



Violence and gender in “Violentada”, a short story by Rafael Gallo, and in Adelaide Ivánova’s poetry

Violencia y género en el cuento “Violentada”, de Rafael Gallo y en poemas de Adelaide Ivánova

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Abstract

Violence against women is a global public health issue, but only recently its eradication became a prominent goal in the international human rights organizations’ agenda. Yet this topic is not a current theme in contemporary Brazilian literature, as pointed out by the main researches in the field (Dalcastagnè, 2010), a symptom of the invisibility of this issue in our society. From the analysis of the short story “Violentada” [“Raped”], by the Brazilian author Rafael Gallo, published in 2012, this article seeks to reflect on the portrayal of violence against women in contemporary Brazilian literature of male authorship by discussing the various types of violence suffered by the main character in light of gender studies, studies on violence and feminist literary criticism. In order to reflect on the social perspective of both authors (Young, 2006) and the representation of violence against women, this article presents as a counterpoint poems by Adelaide Ivánova, published in the book *O martelo* [“The Hammer”] (2017), which address the subject of rape.

Keywords: Violence against women, rape, Adelaide Ivánova, Rafael Gallo, Contemporary Brazilian literature.

Resumen

La violencia contra las mujeres puede considerarse un problema de salud pública a nivel global. No obstante, su erradicación solo ha comenzado a comprenderse como parte fundamental de la agenda de las organizaciones internacionales para los derechos humanos desde tiempos recientes. Esta cuestión no resulta recurrente en la actualidad literaria brasileña, como ha sido señalado por algunos de los más importantes investigadores del campo (Dalcastagnè, 2010), un síntoma claro de la invisibilidad de este problema en la sociedad actual. A partir del análisis del relato corto “Violentada”, escrito en 2012 por el autor brasileño Rafael Gallo, este artículo pretende reflexionar acerca de la representación de la violencia contra la mujer en la actualidad literaria brasileña de autoría masculina, principalmente a través del análisis de los distintos tipos de violencia ejercidas sobre la protagonista de la obra desde la perspectiva de los estudios de género, los estudios de violencia y la crítica literaria feminista. Como contrapunto, con el objetivo de reflexionar acerca de la perspectiva social de ambos autores (Young, 2006) y de la representación de la violencia contra las mujeres, este artículo se servirá de algunos de los poemas publicados por Adelaide Ivánova en el libro *O martelo* (2017), centrado en el acto de la violación.

Palabras clave: Violencia contra la mujer, estupro, Adelaide Ivánova, Rafael Gallo, literatura brasileña contemporánea.

*but the singing nightingale
is the male nightingale.*
(Adelaide Ivánova)

The World Health Organization estimates that over one-third of women worldwide (35%) suffered physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner or sexual violence by a stranger at some point in their lives (The World's Women 2015, p. 142). Presented in "The World's Women" report of 2015, these data reveal the worldwide magnitude of violence against women. In Brazil, according to the 2015 Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública ["2015 Brazilian Yearbook of Public Safety"], 47,643 cases of rape were registered nationwide in the year of 2014, which means one rape was committed every 11 minutes. It is important to highlight that the statistics do not take into consideration many cases that have not been reported to the police, which would further increase these figures. As stated by the technical report "Rape in Brazil" (Cerqueira y Coelho, 2014), published by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) in 2014, it is estimated that only 10% of all the cases of rape are brought to the attention of the police. As the anthropologist Débora Diniz states in an article published in the newspaper O Estado de S. Paulo (2013):

Rape is offensive to women not only because her body is possessed by the pleasure and the desire to torture of the aggressor, but mainly because it alienates us from the only possible existential experience: that of the body itself. A woman victimized by rape is not just someone whose honor was tainted, as early twentieth-century lawmakers believed when they decriminalized abortion by rape, but also someone temporarily alienated from her own existence. Honor, dignity, autonomy are ignored by the rapist, it is true. But the rape goes even further: it is a violent act of demarcation of women's guts by the patriarchy. It is real and symbolic. It acts not only on every female victim, but on all women subjected to the regime of domination.

