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Flora Tristan, Precursor Lecture by Magda Portal

Edited, translated, and prefaced¹ by Kathleen Weaver²

Abstract

A major figure in Latin American struggles for women's rights and social justice, Magda Portal (1900-1989) co-founded the revolutionary nationalist APRA Party of Peru and was the principal women's leader of that party. In her Chilean exile Portal discovered the nineteenth century writer and social reformer, Flora Tristan. In 1944 Portal offered her first lecture on Tristan (1803-1844)—a brilliant diarist and journalist as well as a seminal social theorist, labor organizer, champion of women's rights, and a significant precursor—arguably co-founder—of socialist internationalism. Expanding and revising her initial account, Portal continued into her later years to lecture on Tristan, whom she revered as an exemplary social fighter. The introduction by Weaver, author of *Peruvian Rebel, The World of Magda Portal*, situates the lecture in the context of Portal's own life and her evolving views on the role of women in a developing country, noting parallels between Portal's life and that of Tristan. Portal's admiring narrative starts with Tristan's beginnings as the daughter of an aristocratic Peruvian landowner living in Spain and France, proceeding through the father's death, the family's impoverishment, and Tristan's awakening to the social misery occasioned by rapid industrialization. Portal traces Tristan's journey to Peru to present herself as a hopeful but unrecognized heir to her late father's lands. The publication of Tristan's Peruvian diaries is mentioned: an acerbic critique of a decadent colonial upper class. Portal also treats Tristan's travels in industrial London; her attempts to organize workers throughout the industrial zones of France; her involvement with the Chartists, the Utopians, and the proto-socialist circles that included Marx and Engels; as well as her attempts to escape a homicidal husband when divorce in France was outlawed. Portal's bibliography and notes are supplemented by translator's notes and bibliographical references.

Keywords: Women's struggles, memoir, women writers, nineteenth century, feminism, twentieth century, early feminism, Flora Tristan, Karl Marx Friedrich Engels, French Utopians, Social Utopians, utopianism, Latin American feminism, women's rights, labor organizing, labor history, socialism, socialist internationalism, working-class, Chartist, translation, Latin America, women's vote, Magda Portal, Serafín Delmar, Kathleen Weaver, Peruvian history, Peru

¹ Translation by kind permission of Rocío Revollo, The Estate of Magda Portal.

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Preface

One hundred years after Flora Tristan's death in France in 1844, Magda Portal, then in her Chilean exile, was invited to offer a centenary tribute to Tristan at the first national women's congress of Chile's Socialist Party. Drawing on the limited materials available to her in Spanish, she delivered a tersely admiring account. Her talk appeared as a tiny pamphlet that year in Chile, and the next year in a Peruvian edition (Portal, 1944b; n.d.). This speech commenced her decades-long commitment to popularizing the life and work of Flora Tristan, foundational figure in nineteenth century labor struggles and champion of women's rights.

A great deal of emotion is bound up in Magda Portal's appreciation of the exceptional Frenchwoman who traveled to Peru, and whose life reveals striking parallels to her own. She too experienced the death of her father in early childhood and a harsh reversal of fortune. It elated her to discover Tristan's writings about Peru, and to learn of her bold initiatives in France and England. She believed that women needed Tristan's example. She herself needed it. She was particularly impressed with Tristan's call for industrial workers to unite across national borders, a seminal ideal that anticipated socialist internationalism. Tristan was most drawn to those reformers who eschewed the use of violence to attain their ends, fearing that any such violence would only be turned back in greater force against the workers themselves, ultimately worsening their situation.

Portal sympathized deeply with Tristan's agitated, itinerant and ultimately sacrificial life. She revered Flora Tristan as a figure of the highest stature, existing on an elevated plane among those "few stellar spirits whose names defined epochs."³ It pleased her to claim Tristan as a precursor to their own struggles, and to situate their efforts in a heroic tradition of risk and exertion. By disseminating the legend of Flora Tristan, she was furthering her own social ideals and honoring a forbear whose historical role she thought deserved far greater recognition. Tristan's image might well have appeared in labor halls alongside wall-sized posters of Marx and Engels, but this did not happen. Portal pointedly noted that Tristan's words were adopted by Marx and Engels to provide a resonant close to their *Communist Manifesto*: "Workers of the World, Unite!"⁴ The following overview of Magda Portal's own storied career will make clear, I hope, why it meant so much to her to discover Flora Tristan.

An illustrious figure in Latin American social history, Magda Portal (Peru 1900-1989) was a pioneer in the battle for Latin American women's rights and Pan American social revolution. She was also an acclaimed poet. In a Latin America mired in mass poverty and underdevelopment, she put forward women's concerns in the context of a movement for all-encompassing social reform. Her stature is recognized, especially in Peru, but less so internationally. Her career bears comparison with that of Emma Goldman, Alexandra Kollantai, Rosa Luxemburg, Tina Modotti, not to mention that her efforts compare with those of important male reformers.

The industrial modernization that caused social unrest in nineteenth century Europe only much later disrupted Peru. An influx of foreign capital at the turn of the twentieth century led to a rapid modernization that plunged the country into turmoil—destabilized by the very forces that

³ Compañeros, quiero, en primer lugar," manuscript, The Estate of Magda Portal, Lima.

⁴ This famous phrasing appears in Tristan's *Union Ouvrière*. I've not heard this connection to the *Communist Manifesto* mentioned except by Portal although surely it is noted elsewhere. Many in the overlapping circles of Flora Tristan and Marx and Engels would have known the phrasing from Tristan's writings. The fact that Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) appropriated her words can be seen a tip of their hat to Tristan, an acknowledgment of their indebtedness and, possibly, as a tribute to her life, which ended late in 1844, the very year were writing their manifesto, which appeared in 1845. Also in 1844 they were writing *The Holy Family*, which contained their spirited defense of Flora Tristan. See note 17 in the notes to Portal's lecture below.

shaped Flora Tristan's tumultuous era.

At the time of Magda Portal's birth in 1900, Peru's class structure was hardly different than when Flora Tristan came to Peru in 1833. A hereditary caste of privileged families controlled vast landholdings and wielded political power, while the indigenous majority worked in debt peonage on plantations or subsisted in high Andean villages. By the time Portal began working as a secretary in Lima's new commercial economy, strikes and campesino rebellions were ongoing. The Mexican and Russian Revolutions were current events, and those upheavals inflamed the sensibilities of what became known as a "vanguard generation" in Peru, the legendary generation of the great Marxian labor leader José Carlos Mariátegui, and Peru's great poet, César Vallejo. Portal's political education began in the 1920s as a member of the circle that formed around Mariátegui and his journal of art and social thought, *Amauta*.

