and Social Development. In 2011, she was part of the Transfer Commission of the new government, and later Head of the Cabinet of Advisers to the Minister for Women. Diana has also participated in various projects with organizations such as: Equality Now, DAWN, RENAMA, Social Watch, UN Women, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF, DIAKONIA, CUSO, NOVIB, Oxfam, UE, and USAID, among others. Most recently, she was a major player in the campaign to promote and pass the newly established Gender Parity Law (Law No. 31030, 2020). Diana is currently the Director of the Political Participation and Decentralization Program of the Peruvian Women's Center, Flora Tristán, a key feminist institution created in 1979 with a focus on women's rights. She is also an accomplished author (select titles): *The Autobiography of Maria Elena Moyano: The life and death of A Peruvian* (1992, with editions in Spain and translated in Italy, USA and Japan); *Women's literature, A look from feminism* (2012); *Flora Tristan: Peregrinations of an outcast at the fair* (2019); *Feminism and suffrage 1933-1956* (2015); *Political harassment in Peru: A look at electoral processes* (2016), *Gender, parity and disaster risk management* (2019), publishing both through Flora Tristán and an academic press in the U.S.

Karen Bernedo Morales is a curator and researcher of Visual Anthropology and Gender Studies. She is professor at Universidad Científica del Sur and a founding member of the award-winning peripatetic Museum of Art and Memory. She has directed documentaries on memory of the internal armed conflict of Peru: *Ludy D, women in the armed internal conflict*, *Mamaquilla, threads of war* and the series *Other memories, art and political violence in Peru*, and has curated visual arts projects with a gender perspective such as: *María Elena Moyano, texts of a women on the left*(2017), *Collaborative Carpet of Visual Resistance*(1992-2017), *Pedro Huilca, let's struggle for a cause that is superior to our lives*(2017) , *Las Primeras, women encounter history*(2018, 2020), *Emancipadas y emancipadoras, the women of independence of Perú* (2019). She is currently completing the documentary *The invisible heritage*, which explores the few representations of women in monuments in the public space in Lima.

The interviews for the Peru country site were conducted in summer 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. These interviews were conducted over Zoom, and due to this format, there were some interruptions in the interview due to problems with connectivity. Many of these interviews discuss life and activism during the pandemic.

Karen Bernedo Morales: Well, thank you for agreeing to participate in the project. And I know that everyone surely asks you about your work directly, but I would like to know a little bit more about your life story, your personal story. And like, what memories do you have that you think are transcendental, important, about your personal life and any of the moments that are important for the place you're at or who you are now.

Diana Miloslavich Túpac: Actually, today that we are doing this interview, today is the Day of the Journalist in Peru. And today I tried to put an image and a photo of Ana Maria Portugal on my Facebook, a feminist from the 70's, 80's, who I think was important because she was a pioneer in journalism of that decade when she wrote her column in the chronicle.¹ And I particularly discovered feminism through reading, I wasn't very aware of what was happening to me as a teenager, as a young person. And so I have told on several occasions that reading "Memoirs of a Formal Young Woman" was definitive for me because I found a young woman in Simone de Beauvoir's² book who had the same dilemmas and concerns about her family and her parents as I did. So I kind of found that it was a life similar to any other woman's, that it didn't matter if I was living in Lima, Peru and she was living in France.³ And then, I discovered that a newspaper in that time of *Velasquismo*, and I also want to recognize that fortunately, it was a period of my life that I was a *Velasquista* and of which I do not regret let's say, because I lived through the great changes that there were in those moments from high school.⁴ We were a group that watched, we thought indeed that a revolution was taking place in Peru. I experienced Velasquismo with much joy and much impact. And then, coming out of adolescence, the parallel between Velasquismo, the reading of Simone de Beauvoir and Ana Maria Portugal, who also wrote a chronicle on feminism, this was one of the moments of discovery and I think it marked me a lot. Then I say that I was also marked by San Marcos, the national university where I studied, but the university did not mark me in the sense of women but marked me more in the sense of

¹ Ana Maria Portugal is a native of Arequipa, a writer and journalist, and a pioneer of feminism in Peru and Latin America. ("Ana Maria Portugal." Feminist Archives.

<http://feministarchives.isiswomen.org/categories/author/399-ana-maria-portugal>. Accessed 7 June 2021.)

² Simone de Beauvoir was a French existentialist philosopher, writer, and feminist activist. Some of her most famous works include her treatise on women's oppression *The Second Sex* and her memoirs, including *Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée*. ("Simone de Beauvoir." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simone_de_Beauvoir#Personal_life. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

³ Lima is the capital of Peru. The city is located east of Callao, a port on the Pacific Ocean, and west of the Andes Mountains. Lima has a population of over eight million people. (Robinson, David. "Lima." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lima>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

⁴ The Federación Nacional Velasquista was a political party in Ecuador. The party centered José María Velasco Ibarra and changed policies drastically throughout its time of influence. ("Federación Nacional Velasquista." Wikipedia. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federaci%C3%B3n_Nacional_Velasquista. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

knowing a country as unequal as Peru.⁵ I studied literature and at some point when I studied literature I was also already working in the Constituent Assembly,⁶ I was a secretary, then an advisor to Hugo Blanco who at that time was one of the most important leaders of the left.⁷ And then at the same time, I went to class at the university in the evenings, after the Constituent Assembly I entered into a political project for human rights and I worked in the prisons. I worked in the Sixth, which has now disappeared. There I met great people, including Arguedas' widow. Before she made other kinds of radical decisions and had this affinity with terrorism, but I also met these characters because they were part of Hugo Blanco's friends, so Hugo was like a mentor. So I went with him to meet Arguedas,⁸ I went with him to meet Rosa Larco, I went with him to meet Laura Caller,⁹ but it wasn't something that we could say was casual but he thought that I should meet the important women at that time. I am talking about the constituent, it was the year 77-78, that he considered that at the age that I was, I was 20 years old, I had to meet those women because those women could teach me a lot. At that time I also met very important, very strong women who had already made their way, they were not feminists, they were not feminists, but they were women who had developed, one of them in human rights, in music, another had left her country, right? She had come to a different world and had been married to one of the most important writers that Peru has had like José María Arguedas. Laura Caller was the lawyer of the poor, right? And then, well, me, I lived through all that when I was twenty, right?, getting out of high school, still going to college. And then, I think that this interest I had in politics in general, I did not understand much that there was a feminist way of doing different politics. But my interest in change, in politics, from high school made me go through the Velasquismo, then to enter the left, to work in the Constituent, that year what was very important is the Constitution that finally, who would have thought that a Mr. Cáceres, who came from an organization like SINATRACA,¹⁰ would end up putting up the Constitution of 1979, something that we could say as if women had equal rights? And there I met a group of feminists who were the only ones who went to the Constituent Assembly to leave their proposal for changes. And then I said, who are these women? Ah, they are a group of feminists who came to leave their proposals for the Constitution that was being made. I was already a militant of the PRT party at that time, but

⁵ Located in Lima, Peru, the National University of San Marcos is a public university with more than 35,000 students (including undergraduate and postgraduate students). ("National University of San Marcos." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_University_of_San_Marcos. Accessed 14 May 2021.)

⁶ The Constituent Assembly of Peru was a body of elected officials established to draft the Constitution of 1979, which replaced the 1933 Constitution. ("Constituent Assembly of Peru." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constituent_Assembly_of_Peru. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

⁷ Hugo Blanco is a former Peruvian politician and current leader of the Confederación Campesina del Perú. ("Hugo Blanco (politician)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo_Blanco_\(politician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo_Blanco_(politician)). Accessed 11 July 2021.)

