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CULTURAL STUDIES AND PLURAL FEMINISM IN NICARAGUAN FEMALE AUTHOR LITERATURE

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Abstract: The purpose of this analysis is to reflect on the relationships between Cultural Studies and Plural Feminisms present in literary texts by female authors, comprising the entire context of plurality of ethnicity, race, gender, class, belief and sexualities and political system. The literary text is a social practice and contemporary approaches have shown this with much evidence, as the boundaries between disciplinary territories are fluid, the questioning of places that produce knowledge are recurrent in contemporary times, as are the operational concepts responsible for the production of paradigms. and critical methodologies. In this sense, the main objective is to verify how Feminism was important for Cultural Studies throughout its constitution within the literature of female authorship and what the main ruptures within the literary canon were, taking as an example the works: *O país das mulheres* (2010) and *O olho da mulher* (2012), both written by Nicaraguan author Gioconda Belli. The specific objectives are to outline the theory of Cultural Studies in relation to Literature by female authorship and how the feminist movement around the world has contributed to the construction of critical consciousness in literature by female authorship. The methodology used is bibliographical and documentary, based mainly on Durão (2016); Hall (2009); Zinani (2013); Kolodny (2018), among others. It is hoped that with this reflection there will be more understanding of the importance of plural feminisms within the literature of female authorship.

Keywords: Cultural Studies; Literature by female authorship; plural feminisms.

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Works: *O país das mulheres* and *O olho da mulher*, by Gioconda Belli¹ open up possibilities of (re)thinking gender issues in contemporary society by critically observing the relationships between men and women within social practices, as well as a tangential place for other manifestations of gender, exemplified, either in lesbian women, in gay, transgender and transsexuals, queers, among others. In some moments of the narratives and poetry, there is a concern to meet the demands of gender, through the deconstruction of patriarchy, since all customs of oppression against women and men are modified in search of a utopia for equality, equity and education. for freedom, self responsibility, affection and mutual care.

The work: O país das mulheres was originally published in Nicaragua in Spanish in 2011 and in Portuguese in Brazil in 2011 by Editora Verus. The translation is by Ana Resende.

In this work, a team of women found the Erotic Left Party (PEE) and managed to elect Viviana Sansón, the first woman president of a Latin American country called Fágua, after 100 years of dictatorship. A whole oppression exercised by the masculine is destabilized, from the moment that the character Viviana Sansón manages to prove through the use of the printed and electronic media, that a member of the party of the wing of the dictators is a trafficker of girls.

[...] in the last hundred years, Faguas has received little attention from the United States. This situation changed last November, when a women's party, the now famous PEE, achieved a landslide victory in the country's presidential elections [...]" (EDITORIAL OF THE NEW YORK TIMES, BELLI, 2011, p. 127).

1. Gioconda Belli is 67 years old, born in Managua, Nicaragua, Central America, on December 9, 1948. She is a Nicaraguan poet and novelist who seeks in her poetic texts and narratives, to build scenarios with the voice of the revolutionary woman who is concerned with social issues and policies. She has written around 20 books, distributed among poetry, novels and novels. (BELLI, 2011, p.01).

In: *O olho da mulher*, first book of poetry by Gioconda Belli, published in Brazil in 2012, the collected poems express love, femininity, motherhood, politics, mythology, the sacred, exile, among other themes, in which women are not doomed to domestic life, but to a militant life within literature along with its relations with the world and with culture. In the words Lemos (2012 IN BELLI 2012, p.09):

The poetic word follows the entire trajectory of Belli (1948, Managua) and sets the tone for the most important moments of his life. Poetry is born together with militant affiliation, as literature and revolution simultaneously build their relationship with the world. In 1967, when she got married and soon became a mother, she realized that domestic life could not encompass her worries, and that the privileged environment of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie enveloped and suffocated her. Writing comes, therefore, as the gateway to a new horizon.

The problem reflected raises a particular 'look' on a trope that is recurrent in feminist dystopias or not, in these two works: the regulation of language and its materializations in contemporary times, focusing mainly on the inscriptions of gender that appear both in prose and in prose poems by Gioconda Belli.

The main objective is to verify how Feminism was important for Cultural Studies throughout its constitution within the literature of female authorship and what the main ruptures within the literary canon were, taking as an example the Works: *O país das mulheres* (2011) and *O olho da mulher* (2012), both written by Nicaraguan author Gioconda Belli. The specific objectives are to outline the theory of Cultural Studies in relation to Literature by female authorship and how the feminist movement around the world has contributed to the construction of critical consciousness in literature by female authorship.

