



Estudios e Investigaciones

TOPOGRAFÍAS DOMÉSTICAS EN EL IMAGINARIO FEMENINO. UNA VISIÓN COMPARATIVA, TRANSNACIONAL Y HEMISFÉRICA

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN TEÓRICA

Un imaginario colectivo se compone de costumbres, valores, prácticas y razonamientos que existen en una sociedad. La imagen está directamente relacionada con la imagen o apariencia; convirtiéndose en una representación mental de lo que se percibe. Podemos definir un imaginario como el efecto de una compleja red de relaciones entre discursos y prácticas sociales, que interactúa con las individualidades, y que genera tendencias que se manifiestan a través del lenguaje y de la interacción. También podemos intuir que los modelos de los imaginarios colectivos son temporales, pero que cuesta mucho cambiarlos. El concepto "imaginario femenino", en concreto, alude a las representaciones simbólicas, inconscientes y colectivas de figuras femeninas compartidas por una sociedad. Este imaginario articula estereotipos femeninos que se plasman en la literatura y las artes a través de personajes arquetípicos, pero también a través de los espacios que le son asignados a esos personajes. Pero el feminismo ha demostrado que esta percepción, al ubicarse en un contexto y tiempo determinado, no siempre concuerda con la realidad. Este es nuestro punto de partida al hablar de "imaginario femenino".

Al hablar del imaginario tomamos como punto de partida algunas de las ideas presentadas por Emmanuel Lizcano en su ensayo "Imaginario colectivo y análisis metafórico"¹. Y es que, compartiendo su idea principal, acordamos que las metáforas son "habitantes principales y argamasa del imaginario" y, en consecuencia, su análisis sistemático es una vía privilegiada para su comprensión. La metáfora del imaginario femenino a analizar, en este caso, es la casa (o el espacio doméstico en general), como representación de lo femenino, y como *locus* natural de la mujer.

Desde siempre, las discusiones sobre metáfora han estado dominadas por la noción del espacio; del "tropa como inseparable del topos" (Horner and Zlosnik). Y es que, como el feminismo anglosajón de las décadas de los 80 y los 90 del siglo pasado expuso incansablemente –y yendo mucho más allá del cronotopo bakhtiniano–, las metáforas espaciales utilizadas por escritoras y escritores a lo largo de los siglos y de las distintas

¹ Transcripción de la conferencia inaugural del Primer Congreso Internacional de Estudios sobre Imaginario y Horizontes Culturales. Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos, Cuernavaca, México: http://www.unavarra.es/puresoc/pdfs/c_salaconfe/SC-Lizcano-2.pdf

tradiciones literarias, han servido de elemento estructurador, y no sólo de escenario, en los textos. Títulos como *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936) de Lorca, *The House of Mirth* (1905), de Edith Wharton, o *Casa de Muñecas* (1879), de Ibsen, son sólo tres ejemplos atemporales ya, emblemáticos y universalmente conocidos de entre otros cientos que seguramente podríamos encontrar en la literatura universal que contengan la palabra “casa” (o variantes referidas al espacio doméstico) como configuración metafórica que exprese sentimientos de confinamiento físico y mental, de infantilización de la mujer, de falta de libertad e independencia, y de violencia doméstica (física o psicológica) ejercida contra la mujer a manos de su compañero o de la sociedad patriarcal y conservadora. Y es que el imaginario es el lugar de los pre-supuestos, es decir, de aquello que cada cultura y cada grupo social se encuentra puesto previamente debajo de sus elaboraciones reflexivas y conscientes. Es el lugar de las creencias; creencias que no son las que uno tiene, sino las que le tienen a uno.

La mujer, por tanto, asumió durante siglos el imaginario que se había creado para definir a su género. Y, como ha sido el caso de buena parte del fracaso de numerosos movimientos de emancipación, la dificultad para trascender esta relación entre “casa” e “imaginario femenino” se cifró en que sus reivindicaciones se alimentaban –y se alimentan– del imaginario de aquéllos de quienes se pretendían emancipar. Al sustanciar un imaginario más o menos esencializado, constituido por una serie de configuraciones arquetípicas eternas y universales, las diferencias, mezclas y tensiones existentes dentro del “mundo femenino” quedaron subsumidas como meros avatares efímeros, superficiales y contingentes, olvidando la importancia de las diferencias y la apreciación de los cambios, las emergencias y las discontinuidades.

Pero, si bien cada imaginario tiende a mostrársenos como un universo cerrado sobre sí mismo y homogéneo, es decir, ni afectado por las aportaciones en el tiempo y en el espacio ni tampoco fracturado o tensado por corrientes internas que pudieran estar en conflicto mutuo, llegó un momento en que las propias mujeres empezaron a rebelarse contra un imaginario “cerrado” que había heredado del patriarcado. Siguiendo las pautas marcadas por la primera ola del feminismo anglosajón, llegó un momento, a comienzos del siglo XX, en que la imagen de la casa o de la habitación empezó a asociarse metafóricamente no con la clausura y la dominación que la mujer debía acatar, sino con la independencia económica de la mujer y con la realización de sus ambiciones artísticas, como en *Una habitación propia* (1929) de Virginia Woolf, en que el simbolismo del espacio doméstico adoptó un valor totalmente distinto, convirtiéndose en metáfora de autonomía, libertad y capacidad de elección. ¿Qué ha ocurrido

en los ochenta años que nos separan, como mujeres, de este texto que ya se considera un hito del feminismo? Una vez liberadas de los espacios constrictivos y limitadores (la cocina, el hogar, el ático, o los espacios opresivos de la literatura gótica) como vehículos metafóricos del imaginario femenino, ¿qué espacio han pasado a ocupar las mujeres?Cuál ha sido su evolución y cuál es, ahora mismo, su espacio en las representaciones culturales actuales? Estas son las preguntas a las que pretendemos encontrar respuesta en este proyecto.

2. ESTADO DE LA CUESTIÓN

Aunque sea término de acuñación reciente, lo imaginario –o con mayor precisión, su apreciación explícita en la vida colectiva– ha venido sufriendo a lo largo de la historia un permanente vaivén de reconocimientos y rechazos. En el mundo occidental, el primer rechazo aparece con el tópico –y mítico– “milagro griego”, según el cual el *logos* habría reemplazado al *mithos*, o el mito de la razón ocupó el lugar que habitaban las razones del mito. La descomposición de la Grecia clásica daría paso, siglos más tarde, a esa eclosión del imaginario popular medieval que tan acertadamente ha descrito, entre otros, Mikhail Bakhtin². Posteriormente, al renacimiento del intelectualismo griego y a los nacimientos paralelos del puritanismo iconoclasta protestante y de la ciencia moderna, se contrapuso esa exuberancia de imágenes y ficciones del barroco. Sofocado éste, a su vez, por las Luces de una Razón de nuevo convertida en diosa por la burguesía ilustrada, los poderes de lo imaginario aflorarán de nuevo con el romanticismo, con su sospecha hacia la racionalidad científica abstracta y su exaltación de lo emocional y telúrico. Para acabar llegando así a nuestros días, en que, a partir de los años 70, la llamada posmodernidad pone en tela de juicio todos los tópicos modernos y ensalza, una vez más, la virtud de la representación sobre lo representado, de lo virtual sobre lo que se tiene por real, de los sueños sobre la vigilia.

Este esquemático recorrido histórico sitúa el interés por lo imaginario más allá de una posible moda. La centralidad del interés por lo imaginario en nuestros días es análoga a la que siempre ha ocupado en otras culturas y semejante a la que, en la cultura occidental, ocupó en la Edad Media, en el barroco o en el romanticismo. Pero a diferencia de su eclosión medieval y barroca, en que tal irrupción se agotó en su mero manifestarse, ésta de ahora hace de esa manifestación objeto de reflexión y estudio. En la actualidad, la convergencia de estudios en torno a lo imaginario, provenientes de la filosofía, la historia, la psicología, la antropología, la literatura o la sociología, nos pone en condiciones no sólo de valorar cabalmente el impresionante alcance de lo imaginario en todas sus manifestaciones sino también de pensarlo con el potente aparato conceptual y metodológico desarrollado por todas estas disciplinas. Baste mencionar las decenas de Centros de investigación sobre el imaginario que, al calor de la obra de Gaston Bachelard, se han ido abriendo en Francia, o la reciente publicación en España de sendos monográficos de las revistas *Anthropos* y *Archipiélago* dedicados a la obra de

² Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and his World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1941.