⁸ José María Arguedas was a Peruvian novelist and professor born in 1911. Most of his writings focus on the differences between white and indigenous cultures in Peru, as well as the systemic inequalities which marginalize indigenous people in Peru. ("José María Arguedas." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jose-Maria-Arguedas>. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

⁹ Laura Caller was a Peruvian political activist and lawyer; she defended activists, peasants, and political prisoners. In 1966, she helped to clear Hugo Blanco of the death sentence. ("Laura Caller." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laura_Caller. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹⁰ The Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores-Callejero (National Union of Street Workers)

more interested in the issue of human rights and not very close to the women's commission, who were all feminists.¹¹ Always between one sector of feminism and the other, I was concerned with human rights and the issue of labor. So I think that the debates that I am experiencing today with this new generation were always present. I remember a big argument where my dear friends, feminists, who were very important in these years, treated me not so well because in a vote I voted that the right to work was more important than the right to abortion. I was twenty-three years old. And it's still the same, it's still this issue with the new generations, what's first?, the right for women to work, the right to the decriminalization of abortion, what are the priorities? I believe that these are debates that have come about in the last few decades, let's say some had hegemony at times, others did not, others had this little strength, but they were all there and the discussions were always about priorities. That is what is interesting when I look back and talk about these beginnings, let's say, for someone who came from literature, came from a concern for human rights, more linked to the issue of unions, right?, the issue of labor. Also, meeting the feminists, others who already had a path to follow, was a shock for me and finally understanding why abortion was so important, this happens to you when something general becomes something personal. That's when you realize and I think that's, let's say, the important and interesting thing about feminism because in politics you talk about things in general, right?, but not in feminism. Until the moment you have to decide, right? and today there have been a few days, well on September 28th we put in one more day of struggle and one of the things I put in was "deciding made us free". I think that the advantage that we had in my generation was that we made our own decisions. We were a generation that decided that there were other paths, right? and that we could decide if we wanted to be mothers, we wanted to have children.

KBM: Backing up a little, you have talked about several spaces that are important for you and for what you are now: the university, the school itself, the left, but do you remember what was your first contact, let's say, with the work you do now? What would be your first close-up approach to feminism perhaps?

DMT: Look, I think that... not to put it with feminism but with the feminists, right? I think that my first contact was Simone de Beauvoir. Through reading, I understood that the world has an order, that these inequalities, this thing that I had been living, that I didn't understand why it was happening to me, I understood it through reading. I think that another important moment for me was when I was in San Marcos and there was a feminist too, let's say from another generation who was studying literature and we went to consult with her because we had to run for election in San Marcos and we had thought that we had to make a more progressive list that had more interests in literature. It was a time when the politicization of the left was very high and let's say there was little interest in what was happening in daily life in the school of literature and we thought that something had to be done, let's say more pragmatically, in what was happening to us and with us. And so we

¹¹ The Workers' Revolutionary Party of Peru (PRT Party) was founded in 1978 and follows the political ideology of Trotskyism. ("Workers' Revolutionary Party (Peru)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workers%27_Revolutionary_Party_\(Peru\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workers%27_Revolutionary_Party_(Peru)). Accessed 11 July 2021.)

went to talk to Roxana Carrillo and she said,¹² "But why are you coming to us?" she said, "you have - you are the delegate of the night, how many students are there?" "forty," "and Dalmacia Ruiz Rosas "how many are there in the morning?" "forty," "you have eighty votes, with eighty votes you win."¹³ You don't need anyone, present yourselves with a list of women and you win," she said, "because there are 160 who are going to vote here and not all of them are going to come and vote because they are not interested in the student elections, but you have eighty votes and we in the higher years will be twenty, there you have a hundred votes." And I told her, "But we just got in, we're just in the second semester", "No, it doesn't matter." And also that thing about being a young person, to have someone older tell you that it doesn't matter, that you can do it, and then that was also a lesson because we finally ran and got elected. I came out as the General Secretary of the San Marcos Literature Student Center, which at that time was difficult and there were few women in the centers. My friend, this very important poet Dalmacia Ruiz Rosas was the organizational secretary. So we did the management, let's say it was new, it was different, maybe now when I see it over the years, maybe it didn't have the feminist content that I would have thought, but I think it had the fundamental changes that occurred later in the school because we, for example, opened the first workshop of oral literature. Hey, there are many courses, today oral literature is already spoken about in Peru. We opened the first course in oral literature. Then we did the first workshops in publishing, then we brought a philosophy professor to give us a seminar on Gramsci, Gramsci was not very well known in San Marcos in those years.¹⁴ No, he was the one who finally supported the pioneering women like Ester Castañeda, who was the only one who worked with the women of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ Perhaps that is the only feminist thing we can rescue but, I mean, let's say that we did have, when we were young, the possibility of contributing, let's say, to a sense of democracy that was being lost in the university. But the encounter, I think, with Roxana Carrillo who encouraged us to run and win was important for me, right? She kind of gave us, trusted us and I think that's what women always need, a push, that someone has confidence in what they can do especially when people are young.

KBM: And what was your first close-up approach or your first encounter with Floras?¹⁶

¹² Roxana Carrillo is a Peruvian feminist activist and a founder of the Flora Tristán Center for Peruvian Women. Carrillo worked for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) researching gender violence for many years. She concluded that economic instability causes many types of violence against women. ("Roxanna Carrillo." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roxanna_Carrillo. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹³ Dalmacia Ruiz Rosas is a Peruvian poet and photographer. She was a member of La Sagrada Familia and the Zero Hour Movement, Peruvian poetic groups. ("Dalmacia Ruiz-Rosas Sahomod." Wikipedia. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalmacia_Ruiz-Rosas_Sahomod. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹⁴ Antonio Gramsci was an Italian philosopher, politician, and writer. Gramsci was a founder and leader of the Communist Party of Italy. ("Antonio Gramsci." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Gramsci. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹⁵ Ester Castañeda was a Peruvian writer, poet, professor, and activist. She collaborated with the Diana Miloslavich and others at the Flora Tristán Women's Center in the 1980s. ("Esther Castañeda." Wikipedia. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esther_Casta%C3%B1eda. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹⁶ The Flora Tristán Center for Peruvian Women is a non-governmental organization that works to strengthen Peruvian women's political and citizenship rights. The organization also educates the public on women's issues and ensures that national development policies empower women. ("Misión y Visión." Flora Tristán.

DMT: I was a militant of a political party, working in San Juan de Lurigancho.¹⁷ We all worked in some district. For me that was fundamental, above all to be close to the lives of the women in San Juan de Lurigancho, I was closer to the human rights groups. At that time there was a coup in Bolivia and many Bolivians, men and women in exile, arrived in Peru. And since I was on the human rights committee, that was my job, to help all these exiles who were going through the disarmament process, they were unionists, not only did they include people from the academy or universities, but also workers and miners. Some stayed, others were on their way to Ecuador. It was a difficult moment for Bolivia. So I was gradually getting closer with this women's commission that we had. And then, let's say, when the coordinator of feminist organizations and the parties was created, that was important because that's when I first met the women from ALIMUPER, the group of Flora that had just been formed, and this was the group of Women and Society.¹⁸ That is, all these groups in those years, of women in struggle, all these groups were formed in the eighties, right, the seventies, eighties. We're talking about 1979, 1980. At that time there was a coordinator of feminist organizations and political parties. Perhaps this has not been repeated, it has not been repeated as in those years. There have been some subsequent attempts but that was very important. So there and then we had the unions at that time from Lucy Cornell, why were they very important? Because there was a blow to the textile industry and Lucy Cornell had two factories that had women as a majority of the staff and the union. And the union coordinated with the feminists of the organizations of that time and also with those of the parties. And then suddenly we saw each other, as we do now in this generation that is very supportive of the union of cleaning workers, or domestic workers. At that time the pioneers of the struggles in Lima was Lucy Cornell's union, and all the feminists lived there in the union supporting them in every way we could. Some of us from the political parties and others, who were going like they are now, supported them because the factory closed for many months.

KBM: That was your first meeting with the Floras, in this context of ...?

DMT: Of course, it was in that context that I met them, but let's say when in '81, let's say I went to Mexico for a feminist meeting. Then, I was in a political party, right? The parties are always like vertical media and even though we had a woman in charge of the women's commission, it was Ana Vazquez who has also been a tireless fighter, more now dedicated to the defense of children's rights in an organization like CESIP.¹⁹ Ana was responsible for

http://www.flora.org.pe/web2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=198&Itemid=27. Accessed 11 May 2021.)

¹⁷ San Juan de Lurigancho is the most populous district in Lima, Peru. ("San Juan de Lurigancho." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Juan_de_Lurigancho. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹⁸ Accion para la Liberacion de la Mujer Peruana (ALIMUPER) is a national women's organization in Peru. The group advocates for accessible contraception, women in labor unions, and more. ("Accion para la Liberacion de la Mujer Peruana ALIMUPER." Wiser Directory. <https://wiser.directory/organization/accion-para-la-liberacion-de-la-mujer-peruana-alimuper/>. Accessed 11 July 2021.)