As a young woman in Paris in 1830, Flora Tristan witnessed street demonstrations at the time of the restoration of Louis Philippe, known as "the bourgeois king." His regime suppressed industrial workers and favored bankers and industrialists. Tristan's personal difficulties unfolded in an atmosphere of intensifying social strife comparable to what Magda Portal experienced in Peru.

In 1927—to her utter surprise—Portal, age twenty-seven, was expelled from her own country, along with other members of Mariátegui's circle, all accused of communist subversion. In fact, her radical activities were just beginning. With a number of others, she was put aboard a ship headed for Cuba, along with her companion, poet Serafin Delmar. From Cuba the exiled Peruvians traveled to Mexico City. There, Magda and others in her group were recruited into the nascent APRA movement by its charismatic leader, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre. At his behest, she temporarily renounced writing poetry to devote herself entirely to Aprista activism. APRA: *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*. American Popular Revolutionary Alliance. The APRA quickly became important, establishing a presence in Bolivia, Argentina, Cuba, Panama, even in Paris. Pan-American in scope, this movement offered a revolutionary nationalist alternative to the communist parties of Latin America.

In 1930 Peru's strongman Augusto B. Leguía, fell from power, and leftists of all persuasions poured back into the country. The APRA Party of Peru was founded, with Portal in the originating group. An all-out election campaign followed, with unprecedented outreach to the indigenous majority. As head of APRA's Women's Command, Portal traveled throughout Peru, into highland regions, speaking in any number of small venues or in large auditoriums, attempting to recruit women, and men, into the first mass party in Peru's history.

Initially Portal didn't like the idea of women being separate within APRA. She recounted that "the Women's Command was formed and given to me to head, although I never wanted men and women to be separated. I recall saying, 'The Party is one, there ought not to be separations.' But the men didn't understand this."⁵ She soon saw benefits of women having their own organization.

Early in her career Portal defined herself in opposition to the "feminist." The very word suggested to her an individualist attitude imported from the capitalist metropolises. In those days she was quick to condemn Peru's suffragists as privileged women who were ignorant of Peru's gross inequities and with no vision beyond winning the vote (Portal, 1933, p. 5).

This APRA electoral campaign of 1931 unleashed fervent hopes that a revolutionary government would come to power by democratic means, with land reform at the center of their

⁵ Esther Andradi and A. M. Portugal, eds., interviewers, "Yo soy Magda Portal," *Ser mujer en el Perú* (Lima: Tokapu editores, 1979) 215; see also *Peruvian Rebel*, 123-124.

blueprint for a new society. Many on the left at that time feared that women were so much under the clerical thumb that if given the vote they'd elect reactionaries favored by the Catholic Church. Portal drafted a radical Declaration of Women's Rights for the APRA platform but modified her original call for full women's suffrage, persuaded by her male comrades that the women's vote should be restricted to certain categories of women, namely "married women, mothers, teachers, professional women, office workers, factory workers, self-employed, and authors."⁶

But the APRA Party lost this historic election in a hotly contested vote. Bitterly disappointed, some Apristas refused to accept the vote count. A chaotic period of abortive uprisings followed, which led to a despotic leader seizing power and outlawing all leftist parties, causing Portal and many others to become fugitives.

In 1933, with a more liberal government in power, Portal's views on women's emancipation appeared in several key pamphlets in which she delineated an egalitarian vision of "the new woman."⁷ In these writings Portal called for women to become fully active and responsible citizens, thereby elevating themselves, their households, and the nation. She called for men and women to work together, reinventing their social roles in the process of creating a more just society. In this battle, she counseled, women should act, "not as man's adjunct but as his indispensable complement, not dependent on his whims and awaiting his instructions but participating as a conscious, active element in social struggle, with her own issues and with sufficient ability and authority to attain her goals."⁸

At a certain point the APRA Women's Command formed a special unit to hear complaints against men in their party, including accusations of physical violence, a divisive project. But women's concerns were not to be postponed.⁹ Oppressed as men were, she believed that women were even more burdened by the past:

The individual woman struggles not only on behalf of her own household, her children, her husband. She also struggles for herself—to secure that space in which her own personality, never before expressed, never before understood, might manifest itself fully...The struggle of women, then, is much broader and more encompassing than that of men. (Portal, 1933, p. 48)

She viewed the activist women of this era as transitional, their identities in flux, their personalities distorted by the strain of leading such embattled lives. "The transitional woman," she explained, "is partly masculine and partly feminine in spirit ... not sharply delineated with regard to sexual identity. The feminine is as yet synonymous with weakness, gentleness..." (Portal, 1933, p. 52)

She exhorted women to take initiative in every realm. In a radio broadcast in 1934, she addressed the Aprista women of Cuba:

⁶ Jorge Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú*, tomo 11 (Lima: Editorial Universitaria, 1968) 311. See *El aprismo y la mujer*, 17. See *Peruvian Rebel*, 100-102. Not until 1955 were Peru's women allowed to vote.

⁷ *El aprismo y la mujer, Hacia la mujer nueva*. Editorial Cooperativa Aprista "Atahulpa": Lima, 1933. See also Portal, *La mujer en el partido del pueblo*. Primera convención nacional de mujeres apristas, reunida del 14 al 24 de noviembre de 1946. (Lima: Imprenta "El Cóndor") mayo de 1948.

⁸ *El aprismo y la mujer*, 48. See Magda Portal's autobiographical fiction, *La trampa*, segunda edición (Lima: Editorial Poma, 1986) 146. See also *Peruvian Rebel* 120-123.

⁹ "The women's vote was 'premature,' they said." Esther Andradi and A. M. Portugal, eds., interviewers, "Yo soy Magda Portal," *Ser mujer en el Perú* (Lima: Tokapu editores,) 1976, 216.