In the classic feminist work *Against Our Will* (1975), Susan Brownmiller presents a complex reflection on how rape has been used as a weapon against women since Prehistoric times. She supports Diniz's assertion when she states that rape "is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear" (Brownmiller, 1975: 15). Although we are aware that not all men are rapists, what you can gather from Brownmiller's assertion is that the ever-present possibility of being raped keeps women in a state of constant apprehension whenever she walks down the streets alone at night and in other everyday situations. In this sense, fear is an important instrument of domination, with which women learn to live early on. For Brownmiller (1975: 16), it is exactly this feeling of vulnerability that has led women to seek male protection from a monogamous relationship, thereby asserting their dependence and accepting the domestic space as safe and protected, even though it is known today that it is precisely in the domestic space where most cases of violence against women take place. Still according to her, it is from this idea of male protection that was also created the notion that a crime committed against a woman's body would actually be a crime against male honor and property, one of the myths surrounding rape addressed by Rafael Gallo's short story,

which will be analyzed next.

VIOLENCE AND LITERATURE

Based on the idea presented by the critic Antonio Candido in *O direito à literatura* ["The Right to Literature"] (1988), in which literature is a universal necessity, something that "shapes the feelings and vision of the world, organizing us and freeing us from chaos and, therefore, humanizing us" (Candido, 2011: 88), this article seeks to analyze how literature, with its humanizing potential, which has much to do with the struggle for human rights, can "develop in us the humanity quota that makes us more understanding and open to nature, society, and alike" (Candido, 2011: 282). From the analysis of the short story "Violentada" ["Raped"], by the Brazilian author Rafael Gallo, published in 2012, this article seeks to reflect on the portrayal of violence against women in contemporary Brazilian literature of male authorship by discussing the various types of violence suffered by the main character in light of gender studies, studies on violence and feminist literary criticism. In order to reflect on the social perspective of both authors (Young, 2006) and the representation of violence against women, this article presents as a counterpoint poems by Adelaide Ivánova, published in the book *O martelo* [*The Hammer*] (2017), which address the subject of rape.

For researcher Regina Dalcastagnè (2010: 40): "Contemporary narrative is a particularly fertile field for analyzing the problem of representation (as a whole) of women in Brazil today". In addition to revealing that Brazilian literature is mostly written by men (72.7% of the authors) and about men (62.1% of the characters are male), the research¹ coordinated by Dalcastagnè shows that the lower is the presence of women among the producers of novels, the less visibility they have in the works produced. This study also revealed the lack of stories revolving around important issues, such as abortion, fertility, and domestic violence (Dalcastagnè 2010, p. 61). Thus, based on the observation of Rita Terezinha Schmidt in the essay "Mulher e literatura" ["Woman and Literature"] (2017: 40):

It is assumed that literary art maintains a dialectical relationship with non-verbal reality, with the reality situated outside the linguistic universe. The literary work does not inhabit an ideal world, but a real world from which it feeds and in which it acts, reflecting and interpreting the same and, thus, influencing ideas, values and action.

Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the ideas and discourses present in literature, as well as the social perspectives of the authors, especially when they explicitly address the issue of gender violence. The story chosen for this analysis was published in the book *Réveillon e outros dias* [*New Year's Eve and other days*] (2012), by Brazilian writer Rafael Gallo. Entitled "Violentada" ["Raped"], it tells the story of a heterosexual couple's conflict. They have just left, amidst a torrential rain, the city's police station in which they made a report because the woman, whose name is not mentioned, had been raped. The fact that the

¹ Research "Character mappings of Brazilian novels: 1970s, 1990s", carried at University of Brasília, between 2004 and 2006.

female character is not named is already an indication of the social perspective presented in the narrative, since Pedro, the fiancé, can no longer see himself in a relationship with a rape survivor due to the violence she suffered. The absence of the character's name also points to the women's invisibility before such brutal violence. The delicate subject of rape and its consequences for women is soon addressed: "In the first moment alone with her after the event, the fiancé only remained silent, as if all words were dead. Did he expect anything from her? There was nothing else to be pulled out" (Gallo 2012: 608). Emptied in the eyes of the fiancé, with no personality whatsoever, she becomes merely a body profaned by another.