¹⁹ Centro de Estudios Sociales y Publicaciones (CESIP) is an NGO that works for the maintenance and advancement of child rights and gender equality via a variety of social issues, including child labor and reproductive health. ("Center for Social Studies and Publications." Child Rights International Network.

the women's commission, but the party, the male leaders decided that there was a ticket to go to Mexico to an event, that Delia Zamudio had to go because this Afro-Peruvian woman was this,²⁰ she was Afro-Peruvian, she was also a unionist, later she was the first woman to be in it, she was secretary of Schering, it was a very important union and it was a medical products company, a German industry, Schering.²¹ She was the general secretary of the union and then she became a member of the federation and the general committee of the CGTP, the first woman to join.²² She was also a leader in her neighborhood, in her territory, in San Juan de Lurigancho. So the party thought that she was more representative than Ana, that she was someone from the middle class, that she had a very interesting job, with women, but well, she came to study sociology, she was a sociologist, and she decided to use her own money to go to the meeting. That day I met her, she was quite angry and told me that if she got the money, she had been told she could go to Mexico. Ah, I told her, "what if I get it too?" "They say it's open, the difference is that there is a ticket." I said, "I'll get it," so I managed to pay for a ticket [laughs] with my sister's card and I left, and I stayed in Mexico for several years. Ana Vazquez returned, Delia Zamudio also went to this meeting. It was very interesting because I met an extraordinary French woman named Jacqueline Heinen there who was an important feminist at that time and it was like the first time she came to Latin America and was going to be in Mexico, right?²³ And well, I say that sometimes some of my friends (inaudible) generation, let's say they have been surprised by that. I developed my feminism more in Mexico, I had a history here with them in the labor movement, but in Mexico I arrived at a moment in Mexico that is very illustrated by Carlos Monsiváis.²⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, this great writer, described it as the revolution in Mexico, of the feminist, of the LGTBIQ community. I arrived in Mexico in a moment, and that is why I stayed almost five years. I could not believe it, let's say that there was such a large feminist movement, so open, with so many organizations in all sectors, a cultural movement (inaudible). A movement for solidarity with El Salvador, with Guatemala. I stayed in Mexico, and I think that there I made a different path with the Mexican feminists who came from other experiences. When I returned to Peru in 1985, let's say initially I thought I was going to return to work for a human rights organization like PRODE. Javier Diez Canseco

<https://archive.crin.org/es/biblioteca/organizaciones/centro-de-estudios-sociales-y-publicaciones.html>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²⁰ Delia Zamudio, born in 1943, is an Afro-Peruvian activist leading trade unionism and Afro-Peruvian women's rights work in Peru. She led the General Confederation of Workers of Peru, a national trade union center. ("Delia Zamudio." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delia_Zamudio. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²¹ Schering AG is a German pharmaceutical company focused on research. In 2006 it was bought by the multinational pharmaceutical company Bayer. ("Schering AG." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schering_AG. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²² The General Confederation of Workers of Peru (CGTP) is a national worker's union in Peru. ("Mission and Vision." General Confederation of Workers of Peru. <http://www.cgtp.org.pe/mision/>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²³ Jacqueline Heinen is a French sociologist who has contributed to gender work with the UN Research Institute for Social Development's project on Gender Justice, Development, and Rights. ("Jacqueline Heinen." [https://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/people.nsf/\(httpPeople\)/3D3886F3B016A06BC1256B9E00571D3D?OpenDocument](https://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/people.nsf/(httpPeople)/3D3886F3B016A06BC1256B9E00571D3D?OpenDocument). Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²⁴ Carlos Monsiváis (1938-2010) was an activist and writer from Mexico who studied and wrote about Mexican politics as a left-leaning critic. ("Carlos Monsiváis." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_Monsiváis. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

with whom I had worked at the constituent assembly quite a bit and I had gotten to know him.²⁵ In those years he had told my mom when was I going to return to work on the human rights project. So I thought that I was returning to a human rights project with Javier Diez Canseco and I ended up in Flora Tristan because those years changed me and I returned much more committed let's say, and with much more reading. Even in Mexico there were, when you live the experiences you don't realize that they are so historical. When the cloister of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was opened in Mexico I went, and then when I read the books that the opening of the cloister of Sor Juana those conferences marked a moment of feminism in Mexico, I say "it can't be, I was there". I was, let's say, when the first Frida Kahlo exhibition was held, and this one was also held with an important photographer, whose name I will recall later.²⁶ But when I talk about the exhibition of Frida Kahlo, which I also lived three blocks from her house, I was fascinated by the exhibit and it seemed like I was in front of a totally different painting than the one we had seen before, but I never imagined, that must have been in '82 or '83, that Frida Kahlo would end up being such an important icon of the 20th century, right? The effort to make Frida Kahlo known was the effort of the Mexican feminists, then others came along and today let's say that she is so sought after but let's say that having been part of that history that made Frida Kahlo, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and Rosario Castellanos be known and at the same time let's say, coming from literature it was also a central change.²⁷ And it also helped me because there is something that I always tell them in Peru. Peru is an endogamous country, very closed within itself. So there is not a very Latin American view, there is not a very global view. Having been away for so many years and having discovered, as a stopover from Mexico, I could see the world, at least the world of Central America which I did not know, El Salvador, Guatemala, Argentina, the Argentinean exiles, the Chilean exiles who also arrived at that time, this one, the proximity to the United States, right? It was to discover another world, so I loved all the black women of jazz, but I met them in Mexico, right? It was a culture, in those years, very close to the culture, to these sectors of the North American culture as well. So yes, I think these very strong Mexican figures were very important. And a figure that I cared for and still care for, even though they have tried to hide it is that of Elena Garro's,²⁸ more important than Octavio Paz.²⁹ I mean, a woman can make mistakes in politics, but let's say *Memorias de Porvenir*, her novel, is one of the great novels of Latin America that I recommend. A reading of... all the readings of Elena Poniatowska and I believe that Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz continues to be a pioneer of

²⁵ Javier Diez Canseco (1948-2013) was a Peruvian Congress member and was founder and president of the Socialist Party of Peru. ("Javier Diez Canseco." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Javier_Diez_Canseco. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²⁶ Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) was a painter from Mexico famous for her self-portrait work. She was also a member of the Mexican Communist Party. ("Frida Kahlo." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frida_Kahlo. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²⁷ Rosario Castellanos (1925- 1947) was an author and poet from Mexico who wrote about issues of gender. She influenced feminist work and theory in Mexico. ("Rosario Castellanos." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosario_Castellanos. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²⁸ Elena Garro (1916-1998) was a writer from Mexico who produced screenplays, novels, and other works of journalism. She is known for her contributions to the Magical Realism literary movement. ("Elena Garro." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elena_Garro. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

²⁹ Octavio Paz (1914-1998) was a diplomat and poet from Mexico who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982. ("Octavio Paz." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavio_Paz. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

feminism in Latin America.³⁰ I'm not saying that we don't have figures as important as this Mayra Portal in poetry, or all this discovery of writers from the 19th century, or let's say a Laura Riesco,³¹ or even Clorinda Matto de Turner, but for some reason, I think we can say that fortunately I had the Mexican women, right? and they were feminists.³²

KBM: I see that you have also always been working in these circles in some progressive way, I don't know, the left, human rights, and then Flora, your work with Flora and with the feminist organizations, but have you felt in some way prejudice or discrimination in some of these spaces because you are a woman?