Cornelius Castoriadis³, una de las teorizaciones más poderosas y sugestivas sobre el tema del imaginario, que se sale del ámbito de este Proyecto.

Pasemos al imaginario femenino. Siglo y medio ha pasado ya desde la fecha que Barbara Welter cifrara como el comienzo de "*the cult of domesticity*"⁴ (1820-1860). Los cuatro pilares en torno a los que, según Welter, se organizaba el espacio de la casa como "reino" de la mujer eran la piedad, la pureza, la sumisión, y la domesticidad. La virtud de la mujer se valoraba según su grado de sumisión, de cumplimiento de un rol establecido que, si bien es exclusivamente femenino, viene impuesto desde fuera por el hombre. El hogar era el lugar natural para la mujer, en el que ella es el "ángel"⁵ encargado de proporcionar estabilidad y paz a marido e hijos; un refugio para la familia frente al tumulto del mundo exterior. El espacio de la mujer, pues, es también un espacio donde está destinada a servir a otros (su familia), nunca a sí misma o a sus necesidades, y en el que, además, la mujer pasa a ser percibida como inferior o infantil. El "culto a la domesticidad", pues, fundamentado sobre los pilares de las "*separate spheres*", identificaba la casa como la única esfera "decente" para la mujer frente a la corrupción y actividad del mundo exterior, que los hombres podían controlar y enfrentar pero no así la mujer.

El advenimiento del feminismo, sin embargo, cambió la utilización metafórica del espacio doméstico en la literatura femenina. Las "*New Women*" americanas e inglesas de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX ya empezaron a utilizar el espacio doméstico no sólo como el escenario de fondo en el que se desenvuelven sus historias, sino que se convierte en metáfora, en prisma a través del cual se contemplan otros espacios. A través de la metáfora de la casa –con todas las oposiciones que evoca: público/privado, dentro/fuera, interioridad/exterioridad– las escritoras de los últimos cien años han utilizado la casa como espacio de denuncia y reivindicación, y no de celebración sumisa de su rol doméstico. En su ficción, la casa –símbolo universal de la domesticidad– adquiere una connotación negativa al servir de prisma a través del cual se iluminan otros espacios opresivos.

La utilización de la casa como metáfora de la opresión, reviste especial interés si se considera a la luz de estudios recientes desde la teoría feminista que cuestionan la

³ Cornelius Castoriadis. *La pluralidad de los imaginarios sociales de la modernidad*. (VV.AA. *Anthropos*, 198: 2003) y Cornelius Castoriadis. *Imaginación creadora, autonomía, revolución* (VV.AA., *Archipiélago*, 54: 2002)

⁴ Welter, Barbara. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly* 18.2 (1966): 151-174.

⁵ Woolf, Virginia. "Professions for Women", 1937.

organización política y cultural de la casa desde el punto de vista de su arquitectura. En su libro, *Gendered Spaces*, Daphne Spain analiza el espacio de la casa como parte constitutiva de la institución familiar. Desde su perspectiva, la dimensión espacial de las instituciones cumple una función esencial en la reproducción de la jerarquía de género al asignar diferentes espacios a hombres y mujeres, adscribiendo mayor valor al espacio público productivo masculino que al espacio privado femenino. Spain afirma que la espacialización de las instituciones contribuye a formar una barrera que impide que las mujeres adquieran el conocimiento necesario para alterar las relaciones de poder. En este contexto, el espacio doméstico, considerado universalmente como femenino en la sociedad patriarcal, se constituye en un factor importante en la reproducción de la subordinación femenina. Desde otro ángulo, Mark Wigley, en su artículo "The Housing of Gender" estudia los mecanismos a través de los cuales la casa contribuye a la reproducción de "la ley del padre". Su estudio revela la violencia sobre la cual se construye el régimen doméstico, es decir, la domesticación de la mujer y el control de su sexualidad, que tienen por objeto proteger los derechos genealógicos del padre. Los trabajos de Spain y Wigley contribuyen a la desmitificación de la institución familiar y del culto de la domesticidad propios de la ideología patriarcal burguesa. En una politización de lo privado, al metaforizar la realidad de marginación de la mujer así como la violencia sexista de la sociedad a través de imágenes relacionadas con la casa, mucha literatura femenina contribuye a la desconstrucción de la ideología burguesa de la domesticidad. En muchos de los textos que analizaremos, la violencia que implica la domesticación de la mujer en el espacio de la casa se desplaza al cuerpo social para revelar la violencia de la sociedad ejercida sobre las clases subalternas, en un proceso de domesticación de los cuerpos que permite reproducir el sistema de desigualdad.

Nos hacemos eco de la idea expresada por Emmanuel Lizcano en su ensayo anteriormente citado de que "la lucha por el poder es, en buena medida, una lucha por imponer las propias metáforas". Recuerda en su ensayo el sociólogo Lizcano el análisis que hacía una doctoranda suya que estaba trabajando sobre un conflicto entre un grupo de mariscadoras gallegas y la Administración local. Llegados a un punto que reclamaba un diálogo, la Administración impuso la metáfora que para ella era natural: había que constituir una 'mesa de negociación'. Ya daba igual lo que en esa mesa pudiera acordarse, apuntaba su alumna, sólo por haber asumido la metáfora, las mariscadoras habían perdido la batalla, como de hecho la acabaron perdiendo. La mesa es lugar natural de negociación para el burócrata, el habitante natural de los despachos, pero no lo era para aquellas mujeres. Para ellas, el lugar

donde se discutían los asuntos comunes, donde se negociaba y se tomaban decisiones, es decir, el lugar propiamente político, el lugar de poder y, en este caso, de poder femenino, era la playa, esas playas donde se reunían con ocasión de mariscar. La mesa como lugar político era para ellas un lugar extraño, terreno enemigo. Hubieran debido, concluía la doctoranda, acuñar su propia metáfora e imponérsela a aquellos políticos, hubieran debido llevarles a la 'playa de negociaciones'. Las decisiones habrían sido muy diferentes. Pues bien, aplicando esta visión a nuestro caso, podríamos concluir que el Proyecto pretende descubrir cómo las escritoras de los siglos XX y XXI "imponen sus propias metáforas"; es decir, no renuncian a las metáforas domésticas, pero las dotan de un sentido diametralmente opuesto al que habían soportado antes del advenimiento del feminismo. Así, para muchas escritoras, la casa se convierte en metáfora positiva, por ejemplo, de la imaginación creativa (*El Cuarto de atrás*, de C. M. Gaité), o seña de una identidad étnica concreta (*The House on Mango Street*, de Sandra Cisneros)

Hay una fecunda cosecha de textos en torno al tema que pretendemos abordar. Lo que nuestro Proyecto pretende aportar es una visión mucho más amplia y no sólo circunscrita al ámbito de los Estudios Norteamericanos o de la filología inglesa. Hacemos lecturas transnacionales y comparativas de textos producidos por mujeres a ambos lados del Atlántico, en los dos hemisferios, y pertenecientes a diferentes etnias.

3. OBJETIVOS

Habiendo descrito someramente el tema que hemos explorado, pasemos a continuación a explicar la segunda parte de nuestro título; nuestra “visión comparativa, transnacional y hemisférica”, por haber sido esa visión uno de nuestros principales objetivos.

Se ha escrito mucho sobre espacios femeninos y su simbolismo en la literatura de y sobre mujeres (ver bibliografía adjunta). Pero también los estudios literarios con perspectiva de género han tendido a quedar enmarcados dentro de una tradición cultural concreta, en nuestro caso, la anglosajona. La crítica literaria feminista raras veces se ha aplicado de forma transnacional o desde la perspectiva de los estudios transatlánticos, que es la tendencia académica e investigadora a la que tienden los “Estudios Culturales”, en un mundo globalizado en que las fronteras nacionales ya no pueden seguir delimitando nuestros intereses investigadores. Por otra parte, cada día se habla más, en la Academia estadounidense tan cercana a nuestro grupo de investigación, de los “*hemispheric studies*” (estudios hemisféricos), pues tampoco parece lógico, en un mundo que tiende a derribar muros que encapsulan, que los “*American Studies*” (“Estudios Americanos”) se conviertan en estudios **Norteamericanos**; y de hecho, son cada vez más las Asociaciones científicas y los Congresos en que el hemisferio Norte y el Sur comparten espacios culturales, en los que se han instalado como lenguas oficiales el inglés junto al español⁶, y la literatura del Norte (EEUU y Canadá) junto a las literaturas hispanas, incluyendo, como no podría ser de otro modo, la española. Es por este motivo que a lo largo de la actividad de investigación ejercida durante el período de vigencia del Proyecto, se priorizaron los análisis críticos donde la diversidad femenina (y las subsiguientes asociaciones de domesticidad) se manifestase en la riqueza cultural proporcionada por acercamientos transnacionales, raciales, etnográficos, etc.

