

# **International Feminist Networking and Solidarity**

**Toward the VII Latin American  
and Caribbean Feminist Gathering  
Chile, 1996**

**a letter from Virginia Vargas**

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As a network, Women Living Under Muslim Laws is part of the global women's movement and closely following the developments of interactions and alliances between women's organisations and networks.

This letter was addressed by Gina Vargas, the Director of "Flora Tristan", a feminist organisation in Lima, Peru, to her feminist friends in Latin America and the Caribbean, as a think piece in preparation to their coming meeting. Many of the issues she is addressing are not specific to their region and are being debated in other women's networks around the world. We felt it would be very useful to circulate it to WLUML networkers, and hope it will generate further discussion between us.

# *International Feminist Networking and Solidarity*

*Toward the VII Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Gathering, Chile, 1996 — a letter from Virginia Vargas*

Dear Friends:

We are at a particular stage in the development of the feminist movement. We are, undoubtedly, faced with new scenarios and new contexts for the development of the feminist proposal and we need to take them into account. Nevertheless, we do not have many answers but many doubts, questions, a few certainties, some intuition and an enormously rich practice that we must begin to analyze. The tendency to see two polarized positions in the movement hides the fact that both sides emphasize fundamental aspects of the reality in which we move and each warns about risks that are real, and in the face of which we need to develop strategies in one or the other sense. It is also possible that within each polarity there are also different nuances and differences that can further enrich our vision. Differences are very important because they allow us to question, redefine our practices and grow as a movement. It will be a challenge but it will also be enriching to discuss and visualize these differences, as well as the consensus and agreements on how to continue building a movement that is propositive and subversive. I believe that all of these positions, emphases, and differences are substantial to the development of a vital feminist movement that is aware of what is going on around it.

The Feminist Gatherings have been a forum for political reflection and for planning strategies since their start. The VII Gathering is a privileged opportunity for us to evaluate what these past three years (that separate us from the VI Gathering) of intense feminist strategies in relation to the public- political sphere have meant. The call for the VII Gathering is a clear invitation to this reflection. Its importance is also evident considering that it is the second to the last gathering before the end of the century. It will be a discussion that we will start now but which, without a doubt, will keep us tied up and interconnected until the new millennium because it has to do with our own uncertainties and

searching at the end of a century that has seen the feminist proposals stretch from one end of the planet to the other.

Before moving on it might be worth highlighting some of the significant changes in the areas in which feminist actions and proposals have been developed in the past few years. The first change is that the feminist movement grew in many countries, confronting authoritarianism in both the street and the house, in an anti- democratic climate and/or with strong dictatorships that the movement undoubtedly helped to defeat. The existence of a potent, visible and mobilized movement, as well as the certainties of the 1980s that we wanted to change our oppression in society and in daily life, have given way to a period of greater uncertainty and to a movement that is more reflective and which is grounded in a realist utopia. It is also more fragmented or with articulations that allow for more room and issues, and in which there is much more diversity.

The movement of the 1990s - faced with the processes of transition to or consolidation of democracy - has changed its way of existing, its logic, its dynamic and has started to stress new emphases. One of the most significant changes has been the modification of an anti- state posture toward one of critical negotiation in relation to the state and the formal international organizations. This has also meant a change in an autonomy that was defensive and a logic and dynamic that were confrontational (necessary in the first stages in order to gain affirmation and because of the continent's dictatorships) toward a logic of negotiation based on a strong and propositive autonomy that values dialogue.

The context in which autonomy is exercised has varied drastically in the past few years given the new complexities of social and political life and also the dynamic of world conferences, particularly on women. Our multiple interests as women have been placed in the public- political arena both nationally and internationally, and the experiences and proposals accumulated by the feminist movement in its different expressions and currents since the new wave began have been expressed. From an independent position, but one which is committed to the transformation of the lives of women in our societies, the autonomy of the movement appears more like a process that gains specific contents according to the strength of its articulation, ability to negotiate, its aspirations and the opportunities for transformation that arise in a determined historic moment. An autonomous position is related to the choice of strategies for confrontation, negotiation and forming alliances in the here and now that implies greater power for women over their lives and circumstances at the physical, political, economic and cultural levels and which, in the long run, appears as a horizon for transformation, a world without exclusion or subordination for all people.