DMT: Look, let's say that when you are young and [*pause*] you have your life in front of you, I have said it many times. I have good memories of my political militancy, you don't know how much I appreciate them, you don't know the opportunity it gave me in Lima. I was, we were coming, my father is not from here, my father is Croatian, we had no family on my father's side. I had an aunt who lived in Puente Piedra and who we visited from time to time.³³ She finally managed to put up a small farm in Puente Piedra, and those were the big family visits we made with my father. I didn't understand anything because they spoke Croatian, but I liked to go from time to time to (connectivity issues) and visit that aunt. But we didn't have any other relatives. The other lines of my relatives were my mother's relatives, my mother's family. But my mother had been an advanced woman, I am part of the second marriage in a country where divorce was frowned upon, right, and so we didn't have much closeness, we were never very close with my mother's family except for an uncle. So let's say that it was a small family world and then we were migrants coming from Huancayo,³⁴ Huacho,³⁵ Chimbote and we arrived in Lima, and then let's say our world was small.³⁶ However, for me the political party gave me another world, no, I was fascinated to study in San Marcos, to have as a friend the son of who had been the Minister of Education, Marco Cueto, who is one of the most important medical historians of my generation in our

³⁰ Elena Poniatowska, born in 1932, is a Mexican journalist born in France. She largely writes about politics and social issues. ("Elena Poniatowska." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elena_Poniatowska. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³¹ Laura Riesco, born in 1940, is a novelist who was born in Peru and now lives in the United States. ("Riesco, Laura." Encyclopedia. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/riesco-laura-1940>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³² Clorinda Matto de Turner (1852-1909) was a writer in Peru at the beginning of the independence of Latin America from Spanish rule. ("Clorinda Matto de Turner." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clorinda_Matto_de_Turner. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³³ Puente Piedra is a district in Lima, Peru. ("Puente Piedra District." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puente_Piedra_District. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³⁴ Huancayo is a highlands city in the center of Peru and is the capital of Huancayo Province. ("Huancayo." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huancayo>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³⁵ Huacho is a city on the west coast of Peru and is the Lima Region's capital. ("Huacho." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huacho>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³⁶ Chimbote is a city on the west coast of Peru in the Ancash Region. ("Chimbote." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chimbote>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

country.³⁷ Or being friends with Antonio Zapata,³⁸ another superior historian, and being friends with José de San Juan de Lurigancho who was the highest leader in zone 8 of Canto Chico, or of these women who were leaders of the central highway of Comas,³⁹ having known, for example, Blanca Medina as a child, right? I mean they are relationships and friendships that I still have today. I say that moment allowed me social mobility that I would never have had, that was given to me by the left. I mean, how could I be friends with the son of a former minister of education or the former police chief, right? and also be the daughter of the most important leader of Comas, or daughter, what do I know, of such a poor family from Chorrillos, right?⁴⁰ Who was interested in politics, in the union, in civil construction. I live in gratitude for those years, which allowed me to be Peru.

KBM: Did you not experience discrimination in, say, that space in the left?

DMT: Yes, yes, more than discrimination I experienced fear, fear in what sense? It wouldn't make a difference to them that we were women, and we would get back from meetings really late at night. I would arrive at the Plaza Parque Universitario in the last car that came from San Juan de Lurigancho and sometimes I didn't have a chance to find the last bus that took me home. At that time I lived in great fear that something would happen to me when I walked around Lima in this political work. I met few people who were empathetic to this situation women were experiencing. For example, I always say I am a friend, I still have some friends like that historian I mentioned because he was one of the few who, when we left a meeting in Lima, asked you, "Do you have a way to get home?" To see if they would drive you, and that was also what Javier Diez Canseco did. There were others who didn't care, someone could rape me on the way back, I lived in fear that something would happen to me but they didn't care about the differences, they didn't look after us. So I think that more than discrimination, I felt that except for some of my friends, they didn't care for us, they treated us as if we were men just like them.

KBM: And speaking of your work at Flora, what are the most important issues that you have worked on there?

DMT: Well, I think that the work with local governments, right, and I also want to explain it, I have always worked, I always liked working in Congress, and I had been in the Constituent Assembly, which was so important, Congress for me was like, the building, all this was something known to me then. As a young girl I had already begun to see how the commissions worked, let's say, the things that were done, so I always was interested in

³⁷ Marco Cueto is a medical historian who studied in Peru and the US. He currently teaches at a university in Brazil. ("Marcos Cueto." PPGHCS. <http://www.ppghcs.coc.fiocruz.br/index.php/en/faculty/131-english-version/faculty/211-marcos-cueto>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³⁸ Antonio Zapata, born in 1951, is a historian, writer, and academic from Peru. ("Gastón Antonio Zapata Velasco." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gastón_Antonio_Zapata_Velasco. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

³⁹ Comas is a district in Lima, Peru. ("Comas District, Lima." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comas_District,_Lima. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴⁰ Chorrillos is a district in Lima, Peru. ("Chorrillos District." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chorrillos_District. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

Congress, but there came a time when it was very difficult to work in the era of Fujimorism.⁴¹ And it seemed to me that let's say we had to go somewhere else, so one day in Flora I said, "well I'm going to go work with the local governments," right? They told me, "but where, how?" "I don't know, but I don't think we can continue in Congress in these conditions" because I didn't feel comfortable with a Congress with the Fujimoristas there. And then with the support of the Swedish cooperation that I love so much, I said to Diaconia, "I am going to make a contest". So we made a contest at a national level where we were going to give funds to the councilwomen who wanted to work on three issues. One was domestic violence, the other was the environment and the other was about health. And then in this first call, we made a very nice group, with a winner in a councilor of Itácula who worked with the neighborhood councils on the issue of violence, another councilwoman in Ayacucho who worked with women on deforestation and who only needed a little more money for training women.⁴² I also worked with the municipality of Huaral with a group that also talks about violence.⁴³ And then we won there too, a group won a contest to make a cultural event about sexual and reproductive rights, we didn't even call it that, which was a parade in Concepción, I found it very interesting to make a parade about women's sexual rights.⁴⁴ So as a result of this contest, we had the opportunity to work with local governments, and I value that time in my life a lot. I went all over Peru, at the beginning, the contests were at the national level. Then Diaconia focused them in relation to the most affected populations, detected by the Truth Commission.⁴⁵ It was with great sorrow that I left San Martín crying.⁴⁶ I had to leave for Ayacucho in tears. I didn't want to go to Ayacucho because there were too many organizations working in Ayacucho, right? And I arrived in Ayacucho Huamán and I said, "No, there are too many NGOs here."⁴⁷ And I went south, I went to Puquio⁴⁸ with Sandra Rojas Sandoval who was a young councilwoman. Now she works with us at Flora Tristan. And she told me, "go south, there's no one in the south, no one supports them," and I went south. And so I discovered areas of Ayacucho, of

⁴¹ Alberto Fujimori is a former Peruvian president who served in the role from 1990 to 2000. His government is celebrated for ending the Shining Path conflict and improving the national economy. Since 2005 though, Fujimori has been tried and convicted on multiple cases of human rights violations that took place during his presidency. ("Alberto Fujimori." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto_Fujimori. Accessed 6 June 2021.)

⁴² Ayacucho is the capital city of Ayacucho Region in south-west Peru. ("Ayacucho." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_of_Ayacucho. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴³ Huaral is a municipality on the west coast of Peru. ("Huaral." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huaral_Province. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴⁴ Concepción is a district in the Ayacucho Region in south-west Peru. ("Concepción District, Vilcas Huamán." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concepción_District,_Vilcas_Huamán. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴⁵ The Truth Commission, also known as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, ran from 2001-2003 and investigated human rights violations during civil conflict in Peru in the 1980s and 1990s. ("Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Peru)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Truth_and_Reconciliation_Commission_\(Peru\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Truth_and_Reconciliation_Commission_(Peru)). Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴⁶ San Martín is a region in the northwest of Peru, located in the Amazon rainforest. ("San Martín." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_of_San_Mart%C3%ADn. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴⁷ Vilcas Huamán is a province in Peru's Ayacucho Region. ("Vilcas Huamán Province." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vilcas_Huamán_Province. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁴⁸ Puquio is a town in the south-west of Peru in the Ayacucho Region. ("Puquio." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puquio>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

Huancavelica,⁴⁹ of San Martin. You don't know, I also experienced it as an opportunity to get to know not only the women, the wonderful things they did with little money, but also to get to know Peru. Because it is different to go one day as a tourist or on vacation and then stay for a year, months in places like this working with the authorities, with the people of the Vaso de Leche,⁵⁰ the dining rooms, the FEDEMA what there was at that time, so I appreciate very much (sic), I have wonderful things in my life with the Puneñas for example.⁵¹

KBM: And if you had to mention two important projects that you remember that seem very relevant that you have worked on during this time in Flora, what would they be?

DMT: With the local governments?

KBM: In general.