Por otra parte, el Proyecto no podía, como es lógico, abstraerse de cómo la realidad es filtrada y modulada a través de la lengua. El enfoque filológico, por consiguiente, había de reflejar y corregir los mecanismos de adopción de una realidad que tiende a invisibilizar la diversidad genérica que la compone. Con ese fin, el uso reiterado de un lenguaje no-sexista, capaz de vehicular y difundir verbalmente la pluralidad de géneros que conforman la heterogeneidad social, se convertía en clave de arco del Proyecto en cuanto a la expresión escrita de las publicaciones resultantes se refiere. Los diferentes usos lingüísticos, la

⁶ La IP de este Proyecto fue invitada a dar una conferencia en el Congreso Fundacional de la *International Association for Inter-American Studies*, el pasado Julio de 2009, en Bielefeld (Alemania).

recurrencia a unos artículos, participios o sustantivos genéricamente marcados con el fin de incluir y respetar esa diversidad, han sido usados para restaurar una visibilidad perdida a manos de una hegemonía masculina que tiende a simplificar – cuando no a neutralizar – bajo un denominador común, un espectro civil, social, y humano, que dista mucho de ser monolítico.

Desde el momento de solicitud del presente Proyecto, nuestro objetivo principal fue la publicación de un volumen que recogiese los resultados principales obtenidos mediante la investigación en las distintas áreas de conocimiento que quedan recogidas en esta Memoria. La información sobre el volumen que fue finalmente publicado, así como sobre publicaciones en revistas especializadas y la realización de un congreso queda recogida al final del apartado de “Conclusiones y Prospectiva” de este documento.

4. DESARROLLO Y CORPUS

Nuestro proyecto se ha dirigido al análisis de textos concretos representativos de las culturas literarias anteriormente descritas (desde una visión transgenérica, ya que analizaremos ficción, autobiografía, cartografía historiográfica musical y otras expresiones culturales, atendiendo a la especialidad de cada uno de los miembros del equipo investigador) y de la segunda mitad del siglo XX. Empero, el proyecto también ha tenido un decidido compromiso evolutivo y diacrónico, pues sólo así podíamos enmarcar nuestras conclusiones en el panorama de la crítica feminista que se iniciara con la primera ola del feminismo, y unirlo a la reivindicación de nuevos espacios para la mujer, que ha corrido parejo al desarrollo del feminismo y sus distintas etapas.

Como es bien sabido, pese a que la primera ola del feminismo, desde Mary Wolstonecraft a las feministas decimonónicas de ambos lados del Atlántico, desmoronó conceptos tradicionales de espacio con el fin de expandir los horizontes de las mujeres, su intento no logró trascender los ideales ilustrados de atemporalidad y universalidad. La segunda ola, incluyendo a pensadoras como Virginia Woolf, Simon de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan y los movimientos euroamericanos de liberación de los años 60 y 70, continuaron dramatizando la imaginaria en torno al binarismo de confinamiento-escape. Una tercera ola de feminismo aún vigente, pero que también incluye a los feminismos postestructuralistas, deconstructivistas y postmodernistas de los años 80 y 90, cimentado sobre la pérdida de certezas y la celebración de la disolución y el cambio de referentes, se cifra, en cambio, en metáforas que remiten a la ruptura de fronteras y muros, a la celebración del movimiento como agencia frente a lo estático, que marchita y debilita. ¿Cómo afecta esto a los espacios de la mujer? ¿Se ha pasado de un espacio constrictivo a otro igual de confuso, por su falta de definición? ¿Son los mecanismos de rebeldía contra las imposiciones de espacios reducidos típicos de las reivindicaciones de las dos primeras olas feministas, enmarcadas en la cultura e historia occidental, útiles hoy en día en aquellas mujeres de otros países en circunstancias análogas a las de estas autoras hace dos siglos?

Hemos partido, necesariamente, desde aquellos espacios femeninos previos a la formulación de Woolf; espacios creados por los hombres, que unas veces confinan a “lo peligroso” (i.e. la mujer rebelde) en lugares no visibles de la casa, paradigmáticamente en el ático, como le ocurre a la Bertha Mason de *Jane Eyre* (1847), o que otras veces son estancias que protegen a la mujer incluso de sí misma (así, el reposo obligado de la protagonista de *The*

Yellow Wallpaper), o de la opinión de la sociedad (como en *La casa de Bernarda Alba*). Y hemos atravesado la estasis y la conformidad – también espacial – como típicamente femeninos, frente a los espacios de acción y movimiento, más amplios y no controlados, que corresponden al varón; el mundo “real”, lo profesional y social. Incluso Gaston Bachelard (*La poética del espacio*, 1957) teoriza la casa, el hogar, como sustentada por los conceptos de verticalidad y centralidad, siendo ambas unas direcciones que provocan estabilidad. Esta estabilidad, sin embargo, puede ser constrictiva o constructiva, según sea impuesta o libremente aceptada, según cifre el espacio como lugar de obligación o lugar de creación y desarrollo personal.

Así, los modelos de representación y la metáfora de la casa constrictiva fueron recuperados y reanalizados por parte de Gilbert y Gubar utilizando el cronotopo del ático no como lugar de confinamiento, sino como refugio mental y espacio interior (también lo hizo Lessing en *The Golden Notebook*). La casa, la habitación, el ático, se convierten en un lugar no limitado a lo privado, sino donde la mujer adquiere la capacidad para negociar experiencias públicas y privadas, en el lugar donde habita la memoria creativa. Trasgrediendo la división social o genérica del espacio, los personajes femeninos transforman el espacio real en espacio literario donde trazar sus propias geografías mentales. Así ocurre, por ejemplo, en *La loca de la casa* (2003), de Rosa Montero o en *El cuarto de atrás* (1978), de Carmen Martín Gaité, por nombrar dos obras españolas que han sido incluidas en nuestro corpus textual, por ser obras que pueden compararse, en su tratamiento metafórico del espacio doméstico, con novelas escritas en inglés por mujeres de otras culturas que también abrazan los aspectos positivos de la esfera doméstica y del hogar, alejado de la imposición patriarcal, y buscado como refugio y epicentro de conocimiento identitario. Así, una de las componentes del Grupo investigador se ha centrado en espacios domésticos donde la mujer se encuentra a sí misma como individuo independiente y puede crear comunidades de apoyo (*Reading Lolita in Teherán*, 2003, de la iraní-americana Azar Nafisi) que trascienden las comunidades impuestas por la organización patriarcal familiar y fundamentalista. Este tratamiento por supuesto ya se encontraba en novelas escritas por mujeres feministas del siglo XIX, pero se ha reproducido en nuestro siglo, en circunstancias históricas de mujeres de otros países que quizá son análogas, en opresión y expectativas de roles de género, a la situación de la mujer occidental hace dos siglos.