It is within these new contexts that the discussion about our differences can be framed and where we can locate the practices of the movement that have produced the greatest tension. For this, I believe it is important to move openly - but not only - into the discussion of what the Beijing experience and other conferences meant: What they meant to us as feminists; what they meant to the other expressions of the movement, including those sectors that remained on the margins or were opposed; what paths or risks the criticisms may raise for us; what purpose they served or will serve to modify at least some aspects of the multiple subordinations women are subjected to; and, above all, what do they mean to a long-term radical feminist agenda.

One way to begin the discussion might be dividing it into two large blocks for reflection: the current difficulties and the feminist agenda.

## ***1. The current difficulties***

### ***A way of introduction***

We can summarize some of the tensions in the movement into one large difficulty, feminist schizophrenia, but I think it would be better to talk about ambivalence in the most creative sense of the term. Schizophrenia means division and opposition, two unconnected movements in the same body or in the same space. Ambivalence implies search and connection, no absolute truths, no definitive judgements; the practices of women are in permanent ambivalence between subordination and rebellion, between the old that must be changed and the new that must be appropriated. Related to the presence of feminists in other spaces, ambivalence draws us to the sense of "ajenidad" that is used by the Italians - to be there while at the same time knowing that we are not from there.

The ambivalence currently found in the movement in its different expressions has to do with politics and power, which have also been at the center of the reflection-action of this period. Our reflection on this issue has been constant in the past and in a self-critical sense. Many of the difficulties from Taxco continue to surround us, but there are new ones that are sharpening the debate given the development of the movement in the most recent stage. Politics and power are expressed in other areas, in the ambivalence between institutionalization and autonomy. The difficulties rising from this ambivalence are related to funding, representation, the relationship between the specific and the global, and between the national and the regional-global. They are also expressed in negotiations and alliances the movement establishes in relation to new areas of action and negotiation (states, international fora). Diversity - a complicated issue and reality in the movement - in all of its complexity has to crisscross this discussion.

### *Some of the more tenacious difficulties*

- ***Funding:***

A significant part of the feminist movement has started feminist institutions or nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) that carry out their work with funding from international cooperation. Having NGO's with a feminist orientation without a doubt has been important in attracting attention to the subordination of women, as well as generating alternatives to this subordination. Throughout the years this has generated a market - supply to receive funds and demand to move feminist proposals forward - to give products increasing impact, to generate projects that benefit other women, to launch initiatives to give us more visibility and a political profile, to begin initiatives to keep us connected, etc.

Funding has also brought us difficulties that have to do with the unequal access to resources, the risk of losing our autonomy, the weakening of traditional spaces of feminist organization, competition to receive more funds, which leads to a weakening of feminist solidarity, etc. This has led to the claim that there exist "economic and power interests within the movement," an affirmation that we cannot simply disregard. We must analyze openly the processes that point to this and the processes that can neutralize them.

Concern over money in the movement is not something new but it has gotten worse because there is an economic crisis and there is less money available for feminist projects in the region (it appears that more emphasis is being placed on poverty - Africa - than on empowerment). The risk of putting autonomy and funding at odds with each other has not helped us very much. It is important to avoid a moralistic opposition between funding and autonomy. Instead we should stress a political perspective aimed at modifying the conditions that limit the autonomous movement of NGO's, groups or feminist spaces, and discuss and promote new practices and alternatives for funding that are oriented toward giving visibility to the multiple strategies of the movement through its NGO's, networks, coalitions and its different non-institutionalized groups.

The tendency of the feminist NGO's has been to modify a historically unequal relationship - because of the decision-making power between agencies and the NGO's - by stressing a more egalitarian relationship with the women from the agencies, many of whom also identify themselves as feminists. It is possible to work with them to highlight the more unequal and distorted aspects of this relationship and work together with them on how to share information, define priorities, locate supplementary funding or define untested mechanisms, such as involving the civil societies of the developed countries. At the same time, however, it is the

political responsibility of the feminist NGO's to look for new and untapped forms of funding that can come from our own region. In the "south" income is much more poorly distributed than in the "north" and we can look for mechanisms that allow us to achieve a stronger commitment of civil societies, and eventually the states, to the struggles of women.

Nevertheless, even in the cases where these alliances between women are not easily achieved it is possible to assume a position of autonomy.