DMT: [Pause] Well, I really liked working with local governments, but later I realized that the demand was very high and then this was where we began to promote the associations of women councilors and mayors, which later, years later, ended up in what is today the National Network of Women's Authorities, because we have elected almost 2,000 or 1,700 provincial and district councilors.⁵² So we do not have as many possibilities to support them, we thought that by associating them we could exchange something between them. This ended up in what is today RENAM, the group of women mayors for the bicentennial. That is to say, never (inaudible) of them. What do I remember? There are two things that marked me a lot. When it was the first anniversary of the Truth Commission report I was in Sucre,⁵³ I had come to Huamanga.⁵⁴ There was a councilwoman from Sucre who had invited me many times, and I went to Sucre to do a workshop on violence. A workshop that was for 25 people, and I ended up with 150. It was amazing! That really marked me because we started the workshop and suddenly the women who worked in the medical post came. They would come up and say "we just found out that Flora Tristan is doing a workshop and we want to come". "Ah well, come in". Well, with this "come in", when we finished, the whole town was in the municipal hall. I was very surprised and said "what has happened",

⁴⁹ Huancavelica is a city in Quechua region in Peru. ("Huancavelica." Wikipedia. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵⁰ Vaso de Leche is a governmental food assistance program in Peru. It provides daily food portions to vulnerable members of the population. ("Registration open for the Glass of Milk Program." Provincial Municipality of Satipo. <https://www.gob.pe/institucion/munijatipo/campañas/4043-inscripciones-abiertas-para-el-programa-vaso-de-leche>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵¹ Puneñas means of the city or region of Puno, Peru. ("puneña." Word Meaning. <https://www.wordmeaning.org/spanish/puneña.htm>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵² National Network of Women's Authorities, or National Network of Women in Public Office (RENAM), is a network that provides resources and training to support women in politics. ("Women's Economic Participation in Peru." Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. <https://www.nathaninc.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/US-ATAARI-Peru-Gender-Assessment-final.pdf>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵³ Sucre is a province in Ayacucho Region in the south-west of Peru. ("Sucre Province." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sucre_Province. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵⁴ Huamanga is a province in Ayacucho Region in the south-west of Peru, located to the west of Sucre Province. ("Huamanga Province." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huamanga_Province. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

and what the mayor told me was that no one had gone to Sucre in many years, that no one had remembered them. But I gave them a workshop in something simple about violence against women, not that we came to give a lecture or anything, but no one in town wanted to miss the workshop, I was there.. It taught me a lot of things because at the beginning I had been a bit embarrassed because in Huamanga they were preparing many things, I think it was the second anniversary of the Truth Commission report and I was going to miss it, and then being in Sucre, I started to tell them what the report was and many people did not know what the report was. That's when I realized that. So I, who was not an expert on the report, tried to tell them why there was a report and why it was important. We were in the middle of, Sucre is two and a half hours from Marca.⁵⁵ I think that for me, that was the most important workshop of my life.

KBM: And what projects are you currently working on?

DMT: Well now perhaps another project that I also liked very much was one that we did several years ago with OXFAM.⁵⁶ That was about the migration of Peruvian, Ecuadorian, Colombian and Bolivian women to Spain. It was a innovative project. We did the campaign that was called "*Women Migrate With Their Rights*", because that happens even today, a Venezuelan woman who is going to Peru believes that she has lost her rights, she believes that when she crosses the border she loses her rights. So we did a campaign about when you migrate, you migrate with your rights, that is, you don't lose them, you never lose them. But this was like for the Latin Americans who were in Spain. In those years, because for me that also marked me a lot because in Central America the contribution of migrant women or migration in general to their families had been measured, right? We knew what they represented, what migrants from the United States sent to El Salvador, Guatemala, and even Mexico. And then we said, the same thing happens in Peru and they didn't listen to us. We made the first measurement, today it is measured by the INEI but it was a pioneering project, we said that women were more in charge than men and they laughed at us here.⁵⁷ Everything we have done, the Peruvian State, other sectors including the left have always laughed at us. And when I told them, but what comes in from the remittances is more about the women. "Oh, the feminist is saying stupidity again," that's how they treated us. And what we demonstrated is that the women's remittances were more systematic. These care chains that are now being studied are very fashionable, but I am talking about at least eight years ago, ten years ago, because we have almost three million abroad. In other words, there was a large migration of Peruvians abroad. That project was very beautiful. Another thing that vindicated me with life was when this project had a part in Spain, when later I discovered that all these leaders, men and women, who at some point left Peru continued,

⁵⁵ Marca is a district in Ancash region on the west coast of Peru. ("Marca District." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marca_District. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵⁶ Oxfam is an international organization that aims to eradicate poverty by addressing the systems that keep people in poverty. Oxfam works with organizations around the world to fund and support their missions. ("About Oxfam." Oxfam. <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/about/>. Accessed 19 May 2021.)

⁵⁷ Peru's National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) is a government organization that organizes and calculates a variety of national statistics. ("Instituto Nacional de Estadística de Informática." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instituto_Nacional_de_Estad%C3%ADstica_e_Inform%C3%A1tica. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

making a citizen life, I will not say political, I will say citizen life for example in Spain. The leaders of FEPOMUVES⁵⁸ who went to Spain after the murder of Maria Elena Moyano⁵⁹ at that time were the main leaders of the Peruvian migrant population in Spain. And then people I met in San Marcos, in all these mobilizations in the United States, the Peruvian leaders were part of the people I had met in the university, so this thing about people being aware of their rights, whether they are feminists or socialists, never lose them. And that people when they have this let's say this willingness to be leading leaders never lose it either. It could be that at some point they don't want to do it but many Peruvians ended up, especially leaders, in the migrant movement. We also held an event in Ecuador and they came to Ecuador, and many of the women who came were leaders that we had met from the Vaso de Leche, from soup kitchens, from FEPOMUVES who had been in the leftist organizations in Peru. So that is another project, I loved the topic of migration, it was a few years.

KBM: And now, speaking of the present projects, what are you working on now?

DMT: Well look, a few years ago we did a consultancy with Alejandra Massolo, who is a feminist from Argentina, although she did her career almost entirely in Mexico.⁶⁰ She is a supporter of local and regional issues, right? She evaluated the work that Flora had done, which was fundamentally the work that I had been doing since my program. She did an evaluation with Diaconia. To see what Flora has done in ten years with the funds. So when she got the results, I thought that the route she was going to take was that we had to get more involved in local management, right, that we had been in the process of decentralization. The little that there is in the decentralization regulations on equal opportunities are things that we put in place. In the design, we wanted the women's management and our left-wing friends didn't want it, they wanted social development management. There are very few feminists involved in the process of decentralization, that is also true, and I was one of the few. At that time, there was no group that could fight any more to create the Women's Management that now exists in several regions. It's not that we didn't know that women's management had to be done. What she says in the evaluation is that all this was thanks to the quotas and that the impact of what we were doing was that women had come to local governments because of the quotas. And that was indeed the case, and that this had to be guaranteed because it was not that they were conquered rights and that what she recommended was to follow the line of political participation. And I was a little surprised, I was rather going for the topic more of the gender agenda of local

⁵⁸ The Popular Federation of Women of Villa El Salvador (FEPOMUVES) was a grassroots organization in Peru that worked to uplift local women through community organization and resources for food sharing, childcare, and income support. ("Maria Elena Moyano Requiem for a Feminist Activist." Feminist Archives. <http://feministarchives.isiswomen.org/17-feminist-archives/women-in-action/women-in-action-1992-1/194-maria-elena-moyano-requiem-for-a-feminist-activist>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁵⁹ Maria Elena Moyano was an Afro-Peruvian feminist activist who work in Villa El Salvador, Peru to create soup kitchens and centers for mother, among other projects. She was also co-founder of the Population Federation of Women of Villa El Salvador. In 1992, Moyano was assassinated by the Shining Path, a terrorist group in Peru. Her murder, along with the arrest of the the Shining Path, Abimael Guzmán, led to a decrease in support for the Shining Path. ("Maria Elena Moyano." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar%C3%ADa_Elena_Moyano. Accessed 14 May 2021.)