Puesto que un miembro del equipo investigador se ha centrado en la literatura afro-americana de mujeres, su investigación ha tratado de descubrir si espacios simbólicos como la cocina, por ejemplo, un lugar clave durante la esclavitud en los EEUU, se puede ver también en

representaciones culturales coetáneas de otros países. Y, cómo no, tratándose de un corpus literario del siglo XXI, también hemos tratado de verificar el posible paso de la domesticidad al "*hypertransgressive feminism*" (feminismo hipertransgresivo), de la huida consciente y radical del hogar y de lugares asociados tradicionalmente con lo femenino. Ya Shands nos advierte del peligro de convertir la "*transiency*" (transitoriedad) en fetiche, y de la tendencia de cierto feminismo, en perpetuo movimiento y transgresión, a ver el hogar como algo necesariamente estático y sofocante; de identificar unilateralmente el reposo como algo sospechoso y que implica dominación social y genérica. Sin embargo, la idea fosilizada del espacio doméstico como lugar de dominación y represión cifrada en el concepto de "*The Cult of Domesticity*" puede no ser adecuada para el análisis de culturas no occidentales, o en el caso de mujeres inmigrantes, refugiadas o expatriadas. La casa podría convertirse, en este caso, en el símbolo definitivo de pertenencia, de "*belonging*" y hasta de empoderamiento, por ser el único espacio en que la mujer es dueña de su territorio. Hemos analizado estos aspectos en nuestro estudio de los espacios domésticos en obras como *The House on Mango Street* (1984) de la escritora chicana Sandra Cisneros.

5. BENEFICIOS DEL PROYECTO

1. La riqueza y diversidad de la investigación que se ha realizado gracias a este Proyecto ha culminado principalmente en dos publicaciones especializadas a la vanguardia de los estudios feministas y de género. Dada la triple temática que aúna los estudios de género, los estudios de espacio y la transnacionalidad, dichas publicaciones resultan de gran interés no sólo para los y las profesionales del ámbito académico, sino también para los/las estudiantes inmersos en los estudios de las humanidades:

A/ Se publicó en 2013 el libro *En torno a espacios y géneros / Negotiating Gendered Spaces* (editado por Isabel Durán Giménez-Rico, Noelia Hernando Real, Carmen Méndez García, Joanne Neff y Ana Laura Rodríguez. Madrid: Fundamentos, 2013. ISBN 978-84-245-1280-4). Esta es la descripción del volumen que aparece en su contraportada: "Haciéndose eco de la diferentes tendencias transnacionales e interdisciplinarias aplicadas a los estudios de la mujer, el volumen bilingüe *En torno a espacios y género/ Negotiating Gendered Spaces* cuestiona el papel fundamental que la noción del espacio tiene en campos tan diferentes, y a la vez tan conectados, como la sociología, la educación, los estudios culturales, la política y la literatura. Desterrando antiguas concepciones del espacio por los que la mujer era tradicionalmente vista como una víctima del lugar que ocupa, los artículos incluidos en el presente volumen ofrecen un amplio espectro de las posibilidades existentes cuando la mujer entra en diálogo con el espacio; un diálogo por el que el espacio se reinventa y se erige en punto de partida para dejar de ser un punto de clausura."



El índice del libro nos da una idea de los diferentes espacios recorridos por las autoras y los autores de los dieciseis ensayos recopilados:

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B/ - Por otro lado, la revista de la Universidad Complutense, *Investigaciones Feministas* (de acceso abierto) dedicó también un dossier especializado y monográfico, editado por Isabel Durán, a la temática de "espacios generizados" que incluyó ensayos escritos por Carmen Méndez, David Yagüe y Claudia Alonso. (Ver los resultados incluidos en el apartado de "Conclusiones y Prospectiva" para más información sobre estas publicaciones). ***Espacios Generizados. Dossier monográfico de Estudios Feministas. Vol 3 (2012): 1-180.***

<http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/issue/view/2350/showToc>

2. La IP de este Proyecto fue cofundadora, en 2010, de la rama europea de IABA (*International Auto/Biography Association*), con el nombre de IABA-EUROPE. Ocho fuimos los países europeos (Francia, Inglaterra, Holanda, Alemania, Italia, Austria, Suiza y España) que aportamos una cantidad inicial acorde a las posibilidades de cada uno (en nuestro caso la aportación a cargo de los fondos del Proyecto fue la mínima posible, de 2.000€). De esta manera se pudo crear una red europea de estudios en torno a la autobiografía, campo literario que se encuentra íntimamente ligado a los estudios de género, y celebrar el I Congreso de IABA-EUROPE en la ciudad de Tallín, al que asistió Isabel Durán como miembro del Consejo de la recién creada Asociación, y como ponente (su charla versó sobre temas relacionados con el Proyecto, y tuvo por título "The Symbolic Houses of Autobiographical Memory"). De esta manera, los fondos de este Proyecto han colaborado en la creación de un importante Foro académico de carácter europeo que, sin duda, crecerá, y en el que nuestro grupo investigador tendrá una presencia muy relevante.

3. Puesto que la totalidad de los miembros del equipo se dedica a la práctica docente, la adopción de modelos de análisis intercultural en el aula (principalmente en el análisis literario) ha sido una derivación lógica y natural, y así lo hemos expresado en la parte dedicada a la metodología en esta Memoria. Esto redundará en la transmisión al alumno y a la alumna de una sensibilidad especial hacia la diacronía cultural desde un punto de vista de género, y

una huida de los valores de pureza y autoridad (tan cercanos a postulados nacionalistas trasnochados).

4. No debemos olvidar que enmarcamos este Proyecto en el ámbito de la educación, dentro de los posibles bloques que proponía la convocatoria a la que respondimos. Los Másteres de Postgrado de reciente creación son principalmente interdepartamentales e interdisciplinarios. En la UCM, por ejemplo, un Master bien implantado ya, en el que participa nuestro Departamento, es el *Master en Estudios Literarios*, en el que convivimos profesores y profesoras así como estudiantes procedentes de grados y licenciaturas diversas. Los estudios transversales, tan inimaginables en otras épocas, son ahora una realidad. Y nuestras estudiantes recorren, por ejemplo, la estela del Romanticismo desde una perspectiva comparativa, en diversas tradiciones literarias. Pues bien, es nuestra intención tratar de crear un curso transversal de estudios de género, en torno a “los espacios metafóricos femeninos”, en las diversas culturas literarias (la inglesa, la americana, la española, etc.) para el cual esta investigación que hemos llevado a cabo es fundamental.

5. El proyecto ha pretendido, además, afianzar en la universidad española el interés de jóvenes investigadores e investigadoras por temas de género desde una perspectiva transversal e intercultural. Tanto los cursos de Master de Postgrado que se impartan como resultado del proyecto, como las publicaciones y congresos, idealmente servirán para encauzar a jóvenes estudiantes hacia realización de tesis doctorales (u otros trabajos de investigación) en estas áreas de investigación. De hecho, un investigador y una investigadora de este Proyecto han decidido dar un enfoque en sus tesis doctorales actualmente en elaboración hacia los estudios de género y el tema de la domesticidad.

6. METODOLOGÍA

Dado que nuestro Proyecto pertenece al campo de las Humanidades, y más concretamente del análisis literario, la metodología utilizada es la única que puede emplearse para este tipo de estudios: tras hacer un recorrido por el “estado de la cuestión” (crítica literaria feminista y pre-feminista sobre literatura y domesticidad) y tras leer, durante el primer año de este Proyecto, estudios teóricos y críticos sobre el tema (preferentemente crítica angloamericana), hemos centrado nuestra investigación en el segundo año del Proyecto en la lectura y análisis detallados de las fuentes primarias escogidas para llevar a cabo nuestro estudio de campo, para verificar, desde un punto de vista empírico, las propuestas que nos planteábamos en los Objetivos.

El grupo ha tenido varias reuniones, algunas de ellas a través de videoconferencia, dado que dos de los miembros se encontraban trabajando fuera de Madrid o en el extranjero. En dichas reuniones se ponían en común los hallazgos dentro de las respectivas líneas de investigación de cada miembro, y de los estudios teóricos que cada investigador o investigadora del equipo había acometido. Se consiguió así compartir ideas, destacar textos esenciales, establecer puntos de contacto entre diferentes líneas de investigación, y establecer el estado de la cuestión en nuestra investigación individual, a la vez que se preparaban actividades de carácter grupal como paneles de congresos conjuntos o sugerencias para las tesis doctorales de los investigadores y las investigadoras en formación. Pese a que consideramos fundamental esta labor de equipo, la investigación literaria consiste en primer lugar en hacer lectura crítica y analítica, un trabajo individual que no siempre en un primer momento puede desarrollarse en grupo. Además, puesto que cada miembro del grupo se ha encargado de un corpus textual concreto, no cabe sino detallar a continuación la metodología y corpus textual estudiado por cada uno de los investigadores e investigadoras, que posteriormente se puso en común en las citadas reuniones.