An example that caused a lot of noise, as the Mexican women would say, was the funding received by USAID for the region's preparatory processes toward Beijing. Without taking time here to discuss the imperialist character of this agency (in the end, all of them are in some way, but we consider them to be adjectives that tell us little about the current running of the globalized world), it is important to note that the movement committed to the process toward Beijing was not only able to modify the initial decisions of this agency in terms of organizational structures, people in charge, etc., but carried out a tenacious and permanent struggle to preserve the autonomy of the proposals and organization at all times.

Finally, it is worth insisting that every initiative aimed at supporting the feminist perspective should include these ethical elements: circulate information among ourselves; interconnect efforts; join initiatives; and make certain that all ethnic, geographic, issue-oriented "differences" have access to information and the ability to receive economic support for their proposals.

• ***Representation:***

This is a tenacious difficulty both outside the movement (the presence of women in positions within representative democracy is minimal in spite of their enormous presence and participatory ability in society) as well as within the movement where it is difficult to recognize and give legitimacy to those women in the movement who have greater access to the public sphere, the media or who hold office in the official sphere. It is important for us to analyze this second dimension, that within the movement.

This difficulty includes a series of tensions: between the specific and the general; between equality and difference; between individuality and collectivity; and between articulated structures and flexibility. It will not be easy to overcome this now that we recognize the enormous diversity of expressions the feminist perspective can have and now that the movement is moving toward a policy of identities. It is a good start, however, to recognize that we are not equal, that we are not a unified movement, but that we represent the different expressions of struggles

and proposal- resistance of women, which we want to make visible and work on in such a way as not become paralyzed or isolated one from the other.

Now that we recognize this plurality of feminist voices and interests, this concert of different wills, how and under what conditions can we articulate it and how can it give legitimacy to the representation of differences from one to the other? How can we feel represented, how can we represent others, around what issues in the face of what issues? The "affidamento" of the Italian feminists continues to be a process we should look at. On the basis of an explicit discussion maybe an affidamento that is marked by boundaries, based on the here and now, temporal and eventually renewable, particularly as we "clean" the terrain of our recognitions, is possible.

The problem of representation and leadership is undoubtedly tied to the democratic perspective of the movement. A perspective that is not based on the old ideas of the movement (we are all equal, because I am a woman what I feel is worthwhile, consensus is democracy, etc.), but on the new conditions for growth and the complexities of the movement in its different expressions or in the new spaces where we need to act. We need to analyze these new conditions and scenarios in order to recognize the foundations for a possible "affidamento." Nevertheless, there are basic starting points that can help us with this reflection:

- Assuming that representation is a fundamental part of democracy, we need to feel free to explore some difficulties and ambiguous processes. An important lead is analyzing the need - and difficulty - of equating democracy with efficiency. It will be a constant tension because both things are needed to construct a movement. Recognizing that we are not all equal, that not all of us can do everything but that all us are necessary in our consensus and design, is a step forward. Another important step is revising the valuational element that accompanies our "public" and "intellectual" actions and the lack of value society and the movement place on other experiences, understandings and abilities.
- How do we guarantee a process for feedback among leaders and the expressions of the movement that are recognized as such? How do we move forward a process of "circulating" leaders? There is a dimension of accumulated experience but there is also the responsibility of the movement that facilitated this experience. The work of education-communication are absolutely critical at this level.
- How do we guarantee recognition of the needs and voices of other currents, expressions and diversities around the movement? How do we open new spaces not only to the new voices but also to the divergent voices where and over which issues they manifest themselves?



The specific and the general: The interaction of different currents, the different areas of actions and issues for reflection.

The importance of articulating the specific and the general takes us back to the politics of identity and differences versus the universality of the feminist perspective. It is expressed in many different forms: at the level of the diverse ethnic, sexual, generational, geographic, etc., expressions. It is also expressed in the question of how to grow from the specific and issue-oriented contributions brought on by diversity while incorporating at the same time the global vision necessary to convert specific visions into political visions that include the multiplicity of meanings and processes of transformation. Examples of these are the relationships established with the academic current of the movement, or with the ethnic or generational currents. It is true that we do not want universalist visions, but we also need to recognize some universal values, a common denominator - a flexible and inclusive political project - related to what it is we want to transform. In this sense, maybe the universal-global might be both the ideology and the feminist agenda with its multiple expressions, in a determined historic period.