governments (inaudible) the architecture of gender in the national, local state, all this discourse this rhetoric on the construction of the architecture of gender in the structures of the State. And Alejandra changes me, you know? the route and convinces me that no, that we had to go with the issue of political participation. And from there in a route, I say no, it is not the participation, it is the political rights of the women let's say that we are in a new generation. We are not in the generation of sexual and reproductive rights, of the rights of a free society without violence, but we are in the generation of political rights and that is what we have to continue. So that's where we found that it wasn't quotas but parity. And it has also been very interesting to debate, we have debated in the OAS, some of the things that I love to say that we have been pioneers even before UN Women, before the OAS.⁶¹ It is impressive almost the pioneering issues that we have done in Peru, for example in local governments, for example these contests, how they were done, then UN Women does them. And one thing we also have is that the United Nations recognizes little of what it has taken by civil society and especially the feminists. It seems to me that it is not enough for someone to suddenly say, oh, the lady from the UNDP, from UN women says that they are grateful to the feminists.⁶² No, not only do they have to thank us for the normative issue, we have been, let's say, they have followed paths that we started with greater resources than we did. And that is never clear, and I hope that it remains in this video, that I do complain to UN Women, to UNIFEM,⁶³ to the Population Fund that they have been quite petty to feminist groups, not only in Peru.⁶⁴ Because we have been, for example, the legislation on political harassment, the pioneers are the Bolivians, Ecuadorians, and us. When we went to the OAS for the first working group on political harassment, we had to convince them, the whole sector of feminist lawyers, that political harassment was a new form of violence that affected women's political rights. After that debate, that discussion, that we all already had bills, they brought out their model law, but they never recognized that there was already previous work by feminists in Latin America. And that has been the case a lot, it is not only that we have been made invisible from many of the stories but also from many of the initiatives and creativity of civil society and the movement, not only in Peru, but in the whole region. And then, well, the political harassment in this route of working with authorities, this closeness with the authorities, also made us listen to them. We ended up by saying that a central theme was how we had parity democracy as a horizon and how our political rights were central and that we had to begin political reform and electoral reform in Peru and get out of the box in which there were placed in, again, by several of our friends

⁶¹ The Organization of American States (OAS) was started in 1889 and is an assembly of representatives from states on the American continent with the mission of ensuring peace, democracy, and the upholding of human rights among its members. ("Our Purpose." OAS. <http://www.oas.org/en/about/purpose.asp>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁶² The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a UN organization dedicated to supporting countries around the world in their sustainable development. ("FAQ." UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/about-us/faqs>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁶³ The UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) is a UN organization providing funds and support to programs and initiatives with the goal of gender equality. ("UN Development Fund for Women." Refworld. <https://www.refworld.org/publisher,UNIFEM,,SYR,,0.html>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁶⁴ The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) fights against gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, and the practice of child marriage. The organization funds access to contraceptives and healthcare for pregnant people globally. ("About us." United Nations Population Fund. <https://www.unfpa.org/about-us>. Accessed 23 May 2021.)

who said "those are the feminists, they only defend their quotas and their alternation." They forced us to make a common proposal for an electoral reform. Today we have ended up with political reform, by not only putting parity and alternation on the agenda as we had been doing for several years but also in the area of financing in the elections. We have also placed proposals that are not even debated because the national jury of elections for the electoral process creates special juries that supervise the electoral process and these do not have parity, nor do they have representation of women. We have also brought all of this up, but as we say we are going in parts, now we only need to achieve horizontal parity for women mayors, now we are fighting for the constitutional court to be inclusive and to at least guarantee women in the election. But we ended up looking at a central issue which was not only women's political participation but also the political system and democracy. Then we understood that it was not only that we were going to fight to recover democracy as we did in the 90's because we recovered it and then where we were left?, but also how we fought, because we fought for democracy, but those who stayed in government, in all spaces, were not us. Others remained, not the feminists, so we had to flesh out better what we were talking about when we said radical democracy or parity democracy. How could we go deeper if we had a more novel proposal? I believe that this is the most important and time-consuming thing that we have had in Peru in recent years. I am infinitely grateful not only to Diaconia but also to the European Union which had the confidence to give us various funds to build what has been the campaign "We are half, we want parity". We wouldn't have been able to do it without the European Union. They too were convinced that we had something to contribute to the debate on political reform and democracy in Peru. This has been our job for the last seven, eight years.

KBM: As someone who also comes from the academic world, who has written books, who does research and at the same time is part of the social movement, the human rights movement, the feminist movement, how do you perceive this relationship between academic research and feminism [pause] or activism?

DMT: It seems to me that it was losing. Flora, for example, who has been working for twenty years, is pushing for us to create a weekly program of feminist debate. And we pushed a lot for the creation of the first San Marcos diploma in Gender Studies in San Marcos with Maria (inaudible) was many years in Flora Tristan. And then, well, that became independent from Flora, so we promoted a network of professors who were interested in gender and feminist issues in the universities. Then we promoted short courses at the University of San Antonio de Huamanga, at the Universidad del Centro. Several. We have less in Flora today. At one point we had almost all the graduates from the Universidad del Centro in Huancayo because Flora was very close to the graduates of the Universidad del Centro with a group of pioneering professors there. So there were a couple of generations of feminists from various fields, communications, sociology, who were not necessarily in Lima. This was also the case with the diploma course that was taken at the San Antonio Abad in Cusco. It seems to me that until that moment there was a kind of link, but where I felt that there was no link, and let's just say we were establishing a link on the issue of violence, right? It seems to me that there is a moment in which the paths are different, that I do not know what explanations to give them, but it seems to me that what we still need is more research, for example, on issues of history, memory, even literature.

And that has to do with the fact that there are few women in the decision-making spaces of the university system. I used to see them as exceptions, but I think that was the rule. Many people I know have had enormous difficulty with doing their theses on women at San Marcos. There are professors who impose that theses be on male authors. When a student wants to study Adela Montesinos or wants to study a woman, the professors tell them that it is not important.⁶⁵ That it is better to focus on men. So when you are young, you don't have the strength that you have when you are older as to say, "no, I study who I want and I study these women". And the same thing happened in the Catholic Church. I know students who have wanted to study certain subjects and who have been told that it is better not to go for those subjects, that they are not going to succeed, that they are forbidden subjects. We could research how universities have worked against having more research on women in our country, it is enormous. There was never any willingness. My generation is a very macho intellectual sector, they never gave importance to women, never. All the women that one thought were important to them were not. (faulty audio) Magda Portal's recovery is recent, isn't it, it comes more from the Casa de la Literatura, from younger people, the revision of their texts, of their works, San Marcos never gave importance to Magda Portal.⁶⁶ I am a graduate of San Marcos, I have also done a master's degree there and I know what I am talking about. I always love to say that in a course I had on testimony in San Marcos, all the texts were from men. I was already older when I did it, and I didn't read the men then, I would say "professor, put some women on the syllabus. Because since I am like you guys, so you read each other's works, and so I'm following your example and I only read other women's works. Following your example". And the professor said to me, "what important woman is there about testimonies?" And I said, "Professor Elena Poniatowska (faulty audio)". And so I had to place many women from Latin America that I don't know if he didn't know them, probably didn't know them, let's say their illustration didn't cover women. I have known few professors, I went to San Marcos, who were interested in women. Except for the one I mentioned, Ester Castañeda, who was the only one who had read all the novels of the 19th century, the rest of them had not read them, they were not interested in women, they saw us as lesser literature, and women who were consecrated. What I know best is literature and then you can also realize what it has to do with history in a subject that I am passionate about, which is the issue of suffrage and women's political rights. I don't know what to say, shame or embarrassment, but just last year it was published in Zoila Aurora Cáceres' letters, which are fundamental to understanding the women's suffrage movement in the 1930s.⁶⁷ If the letters were always there, why didn't anyone ever publish them? Or letters by Clorinda Matto that have just now just been published.⁶⁸ There was no interest. Perhaps one of the few important things about this

⁶⁵ Adela Montesinos (1910-1976) is a poet from Peru. ("Adela Montesinos." Wikipedia. https://es.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adela_Montesinos. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁶⁶ Magda Portal (1900-1989) was a feminist activist and poet from Peru. She was a founding member of the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, a democratic socialist political party. ("Magda Portal." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magda_Portal. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁶⁷ Zoila Aurora Cáceres (1877-1958) was a Peruvian writer as part of the modernismo literary movement, focused on the language and rhythm of poetry as an art itself. ("Aurora Cáceres." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurora_Cáceres. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁶⁸ Matto was a 19th c. novelist who depicted—among other things—relations between White and Indigenous people.