NOTA: Los resultados finales en cuanto a publicaciones se refiere aparecen en el apartado “Conclusiones y Prospectiva”.

ISABEL DURÁN : Como ya se anunciaba en la solicitud, la IP del Proyecto, que accedió a su cátedra en Mayo de 2011, mientras este Proyecto estaba en marcha, presentó como “Proyecto Investigador” en su concurso precisamente éste que nos ocupa, *Topografías domésticas en el*

imaginario femenino. Una visión comparativa, transnacional y hemisférica. Cabe decir que la puntuación que le dio el Tribunal por este ejercicio fue la máxima posible (10). La Dra. Durán se ha centrado en la exploración de los espacios domésticos en la Autobiografía de mujeres. Dos han sido los focos principales de su investigación, que resultarán en sendos ensayos publicados en el volumen recopilatorio final.

1. Intercambios transatlánticos US-Europa (*Where Women's Imagination Dwells: Autobiography and/as Criticism*). Sidonie Smith y Julia Watson en su libro entitled *Reading Autobiography* (2001) dedican un capítulo a la explicación de 52 géneros de la escritura de la vida. Ninguno de estos 52 géneros, sin embargo, es autocritografía, que es aquel en el que se inscriben las obras que han analizado para este Proyecto. El *bios* de estos textos se centra en las preocupaciones de la crítica académica por un lado, o en los aspectos de la carrera del autor, por el otro. La palabra autocritografía fue utilizada por primera vez por el crítico afroamericano Henry Louis Gates para describir un libro de ensayos críticos que constituía "la autobiografía de un concepto crítico". Es, en otras palabras, un relato de las condiciones individuales, sociales e institucionales que ayudan a crear a una escritora. Las obras analizadas para esta vertiente de su investigación han sido *Rooms of Our Own* (2006), de la escritora y crítica norteamericana Susan Gubar, y *Negotiating With the Dead*, (2002), de Margaret Atwood y *La Loca de la Casa*, escrita por la escritora periodista española Rosa Montero en 2003. *Rooms Of Our Own* obviamente toma al clásico de Virginia Woolf, *A Room's of One's Own*, como modelo, y establece con este texto un diálogo intertextual. Los libros de Margaret Atwood y Rosa Montero, como el de Susan – Gubar, no sólo utilizan el espacio doméstico metafóricamente. También deliberadamente se instalan en la recreación de escenas domésticas, como acto político y feminista. Porque ellas vuelven constantemente a los detalles materiales concretos de las situaciones que se describen: la comida que comen y cocinan, el dinero que gastan, o la comodidad de los alojamientos. Su estrategia está diseñada para convencer al lector de la importancia profunda de estas condiciones físicas para la posibilidad de que se dé una actividad intelectual y creativa.

2. Literatura Chicana en los EEUU y domesticidad (*"From Ancestral Land to Domestic Site in Chicana Literature"*). La arquitectura es una metáfora fundamental para expresar la identidad. Las ciudades y los edificios expresan aspiraciones sociales y valores a la vez que actúan como barómetros de la permanencia social o del cambio. En cuanto a la propiedad de una casa, se manifiestan perfectamente el Sueño Americano y el "American Way": los valores cívicos del individualismo, el éxito económico y la autosuficiencia quedan probados.

Para los autores chicanos, como para todos –según Bachelard y Heidegger-, la metáfora arquitectónica es una figura crucial de la identidad; nuestro hogar es el hogar de nuestro ser (*The Poetics of Space*). En la década de los 80, durante el período conocido como postnacionalismo en los Estudios Chicanos, *Days of Obligation*, de Richard Rodríguez (1992) y *The House on Mango Street* de Sandra Cisneros (1984), utilizan la casa como metáfora general para la construcción de la identidad. En este cambio, desde el heroico nacionalismo chicano de los años 70 hacia el modo actual, más irónico y contingente, se ha producido un cambio de símbolos, en el que podemos percibir que el foco se ha trasladado desde la tierra, un símbolo central del nacionalismo enraizado en nociones de Aztlán como hogar simbólico de los mexicano-americanos, hacia la casa. Es decir, si la fuente de inspiración para transmitir una identidad colectiva chicana era anteriormente el paisaje natural, ahora ese rol lo tienen la casa y el paisaje urbano. Y esto no es casualidad. Contrario al entorno natural y a la tierra, las casas pueden transformarse, remodelarse, sustituirse y destruirse. Y la distinción entre los entornos naturales y aquéllos contruidos por el hombre está relacionada con el conflicto entre permanencia y cambio; entre estabilidad y desarrollo, entre lo natural y orgánico y los mecánico o manufacturado.

Este cambio de perspectiva ha llevado a estudiar en profundidad la obra de Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*, en conversación transatlántica con otros textos (no americanos) centrados en el espacio doméstico. El texto de Cisneros está narrado desde el punto de vista de una joven chicana, y es una colección de cuarenta y cinco viñetas sobre el deseo de la joven Esperanza de poseer un espacio social, cultural y personal, enmarcado en su deseo de una "casa propia". Es cierto que, mientras que Cisneros utiliza la metáfora de la casa para representar los límites ideológicos, culturales y económicos impuestos a la joven adolescente perteneciente a una comunidad latina, también se alinea con muchas otras escritoras que han utilizado el espacio de la casa como símbolo de la opresión de género. Por tanto, ha interesado hacer un análisis comparativo de esta obra con otras autoras norteamericanas como Mary Wilkins Freeman.

Y es que la "casa propia" de Esperanza está libre de las limitaciones y obligaciones patriarcales del barrio obrero en el que vive. Al igual que Virginia Woolf en *Una habitación propia*, la "casa propia" de Esperanza surge de una reinterpretación feminista del espacio. Por lo tanto, esta lectura del texto da razones más que suficientes para utilizarlo en una perspectiva comparatista, como otro ejemplo del uso del espacio doméstico como señal de detención de la opresión de las mujeres. Como tal, se pueden tender puentes entre Sandra

Cisneros y los textos de Virginia Woolf, por supuesto, pero también entre el texto de Cisneros y los relatos de María Wilkins Freeman y Kate Chopin, o entre una autora chicana y los espacios domésticos de García Lorca, Edith Wharton, o Henrik Ibsen. Y es que todas estas obras cuentan con protagonistas femeninas que experimentan un despertar a las limitaciones que les impone la sociedad patriarcal y/o racista, y/o clasista, y así reclaman un espacio propio, liberado de las limitaciones espaciales y existenciales impuestas por la sociedad.

CARMEN MÉNDEZ GARCÍA se ha centrado en dos líneas fundamentales, que había definido ya originariamente como su contribución al proyecto: 1) la mente femenina como espacio de trasgresión y de creación de identidad, y 2) la redefinición y transformación de espacios de conflicto o liminales tradicionalmente considerados masculinos (el frente de batalla, la parte pública del burdel, el hotel), y por ende no domésticos, en ubicaciones de domesticidad y cuestionamiento genérico.

Como parte de la primera línea de investigación apuntada, el espacio mental femenino, impartió con la IP del Proyecto, la Dra. Isabel Durán, la conferencia "Crisis del cuerpo y de la mente" En ella se centraba en la novela *The Golden Notebook* (1962) de Doris Lessing. Analizó durante esta conferencia la metáfora del yo escindido como receptáculo (o "habitación") de distintas partes de la personalidad. Además, en un estadio temprano de su investigación, y precisamente para conectar líneas de investigación, se planteó el análisis de la reformulación del espacio doméstico como algo típicamente femenino durante la década de los 50 en los Estados Unidos, siguiendo las teorías de Betty Friedan y analizando publicaciones de autoras relacionadas con la generación Beat como Joyce Johnson (*Minor Characters, a Beat Memoir*, 1983, o *Come Join the Dance*, 1961), que reformulan la división genérica estricta del espacio en los años 50 (con hombres que se lanzan a la carretera, como en el famoso *On the Road* (1957) de Jack Kerouac, para ver dónde radica la visión de estos autores de las mujeres como sometidas – y también sometedoras – con su domesticidad). Esta línea de investigación se ha introducido en su docencia a través de varias sesiones de la asignatura que ha impartido en el curso 2010/2011 y en el actual curso 2011/2012 en el Máster de Estudios Literarios de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, "Cultura y contracultura en los Estados Unidos". Así, ha analizado con sus estudiantes la obra de autoras "beat" como la ya mencionada Joyce Johnson o Dianne Di Prima -- especialmente la evolución de su relación con los espacios domésticos y la trasgresión genérica en su obra temprana *Memoirs of a Beatnik Girl* (1969) y su más reciente *Recollections of My Life as a Woman* (2001) --, o mujeres creadoras inmediatamente posteriores a las mujeres beat como Patti Smith y su reciente autobiografía *Just Kids* (2010).