A variation of this tension is that established between the networks and the rest of the movement. The articulation between both "spaces" is necessary and vital. The networks have contributed enormously not only in producing knowledge but also to the dynamic of the movement. But the networks would not have existed were it not for movement, in its multiple expressions and interests; if we had not organized the Gatherings, which tied us together and gave us common ground to articulate our thoughts, proposals and interests. In this sense, maybe the most significant aspect of the networks has been their ambivalence and the tension between their own agenda and the global agenda. This ambivalence and tension can be very creative and produced important contents on many occasions because the global does not advance without specifics that enrich it, that give it content and allow it to have a more complex vision of reality. However, it can also limit this vision by generating a corporatist view that is not articulated with a long-term political perspective.

These are the risks of a movement that accumulates experiences and wisdom, that generates a division of labor and that has to come up with strategies to articulate visions, perspectives and different points of view on how to go about modifying the multiples forms of subordination to which women are subjected.

The networks are fundamental in the process of connecting the determination of the different expressions of the movement in the region. Nevertheless, these connections do not come only from them, but from all of us. If we accept a broader definition of what it means to work

in a network, we can see that all of the expressions of the feminist movement in the region constitute a large network (a political domain identified by the specification of criteria solidly defined by mutual relevance or shared interest, according to Vicky Guzman); or a domain that contains multiple articulations, some of which are more visible than others, with permanent dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, and the permanent need for democratization and openness toward other expressions and subjects in order to avoid becoming an endogenous space.

In this way, "networking" is an effective form open to growth. If it is a self-referencing process or monopolized by only certain ideas it will be difficult to create a collective sense of acting on the differences - producing limitations, in terms of impact, feedback, radius of action, etc. - of isolated organizations.

### *Negotiations and Alliances*

There is a basic tension in analyzing this difficulty: the reformism/radicalism opposition that is expressed by the actions of the movement itself, as well as in civil society and the government.

Perhaps a first orientation refers to the need to overcome the opposition between the two terms or processes. If we overcome the old tendency of analyzing the world and processes through binary opposites we will have to recognize that reforms and radical transformations are part of the same process. One is a condition of the other, at least in the feminist movement. For women, modifying aspects of our subordination in the here and now will allow us to move closer to formulating radical proposals not only for ourselves, isolated, but for many more women, thereby generating a "foundation" that puts us on more equal footing to unfurl the processes of autonomy and empowerment. This reformism cannot be accomplished if we are missing a radicalness that nourishes it and constantly pushes it along. That is, the radicalness of our proposals needs to take shape in some aspects and in some form in the here and now, not only to offer us feedback on the feminist movement's ability to impact and transform but to influence the living conditions of millions of women whose lives may be a bit less subordinated. Achieving gender justice in the here and now in all the possible aspects is a political responsibility of all feminists. Following these same lines, holding on to radical proposals without the possibility of negotiating reforms is nothing more than fundamentalism.

Undoubtedly, an urgent discussion between the different expressions of the movement deals with what are the limits to our agreements; what is negotiable and what is non-negotiable for the different expressions of the movement; and what is our minimal political common denominator

for recognizing and moving forward with our differences? On this foundation we can outline feminist politics, the points of the feminist agenda that interest all of us and on which points we can coordinate efforts and strategies.

This possibility of minimum or maximum agreements among us is fundamental because we are faced with multiple forms of power, in multiple levels and relations. We need a way of relating among ourselves that allows us to confront the dominant powers at all levels, including in our own spaces. The game of forming alliances within the movement is fundamental because it allows us to combine and complement knowledge, experiences and skills. The radical changes proposed by the feminist movement in its different expressions need strategies for mutual reinforcement so that they have a greater chance of having an impact and achieving transformation.

Another fundamental discussion is addressing what are the limits to negotiation and alliances with other movements and other expressions of civil society and, of course, with specific governments. The experience of Beijing showed us that it is possible to form alliances with some sectors or expressions of the governments (generally women) without compromising the movement by supporting authoritarian governments or losing the perspective of autonomy.

Certainly, we cannot have complete or constant answers to these questions, but reflections that serve as a guide for political action.

### *The International*

At the regional level we have developed a creative articulation between the national and the regional levels that needs to be analyzed in light of this new vision. The networks are once again important here, as well as the six earlier Feminist Gatherings. This does not mean that there are no tensions that need to be addressed. They have manifested themselves at times in terms of geographic and sub-regional differences, or in competition between the new levels of development or experience of the feminist movement; in differences between the issue-oriented networks, between the networks and the national, sub-regional and even regional dynamics (and vice versa). We need to analyze the practices, as well as the prolonged tendency of the movement to look inward on itself and not to confront- share its feminist developments with what is happening in other regions and on other continents.