bicentennial is that it has relocated the female writers of the 19th century to stay, that is to say that I already know (inaudible). let's say against all my generation that didn't make it, I am happy because they are not going to stay in the bicentennial but the women of the 19th century will. Now they have come with force, above all, I believe more from history works than literature ones. I think that more or less the route was always like that. When feminism was marked by sociology, it marked it for a decade, sociology marked Peruvian feminism. But when it is disputed and the hegemony of women in law enters, it is another moment. It is the moment where there are all the great normative changes in our country that are very advanced, it doesn't matter that they were not promulgated but we were pioneers in almost all of them, for about two generations, three generations of first level feminist lawyers. So I think that the generation of writers that there are today, two generations of feminist writers and also historians who are open to feminism are achieving important changes. One would not understand a Karen Poulsen studying the Odría archive, or a Sofia Pachas analyzing the letters of Zoila Aurora Cáceres, for example, if María Emma Mannarelli⁶⁹ or Antonio Zapata were not involved. (inaudible, faulty connection) Today there is an important moment for the history of women, the history of feminism, in addition to the pioneering work of María Emma Mannarelli and Margarita Zegarra⁷⁰ and this girl Claudia Rosas historians.⁷¹ I believe that this is the moment for women historians, and it has just coincided with the bicentennial, which is why this has changed. These specialties have also marked the moments of feminism. Not only in Peru, but in all regions, feminism has marked not only the rhetoric but also the close work with the indigenous peoples. I don't know if it's just one specialty, there are many specialties, but let's say that interest in indigenous women, indigenous peoples, from the perspective of feminism is recent. But (inaudible, faulty connection) very important in the coming years as what we are living from the historians.

KBM: And precisely speaking of feminism, what is your analysis, evaluation, and expectations of the feminist movement in Peru?

DMT: Well, first of all, there is no feminist movement in Peru, no?, and I think that what is good for this generation was good for all of us. I think that is the great lesson because in Peru there are four generations of feminists, right? This is the first time we have lived together with four generations. I am a generation that lived together with another generation, they were like teachers. I at least, lived it that way. I was close to Ana María Portugal, who was also a friend of Adela Montesinos. Otherwise, you can't explain how there can be two Arequipa women at different times.⁷² I do believe that there are

⁶⁹ María Emma Mannarelli is a feminist academic and author from Peru. ("María Emma Mannarelli." Wikipedia. https://es.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/María_Emma_Mannarelli. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁷⁰ Margarita Zegarra is a feminist and member of the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World. ("Margarita Zegarra Florez." OWSD. <https://owsd.net/member/zegarra-florez-margarita-0>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁷¹ Claudia Rosas is a historian and professor at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. ("Claudia Rosas Lauro." Profesores PUCP. <https://www.pucp.edu.pe/profesor/claudia-rosas-lauro/>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁷² Arequipa is the legal capital of Peru. ("Arequipa." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arequipa>. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

continuities. There are factors, how can you understand, I do not understand Ana Maria Portugal without the closeness to Adela Montesinos. Well, I knew Ana Maria Portugal, not Adela Montesinos. I knew Helen Orvig was all one, still alive, they were the eldest. At the end of her life I was close to, very close to, Rosa Dominga Trapasso, I was always distant for reasons that are not worth mentioning.

KBM: What would be your opinion about this coexistence of four generations that you are mentioning?

DMT: Look, in the same way that I felt, let's say, I felt a lot of hardness from Rosa Dominga when I was young. I didn't feel close to her, I recovered her later in the last years. Why? I don't know. However, I did feel a closeness to Ana Maria Portugal. We did a radio program that was the first (sic) program that was called, was this Hugo Salazar gave us in what later was "Sun and Harmony" or "Feminist Space".⁷³ It was once a week, so in the beginning, I had the space to myself and I did interviews. Everything was very improvised, so Ana María decided to join me in the radio program and she did the scripts. I was getting used to working with scripts. She would make the script and she would make them for me on little pieces of paper, what she talked about and what I talked about. She helped me because also one of the things that I have loved most as a feminist has been the radio, I was in "Sun and Harmony" and in "Radio Santa Rosa" and I have always encouraged local radio proposals when working with local governments, that has been a theme with the radio. Then Ana Maria would make the scripts for me, and I would read, but I would improvise, do other things. I always found it interesting. Well, I recognize that she was like my teacher, and I always let myself be a student and I am very grateful to them. And the same goes for Helen Orvig.

KBM: Only for those who don't know, would Helen Orvig, Rosa Dominga and Ana Maria Portugal belong to this previous generation?

DMT: Sure, Ana Maria Portugal is from the group of ALIMUPER that was very important. Helen was, during the velasquismo, she is a widow of one of the Salazar Bondy.⁷⁴ They are... in the group that is the first proposal, at least of those years, that they propose a commission for the woman. There is a proposal for the women in the velasquismo and Helen is in the group. She also had a column in *Expreso* and spoke about feminism once a week, about what was happening in the United States, in France. We don't know how she did it, but we were aware of what was happening in the world of feminism because of Helen Orvig. Afterward, I met them and what I always respected about the three of them, the most well-known ones, was that when we had meetings they would come and be patient. They always had the enormous patience to be in all the meetings of debates, discussions, conferences, and coordination. It seems to me that this was central to that

⁷³ Hugo Salazar is a radio broadcaster, as well as a comedian, actor, and interviewer, from Peru. ("Hugo Salazar." *Doblaje*. https://doblaje.fandom.com/es/wiki/Hugo_Salazar. Accessed 29 August, 2021.)

⁷⁴ Salazar Bondy (1924-1965) was a writer from Peru, who produced plays, essays, poems, and works of journalism. ("Sebastián Salazar Bondy." *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sebastián_Salazar_Bondy. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

generation to which I, well they were the reference, there were no others. Others were not so, they did not come from other stories and they are not the people I found in Flora like Gina Vargas or like Ana Maria Portugal herself who has also been in Flora for several years.⁷⁵ Or like Vicky Guzmán, a Chilean feminist who was also in Flora for several years. So, let's say it was never easy.

KBM: Do you think there is this same relationship between you and the next generation and the next generation?

DMT: No, I think my generation was more open with younger people. I think we gave them more openness and more opportunity. I'm from a generation that was very difficult, let's say living together. I think that no?, at least I hope, at least I try, I have always tried to be as inclusive as possible, right, with younger people, to have opportunities to share what I know with them. It wasn't easy with, I think there were, I think the issue of power and sharing power is always a problem, not only for feminism but, what do I know, for historians, for women historians, for journalists, for visual anthropologists, for politicians. There is an issue with power that so far human beings do not learn to share. That's what we live with and that's what we have to go on with. We have to take a look at it, and in a country, I always say with so few opportunities, and with such difficult lives, because I do, just as I say that the pandemic has had an unequal impact on the poorest people, the life of women, whether you are a feminist or not, it has been hard for all of them.

KBM: And how do you think the feminist movement in Peru is handling those different agendas as well, the intersectionality, how are they handling those different social positions of inequality and oppression?