In order to do so, some excerpts from the narrative of: "*o país das mulheres*" and three significant poems from "*O olho da mulher*" understanding the intersection of cultural studies and plural feminisms. The methodology used is bibliographical and documentary, based mainly on Durão (2016); Hall (2009); Zinani (2013); Kolodny (2018), among others. It is hoped that with this reflection there will be more understanding of the importance of plural feminisms within the literature of female authorship.

BRIEF CONTEXTUALIZATION OF "O PAÍS DAS MULHERES" (WOMEN COUNTRY) AND O "OLHO DA MULHER" (WOMAN EYE)

The central character Viviana Sansón in "*O país das mulheres*" wins the elections against her opponent Emiliano Montero, as she unmasks the atrocities of the party of the wing of dictators, managing to publish this news in the printed newspapers of the country and in the United States, making denunciations against Roberto Jiménez, member of the current dictatorial policy and magistrate of the Supreme Court of the Presidential Palace. Most of the population, made up of women, chooses Viviana Sansón, besides that, there is also a geographic accident caused by the boiling of a volcano having come into activity and emitting black smoke in the country. This also caused, according to laboratory tests, a decrease in male libido, generating in men, a weakening of the level of the male hormone testosterone, causing them to become "tame". The particular weakening was "discovered through new and complex laboratory tests indicating that the gases from the volcano were responsible for the effect that unexpectedly blessed Fágua with a masculine meekness never seen before (BELLI, 2011, p. 33).

The revenge proposed by the Party of the Erotic Left (PEE), represented by the leader

Viviana Sansón and the companions Eva Salvatierra, Martina Meléndez, Rebeca de los Ríos and Ifigênia Porta is the practice of the utopia of “felicism”, whose greatest innovation is the introduction of the concept of “caregiving” in which all women and men are “caregivers”, that is, “caregivers of the homeland as if it were everyone’s home”, (BELLI, 2011, p. 37), characterizing themselves as a very characteristic 2nd wave feminist utopia in which women came together politically and fought for their rights. Furthermore, education is put at the service of freedom, men and women have an equal position starting from education, that is, in addition to subjects such as grammar and science, for example, men and women would have “motherhood” classes: “men became doctors in changing diapers [...] they didn’t have to beat their children” (BELLI, 2011, p. 48) and democracy is really put into practice. As for acts of violence against women, rapists are displayed in public places, in cells similar to cages, where people who visit them make suggestions on how the perpetrators of this violence must be punished, whether by castration, life imprisonment, scourging, lynching or death and on their foreheads every reason for their arrest is displayed followed by the letter (E) meaning “Rapist”.

Thus, the government of the Erotic Left Party (PEE), opts for the expulsion of all men from political positions and only women occupy all positions in all spheres, whether in politics, education, culture, economy, safety and health. Men are left only with domestic care; and, “letting women work alone in the government confirmed her intuition that, left to their own devices, without the male eye to evaluate them and make judgments” (BELLI, 2011, p. 156).

In general, the narrative takes place in the 3rd person singular and, in free indirect speeches, with the presence of dialogues

between the characters about a team of united women who founded the Partido da Esquerda Erótica (PEE), in the Latin American country called Fágua, which defeats the dictatorial and corrupt culture carried out by men in democratic elections with the population.

In: *O olho da mulher* 137 poems are gathered in which various themes are expressed that provoke the reader from the perspective of the female gender, as a social, political and cultural construction. Poems that intertwine the sacred, the political, the maternal, love, care, among other human spheres. In this article, the prose poem: “Quem és, Nicaragua?” because this portrays something recurring also in: *O país das mulheres*.

According to Lemos (2012) the poetics of Gioconda Belli in: *O olho da mulher* oscillates between the intimate chronicle of political and social struggles and sensual, erotic, maternal poetry, in which the body is understood as nature, land, reproduction, jouissance and, at the same time, letters and weapons that join the collective in the Sandinista guerrilla against the Somozist dictatorship that lasted 45 years. Belli, in addition to being a writer, is a middle-class woman from Nicaragua who has always fought against the dynasty of the dictatorship of the Somoza family, who ruled Nicaragua in a dynastic way and allied with Augusto César Sandino, leader of the rebellion against the US military presence in Nicaragua between the period of dictatorship in this country.