Otro resultado positivo de la introducción de esta línea de investigación en su docencia es que ha despertado el interés de una de sus estudiantes, que ha matriculado el pasado mes de octubre de 2011 su tesis doctoral, titulada "La alienación ideológica y social de la mujer en la Norteamérica de los cincuenta: manifestaciones literarias y cinematográficas", y que estudiará precisamente lo doméstico y lo femenino en este contexto histórico y geográfico.

Dentro de la segunda línea de investigación señalada, los espacios liminales y la redefinición de lo doméstico, ha analizado la distribución de los roles y de las esferas masculina y femenina en el espacio conflictivo y liminal que es el campo de batalla, y cómo existen muy diferentes ámbitos (la retaguardia o el hospital de campaña para la mujer, frente al frente o la trinchera para el hombre) conectados con el género. Se utiliza la denominada "literatura de la guerra de Vietnam" (novelas y relatos de batalla escritos en su gran mayoría por hombres) para analizar la problemática relación de los géneros y sus distintos espacios durante el conflicto armado y también en el posteriormente denominado "regreso al hogar", una frase hecha que no deja, sin embargo, de indicar ciertas nociones de lo doméstico como un lugar de sosiego y paz, concebido en términos femeninos, frente al espacio violento y masculino que es el frente.

Su estudio de la obra de Karen Tei Yamashita, *I Hotel* (2010), presta especial atención a la representación de la mujer siguiendo la evolución paralela del *identity politics* y las reivindicaciones sociales organizadas en torno al International Hotel de San Francisco durante las décadas de los 60 y 70. Se analiza el espacio de género, pues, en una ubicación muy concreta donde residían numerosos inmigrantes asiáticos (hombres) hasta su demolición. El International Hotel no funcionó sólo como espacio de acción política, sino que también se puede observar en él la feminización de un espacio público que se torna doméstico (los residentes eran casi permanentes, acercándose así el International Hotel más al espacio de una residencia que al de un hotel al uso). La historia de feminización del hombre asiático en Estados Unidos convierte así las habitaciones del hotel en un espacio difuso, donde los hombres viven "sin mujeres" y adoptan, de hecho, numerosos comportamientos tradicionalmente considerados femeninos (cocina, limpieza), lo que difumina las fronteras tradicionales de espacio y género.

La reciente obra de teatro de la autora Lynn Nottage, *Ruined* (2008, ganadora premio Pulitzer de teatro 2009) es, de facto una reescritura de la conocida *Madre Coraje y sus hijos* de Bertolt Brecht, ubicada en esta ocasión en la República Democrática del Congo. *Ruined* es una

obra de y sobre mujeres, que negocian su identidad dentro de un mundo masculino consiguiendo un refugio en el burdel regentado por la figura matriarcal de Mama Nadi. La identidad, física y mental, de las chicas que trabajan para Mama Nadi está constantemente amenazada (al borde, literalmente, de la destrucción del título) por un mundo masculino de guerra y violencia que trata, sin éxito, de romper los muros de solidaridad femenina creados en el burdel, espacio real que se convierte así en una representación de la feminidad misma, constantemente amenazada y penetrada por lo masculino, pero también a otro nivel en un refugio donde puede preservarse y definirse la identidad individual y comunal. También ha estudiado la redefinición de dos espacios cerrados, públicos pero íntimamente relacionados con lo privado, el hotel, o la habitación alquilada, en relación con el concepto de lo erótico, y el estudio de los distintos roles de género y expectativas que se producen en dichos espacios.

CLAUDIA ALONSO RECARTE ha profundizado en el estudio de los espacios domésticos en el imaginario femenino siguiendo la doble vertiente de sus líneas de investigación. Por una parte, de acuerdo con el marco académico de estudios raciales y de género, ha continuado su investigación sobre las cantantes de jazz y de blues en la literatura femenina afroamericana y en la cartografía historiográfica del jazz. Ésta se caracteriza tradicionalmente por estar escrita por historiadores masculinos cuyo énfasis mitopoético se centra habitualmente en los “grandes hombres” del género musical. En su corta historia, el blues y, especialmente, el jazz, se han consolidado como tradiciones masculinas cuyo grado de énfasis en la hiper-masculinidad e hiper-heterosexualidad han dejado escaso espacio para el desarrollo de una vertiente femenina. Sin embargo, el corto pero intenso periodo de grabaciones de las cantantes de blues clásico de los años veinte está eximido de este patrón. Tanto escritores y escritoras como académicos han encontrado en las actuaciones y grabaciones de estas figuras un sistema de *signifying* (es decir, la intertextualidad literaria afrocéntrica de acuerdo con complejos sistemas deícticos) basado en la denuncia contra la opresión racial, social y económica. Esta problemática guarda una estrecha relación con los temas concernientes al Proyecto. La antinomia esfera pública/esfera privada constituye uno de los ejes que posibilita la interpretación y relectura del blues clásico. El imaginario doméstico recogido por cantantes como Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Clara Smith, Victoria Spivey o Alberta Hunter, entre otras, invierte en varias ocasiones las jerarquías implícitas de la antinomia – según las cuales el ámbito doméstico es de carácter negativo por su asociación con lo femenino – para ofrecer una nueva concepción de la privacidad del hogar como espacio de liberación personal. En estas ocasiones, la mujer se aferra a la privacidad y a la intimidad que representa el hogar para

fortalecerse como agente, frente a la asociación de la esfera privada como propia de una actitud pasiva.

Por otra parte, ha continuado con su investigación sobre las topografías domésticas en el imaginario femenino desde el marco ecocrítico y el ecofeminista, así como en la articulación de espacios domésticos en la literatura femenina partiendo de la simbología que presentan los animales domésticos dentro de la esfera privada. El objetivo es examinar el discurso y las tendencias retóricas adoptadas por mujeres en la caracterización de animales domésticos no como agentes pasivos, víctimas del encarcelamiento y el dominio inherente al sistema patriarcal, sino como personificaciones de una privacidad que presenta el ideal a alcanzar para la mujer independiente. En el congreso *Reading Nature*, que se celebró en la Facultad de Filología de la Universidad Complutense los días 14, 15 y 16 de diciembre de 2011, se reservó un espacio dedicado exclusivamente a la crítica ecofeminista y a los estudios de animales con un total de ocho sesiones sobre esta temática.

DAVID YAGÜE ha centrado su investigación en el desarrollo del espacio doméstico como lugar de trauma y posible curación del mismo. Conforme a su línea investigadora, ha centrado su investigación sobre la domesticidad y el trauma dentro de la literatura femenina afroamericana y latinoamericana, con especial hincapié en las obras de Toni Morrison e Isabel Allende. Para ello se ha servido del marco crítico que la corriente denominada *Trauma Theory* o Teoría del Trauma brinda para dicho análisis. Esta escuela crítica se centra en el análisis de las descripciones de víctimas de traumas dentro de las obras literarias, siendo objeto de su observación víctimas de abusos sexuales, soldados o maltrato de cualquier tipo. El estudio realizado a través de las obras literarias de víctimas de un trastorno de estrés post traumático – o PTSD como es más conocido - es muy propicio para el objetivo de la investigación de este proyecto, dado que es el espacio doméstico donde se desarrollan los traumas primordiales de muchas de las mujeres que sufren de esta dolencia y donde se desarrollan gran parte de las novelas que exploran el trauma psicológico que algunas mujeres víctimas de estos malos tratos desenvuelven sus vidas.