There are several points that need to be highlighted and reflected upon. Many of them are implicit in the struggles and strategies of women at the international level but, as Peter Waterman states, need to be explicitly discussed.

Perhaps the first point that needs to be considered is that in spite of the fact that globalization is the international expression of the new information and service-oriented capitalism it does not simply represent an imperialist project but, instead, the first truly global society in which the women's movement and other emancipation movements have the possibility - and necessity for the first time in history - to formulate their own alternative global projects.

This means, for example, overcoming the vision of the world in terms of binary opposites, such as the contents of the concepts "development" and "dependency," in order to move toward a vision of the world in global emancipationist terms. Only in these terms can we see the national, regional and global as increasingly interdependent. If the processes of domination operate at all levels then an effective struggle for emancipation has to articulate the struggles happening at all these different levels.

A second aspect is understanding for the same reasons that we need to enrich our vision of international solidarity, seen simply as solidarity/inter-relation between nations or nationalities, recognizing the multiple and complex dimensions this global solidarity can take. In the international feminist movement the dominant notions of solidarity have been those of "identity" (global sisterhood) and/or of "substitution" (in only one direction, like development aid). A more complex notion of solidarity includes a relationship of "complementarity," (contributions from different sources from different national or regional movements, for example), "reciprocity," (exchanging similar contributions among different expressions of the movement, for example), and "affinity," (among different expressions of the feminist movement with similar visions and desires, for example). All of these dimensions are present in our regional practices and it is worth setting aside space to analyze them.

Another important point is recognizing that today our movement, like all other emancipation movements with an international character, is a feminism of information that develops new ideas, values and images that are transmitted and connect us. As such, the feminist movement is not developed or articulated in a hierarchical or pyramid form, but is built in a decentralized, horizontal and flexible "networking."

### ***The Diversity Difficulty***

This is one of the oldest yet, at the same time, newest of feminist reflections. It is one of the most tenacious and complex knots, which is why this is only a first pass at discussing it. Within the movement it is still difficult for the majority expressions to stop thinking of difference as meaning "other;" as if "they" were the norm. Diversity and difference lead us to the inequalities among women, to other forms of

subordination, to differences in access, and citizenship that is restricted at multiple levels. It also brings us closer to a more complex view of gender, a perspective that is more articulated and less exclusive. How do we avoid simply adding other forms of discrimination to gender discrimination without recognizing, as the black feminists point out, that racism (or any other discrimination) not only increases the experience of oppression but makes it qualitatively different in form and content. In this sense, perhaps it would be better to talk about multiple identities in which one of them (not necessarily gender) at a determined historic moment has the flexibility to move forward a more profound questioning of all the systems of exclusion and discrimination - including gender - in one person. How do we avoid the recognition of difference becoming a good unto itself (there are differences that we do not want, that are not part of our utopia of transformation), or leading us toward infinite fragmentation where the dynamics of representation and articulation do not make sense.

## ***2. The Radical Feminist Agenda***

The radical feminist agenda belongs to no one and we are all contributing to it from our areas of action and reflection. Obviously, the radical agenda in this period needs to incorporate our experiences and the results from Beijing, in which a significant sector of the feminist movement participated. It also needs to incorporate, in a broad and open discussion, the knots and tensions that have already been mentioned and all of the others that feminists believe need to be addressed.

Because of this and within the framework of the knots and tensions already highlighted, I would like us to contribute to the agenda from two points of entry: the experience and tasks left us by Beijing, and our approximation to an ethic of solidarity.

### ***Beijing***

Where do we place Beijing in this concert of searches and ambivalence. Beijing was and is a "strategy" of a wide sector of feminists and feminist NGO's. It is NOT the feminist utopia, but it helps us prepare the terrain to get there. Beijing is a "text" and a "pretext." It is a "multiple strategy" with a specific end: the elaboration and approval of the Platform. At the same time, and above all, it is a method: To make visible the feminist proposals in the here and now in order to articulate a political will in a broad sector of the movement, or in the multiple expressions of the movement, to have a tool to apply political pressure on governments and society; to generalize for all women the minimum democratic initiatives needed to eliminate the most flagrant aspects of subordination.