CULTURAL STUDIES AND PLURAL FEMINISM IN FEMALE AUTHOR LITERATURE

In Cultural Studies, what matters are the ruptures with the old currents of thought, carrying out a regrouping of new and old premises in order to reflect on themes never seen before. The changes that have taken place in social, cultural and economic issues, among

others, have brought about transformations in all sectors. As stated by Hall (2009, p. 123) “such changes in perspective reflect not only the results of the intellectual work itself, but also the way in which developments and true historical transformations are appropriated in thought”. In this context, it is observed that literary productions and literary criticism also appropriate social transformations in the way they materialize.

The literary text is a social practice and contemporary approaches have shown this with much evidence, as the boundaries between disciplinary territories are fluid, the questioning of places that produce knowledge are recurrent in contemporary times, as are the operational concepts responsible for the production of paradigms. and critical methodologies.

Kolodny's thinking (IN BRANDÃO, 2017) is fundamental because in the essay The “minefield” is easily seen in the face of hegemonic and heterosexual aesthetic criteria, unilateral interpretive strategies, reading habits guided by prejudiced views present in traditionalist literary criticism. It is a search for a language of their own, a style, a voice, an appropriate structure to face the “minefield”, where feminist critics had to ‘dance’ to find a space where they could insert their voices and be somehow, heard.

Kolodny shows that it is possible to work with female authorship as a legitimate field of research and to understand that the way a literary text is apprehended can be re-learned and reconstructed and that although changes are not easy and cause a certain ‘threat’ to established places, it is increasingly necessary that scholars can deepen their studies, ‘mining’ old works ‘shelved’ in the ‘basements’ of history, after all, Kolodny questions the literary canon and, at the same time, sees the “minefield” of interpretive practices hitherto carried out in literary

works, especially those written by women. This extends to the writings of lesbian women, which are silenced in the literary canon.

Classical and canonical literary criticism is wrong in stating that Cultural Studies would relegate literature to a secondary position, however, the scope that literature assumes as a social practice is not visualized, as it goes beyond formal, aesthetic aspects., classics.

Contemporary literary criticism has acted in several aspects, especially to understand, welcome and analyze the disagreements, contradictions and conflict zones existing in past and current literary productions, showing itself to be a field of possibilities and, at the same time, in permanent crisis.

In the words of Durão (2016, p. 98) “whoever starts to systematically study literature today is soon faced with the existence of so-called critical currents”. Modern literary criticism began with Russian formalism, focused on structuralism and post-structuralism and more recently, from the second half of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century, with the theoretical aspects that bring political concerns. This is the case of feminist literary criticism, as it has at its root the awareness of gender oppression; and Cultural Studies point this out as of unique importance since it was through this condition of resistance to gender oppression that feminist literary criticism became plural and broke with all theoretical legacies that did not visualize the issues of gender, class, race, ethnicity, between others.

Feminist literary criticism was responsible for rereading the entire history of literature as related to the male domain. The absence of female writers in the literary canon was questioned; the creation of female characters that only served the stereotypes of good behavior and the supremacy of male values as

hegemonic. Furthermore, studies of blackness in the universe of black feminism bring the voice of black women silenced by the literary canon; queer, gay, lesbian, transgender militancy criticizes latent sexual impulses in classical texts and in contemporary texts, more and more writers affirm their sexualities in a political way and away from ties (DURÃO, 2016).

Zinani (2004) shows that the deconstruction of patriarchal discourse in the voice of feminist discourse expresses a new social and symbolic order projecting a new aesthetic of feminine character in literature and this becomes a very important political data for the transformation of society.

[...]Through the deconstruction of the patriarchal discourse, the voice of the female figure starts to be heard, allowing her to reveal her experience and express a new social and symbolic order, whose parameters reveal the universe of women, with the intention of projecting an aesthetic with feminine character, insofar as this universe is represented in the literature, and which can become an influential political element in the transformation of existing power systems. (ZINANI, 2004, p. 4)

Hence the importance of feminist literary criticism, as it provoked ruptures within Cultural Studies and this was fundamental. It is known that the origin of Cultural Studies took place from the criticism of orthodox Marxism, eliminating reductionism, trying to pay attention to the thesis that in the word culture, there are fundamental questions present in historical changes in industry, democracy and social classes., because culture is permeated by all social practices.