Las novelas afroamericanas escritas por mujeres son un terreno oportuno para una investigación sobre el ámbito doméstico siguiendo este punto de vista traumático. Históricamente, la mujer afroamericana ha tenido que sufrir abusos y vejaciones constantes dentro de las casas de sus amos bajo la esclavitud, tal y como se nos muestra en autobiografías como *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), escrita por Harriet Jacobs, o *The Narrative of*

Sojourner Truth (1850), escrita por Sojourner Truth, entre otras. En ellas, se nos muestra cómo el espacio doméstico en el que vivían los esclavos era un espacio marcado por el trauma, que se pasaba de generación en generación, repitiendo así un comportamiento que llega hasta las novelas de Toni Morrison. Por una parte, Toni Morrison identifica el espacio doméstico como lugar original donde se inicia y desarrolla el trauma y donde las víctimas se sienten encerradas, determinadas a repetir los mismos patrones de violencia con futuras generaciones, tal y como pasa en *The Bluest Eye* (1970), *Beloved* (1987) o *A Mercy* (2008). Los lugares donde habitan las protagonistas de estas novelas se encuentran en la intersección del racismo, la pobreza, el fracaso de la comunidad y el deseo no satisfecho de las protagonistas, tal y como lo describe Valerie Sweeney Prince en su libro *Burnin' Down the House: Home in African American Literature* (2005). La única salida para estas personas es huir de sus casas y lograr que la comunidad les acepte.

MARINA ROIG ha realizado lecturas de corte teórico como *In the House of Silence*, editado por Fadia Faqir, que analiza textos árabes autobiográficos. La introducción de este volumen ha sido interesante para su estudio ya que analiza lo que es autobiografía en la historia del mundo árabe. El volumen antológico *Women, Gender, Religion* de Elizabeth Castelli, reúne artículos sobre esos tres grandes bloques temáticos, haciendo aportaciones valiosas en su campo sobre temas como el fundamentalismo y la mujer en Oriente Próximo o la polémica del velo. En *Woman's Body, Woman's Word*, de Fedwa Malti-Douglas, se analiza el papel de Sherezade como un modelo a seguir en el uso del cuerpo y de la palabra. En *Women Claim Islam* de Miriam Cooke se estudia el término "Islamic feminism". *Home and Harem*, de Inderpal Grewal, aunque se centra en la relación entre la mujer inglesa y la mujer hindú a través de los viajes, también aportó valiosas ideas para la investigación. En *Opening the Gates*, editado por Margot Badran y Miriam Cooke, se vuelve al término de "Islamic feminism" y las batallas que las voces árabes femeninas tienen que librar.

En *The Veil Unveiled* de Faegheh Shirazi o *Opening the Gates*, editado por Margot Badran y Miriam Cooke, se acuña el término *islamic feminism*, que aunque pueda parecer un oxímoron, representa el doble compromiso de la mujer musulmana; por una parte, se debe a su fe, y por otra a la lucha por los derechos de las mujeres tanto dentro como fuera del hogar. Aquí confluye el inabarcable tema de la *identity* que es básico en esta investigación. La mujer que se identifica como creyente y que lucha por los derechos de la mujer en su comunidad crea un nuevo modo de ser y de entender la religión y el feminismo. La yuxtaposición de estos términos es un acto políticamente subversivo ya que las mujeres que se definen como *islamic*

feminists están rechazando las etiquetas que otros les imponen, ya sea como mujeres occidentalizadas por parte de los musulmanes más patriarcales o como mujeres religiosas subyugadas por los mandatos machistas.

En este sentido se labran las autobiografías de mujeres musulmanas que conforman el corpus de su investigación, tales como Azar Nafisi, Fatima Mernissi, Azadeh Moaveni o Nawal al-Saadawi, entre otras, donde espacios públicos, como las cárceles o las calles de una ciudad, se convierten en lugares donde la mujer empieza a tomar el poder de distintas maneras, todas ellas subversivas. Las barreras, tanto físicas (cuerpo, familia, casa, ciudad, país) como socioculturales y psíquicas, se sobrepasan con ayuda de elementos “prohibidos” como el arte y la solidaridad entre mujeres. La toma de la palabra por parte de éstas, imitando a Sherezade, modelo para muchas de ellas, significa el empoderamiento en cualquiera de esos espacios, públicos y privados. El papel del patriarcado y del Islamismo más radical se ven cuestionados por la toma del espacio.

7. CONCLUSIONES Y PROSPECTIVA

Atendiendo a las distintas líneas investigadoras de cada uno de los y las participantes del Proyecto, detalladas en el apartado anterior, se enumerarán ahora las conclusiones y resultados a las que, como grupo investigador, se ha llegado durante estos dos años.

1. **Intercambios transatlánticos EEUU-Europa:** Queda claro, a la luz del análisis pormenorizado de las novelas autobiográficas analizadas, que el clásico de Virginia Woolf *A Room's of One's Own* está detrás del mensaje que numerosas escritoras pretenden transmitir en sus autobiografías. Woolf decidió dar la vuelta a las connotaciones negativas del espacio doméstico, y envió al mundo como mensaje indiscutible que toda mujer necesita una habitación propia, como símbolo de muchas necesidades, tales como la privacidad, el ocio, y la independencia económica, todas ellas componente esencial de las desigualdades entre hombres y mujeres. Woolf predice que hasta que estas desigualdades se corrijan, las mujeres seguirán siendo ciudadanas de segunda clase y que sus logros literarios también se evaluarán como tal. Casi un siglo después de que Woolf escribiera su ensayo, las mujeres tenemos habitaciones propias, afirma Susan Gubar en su título. Pero, si todo ha cambiado sobre las condiciones materiales de la mujer y sobre su situación económica en el mundo moderno, no ha cambiado lo suficiente en términos de las estructuras de poder y hegemonía que dominan su conciencia. Respecto a otro título con referencias a la domesticidad, *La loca de la casa*, podemos sacar conclusiones similares. En contraposición a otras representaciones simbólicas negativas del espacio doméstico, como las propuestas, por ejemplo, por Edith Wharton en *La casa de la alegría*, por Lorca en *La casa de Bernarda Alba* o por Ibsen en *Casa de muñecas*, Montero y Atwood presentan la casa como metáfora de la imaginación, la habitación como espacio de independencia, y hasta el convento como el espacio donde se encuentra el sentido del verdadero yo de la mujer que elige esa clausura.

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2. **Respecto a la escritura de mujeres latinas,** se ha llegado a la siguiente conclusión. Con la transición del modo heroico del nacionalismo chicano de los años 70 hacia el modo

más irónico y contingente de la actualidad, podemos percibir un cambio en los símbolos utilizados por las escritoras latinas, en el que nos encontramos con que el foco de atención ha pasado de la tierra, símbolo central chicano anclado en las nociones nacionalistas de tierra y Aztlán, a las casas. Mientras que anteriormente el diseño un tanto pastoral del entorno natural era la inspiración para la expresión simbólica de la identidad colectiva, ahora los edificios han asumido ese papel. Porque, a diferencia del entorno natural, las casas pueden ser derribadas, modificadas, reformadas, y reemplazadas. Por lo tanto, las distinciones entre el entorno natural y el urbano se refieren también a las oposiciones fundamentales relacionadas con el tema del cambio humano en la tierra -el conflicto entre permanencia y cambio, entre estabilidad y desarrollo del paisaje, entre lo natural y lo orgánico frente a lo fabricado y lo mecánico. En otras palabras, "The Machine in the Garden" de Leo Marx se ha convertido, a manos de las escritoras chicanas a partir de los años 90 del siglo pasado, en algo así como "La casa en la tierra". Como resultado, hay una serie de imágenes arquitectónicas en la literatura chicana contemporánea que pueden ser analizadas como claves para la identidad. Así, estos textos que se centran en casas en lugar de en la tierra ancestral, cuestionan la visión orgánica y esencialista de la cultura chicana, consagrada en los paisajes ancestrales, y optan por la metáfora arquitectónica de la vivienda nueva y temporal. La literatura chicana femenina de los años 1980 y 1990, rechaza, pues, la idea de que la etnicidad es un proceso orgánico que se desarrolla en un solo lugar, el lugar del nacimiento y la patria, y sugiere que el movimiento desde el enclave original hacia casas nuevas y temporales es esencial para la formación de la identidad Chicana feminista. De hecho, podríamos afirmar que el cambio de lo nacional a lo post-nacional o post-Movimiento está marcado por este cambio desde el mítico Aztlán hacia la casa enclavada en la ciudad.

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From ancestral land to domestic site in Chicana literature.