We believe that Beijing is a "strategic agenda" of a broad sector of the region's feminist movement in the here and now. Assuming that Beijing was the pinnacle of all the gains that feminists have made in earlier conferences, then making these gains reality is also part of the agenda.

Our radical agenda, however, goes further, incorporating those aspects that were not included in the PAM, despite the proposals and pressure applied by the international feminist movement. Among these are economic justice and sexual rights in two basic expressions: abortion and sexual preference.

For some, these were the issues that caused the most controversy in Beijing. All of them are "tips of the iceberg" of much more profound phenomena. The lack of economic justice not only effects the majority sectors - both women and men - in all the countries of the region, but also adds to the existing forms of discrimination: gender, ethnic, generational, etc. And in each of these dramatic situations women continue to be the poorest of the poor and those who have the least amount of room to confront these situations. This reality also forms part of the interests of women because it is a precarious, reduced, undervalued and painful scenario for their interests as citizens.

Abortion, for its part, is in some ways a symbol of the current condition of women because within this issue, perhaps like in no other, are concentrated the crudest and most irrational forms of subordination and transgression of women's searches and resistance. On the one hand, it is a symbol of the archaic and obscurantist ideas surrounding women's sexuality, and, on the other hand, it is an expression of resistance without condition to a sexuality agreed upon and hypocritical.

To sum up this section, autonomy is achieved in two dimensions: in the ability to raise up our own agenda and an identity in the spaces for negotiation within the official public-political sphere; and in the ability to outline and move forward from civil society our own radical and subversive agenda (radical and subversive because it subverts the traditional agreement of our societies and the states, and because its resolution is central to any modification of the political-economic-cultural-ethnic logic of gender today).

This radical agenda constitutes a "feminist pole" that definitely contributes to making more visible the clear profile from which the movement can negotiate, pressure and form alliances in the official political sphere in order to implement the recommendations of the PAM.

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Editor's note: In Latin America, women's sexual and reproductive rights have been drastically limited by the influence of the Vatican and Christian Fundamentalists.

***Ethic of solidarity***

These are some of the initial ideas I hope will enrich our discussion. From the ethical position we can deepen the discussion of a substantial aspect: solidarity. Various feminists have already started to reflect on this, putting forth a few ideas that can serve as foundations for us. Jodi Dean talks about reflexive solidarity, which is like a bridge between identity and universalism. She includes as a pre-condition the mutual recognition of differences, overcoming the dualism of fixed definitions and positions, in order to look on the margins and in the areas at the limits of our concepts and discussions. It implies mutual expectations and is based on the intuition that the risk of disagreement that accompanies diversity should be rationally transformed to offer a base on which to establish inter-subjective ties and commitments. It is a process for building, with political will, clear rules and accountability.

For her part, Nancy Fraser talks about the "ethics of solidarity," alluding to the need - a political task in our language - to relearn the needs and hear the voices of others. Her proposal is based on the premise that (in a collective, in a political setting) manners of interpreting and communicating are not neutral, they express the experiences, interests and self-images of the dominant groups or the currents of the strongest force that, at the same time, inhibit other voices and forms of participation in equal conditions. She proposes moving from a single ethical logic to a dual ethical logic that implies recognizing the inequalities of position, access, forms of understanding and interpretation and negotiating alternatives.

Where do we fall in relation to this? How can we move forward an ethic of solidarity or reflexive solidarity among ourselves, toward the closest movement and toward the rest of the expressions of the broad movement of transformation that feminists are carrying forward in multiple spheres?

Well friends, these are some basic ideas that can help us structure the process of political discussion-reflection among us. I hope they excite you.

We thought that maybe this discussion could be organized in a workshop during the VII Feminist Gathering, something like the Workshop on the Radical Feminist Agenda. We could call the workshop:

"Feminist Odyssey 2001: Toward a Radical Feminist Agenda"????

I want to insist that these are only contributions to the discussion. If we manage to generate a good exchange of ideas, issues, opinions and differences in the months that separate us from the VII Gathering then we can make certain that our views are more complex. Let us add all of the issues you think are missing from these lines to the discussion. If you

know of anyone else who is interested and willing to embark on this collective reflection, they are welcome.

*Gina*  
*London, Aug. 20, 1996*