The struggle of women continues, because even if patriarchal institutions are transformed, male domination remains, because within feminism itself, patriarchy is understood as being just one of the historical manifestations of male domination. It

is customarily stated in contemporary discourses of common sense, whether in the media as a whole, in certain political discourses that the feminist platform is outdated by the fact that many women already have access to education, political rights, formal equality in marriage. and having a massive presence in the labor market, however, as Miguel (2014, p. 245) states “the evidence of the permanence of male domination is abundant, but mechanisms that produce inequalities that always operate to the disadvantage of women remain in action”.

THE COUNTRY OF WOMEN AND WOMEN EYE IN THE RELATIONSHIP OF CULTURAL STUDIES AND PLURAL FEMINISM

The soap opera: *O país das mulheres*, by the Nicaraguan author Gioconda Belli was released in Nicaragua in 2010 and in Brazil in 2011. It brings the theme of the presence of women in the governance of a country that is always recurring in the author's work, which she calls Fágua. Particularly, in this work, it is shown how a group of women manages to reach the governance of this country, thanks to the union of five companions in the struggle who founded the PEE (Party of the Erotic Left): Viviana Sansón; Eva Salvatierra; Martina Meléndez, Rebeca de los Ríos and Iphigenia Porta. The first, Viviana Sansón, manages to prove, through documents published in the country's press and recorded in the book, in the form of historical materials, the trafficking in girls carried out by the opposing party, a representative of the secular dictatorship led by Emiliano Montero. After publications in the country's newspapers, even in the US press, Viviana Sansón manages to get the strength to be elected the first president elected by direct vote after 100 years of dictatorship in that country. The book brings elements of magical

realism in the narrative, with the symbology of how the smoke of a “volcano” was able to make men more “meek and docile” and let themselves be carried away by the voice of women. An entire utopian scenario is built that takes place in practice, detailing how men, in particular, began to see the real possibility of a party formed only by women ruling a country marked by patriarchal violence.

The group of women led by Viviana Sansón, upon arriving at the governance of the country, establishes that no man would be part of the political, social, economic life of the country, as they would have to feel firsthand what it is like to work only at home, taking care of their children. Women would be given full powers so that they could occupy all the political positions that a society has, including the military.

In this sense, a utopia is built for the exercise of women within political-social and economic decisions and a dystopia for men, as they would have no right to work outside the home. They would only be given the right to care for their sons and daughters. The author in this Nicaraguan novel builds a utopia for women and a dystopia for men. The character Viviana Sansón, 40 years old, a woman of

enviable physique: light brown body and firm swimmer [...] heritage of the mulatto father, who had never met - and the thin face with delicate features of the mother [...] wore a black T-shirt with a deep neckline, between the which the full breasts stood out, whose usefulness only started to accept after he entered politics (BELLI, 2011, p.12)

In her second term as president of Fágua, after a speech given on the inauguration day, she was unexpectedly hit by a bullet from a revolver delivered by a man “with a blue truck driver’s cap that opened space among the crowd” (BELLI, 2011, p. 14) that fired the bullet towards her brain. The scene was visualized by a gentleman named José de la Arithmetica and who will be the main witness

of the character’s attempted murder. After this scene detailed in the first chapter of the book, Viviana goes to the hospital and stays in a coma throughout the book, waking up only at the end of the book, when she gives a speech reflecting on the decision to put only women in the government of Fágua. In the coma period, the omniscient 3rd person narration demonstrates Viviana’s memories regarding her love life with Emir, her great love and her relationship with her daughter, Celeste, at the same time with the political and feminist issues in Fágua.

It can be seen that this work by Belli (2011) brings questions present around the feminist movements of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th waves worldwide, especially in Latin America, as it emphasizes the recognition of being a woman, in an essentialist way, but it also observes women in political practice, their pains and their challenges in the face of the obstacles faced historically as a result of the constant need to fight against the oppressive force of patriarchy. Influences from feminists such as Adrienne Rich; Sherry Orther; Betty Friedman; Kate Millet; Simone Beauvoir and writers such as Virginia Wolf echo Belli’s work. A country governed by women is built in order to deconstruct a patriarchy and build a society of equality and equity of rights for women, making men feel in their “skin” what it is like to be a woman in a patriarchal society, placing them outside political, social, cultural and cultural decisions. This dystopian revenge for men generated resentment, but as the speech in the last chapter of the book highlighted, it was the only possibility that men recognized the value of women and that women themselves also realized the value they have.