Compañeras ... we are the authors of our own destinies, and by the same token of our own subjection. We create the tyrant. We cannot wait for some inevitable historical progress to bestow upon us the fruits of freedom... We cannot wait for ... the natural evolution of civilization to attain for us what we have not managed to attain for ourselves. We must fight for every gain. No one will do it for us. We must start in the Aprista households—it is there we must begin to create the new consciousness that will defeat not only the external enemy ... but also the despot within—the ignorance, the indolence, the conformity, and that great rash of small vices all of which add up to a formidable obstacle to any progress.¹⁰

Education was central to any progress; that was her major insistence (Portal, 1933, p. 43). Overtly sexist mores were deeply rooted in Peru, leaving women in ignorance, even in doubt of their mental capacities. Some feared that the female mind was unsuited to serious thinking: “their delicate brains might be damaged by the impact of ideas too large for their minds to hold.”¹¹ Defying such backward attitudes but politic in her approach, the nineteenth century writer and social reformer Clorinda Matto de Turner called for women to be educated so as to be better able to teach their own sons. Matto de Turner was part of a distinguished constellation of women that became known as the Generation of 1870, precursor to women writers and activists of Portal's generation. In her excoriating novel of social criticism, *Aves sin nidos (Torn from the Nest)*, 1889, she dramatized the wretched conditions of the indigenous, including the crude sexual exploitation of indigenous women servants.¹²

For two turbulent decades Portal worked indefatigably to mobilize women in support of the APRA program, explaining the need for sweeping reforms and promoting projects to serve immediate needs—sewing cooperatives, people's pharmacies, educational projects. In reaction to APRA's revolutionary aspirations and to its insurrectionary tendencies, repressive regimes repeatedly seized power, forcing APRA members into hiding for long periods. There were arrests, tortures, deaths. In the emergency-ridden context of 1934, Portal and Serafín Delmar were each jailed, a catastrophic event for the couple, and for their daughter, Gloria. Serafín would be incarcerated ten years, Portal for five hundred days. After her release from prison, she left Peru, finally settling with her daughter in Chile.

In 1946, with Peru's APRA Party at last restored to legal status, Portal returned to Peru, resuming leadership of a resurgent APRA Women's Command. But Haya de la Torre, APRA's principal leader, was veering to the right, downplaying their radical agenda and thrusting the party into internal dissension.

Addressing a major party congress in 1948, Haya de la Torre announced—astonishingly—

¹⁰ Mensaje a las mujeres apristas de Cuba," "Actividades Apristas." Alberto Arredondo, *Futuro*, no. 1, La Habana, 1 de agosto de 1937. Reprinted in Luis Alva Castro, *Haya de la Torre: Peregrino de la unidad continental*, tomo 2, (Lima: Fondo Editorial "V.R. Haya de la Torre") 1990. *Peruvian Rebel*, 125.

¹¹ Felisa Moscoso de Carbajal, *Ligeros pensamientos consagrados a la mujer*, Lima, 1901, cited in Martiza Villavicencio, *Del silencio a la palabra: mujeres peruanas en los siglos XIX-XX* (Lima: Centro de la mujer peruana Flora Tristán) 1992, 103-104.

¹² Clorinda Matto de Turner (1852-1909). See *Clorinda Matto de Turner*, trans. John Polt, ed. with foreword and chronology by Antonio Cornejo Polar (New York: Oxford Univ. Press) 1998. Members of the Generation of 1870 met in *tertulias* arranged by Juana Manuela Gorriti. See Martiza Villavicencio, *Del silencio a la palabra: mujeres peruanas en los siglos XIX-XX*, Lima: Ediciones Flora Tristán, 110-115; see also Mary G. Berg, "Juana Manuela Gorriti (1818-1892) Argentina" in Diane E. Marting's *Spanish American Women Writers*, pp. 226-240.

that women could no longer enjoy full status as party members: since they did not have the vote in Peru, they could only be sympathizers.¹³ Stunned and outraged, Portal demanded the floor but was ignored. Indignant, she walked out of the assembly in protest, later denouncing the party she had identified with so entirely, enumerating its betrayals in a widely circulated pamphlet (Portal, 1950).

Disillusioned with APRA and saddened by her daughter's suicide in 1947, she entered a period of relative obscurity but not inaction—until Peru's women's movement of the 1970s brought her to renewed prominence. "Was she a feminist?" she was asked in 1983. "Of course," she replied.¹⁴ Decades earlier, speaking to a journalist in Chile, she voiced her belief that women's struggles, ongoing for millennia, were an authentic revolution of paramount significance: "That day when woman will take her place alongside man in complete equality and mutual respect, the most transcendent revolution of all time will have been accomplished." That revolution, she went on, was all the more exceptional in that it was being achieved "without cataclysmic bloodshed."¹⁵

Happily, she shared her researches on Flora Tristan with a new generation of women activists. Her lecture on Tristan, always a work-in-progress, became the kernel for a book-length work by the same name, *Flora Tristán, Precursora*, the results of a collective research project undertaken by Portal and five other Peruvian women. Hailed as "the bedside-table book of Peruvian feminism," this study appeared in 1983 (Portal, 1983).

In 1984 Portal, age eighty-four, with her niece Rocío Revolledo, traveled to Dijon, France, to participate in the First International Colloquium on Flora Tristan. The talk she presented there appeared in a collection of papers published by the Flora Tristan Woman's Center in Lima, 1985 (Portal, 1985). This center was founded by Virginia Vargas in 1979.

It must be noted that Tristan scholarship and translation has flourished wonderfully since Portal began her researches in 1944. Two principal works by Tristan, her London journal and the journal of her tour of France's industrial zones, only recently have appeared in Spanish. This last journal was unpublished for 125 years, appearing in France, 1973. These works were available to Portal only through secondary sources if at all.

Flora Tristan, Precursor

by Magda Portal

I. Beginnings

A resident of Spain, Flora Tristan's father, Don Mariano Tristán y Moscoso, a Peruvian of Spanish ancestry, native of Arequipa, Peru, held the rank of colonel in the Spanish army. Like many Peruvians of his elite aristocratic class, he came to Europe as a student and stayed on, living abroad on proceeds from his family's extensive landholdings, great haciendas worked by hundreds of black and indigenous laborers.

During the upheavals of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars, refugees streamed from France into neighboring countries. Flora's mother, the beautiful French woman Thérèse Laisnay, found refuge in Bilbao, on Spain's northern coast. There she met Don Mariano, and the

¹³ *Peruvian Rebel*, 155. See also E. Andradi and A. M. Portugal, eds., interviewers, "Yo soy Magda Portal," in *Ser mujer en el Perú* (Lima: Tokapu editores) 1979, 216-217.

¹⁴ "Lampo," *Quehacer*, no. 25, Lima, noviembre de 1983. *Peruvian Rebel*, 179.