In her analysis of political representation, identity, and minorities, Iris Young (2006: 162) defines social perspective stating that "people with different positions have different experiences, stories, and social understandings derived from that positioning". From these different social positions, people will also understand the world, its social events and its consequences in a unique way. For Young, social perspectives derive from the social constructions we make of ourselves and of others, in different situations and contexts. Each positioning, or rather, each social perspective results in a distinct capacity to "interpret the meaning of actions, rules and structures in different ways" (Young, 2006: 162).

In the short story the questionings made by the narrator when he asks "Could he estimate the weight that was on her? *Some things a man does not reach*" (Gallo 2012: 603) relates to Iris Young's thought on social perspective, demonstrating that Pedro, the victim's fiancé, might not reach the magnitude of the suffering and pain felt by his bride. After leaving the police station, Pedro's discomfort in the silent presence of his fiancée in the car and his impassive attitude towards the suffering of others reveal an absence of love, because, as the narrator says, "To love is to cross to the other side. He would not even move" (Gallo, 2012: 629). They also reveal that Pedro's worries about the rape are selfish and trivial, since he is more concerned with his honor than with the real sorrow that afflicts his bride. Alongside, we can establish that Susan Brownmiller's (1975: 17) understanding of rape as an aggression against male honor is still a very present idea in contemporary times.

Everything becomes even more complicated when the bride breaks the silence to search for support and asks if he will still be able to love her after that fateful day, in other words, if he will still marry her.² The focus then turns to the feelings of Pedro and what goes on in his mind:

He was not ready for this inquisition. Not now. Something in him had also been hurt, he was also suffering. Although the rape had not occurred in his own body, it was as if he was linked to her body, somehow sharing part of the brutality. Her body was his: his home. His home was invaded, attacked, robbed. It was impossible to repay the theft. A man feels differently from a woman. He had also been thrown to another place, was also lost, bruised; and

she, entangled in his wound, was struggling, crying out for help (Gallo, 2012: 634).

This last passage allows us to reflect on the idea of a woman's body as an object, seen by men as their property, as a real territory of dispute, in the words of Rita Segato (2014). The suffering Pedro feels is not based on the violence suffered by his bride, but based on the fact that his body-territory, a term coined by Segato, was invaded by another, something that strikes him in his sick manhood. The feeling of guilt soon takes over the victim, reiterated by the groom's behavior in face of the new situation in which they find themselves. Therefore, one can observe the naturalization of guilty behavior that has always been associated with women:

He began by wondering how he would react if the crime had been another. He realized that if she had been beaten, for example, if she were on a hospital bed now, it would be simpler for him. Even if the damage to her body had been more severe, it would still be easier to deal with. A knife-strike or a punch would not bring this astringent taste of erotic sin – it would be pure aggression; there would be no communion, no carnal pleasure gained by the other. The other, who could mock him forever in his nightmares. He stopped wondering when he came across his unfortunate notion that even if the criminal had inserted a knife into her vagina - mutilating it inside - it would be less repulsive to him. But the sex, the flesh penetrated by flesh... the shared body... this was unbearable. (Gallo, 2012: 679-685).

In *Rape: Sex, Violence, History* (2007) the historian Joanna Bourke delves deeper into the subject and discusses some relevant points on the subject of rape and its representation in her work. In her study of sexual violence in England, the United States and Australia, Joanna Bourke (2007: 7) analyzes the problem of sexual violence from the perspective of the perpetrators, which the author herself claims to be a challenge. First because, by focusing on their stories, they are humanized (which, on the other hand, Bourke states it helps to demystify the idea that they are "monsters", something always exploited by the media); secondly because this may reinforce a dichotomy that associates masculinity with aggression and femininity with passivity, which reduces women to victimhood. Bourke argues that the idea that relates masculinity to aggression is constructed and, as such, is susceptible to change, to a reconstruction. For the author (Bourke, 2007: 7) "rape and sexual violence are deeply rooted in specific political, economic and cultural environments". As well as other researchers, Bourke highlights the very definition of rape as one of the main challenges, as well as the concept of violence, since both are subject to different interpretations according to the times, the context and the culture. Beginning with the idea that "linguistic practices give meaning to bodies" (Bourke, 2007: 10), she reflects on masculinity, myths and the prevalence of rape in these societies throughout history, noting that "rapists are not born, they become" (2007: 18).