[...] I returned lucid from the room with the Always Present Memories. I didn’t get lost along the way. I returned with my memory intact and with the strange ability not to forget what is in the shed of forgotten things

that is time. [...] Reading the fanciful stories of people waking up from a coma with the power to see the future or see ghosts and the like, I laughed with Emir at how petty my coma turned out to be. [...], but it is necessary to see how much it is possible to learn from the past. [...] I do not regret the folly of sending men home and removing them from the state public service. I admit it was an extreme measure. Fortunately, Fágua, being a small country, could afford to artificially create this laboratory carried out in the Government of Viviana, in which we mix identities and roles according to our will. (emphasis added) I paid a price. I would not dare to propose this experience as an essential requirement for society to recognize women and women above all to recognize themselves, but what I do know is that, in my country, this meant a profound change that was worth it. (BELLI, 2011, p. 220)

The struggle for women's rights in this telenovela, however, demonstrates a universal struggle that acts only on being a woman and seems at first not to give prominence to other fundamental issues for the struggle of feminism, as is the case of black feminism., for example. It is understood that Belli's production regarding Plural Feminisms approaches a woman's struggle for the nation and equality, with women within the entire decolonization process, but as Akotirene (2019, position:) states: 83 *kindle*):

[...] the political challenge is to reject any elitist literary expectations [...] that are short-sighted for the ancestral grammar of Africa and the diaspora. [...] it is imperative for activism, including theoretical, to conceive the existence of a modern colonial matrix whose power relations are imbricated in multiple dynamic structures, all of which deserve political attention. Combined, they will require from the victimized groups: 1. Conceptual instrumentality of race, class, nation and gender; 2. Interpretive sensitivity of identity effects; 3. Global attention to the modern colonial matrix, avoiding analytical deviation to just one axis of oppression.

In the poetry book: *O olho da mulher* (2012) it can be seen that the author demonstrates this will to fight for women in society, but this appears in a universal way, as the poems bring the militant affiliation of the woman who fights for her recognition, that domestic life cannot encompass her worries nor bourgeois life can suffocate this woman.

Who are you, Nicaragua?

Who are you
but an earth triangle
lost in half the world?

Who are you
but a flight of birds

Guardabarrancos
Cenzontles
Colibris

Who are you
but a noise of rivers
taking with them the polished and shiny
stones
leaving water footprints on the hills?
Who are you
but a woman's breasts made of earth,
smooth, pointy and menacing?

Who are you
but a singing of leaves in giant trees
green, tangled and full of doves?

Who are you
but pain and dust and screams in the
afternoon,
- "women's cries, as in childbirth" -?

Who are you, Nicaragua
if not a clenched fist and a bullet in the
mouth?

Who are you, Nicaragua,
to hurt me so much?

(BELLI, 2012, p. 76-77)

It can be seen that the struggle of women as a political being is the greatest battle of author Gioconda Belli. It is a struggle that materializes the oppression that Nicaragua suffers from the suffering that women as a human being face, as a result of the pain they experience in a patriarchal society that oppresses all spheres of women, from the most subjective possible, to the political, economic and social.

CONSIDERATIONS

In view of what has been discussed in this article, it appears that the first waves of Feminism, especially the 1st, 2nd and 3rd waves, are characteristic of the writings of: *O país das mulheres* and *O olho da mulher*, by Gioconda Belli, as it demonstrates the voice of the woman who fights politically, either through literature or in arms, in search of a more egalitarian society, however, it is also necessary to observe in Belli's writing, the issues of equity, that are from the struggle of class, race, ethnicity, gender, belief, sexualities.

In reading these literary productions by Gioconda Belli, one can see how important the relationship between Cultural Studies and Feminism is and vice versa in the context of literature by female authors, because through this intense relationship, it is possible to deconstruct stereotypes and build critical consciousness through of ironies within the narratives and poetic verses.

It is interesting to point out, however, that it is necessary to expand the feminist struggle to a perspective without binarisms

between men and women, in a struggle closer to that of equity, because in this sense, there will be a greater sense of justice criteria that adapt the rule to a specific case in order to make it fairer, in an equity of gender, class, race, ethnicity, belief and sexualities, among others.

It is believed that Gioconda Belli's writings are very important provocations for Feminist Studies, for Cultural Studies, for Latin America, for the whole world.

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