¹⁵ "Con magnífica velada de arte ha sido clausurado exposición femenina de Viña ... Charla de la poestisa peruana Magda Portal," *El Mercurio*, Santiago de Chile, 3 de marzo de 1940. *Peruvian Rebel*, 179.

two married. As a subject of the Spanish king, Don Mariano was obligated to seek authorization for the marriage from the proper authorities, a requirement he neglected, such that the church marriage was not recognized as a legal union under Spanish law.¹⁶

The couple moved to Paris, where a daughter was born on April 7, 1803: Flora Célestine Thérèse Henriette Tristán y Moscoso. The family settled into a pleasant Parisian neighborhood, one befitting their social and economic position. As in Spain, their home became a gathering place for South Americans. Among their frequent guests at these fashionable *tertulias* was a fierce young man with penetrating eyes and intense, animated gestures—Simon Bolívar, who would soon be celebrated as the liberator of a continent.¹⁷ Despite their political differences—Bolívar an ardent separatist, Don Mariano a reluctant monarchist—the two enjoyed a cordial friendship. Hand in hand with the young Flora, Bolívar paced in the garden with her father, the two men heatedly debating the great problems of Latin America.

Ever mindful of this early connection, Flora would eventually publish an annotated collection of Bolívar's letters to her mother. Later, when her uncle refused to recognize the legitimacy of her parents' marriage, she confidently assured him that "the celebrated Señor Bolívar will attest to his warm friendship with my parents in Paris." One of Flora's biographers, Ventura García Calderón, speculated as to what might have been Flora's fate, notwithstanding the substantial age difference, if these two ardent defenders of people's rights had become a couple, united by liberal ideals and the imperative of love. By the time Flora finally reached Peru, however, Bolívar had already attained the height of his power and was rapidly approaching his tragic decline.¹⁸

Flora was five when her father unexpectedly died, in 1808, leaving her mother with no document attesting to the legitimacy of her marriage. Their situation rapidly deteriorated as her father's papers were confiscated by the Peruvian ambassador and the family home seized as enemy property—Napoleon's France at that time was at war with Spain. Most serious of these calamities: remittances from the family lands in Peru were permanently cancelled, monies without which they had no income.

Now with two children, Flora's mother relocated to the outskirts of Paris,¹⁹ and the family settled into a bleak hand-to-mouth existence. This reversal in fortune could only have profoundly affected the young girl, for whom nothing in her early years of domestic ease had so much as intimated that such poverty might be in store. Her brother at age ten died of tuberculosis.

¹⁶ Salvador Bueno mentions that a French émigré priest by the name of Roncelín married the couple without the bridegroom's having sought authorization for the marriage from the Spanish king. Prólogo, *Peregrinaciones de una paria*, Havana, 1.

¹⁷ Of aristocratic lineage and family wealth, Simón Bolívar (1783-1830) led a series of military engagements that liberated Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Peru, and Panama from Spain. He was in his early 20s at the time he attended salons in the home of Tristan's parents. Bolívar arrived in Paris the year of Tristan's birth, 1803, and returned to Latin America in 1807. During that time in Paris he immersed himself in Enlightenment and republican ideas. See "Lettres de Bolivar," in *Le Voleur*, 31 July 1838. Flora Tristan translated Bolívar's letters to her mother Thérèse Laisney into French. See also *Teresa, la confidente de Bolívar. Historia de unas cartas de juventud del libertador*. With "Facsímil fotostático del artículo de Flora Tristán 'Lettres de Bolívar,' publicado en el periódico *Le Voleur*," which includes a French translation of the letters. Marcos Falcón Briceño, editor. Caracas, 1955.

¹⁸ Bolívar died in 1830, three years before Tristan reached Peru. His visionary project of a Pan-American union of republics was shelved as the territories liberated from Spain struggled to achieve stability and his health failed.

¹⁹ After living with her children for some years in a country village, Tristan's mother returned to Paris when Flora was fifteen; they lived in the shabby district of *Place Maubert* on the *rue de Fourarre*.

In Paris Flora came to know the most squalid neighborhoods, districts invisible to the fortunate citizens who lived along the elegant boulevards. Remarkably beautiful at age sixteen, she began working for a meager wage as a colorist in a lithographer's studio. The young proprietor of this establishment, Monsieur André Chazal, proposed marriage. But Chazal was hardly a suitable partner for this young woman of aristocratic bearing and upbringing. Even so they married, and almost immediately their contrasting temperaments—his rigid and authoritarian, hers proud and very dignified—produced tensions that led to continual domestic strife. The birth of two children and the decline in Chazal's business heightened tensions, and domestic abuse ensued. As financial stress worsened, Chazal insisted that his wife make every sacrifice to keep the household afloat. According to one biographer [Dominique Desanti] Chazal urged her to sell her body.

Pregnant with a third child [who did not survive], Flora resolved to leave her husband. Divorce, even legal separation, was outlawed in France: women were subject by law to the despotism of their spouses.²⁰ Telling Chazal she was taking the children for a brief stay in the better air at her mother's home in the city outskirts, Flora packed up and left, with no intention of returning. Moving from one place to another in France, she eventually situated her children with friends and went to work for an English family as a domestic servant. For two years she worked in London, all the while imploring her mother to send news of her children and to take every precaution to keep their whereabouts from becoming known to Chazal.

On her long walks in the great English city, Flora observed the massive impact of the nascent revolution in iron, coal, and textiles. As artisan hand-labor lost value, artisans and small farmers by the tens of thousands were uprooted from cottages and thrust into the city's burgeoning factories. Undernourished and debilitated by disease, men, women, and children worked twelve to sixteen-hour days at starvation wages. With ever-growing comprehension, Flora listened to the speeches of the Chartists,²¹ who were calling for a world less cruel than the one recklessly driven by the machine. Flora was now writing, recording her keen observations, her incipient rebellion against injustice.

Back in France she learned that Chazal had abandoned his debt-ridden business and given himself up to drink. Desperately wanting to reclaim her children, she could not face the prospect of meeting with him to try to work out a custody agreement. At this impasse she remembered her relatives in Peru and made inquiries at the Peruvian consulate. The striking resemblance she bore to the Tristán family left little doubt among consular officials—without question she was Don Mariano's daughter.

On his deathbed Flora's father designated his brother, Don Pío, as the person to whom his wife should appeal in any difficulty. At the consulate Flora learned that this uncle belonged to one of the wealthiest and most illustrious Peruvian families. After her husband's death, Flora's mother wrote repeatedly to Don Pío but without reply. Flora decided to make one more appeal. In a long formal letter she detailed the difficulties her family had suffered after her father's death, writing frankly, requesting only affection and what should rightfully be her due. According to her biographers, and by her own account in *Peregrinaciones de una paria*, she made one serious error in this letter: she admitted to Don Pío that her parents' marriage had not been legalized, and that

²⁰ Established in 1803, The Napoleonic Code permitted divorce, although restricting it severely. When the French monarchy was restored in 1816, divorce was abolished entirely, with judicial separation permitted in a few circumstances. That was law Tristan faced.