Rafael Gallo's short story, however, does not discuss the perpetrator's perspective, but shows the impact of this violence on the victim's life, addresses the stigma surrounding sexual violence that remains strong in our culture, and raises some myths about rape, also discussed by Bourke (2007) in her study. In the following excerpt, one of Pedro's dialogues

2 In Colette Dowling's *Cinderella Complex* (2012), originally published in 1982, the author points out how women, in the most varied contexts, feed what she calls the "desire for salvation", in other words, the "psychological dependence: the unconscious desire for the care of others" (2012: 27). Even after suffering the brutal violence of a rape, the character of the tale maintained the marriage as her main concern.

with his bride after they left the police station, the question of guilt over the victim is addressed by him:

"I know it was not your fault."

"And you still do not want to marry me, do you?"

"Is that... is that ... it's always going to be this, you know?! I'll always know... I'll keep remembering it all the time. What happened can never go back. It will always be this... this...". (Gallo 2012: 658).

For sociologists Wania Pasinato and Eva Blay (2018), "The fear, the ignorance about police procedures and the institutions' lack of professionalism when receiving reports are some of the factors highlighted when it comes to saying that women still suffer without seeking institutional help". Seeing history as a justification for the low rate of reports in the countries she surveyed, Bourke (2007: 27-28) notes that legal and medical books and manuals, all written by men, have contributed significantly to perpetuating some misconceptions about women and rape that still circulates in our society today, and help to discourage and inhibit women from filing a report due to the stigma so widespread in popular culture. The idea that "false" charges of women against "good" men were endemic circulated in books, spreading disbelief in women's reports, as well as other absurd ideas recorded by Bourke (2007: 33), such as hysteria or menstruation itself, then used as arguments to delegitimize the complaints of girls and women and condemn them, since many were hospitalized as insane for threatening their family and the religious belief.

Moreover, as noted by Bourke (2007: 32), medical disbelief in children's claims, especially if they came from the working class, only demonstrates that the intersection between gender and social class (and also race) is indispensable when discussing violence against women, since this kind of greater disregard for the poor only made violence against them even more common, making them more vulnerable to many of the violence they suffered and, because they were aware of their invisibility to the eyes of health institutions and the justice system, making it even more difficult for the perpetrators to be exposed and denounced, once the victims knew they would be socially considered unfairly as "guilty".

In Rafael Gallo's story (2012), it is possible to observe the persistence of these myths, even today, as they are continually revitalized by the male gaze in face of violence and constantly reproduced by different media outlets. In this sense, the story registers a double violation against this unnamed woman that could be any of us: first, the rape violation that constitutes a brutal trauma to the victim; second, the symbolic and emotional violation committed by the groom, someone she loved and trusted, and that leaves her and judges her for a crime to which she survived:

As if he was finishing the work started by that other man, he violated parts of her that the criminal could never reach. Not even by killing her or opening her body would the rapist have access to what only the beloved man could touch. This, it was precisely this man - her fiancé - who violated, who wounded her deeply. (Gallo, 2012: 690).

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN A. IVÁNOVA'S POETRY

Based on the concept of social perspective proposed by Iris Young and mostly on the statement that "it is especially when they are located on different sides of the structural relationships of inequality that people understand these relationships and their consequences in different ways" (Young, 2006: 162), we seek to oppose the male perspective presented in the story, which privileges the point of view not of the victim or the perpetrator, but of a third person, to some of the poems by Brazilian poet Adelaide Ivánova, published in the book *O martelo [The Hammer]* (2017). In her work, characterized by a strong feminist verve, the poet portrays the social perspective of women, especially in face of everyday violence, seeking to subvert the hegemonic narrative about the feminine universe and give voice to the daily suffering lived by women, regardless of race, class, age, ethnicity or origin. Despite her focus on the narrative and the perspectives presented by the women's point of view, Ivánova is able to criticize violence against women without reinforcing the category of passive victims, since she brings an always questioning and ironic take on the different situations described in her poems.