DMT: Well, let's say up until now, that is, [pause] what there was always in Peru that I didn't see in other parts of Latin America despite differences, which were not programmatic because the differences were never programmatic. In Peru, for example, one programmatic difference was a lot, in many parts of the world, it was the issue of sex workers, the issue of prostitution, seeing it as women in prostitution. In Peru, this has never been the subject of major disputes or confrontations. Here what has been maintained is a coexistence, there are those who think one thing and those who think another. This has been a programmatic issue; there have never been any programmatic differences. With the new generations, we have no programmatic differences. What we have is a lack of trust, right, but it has to do with the fact that the new generations want more visibility and want more protagonism. So in such conservative countries where the public space for women is small and for feminists too, then it is, it has always been very tense to share not only for feminists, but the same thing has happened to the Peruvian left. The public space is very small compared to conservatism, so how do you share it, and how do you also share

⁷⁵ Virginia "Gina" Vargas is a Peruvian sociologist and a leading activist for women's rights in Peru. Vargas founded the Flora Tristán Center, a non-governmental organization that advocates for women's rights in Peru. Vargas has also campaigned for reproductive rights and run educational workshops on women's movement theory and practices. ("Virginia Vargas." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Vargas. Accessed 1 May 2021.)

leadership? I believe that at least in Peru (inaudible) to all the calls from the street. It is not like in Mexico. In Mexico, let's say there have been moments of marching where there have been sectors of young feminists who have gone to take others out of the marches. On the 28th there were two marches, we are never going to do two marches. For me there is going to be one because there are moments when you have to understand that we are diverse expressions, but let's say outward to the world so big a public that does not know what is going on between us, we are never going to end up opening two marches, it will always be one and if there is a bigger problem with coexistence it will be tried to solve in the best way. That is part of the legacy of feminism in Peru [laughter]. In all generations the greatest confrontation is silence. It has never been even the attack with intemperate words. The differences have been handled with silence, people leave, exclude themselves, stop going, return, but there has always been a framework of respect for differences and the differences have never been programmatic. The more public space and more space we have in (inaudible, faulty audio) that also helps us. I always say in territorial matters, we have all of Peru to ourselves. I have always gone to work outside of Lima, in places where there was no one, that's why I was in San Juan de Ayacucho when there was not a single feminist. I was in Concepción when there was nothing.⁷⁶ I've been in the San Martin area when there was no one there either. So why would I be in places where I would be disputing spaces in Huamanga or the very (inaudible) or in Lima, if we have all of Peru and we have to work with so many women who are waiting for our support because they all live in situations of violence, or they all have situations of any inequality. Those of us who are here, are overwhelmed by the number of women who need us, then the territory is very large in Peru. We have to learn to live together and see what we can walk together in common and what we have other styles of work, rather than programmatic they are various forms of expression as well.

KBM: And finally, how have you changed your work as a result of COVID? And earlier you also mentioned that COVID had affected the poorest people but how has it affected women in particular as well?

DMT: Well I think, the confinement has impacted all of us. I live alone and I don't have children, but I still have to work here every day alone, it's different working every day in an office with a team on hand, that you stop and say, ask for such material or have copies made. I have had to survive alone with the same responsibilities. It's different having to be on the phone to get something done or you're missing materials, documents, files, that you've left in your office. I don't think anyone was prepared for teleworking and we had to learn it quickly. Domestic work, even for someone like me, also takes away hours, because I don't have any chance now that someone will come and clean my house, I don't have any chance of something that I had solved in another way. So I have to do this household chore in this way as well. I don't have access to everything I had before the pandemic. My books are missing, I don't have the library at Flora as available to me as I had it, and I don't have all the resources that I had in an office but that's why I'm affected. I've been affected by the work, I've been affected by the death around me. By the deaths of close friends, people not

⁷⁶ San Juan is a district in Ayacucho Region in Peru. ("San Juan District, Lucanas." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Juan_District,_Lucanas. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

so close but valuable to me and without the possibility of saying goodbye to them. That has also been... and then I have also been overwhelmed in weeks living and sharing despair, different sectors looking for oxygen for a union leader in Loreto,⁷⁷ a woman looking for oxygen for her husband in Moquegua.⁷⁸ For me, the feminists who didn't know at the beginning what was going to happen to them, it's not like we sit here and keep working. Every day someone died, today more so in these last days, someone very close to me has just died, a human rights lawyer. I mean, we are in anguish for several months, of not knowing if we were going to get an ICU bed for someone's dad, for that someone, or for the mom, or for the uncle. The anguish of the oxygen, the anxiety of if we could get some doctor who had time to talk and calm down close friends. Those moments have gone down. Or the anguish of people who had no chance to go out and had run out of food. We have done things, we created a group with Carmen, Lizbeth - Liz Melendez, Carmen Espinoza we created a feminist fund. We've helped as much as we could for people who didn't have the means to buy their medicine, people who didn't have anything to eat at the time or people who needed to complete things. They weren't big bonuses, but we did what we could, there was no other way. When they ask me why they did it that way, because when you give a bonus you don't have to ask the person to give you a receipt. Had we done it institutionally, and we would have gotten funds but we would've had to ask people for receipts and we didn't want that. We wanted people to go to the bank and take out some money, which would serve them for what they needed at that time. That's why the bonuses went the other way, but let's also say the desperation of running out of funds (faulty audio). Anyway, the pandemic has also reached us a little bit to be in solidarity with those who needed it at the time, and at the same time also to talk about what was the most, to see what policy we would need post-pandemic, right? All these Zoom groups to define what we were doing, who we were listening to, what we were proposing. And also, in the midst of the pandemic, because that's how it was presented, we fought and presented a new law of parity and alternation. It hasn't been easy, people ask, but how did we do all that at once, because I think that there are also... opportunities that have to be taken. Just as today we have a law for domestic workers, and there was a sector of domestic workers who fought for it, they went to Congress, they got an interview with the President of Congress, they met with all the parties, they raised their voices and they brought out their law. I also have other organized sectors that said no, they were better off presenting their legislative project with the new Congress that was going to last for five years. And we said no, we have a chance here, so we redrafted a proposal in three days and we presented it. We started the new initiative, I always want to clarify that we presented it with the Purple Party⁷⁹ because the proposal of the Frente Amplio did not resolve the horizontal parity to settle the issue of the mayors, the (faulty audio).⁸⁰ That's why there was no other possibility, so we went with

⁷⁷ Loreto is the region in Peru farthest north. ("Department of Loreto." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_of_Loreto. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁷⁸ Moquegua is a Peruvian city located in southern Peru. It has a population of approximately 70,000 residents. ("Moquegua." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moquegua>. Accessed 1 July 2021.)

⁷⁹ The Purple Party is a centrist political party in Peru with liberal and progressive influences. ("Purple Party." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purple_Party. Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁸⁰ The Frente Amplio por Justicia, Vida Y Libertad is a coalition of Peruvian political parties, activist organizations, and individuals. The group was formed to connect left-of-center political and social

Daniel Olivares⁸¹ and Carolina Lizárraga⁸² to present a new initiative on horizontal parity. And finally, what we achieved was horizontal parity for the election of female councilors, which will not be seen in these elections but will be seen in a few years' time. And we continue betting with the little time that we have left and if we wanted to, as well as for all is very important the issue of education, the issue of health, a comprehensive health system for all those who care for women with sexual and reproductive health services that were suspended during the pandemic. To tell you that we have not managed to make care a priority, (faulty audio) people understand the care system as a recognition today that it has become clear, just as they are to the citizens, what women work, the pick and shovel that there was in Lima at a time when women could go out for a few days and men another day. This exposed what we already knew, that it is the women who do the shopping. The men the day it was their turn to go shopping didn't go because they never do. And the treatment of trans people was also on the agenda, it's not common sense to respect the decisions of the trans population. Just as social and economic inequalities have been laid bare, so has the double, triple work for women, but the alternatives have not been clear. There is no clear proposal from the State or from any sector on what a system of care for women in the post-pandemic period would look like as a central issue. I feel very sorry for Peru because Argentina and Costa Rica are ahead of us there.

KBM: Well, there's a lot to discuss, I think this is going to lead to a lot of research and studies with a gender focus on how women have dealt with the worst part of this pandemic in different areas in different professions. We'll end the interview because I think there's also a limited time for Zoom of two hours that Shelly has scheduled and it's probably going to be over soon. I thank you very much Diana for the interesting conversation. I'm sure some things will be edited, such as sounds, but I understand that the interview will be complete and also transcribed on this website. So I'm going to write to you to send you the consent form and also to remind you of the photo and this little biography that can go on the web with the video and the PDF with the whole transcription of the interview. We'll keep in touch and see how we are getting the missing interviews.

movements. ("Broad Front (Peru)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broad_Front_\(Peru\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broad_Front_(Peru)). Accessed 4 June 2021.)

⁸¹ Daniel Olivares, born in 1981, was the Parliamentary Spokesperson of the Purple Party from 19 November 2020-26 July 2021. His term ended with Martín Vizcarra dissolving the Peruvian Congress. ("Daniel Olivares (politician)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Olivares_\(politician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Olivares_(politician)). Accessed 29 August 2021.)

⁸² Carolina Lizárraga, born in 1970, is a Peruvian politician and lawyer, and served as a member of Peruvian Congress from 16 March 2020-26 July 2021 as a member of the Purple Party. ("Carolina Lizárraga." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carolina_Lizárraga . Accessed 29 August 2021.)