²¹ The Chartists were the first mass working-class reform movement in England. Tristan's visits to London coincided with full-flood Chartist activity, which involved seeking full suffrage for men with no property qualification, among other demands. Full women's suffrage was in the initial People's Charter draft but was dropped as an impolitic demand.

her father had failed to rectify the situation by making a will.²²

This time Don Pio replied by return mail, informing Flora in no uncertain terms that her claim to an inheritance was without legal standing. Even so, he invited her to visit Peru as his guest. Now Flora made the single boldest move of her life. She accepted this invitation and made plans to sail to South America. But before she could leave, she would have to face her estranged husband and the custody problem.

Over the course of a number of humiliating meetings, Flora and Chazal reached an agreement: Flora would have custody of their daughter, Aline, and Chazal would have their son, Ernest. Despite this accord, Chazal tried to abduct Aline, more than once. The child needed to be hidden far from Paris, a haven Flora found in Burdeos, a village in Burgundy, where a charitable woman offered to care for Aline indefinitely, even to act as a mother to her if Flora did not return.

A secular state had been instituted in France, making it possible once again to hope that divorce might be legalized.²³ In the process of giving up her claim to Ernest, Flora had extracted from a reluctant Chazal a signed agreement of conjugal separation. Keeping her marital status secret and using only her maiden name, Flora prepared to leave France. She embarked on April 7, 1833, her thirtieth birthday.

II. *Peru*

The sea voyage lasted four months. As the only woman aboard the *Mexicain*, Flora must have been the object of a good deal of interest on the part of the other travelers. In those days travel from France to South America was by way of the Strait of Magellan, with stops at various ports of call along the coasts of Europe and Africa. At one stop, in the Bay of Praya in Africa, Flora encountered the slave trade, an odious commerce carried out primarily by non-Africans, many of whom were French. Flora recorded her revulsion in her diary but said nothing to her French compatriots aboard ship, whose hospitality during the long voyage she gratefully accepted.

The *Mexicain's* arrival on the Peruvian coast was crowded with picturesque incidents. The landing docks were primitive, lacking in the most rudimentary hygiene, although crude settlements sprang up at the landings to serve the many foreigners disembarking in newly independent Peru. Finding themselves in these conditions, the new immigrants struggled to adjust, all the while retaining a potent nostalgia for the countries they had left behind. All of them were coming to Peru out of some urgent need. Some in fact were fugitives from justice, and all shared a single desire—to better themselves quickly and return to their respective lands to enjoy their improved fortunes.

Wherever they came from, the foreigners Flora met in Peru seemed to share an attitude of derision toward native Peruvians, whether creole, mestizo or Indian. Despite their scorn, a number of foreigners married Peruvians, as did one Herr Althaus, a German military officer who would go anywhere to find yet another battle in which to enlist, having already served in both the French and German armies. Althaus was considered to be a cousin of Flora's, having married into the Tristán family. His knowledge of military strategy was greatly in demand among seditious generals vying for power after Peru's Proclamation of Independence.²⁴ In her diary, Flora described these

²² *Magda Portal note.* It may be that this error was less grievous than Flora feared, since the problematic status of her parent's marriage was already known to Peru's ambassador to France and to a number of French officials.

²³ With the fall of the Bourbon monarchy in 1830, repeated legislative attempts were made to liberalize divorce laws, to no avail: divorce remained outlawed in France until 1884.

²⁴ Following Peru's independence, 1824, the post-independence period was rife with warring factions: a series of strongmen and/or elected officials came to power, over twenty regime changes in as many years. Tristan's sojourn in Peru, 1833-1834, coincided with the rule of Agustín Gamarra, who maintained power for five years, 1829-1834, while intrigues continued. Tristan wrote: "When I questioned my cousin Althaus on the subject he

machinations in a tone of bemused detachment. Also, in those pages she expressed her resentment and disappointment at her failure to be accepted into the affections of her closest relatives, her father's brother, cousins, and nephews. Candidly she explained to them about her marriage, her children, her mother—how she hoped to bring all of them to Peru, which would not happen.

Flora thought of becoming involved in Peru's political and social affairs. She wished to distinguish herself and to help improve the situations of her new compatriots. It seemed to her that Peru's people were gifted with a fine intelligence, but an intelligence stifled by the existence of slavery. Or by the self-indulgent habits of the privileged elite. Women of that class, she observed, tended to be passively dependent, like her cousin Carmen who relied entirely on Don Pío's largesse. Any lingering illusions Flora might have entertained about the well-to-do were dispelled during her protracted stay at the Tristán family's hacienda in Arequipa. The rich, she concluded, weren't interested in alleviating suffering. Nor were they capable, she learned, of recognizing the rightful claim of blood ties. In Peru as in Europe, Flora realized, repressive laws destroyed the hopes of the poor.

As the months in Arequipa dragged on with no news of her children, Flora thought of them with increasing alarm. Finally accepting that her claim to an inheritance had failed, she made plans to return to France. Don Pío arranged for her to receive a small allowance in Paris, doing this as a kindness, not in recognition of any right she might have to her father's estate. Don Pío also paid her return passage to France. Flora understood all too well that in a short while she would again be facing the very difficulties, she had gone to Peru to escape.

Before sailing, she spent two months in Lima, immersing herself in the idle, spendthrift world of Peru's colonial elite. She observed with fascination how women of the upper class indulged in frivolous distractions, disporting themselves in a traditional Spanish garment, *la saya y manto*, whose shawl afforded a veil behind which the darlings of high society carried on playful as well as serious flirtations. She observed too that the wealthy women of Lima were very influential in political and social life, despite their ignorance—at best having studied only domestic arts, or the feminine adornments of music and dance. Their uneducated and frankly uninhibited behavior prompted some exceptionally caustic comments when Flora confided to her diary her views of Lima's social whirl.