The first poem, "O urubu" ["The Vulture"], recreates a scene similar to the one narrated in Rafael Gallo's short story, but here the woman, a rape victim, is being examined by male doctors at the legal medical institute, and faces the lack of sensitivity during the procedure. In addition to being a rape victim, the poetic persona of the poem undergoes a new violence - symbolic and institutional - when seeking care after the event. In the poem, The objectification of the female body by the male looks of the doctors is striking, as it indicates the non-recognition of women as a life deserving of mourning and care, of the idea of precariousness of life, in the words of Judith Butler (2015):

the vulture

body of crime is
the expression used
for the cases of
infringement where there is
on-site event marks
infractional
making the body
a place and of crime
an adjective the exam
consists in seeing and being
seen (parties also
consist of this)
lying on a stretcher with
four doctors around me
talking at the same time
about mucous membranes to strike
the lack of disposable cups
and deciding before my legs
open if after
expedition they would all go to the bar
the doctor of the institute
of legal medicine wrote his report
without looking at my face

and talking on the phone
 me and the doctor have a body.
 and at least one other thing in common:
 we love to talk on the phone and go to the bar.
 the doctor is a person
 deals with dead and living women
 (which he calls parts)
 with things.
 (Ivánova 2017: 25)

o urubu

corpo de delito é
 a expressão usada
 para os casos de
 infração em que há
 no local marcas do evento
 infracional
 fazendo do corpo
 um lugar e de delito
 um adjetivo o exame
 consiste em ver e ser
 visto (festas também
 consistem disso)
 deitada numa maca com
 quatro médicos ao meu redor
 conversando ao mesmo tempo
 sobre mucosas a greve
 a falta de copos descartáveis
 e decidindo diante de minhas pernas
 abertas se depois do
 expediente iam todos pro bar
 o doutor do instituto
 de medicina legal escreveu seu laudo
 sem olhar pra minha cara
 e falando no celular
 eu e o doutor temos um corpo
 e pelo menos outra coisa em comum:
 adoramos telefonar e ir pro bar
 o doutor é uma pessoa
 lida com mortos e mulheres vivas
 (que ele chama de peças)
 com coisas.
 (Ivánova, 2017: 25)

The second poem also presents the perspective of another person, or rather, of another woman about a female victim of violence. The clerk, hearing possibly the account of the violence narrated by the victim, questions her and blames her, reproducing the symbolic and structural violence of the patriarchal culture that punishes women with judgments and doubts, instead of protecting or doing them justice. In the following poem, the figure responsible for this oppression is a woman, corroborating with what Flavia Biroli and Luis Felipe Miguel state in *Feminismo e Política [Feminism and Politics]* (2014: 14): “gender relations impact the experience, but the exercise of power - as well as the forms of domination and exploitation - also occurs internally to the group ‘women’”. The “pig” in the title, which refers to the popular term “chauvinistic pig”, indicates that women also reproduce sexism from the society they are inserted in. It also points to institutional violence, since the people who

should aid victims are not prepared to deal with such cases, creating further obstacles to new reports and spreading myths such as the disbelief before their allegations.

the pig

the clerk is a person
 and she’s curious as how
 curious people are
 asks me why I drank
 I did not answer so much but I do know
 that we drink to die
 without having to die a lot
 asks me why I did not
 shouted since I was not
 gagged I did not answer but I do know
 that we are already born with the gag
 the white shirt clerk
 starched
 is an excellent employee and
 typist reminds me a lot of
 a song
 an animal I don’t remember which.
 (Ivánova 2017: 23)

a porca

a escritã é uma pessoa
 e está curiosa como são
 curiosas as pessoas
 pergunta-me por que bebi
 tanto não respondi mas sei
 que a gente bebe pra morrer
 sem ter que morrer muito
 pergunta-me por que não
 gritei já que não estava
 amordaçada não respondi mas sei
 que já se nasce com a mordada
 a escritã de camisa branca
 engomada
 é excelente funcionária e
 datilógrafa me lembra muito
 uma música
 um animal não lembro qual.
 (Ivánova, 2017: 23)