In the Peruvian capital Flora met a great number of people—politicians, military men, members of the landed aristocracy and of the new post-Independence elite. Yet only one woman inspired her admiration and respect: Francisca Zubiaga de Gamarra, then in the twilight of her fame. Known as *La Mariscala*, the wife of Peru's president during the war for Independence, she had distinguished herself as a heroine in that conflict. Flora was even more impressed when she learned the full story of *La Mariscala's* brief but valorous contribution to Peruvian history.²⁵

This sojourn in Peru marked a turning point in Flora's life. In Lima she felt herself even more alienated than in Arequipa. Manners in Lima were more liberal but equally foreign to human

replied with a laugh: 'Florita ... I never knew a president whose right was not very questionable. At times there were up to five claiming to be legally elected.'" *Peregrinations of a Pariah*, trans. Charles de Salis (London: The Folio Society, 1986), 150. Cited in Vanesa Miseres, "On a Republic in Ruins: Flora Tristán's *Peregrinations of a Pariah* and the Role of the Rabonas in Nineteenth-Century Peru." Published online 30 Apr 2012; *Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas* 45:1, 29-36. See also Frederick B. Pike, *The Modern History of Peru*, 1967.

²⁵ *Magda Portal note*: Francisca Zubiaga de Gamarra, wife of Peruvian president, Mariscal Agustín Gamarra, played a foremost role in the struggle for Peruvian Independence, as did many valiant women. When Simón Bolívar arrived in Cuzco, Señora Gamarra officially honored him with a gold wreath. Knowing her heroic efforts, Bolívar took the wreath from his own head and placed it on hers.

solidarity. The rich inhabited one world, the poor another, and the institution of slavery flourished. Blacks and Indians lived in subjection, toiling in fields or as servants in the palatial homes of the great families. Independence did not change things at the lower levels of society, Flora could see that clearly. Skin color, personal wealth, esteemed aristocratic names—these determined the social distance between individuals. Little had changed since colonial days.

On the eve of her departure Flora wrote an extensive account of her experience in Peru, treating as well, the principal events of her earlier life. In her heart was a bitter brew of frustration and humiliation. But she refused abject isolation. She was still young, and strong, and a fresh sentiment stirred within her. A better life was possible, not just for herself or for her family, but for all who suffered social injustice—all who were persecuted by laws written for the sole purpose of protecting the rich. Looking back at the retreating shoreline of Peru, Flora exclaimed with conviction: “From now on my country will be humanity.”

III. *Paris*

Paris: the only city in the world in which Flora enjoyed living. Her children were there, her mother, her friends. The year: 1835. Two years had passed since she had sailed for Peru. Contradictory feelings overwhelmed her. She wasn't sure what next to do but at least she felt a sense of purpose: she intended to join with others in the battle for social reform. In Paris she would have to deal with Chazal's hostility. He became even more aggressive upon her return, suspecting she might have succeeded in obtaining her father's fortune. At the same time, she reunited with friends and began writing for various magazines. Intensely busy, she struggled to give form to the many ideas jostling in her head and heart. With the aim of avoiding confrontation with her husband, she returned to London, the third of four trips she would make to the English capital.

The city on the Thames exerted magnetic attraction. The Chartists were there, and the utopians—William Lovett, Robert Owen²⁶—with their innovative schemes to promote the rights of the poor. The fiery Irishman O'Connell amazed her.²⁷ Again she was drawn into London's slums, venturing inside dank row houses and taverns sour with misery. She toured factories and teeming sweatshops. She felt both terrified and fascinated by this monstrous city in which twenty million wage earners toiled in deplorable conditions.

Disguised as a man, she attended sessions of parliament and heard speeches by representatives of His Majesty's government, none of whom, it appeared, were the least bit aware of the abhorrent conditions in which the poor of their own country subsisted. Worse, in their ignorance they had no feeling for the plight of the great English masses, deprived even of minimal voting rights despite being positioned at the center of the British Empire. The most severely exploited were children and women. Children begged in the streets or depleted their strength in factories. If work was scarce, women sold their bodies. Yet voices were rising up in protest, calling for organization, for trade unions that would give workers the power to challenge the voracious greed of the industrialists.

London was the seedbed in which capital flourished, the city of prodigious transformations,

²⁶ William Lovett (1800-1877), a founding leader of the Chartists, favored constitutional means to seek electoral reforms. Robert Owen (1771-1858) was a Welsh textile factory owner and Utopian Socialist who initiated communitarian living experiments and worked to outlaw child labor. He returned to London from the United States in 1828.

²⁷ Daniel O'Connell: (1775-1847) a major figure in Irish history. His oratorical skills were on display in the English parliament where he lobbied on behalf of Irish independence. He received a substantial salary for this work, which salary Tristan defended. His example gave her the idea that industrial workers might hire a lobbyist to represent their interests before legislative bodies.

seat of the tireless machine, the smoke-shrouded city of power, fueled by iron and by coal. Titles of nobility had small worth as a new hierarchy emerged, one based solely on wealth. A groundswell of rebellion was in the works, as yet with no clear program but with ever more insistent clamor.

Back in Paris, Flora attended meetings. She was labeled socialist, communist. She had friends at all levels of society. But having returned to Paris she could no longer avoid facing her personal predicament. By court order Chazal had regained custody of the children.²⁸ In hopes of some legal remedy, Flora formally petitioned the French parliament, asking for the reinstatement of legal divorce. Her petition was denied, and the battle for custody intensified, approaching crisis. Chazal now attempted to murder his wife. Firing at close range [as she walked along the rue de Bac], he seriously wounded Flora [a bullet lodged in her lung]. Immediately he was arrested. As the newspapers picked up the story, the ensuing scandal greatly heightened Flora's profile in France, and friends rallied to her defense. Convicted of attempted murder by the French courts, Chazal faced a possible death sentence. Emerging from a protracted convalescence Flora once again petitioned parliament, this time calling for abolition of the death penalty, requesting as well that her children be permitted to drop their father's name, which request was granted by court order. For many years Chazal remained in prison, while Aline and Ernest adopted the name Tristan, a name later renowned not only for Flora's accomplishments but for those of her grandson, the celebrated painter Paul Gauguin, Aline's son. Gauguin never forgot his remarkable grandmother, around whom he wove a number of stories involving Peru and his Peruvian ancestors.

Flora was now at liberty to devote herself to her social passions. In 1835 *Nécessité de faire un bon accueil aux femmes étrangères* (The need to welcome foreign women travelers) appeared, an essay inspired by her own experience in Peru. Aware of the serious difficulties so many women faced, she proposed that an organization be formed to aid single women without families and to assist immigrant women and their children. This essay anticipated Flora's later work, *L'Émancipation de la femme* (The emancipation of women). A novel, *Méphís*, also appeared, written in the florid melodramatic style then in fashion. Its uncomplicated theme reflected in part her own experience and her desire to break free of traditional restraints on women's liberty.