The third poem also brings a female figure as a reproductive element of patriarchal and institutional oppression by presenting a woman deputy, who supposedly should support the victim while listening to the reports of her pain, but who does not take the complaint seriously and discourages the victim of violence, another woman, from registering the report. The situation, common in Brazilian police stations, reveals the lack of preparation of the staff of the various establishments dedicated to assist women, which is one of the greatest challenges in the fight against this type of violence, since erroneous assistance are an incentive to maintaining cycles of violence, since it doubts the credibility of the complainant and do not provide adequate support.

the cat

the deputy did not take me seriously
 in no way and asked slippery

if I really wanted to
 open an investigation was wearing a
 wonderful set and
 hideous pants and shirt
 jeans with jeans
 then reading the process
 the deputy reminded me of janus
 the two-faced Roman king and
 of the two-faced cat that
 died at age 15
 a rarity a cat to live for so long
 yet the deputy is alive with the set
 jeans with janus.
 (Ivánova 2017: 21)

o gato

a delegada não me levou a sério
 em nada e perguntou escorregadia
 se eu queria mesmo que se
 instaurasse inquérito vestia um
 conjuntinho maravilhoso e
 horroroso calça e camisa
 jeans com jeans
 depois ao ler o processo
 a delegada me fez lembrar de janus
 o rei romano com duas caras e
 do gato com duas caras que
 morreu aos 15 anos
 uma raridade um gato assim viver tanto
 já a delegada segue viva de conjuntinho
 jeans com janus.
 (Ivánova, 2017: 21)

The fourth and last selected poem exposes the systemic violence against women that fear for their lives and feel the constant threat of rape since an early age, corroborating with Débora Diniz's statement (2013) that rape is an "act of demarcation of women's guts by the patriarchy". The poem also alludes to girls who hide from the violence of men, for example, in the famous Ciudad Juárez, on the border between the United States and Mexico, known for the large number of femicides, but could be any other city, for example, any city in the north of Brazil, a region with high rates of violence against women. The act of entering a hole in the ground or in a suitcase, as written in the poem, not be seen and, thus survive, reveals the vulnerability of women, whose only available option is to deny their body and their femininity in an attempt to not draw attention. What Ivánova's poems expose is the fact that to be visible as a woman in a world where so much violence erupts over the female body constitutes in itself a threat. Whether hiding their bodies from the male gaze or through violence, like the hammer of the following poem, women seek to resist with the weapons they possess, showing that there is a resistance, that they are not passive before violent acts. The poems also show that women's violent reactions, as in the poem "O martelo" ["The Hammer"], are the result of a lack of support and other plausible options to free themselves from a life of violence. In addition, Ivánova talks about abortion, which turns out to be the only way for those who are not successful in hiding or defending themselves, although often the same

people who allow the existence of the abortion - not, of course, without making the issue a polemic - sometimes are the same ones who turn abortion necessary for those who suffer rape.

the banana

in the basement there was
 a suitcase inside her
 Josefina
 who hid there with
 her mother's help
 not be raped
 after all, one only rapes someone
 that is found the destiny of the
 mother, we do not know but
 Josefina
 it's fine, thank you, at the age of 11
 she ate a banana for the
 first time offering from the
 French official who also
 gave abortions to the Germans
 that did not have hammers
 or suitcases.
 (Ivánova 2017: 15)

a banana

no porão tinha
 uma mala dentro dela
 josefine
 que aí se escondia com
 a ajuda da mãe para
 que não fosse estuprada
 afinal só se estupra alguém
 que se acha o destino da
 mãe não se sabe mas
 josefine
 está bem obrigada aos 11 anos
 comeu banana pela
 primeira vez oferecimento do
 oficial francês que também
 dava abortos às alemãs
 que não tinham martelos
 ou malas.
 (Ivánova, 2017: 15)

The irony present in the poems makes the poet's writing acid and intense, as seen in the poem "A banana" ["The Banana"], in which the fruit symbolizes the phallus, showing that not even hiding inside a suitcase seems to be the solution to the misogynist and sexist hate for women.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In *Feminism, Literature and Rape Narratives* (2010) SORCHA GUNNE and ZÖE THOMPSON gathered papers which discuss literary rape narratives in order to instigate the theoretical debate about rape as, both in literary and film narratives, an impasse before the attitude seems to be taken: should rape be represented or not? Should we talk about it or keep silent? Would that be a new violation, as some feminists argue? What Gunne and Thompson point out is that, more

than just fall into the same discussion, it is necessary to analyze narratives which reject voyeurism and the exploitation of violence to broach the subjectivity of violated women. In their book the researchers focus on female authorship and on titles which show women's perspective while addressing sexual violence and the different ways these women find to subvert standard notions. They argue that is mandatory to disrupt binarism, either by focusing on the victims or the perpetrators. Also, the contemporary authors examined by them come from different parts of the world – although they are all English-speaking writers –, which helps them in their search for a more inclusive approach capable of capturing the idea advocated by the organizers of a “feminism without borders” while not favoring some narratives to the detriment of others.

In this sense the male and the female authors analyzed here present different social perspectives when they discuss sexual violence in their work, since, as we saw in Rafael Gallo's short tale, his narrative perspective is built around a third character who is neither the victim nor the perpetrator, little explored in the story, but that of an observer who watches the consequences of the rape on the survivor, allowing us to reflect upon the impact of violence and its stigma, as well as discussing some of its myths.

When comparing our analysis of the short story with the poems of Adelaide Ivánova, it is possible to reflect on the social perspective of women and their relation to the representation of violence, because considering that “the perspective is an approach of the way we look to social events, which conditions, but do not determine what is seen” (Young 2016: 166), we rise the hypothesis that the different social perspectives could lead to different representations of violence against women.

The same way Carine Mardorossian (2004: 265) argues that the perspective and place of speech may interfere with the way we experience an event, without, however, determining it. A bit of the discussion emerged from the question of whether or not there is a Female writing, also addressed by Nelly Richard (2002) in her essay “A escrita tem sexo?” [“Writing Has a Gender?”]. Challenging the initial position of many writers that deny any differences based on biological and sexual aspects, Richard argues that affirming the language indifference to gender and sex is to reiterate a discourse that has always regarded the masculine perspective as a standard, an established power. For Richard (2002: 131), “language, literary writing, and cultural norms carry the marks of this sociomale violence, which subordinates texts to its vicious rules of universality.”

Faced with the urgent need to problematize violence against women in our society, we agree with Jaime Ginzburg (2013) that literature can be an important tool to foster this discussion and to educate citizens on being more aware of their role in the world, and to prevail for a less unequal and less violent life. According to Ginzburg:

Coexistence with literature allows us to create a repertoire of elements - images, ideas, positions, reports, examples - that are relevant to the constitution of individual and collective ethical guidelines. This repertoire, in its variety, contributes to an open and diversified debate. (Ginzburg 2013: 106).

Based on the analysis above, we believe that this

debate and the humanizing potential of literature can be intensified and enriched by the broader possibility of bringing different social perspectives to light through the literary text, especially when seeking a critique of gender violence. We believe it is important to consider the works of male authors that deal with the subject, since they circulate as discourse in our society and contribute to the formation of new views on violence against women. However, it is important to value what Márcia Tiburi calls the “place of pain”, since every minority has its own pain (2018: 116), to “articulate pain, recognize it, put it into a political place, one where the other is included as a subject full of rights who also has their own pain”. In this way, it is indispensable to recognize that this “place of pain” enriches the work of female authorship with perspectives that bring to discussion the violence and the condition of women's lives, to a large extent, almost always silenced in life and in literature.

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