In 1838 her Peruvian diary appeared, *Peregrinaciones de una paria (1833-1834)*, a two-volume narrative scathingly critical of her Peruvian family and their social milieu. The French critics reviewed it favorably, and the Peruvian historian Jorge Basadre later affirmed its literary merit. Dedicating the book to the Peruvian people, she signed herself "your friend and compatriot." The extremely negative reaction of her illustrious relatives, however, came as a shock. Her most eminent relation, the Archbishop Goyeneche, ordered copies of the offending book burned in the public square of Arequipa, and Don Pío abruptly cancelled her allowance.

Flora was now associating with the leading writers of France: Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Théophile Gautier, Aurore Dupin (the famous George Sand, who wore men's clothing to assert her independence). Madame Sand, an authentic rebel who lived independently of her husband and spoke forthrightly of the injustices endured by women was reproached by Flora for adopting a male pseudonym. Flora believed that Sand's protest would carry a good deal more weight if it appeared under a woman's name. Proudly feminine in every sense, Flora never published under any name but her own.

²⁸ Placed by court order in her father's custody, Aline ran away to her mother. Chazal retrieved her by court order, but she ran away again: sexual abuse was intimated, and Tristan alerted the police, accusing Chazal of rape and incest. He accused her of adultery and prostitution. Chazal confided to his friends his intent to murder his wife.

In *Promenades dans Londres*, 1840, Flora's described her excursions into every sector of the world's greatest industrial city.²⁹ A number of French writers were intrigued by her graphic descriptions of abject poverty. The Fourierists praised her daring. Caught up now in a furious whirl of activity, Flora attended meeting after meeting in which the new ideas then called utopian were under debate. Her views were closest to the French utopians: Fourier, Saint-Simon, Béranger, and Victor Considérant.³⁰

Workers in France suffered conditions as piteous as any she had seen in London, and Flora envisioned a single organization that would unite all French workers in a union based on economic cooperation. French workers, she recommended, should make common cause with their English, German, and Belgian counterparts. One of the principal goals of such a union would be the creation of workers' pavilions, economic cooperatives to be maintained by workers and their families. These centers would be a refuge for the old and infirm and would foster education and skills training.

Essential to the workers' union would be the constitution of a new social class, the working class, parallel to the bourgeoisie, which already had emerged as a distinct social formation. The essential provisions of the Workers' International were now formulated: "Workers of the World, Unite!" Only by unifying could the workers defend themselves from exploitation. That was Flora's paramount idea. Her pamphlet *Workers' Union (Union Ouvrière)* explained her thought in detail. It was no small task for Flora to raise the funds to print this famous treatise, but her faith in the eventual impact she believed these ideas would have sustained her. She appealed to friends and other sympathizers. Many people helped finance the first edition, which subsequently went into four printings, 20,000 copies in all. Among the supporters of the first edition were writers, artists, exiles, and workers—all moved by the Pariah's contagious enthusiasm.³¹

Workers' Union appeared in 1843; the first printing rapidly sold out in Paris. She decided she herself should personally deliver copies into the hands of the French workers, believing strongly in the value of direct personal contact between the proponent of ideas and those to whom the ideas were addressed. A labor *tour de France* was needed, an extended trip throughout the industrial zones. Thinking of possible way to attract the workers' attention, she thought of music, and appealed to writers Lamartine and Béranger to compose lyrics for a "Workers' Marseillaise." Novelist Eugène Sue, who admired Flora, arranged a competition to select the music, and the

²⁹ Flora Tristan's Peruvian chronicle, her London journal, and the posthumously published final journal are works that merit more consideration as literary works, at once literature of witness, social criticism, intimate diary. One hundred twenty-five years elapsed before her final diary entries were published in France, making available at last the full complement of her writings.

³⁰ Charles Fourier (1772-1830) was a major social utopian theorist and defender of full equality for women; he is credited with coining the term "feminist." He believed in the importance of play, sexual libertarianism, and social cooperation. Victor Considerant (1808-1893) was a disciple of Fourier's and an important friend and supporter of Flora Tristan. He published segments of her *Workers' Union* in his journal *La Phalange* in March 1843. See *Victor Considerant, The Rise and Fall of French Romantic Socialism*, Jonathan Beecher, University of California Press, 2001. Count Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), was an earlier social theorist who saw industry as a basis for class and promoted the idea of merit as a means of advancement. Tristan found most congenial those thinkers who eschewed violence as a means to power. Often described as a utopian, Tristan felt that a number of the utopians' ideas were impracticable if not completely far-fetched. She formulated and promoted down-to-earth proposals for workers' pavilions that would deliver social services.

³¹ Distinguished subscribers to the first edition of *Union ouvrière* included novelist Eugène Sue, Victor Considerant, the novelist George Sand, historian and reformer Louis Blanc, writer Louise Colet. Many workers also subscribed, including Flora's daughter, Aline, a laundress who became the mother of painter Paul Gauguin.

composer Thys³² won the contest. Later editions of the *Workers' Union* included the text of the “Workers’ Marseillaise.”

IV. Messianic Woman

Early in 1844, accompanied by the costly baggage of her pamphlets, Flora set out for the provinces. She traveled alone with a minimum of luggage, lacking proper shoes or sufficient clothing to protect her from France's inclement weather. A number of times she fell ill as she traveled from town to town visiting factories and workshops. As a woman, an attractive woman, and one not sponsored by any organization, she frequently engendered suspicion, even hostility. Workers weren't accustomed to her bold speech or her radical ideas. But such was her persistence that increasingly she managed to be treated with respect. In her various lodgings she held meetings to present the contents of the *Workers Union*, particularly the idea of economic cooperation, which would start small and gradually grow, delivering benefits to a swelling union of workers.

Flora spoke to women about the unequal treatment they experienced even within the working class. She talked to them about all the things their children lacked. Her singing voice was good; enthusiastically she taught workers to sing “The Workers’ Marseillaise.” Her efforts were ridiculed. Some thought her a charlatan, but others were moved to action. Workers demanded raises and initiated strikes.

When France's great industrialists became aware of her activities, they called in the police. From then on, she lived under constant surveillance. Police spies repeatedly broke into and searched her rooms, finding only the inevitable copies of *Worker's Union*. She was attacked as a social agitator, a feminist, a communist, labels the world of power contemptuously reserved for the early advocates of radical social change.

The Pariah had become the Messianic Woman. She taught by example, thinking of herself as a worker, and so too her children were workers, Aline a seamstress, and Ernest a factory operative. She traveled without comforts, sleeping in run-down boarding houses without the funds to meet even the modest expenses of her strenuous quest. Her health began to fail. At night, alone with her thoughts, she suffered moments of despair occasioned by the workers’ lack of comprehension, yet, in the morning, she resumed her efforts. She could not be dissuaded from continuing in this task so debilitating to her health. She never lost faith that in the end she would succeed in awakening the dormant consciousness of the French workers.

Eventually her enemies joined together to attack her personally. Many denigrated her ability and denied her authority. Her schemes were dismissed as utopian, attacked as outlandish, impossible. Yet who else was addressing the workers, establishing personal contact with the proletariat of France? As she became more accustomed to public speaking, Flora’s anxiety diminished. She put forward the possibility that a better world might be created, one that could arise only upon foundations of authentic solidarity.

Meanwhile in England, France, Germany, Belgium, socialists of all tendencies were coming together, debating, making plans. Marx and Engels were increasingly active. And Flora’s project was gaining adherents—she could see this was the case—though not all her ideas were winning acceptance. Workers, she maintained, vastly outnumbered those in the bourgeois, capitalist class. If workers refused to work, nothing would function. The entire industrial machine would grind to a halt—mines, railroads, factories. Nothing would be produced. Yet the capitalists continued to amass fortunes while the workers lived in squalor. The workers’ union, she believed, would be the adhesive that would bind these scattered forces into a formidable power. Theory was

³² Alphonse Thys (1807-1879), French composer of operas, cantatas, popular songs.

not enough; direct action was essential. Of this she was certain—the central text had to be *Workers' Union* and the actual organizing of such a union had to be the most urgent priority. She refused to acknowledge that formidable forces might thwart this union—the state and those servants of state power, the army and the police. She knew these powers existed, but police and soldiers were also part of the exploited class, and this, Flora insisted, they would one day realize.

She was forty-one years old. Time had passed and her ideas were far from being widely known let alone accepted. But word of her speaking tour was spreading throughout France; she discerned glimmerings of understanding and agreement in the workers' faces. How many provincial cities she visited is not certain: Lyon, Marseilles, Montpellier, Toulouse, Dijon, Chalons. Copies of the *Workers Union* were sold or given away, and large numbers of workers began to grasp her ideas. Sometimes, shortly after she visited a town, there would be meetings, strikes, sabotage. She was blamed for any disturbance. But the workers defended her. It wasn't her fault, they said. Their working conditions were to blame, the bad conditions in which they lived—these were the real instigators of their protests.

In Paris, a number of Hegelians, in particular the Bauer brothers, attacked Flora as being dogmatic: dogmatism being the principal defect of women, so they claimed. Marx and Engels came to her defense in an acerbic critique that appeared in their work *The Holy Family*.³³ On one occasion as she departed Lyons, Flora was deeply moved to hear the crowd spontaneously begin singing *The Workers' Marseillaise*. This and other signs—of restrained acceptance, even frank admiration and sympathy—gave her strength to continue her arduous travels, even as her health deteriorated.

Having been declared a public menace, she continued to be surveilled by police. Proprietors of hotels and small lodging houses sometimes refused her shelter. Eventually her resilience failed, and she became fatally ill. On November 14, 1844, the Pariah, the Messianic Woman, indefatigable fighter for human rights and creator of the *Workers' Union*, lapsed into a coma and died without regaining consciousness. At her bedside was the faithful Eléonore Blanc.³⁴ Also present were a number of workers. Bordeaux would be her final resting place.

Did this writer and activist succeed in spreading her vision of unity and social solidarity? French workers themselves answered that question. By public subscription they raised money to purchase the simple headstone that marks Flora's grave in the cemetery of Chartreux. The inscription reads:

³³ In the first book Marx and Engels authored together (*The Holy Family*) there appears a defense of Flora Tristan, who was attacked by Hegelian E. Bauer. See *Section One, Chapter 4*. See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism: Against Bruno Bauer and Company*. Trans. Richard Dixon and Clement Dutt from German edition, Frankfurt aum Main, 1845. Marxist Internet Archive. "In this section [Engels] analyzes and quotes E. Bauer's review of Flora Tristan's *L'Union Ouvrière (The Workers' Union)*, Paris, 1843, which was published in No. V of *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (April 1844)"—this is endnote 8 in the Marxist Internet Archive notes to *The Holy Family*. www.marxists.org/archive. Tristan's apartment on the *rue du Bac* was a gathering place for reformers, including German émigré Arnold Ruge, to whom, it is asserted, she entrusted a copy of *Union ouvrière* for his collaborator the young writer Karl Marx. (Portal, et al. in *Flora Tristan, Precursora*, 94) For a brief time Marx lived in the same Parisian quartier as Tristan.

³⁴ Tristan died of typhoid fever, complicated by stroke and further ailments. In her final illness Tristan dictated to her disciple Eléonore Blanc an outline for a book she intended to write from her journal entries on this tour. In 1910 Eléonore's son Pétrus Blanc gave this dictation as well as the journal entries to Jules L. Puech, who published a major work of Tristan biography in 1925. The full text of her final journal, including her dictation to Eléonore Blanc, did not appear until 1975. See Collinet's preface to *Le Tour de France*.

In Memory
of Madame Flora Tristan
Author of *Workers' Union*
workers gratefully
raise this monument
Liberty Equality Fraternity
Solidarity
Flora Tristan was born in Paris
April 7, 1803
She died in Bordeaux
November 14, 1844
Solidarity

In 1848, four years after Flora's death, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, after much correction and revision, published *The Communist Manifesto*, which incorporated the fundamental ideas of Flora Tristan. Their manifesto ends with this imperative: *Workers of the World, Unite!* — the very words that concluded *Union Ouvrière*. This imperative is the catechism of the poor and the confirmation that Flora was not on the wrong track. She never forgot that women's struggle for their own emancipation was an integral part of the larger social struggle. This was the topic of her final book, *L'emancipation de la femme* (The emancipation of woman), which appeared after her death. An authentic social fighter, Flora insisted that the union of workers, the working class, must include all workers, regardless of gender, political ideas, religion or nationality. Hers was the most complete expression of revolutionary faith.

Note on text: This lecture is edited and translated from an undated manuscript version of "Flora Tristan, Precursora" that Magda Portal brought with her to San Francisco in 1981, a version she continued to revise. The translation takes into accounts a number of changes Portal wrote on a carbon copy of this same manuscript, which I found among her papers in Lima in 1993. Translation by permission Rocío Revolledo, The Estate of Magda Portal.

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