(Isabel Durán)

As is well known, between 1950 and 1960 a high birth rate and continuous immigration guaranteed the growth of the ethnic Mexican population in the United States and planted the seeds of the Chicano movement in the following two decades. Believing in the American dream, Mexican Americans born during the cold-war era confronted social, economic, and political conditions that prevented its attainment. This reality, combined with the civil rights movement of the 1960s, generated the Chicano movement. In their quest for empowerment, Chicano activists in the 1960s and 1970s essentialized the term and voiced demands for change and recognition in the common anti-American language of *Chicanismo* that emphasized *la raza, carnalismo* ("brotherhood"), and *Aztlán*.

Chicano authors of the 1960s and 1970s, on their part, also recuperated a sense of collective history by conceptualizing "*Aztlán*," which represents both the legendary origins of the Aztecs, and the South-western U.S. geography once belonging to Mexico. Thematizing *Aztlán* in their literature enabled Chicanos to validate a subordinated identity and an invisible history.

As a result, the legitimacy of the Chicano politics of minority nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s was built on the premise of the Chicano homeland, that is, of the permanence and stability of Mexican vernacular landscapes in the US, as Americo Paredes displays in his book on corridos *With His Pistol in his Hand: A Border Ballad and its Hero* (1948). The *corrido*, a kind of oral epic ballad, is considered by critics as the popular history of Chicano letters, as long as it was an expression of Mexican-American ethno-cultural identity of Mexican pride and rebellious and strong-willed spirit of the heroes. In this Ancestral land, a rural landscape to which the Mexicano settlers feel strong organic ties, gives them a collective identity (Kaup, 365)

From this revolutionary period also dates the "*Teatro Campesino*" established by the Chicano playwright Luis Valdés in 1965. *El Teatro Campesino* was the cultural wing of the *United Farm Workers union*, a popular theatre that took its material directly from the lives of its audience in the bean fields of California's central valley. The works (called *Actos*) written and represented, became radical critiques of racism, exploitation and injustice suffered by Mexican-Americans, and promoted the creation in 1967, of "Quinto Sol" a press strictly dedicated to promoting Chicano letters.

Quinto Sol gave a voice to Mexican-American writers who had been rejected by mainstream publishers, and it assisted the establishment of an agenda of political identity to which most Chicano poets and novelists did not hesitate to ascribe. Apart from the use of various experimental techniques (multiple narrators, mixed genres, deliberate and challenging use of bilingualism), these early Chicano writers rediscovered and rewrote the Aztec myths and symbols and coated their land of origin, the mythical homeland Aztlán, with new meanings. Aztlán, the ancestral home of the ancient Aztec Empire, came to represent everything that Mexicans had lost in the process of colonization of their lands and their minds by the United States. Over time, this symbolic landscape would become a national, cultural, historical and political symbol, even a "mental state" (in the words of Chicano poet Alurista) that soaked the emotions of all Chicanos (in fact, the most prestigious academic journal on Chicano Studies today is called *Aztlan*).

The *Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*, a manifesto advocating Chicano nationalism and self-determination for Mexican Americans, was adopted by the First National Chicano Liberation Youth Conference, a 1969 convention in Denver. During the conference, the Mexican-American poet Alurista, urged Chicano writers, poets, musicians and artists to produce literature and art that is appealing to their people and that relates to their revolutionary culture, and proclaimed the following words:

In the spirit of a new people that is conscious not only of its proud historical heritage but also of the brutal "gringo" invasion of our territories, we, the Chicano inhabitants and civilizers of the northern land of Aztlán from whence came our forefathers, reclaiming the land of their birth and consecrating the determination of our people of the sun, declare that the call of our blood is our power, our responsibility, and our inevitable destiny.... Aztlán belongs to those who plant the seeds, water the fields, and gather the crops and not to the foreign Europeans..... *Por La Raza todo. Fuera de La Raza nada.*

Alurista went on to become the "poet laureate of Aztlán", and from that moment on, artistic prescriptions like the one I show here appealed to a kind of identity politics that, apparently, all Latinos had to embrace:

...We must celebrate cultural diversity, take pride in *La raza*, in our Spanish language, in our cultural heritage...And we must be proud of the autochthonous roots: of the Aztecs who invented the calendar, of the Mayans who before the age of the telescope, traced the orbit of Mercury about the sun, of the Incas who developed the art of

irrigation and built the majestic terraces and edifices of Machu Picchu in polished stone. (Alegría, 106)

While the influence of the Chicano Movement was instrumental in promoting and disseminating literary creation, I believe, as Ada Savin and other Chicano critics do, that its ideological impact on much of the literature written in those decades was excessive. It is true that the militant nationalism of the decade of the 70s was necessary after a long history of community silencing and oppression. But when the agenda of "*la raza*" was imposed on the creator's artistic freedom, the resulting works were filled with ethnic stereotypes and certain linguistic clichés. In fact, most of that political and openly didactic literature was forgotten once the end stopped justifying the means.

However, after these somewhat clumsy beginnings of a literature exclusively of protest throughout the 70's, some emblematic figures of Chicano literature emerged, as Tomas Rivera (*Y no se lo tragó la tierra*, 1971⁷) Rudolfo Anaya (*Heart of Aztlan*, 1976, or *Bless me, Ultima*, 1972), Rolando Hinojosa (*Estampas del Valle*, 1973), and Miguel Mendez (*Peregrinos de Aztlán*, 1974). All of these titles significantly point at the prominence of the inherited ancestral land as a metaphor for one's Mexican identity. These early Chicano novels seem to ascribe to the Emersonian idea that

"In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate [konát] than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature" (*Nature*, 2)

It seemed, however, that the decade of the 70s had exhausted the possibilities of an eminently socio-political literature, community-oriented and too repetitive in its themes, motifs, symbols and didacticism. But the 80's marked the rebirth of Chicano literature, largely due to the emergence of some Chicana authors. Because the official version of a static and closed ethnicity propounded by the Chicano Movement, was finally answered and refuted by other voices who dared express their discomfort with the male community and with a literature written by men who relegated the female characters to traditional gender roles (the *curandera*, the *chingada*, the *comadre*, the prostitute...). Central to this emergence of Chicana

⁷ ...*y no se lo tragó la tierra*, is Tomas Rivera's classic novel about a Mexican-American family's life as migrant workers during the 1950s, as seen through the eyes of a young boy. Exploited by farmers, shopkeepers and even fellow Mexican Americans, the boy must forge his self identity in the face of exploitation, death and disease constant moving and conflicts with school officials. It is the epic vision of a proud and indomitable Mexican community against powerful social and economic forces.

literature was the publication of a seminal anthology, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1981), whose editors, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua, together with a large group of American female voices of all races, questioned in their poems, essays, stories and testimonies, the idea of a stable and monolithic sexual and ethnic identity. Among the canonized titles of Chicana literature we can place the epistolary novel *The Mixquiahuala Letters* (1986), by Ana Castillo, *The House on Mango Street* (1985), by Sandra Cisneros, and the now classic *Borderlands / La Frontera*, by Gloria Anzaldua.

So, with the transition from the heroic mode of Chicano nationalism of the early 70s to the more ironic and contingent mode of the present, a shift in symbols has occurred in which we find that the focus has passed from the land, that central symbol in Chicano nationalism indebted to the notions of *tierra* and *Aztlán*, to houses. Whereas earlier the somewhat pastoral design of the natural environment provided inspiration for the symbolic expression of collective identity, now the built environment has assumed that role. Because unlike the natural environment, houses can be torn down, modified, remodelled, and replaced (363). So, according to Monica Kaup, the distinctions between the natural and the built environment refers to the key oppositions related to the issue of human change in the land –the conflict between permanence and change, landscape stability and development, the natural and organic as opposed to the manufactured and mechanical (363). In other words, Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* has become something like "*The house in the land*". As a result, there is a range of architectural images in contemporary Chicano Literature that can be analyzed as keys to identity.

Some Chicano texts that focus on houses instead of on the ancestral land question the organic and essentialist view of Chicano culture embodied in old houses and landscapes, and opt for the architectural metaphor of the new and temporary dwelling. The Chicano literature of the 1980's and 1990's reject the idea that Chicano ethnicity is an organic process unfolding in one single place, the place of one's birth, the homeland, and suggest that moves from the original to new homes are essential for the formation of Chicana feminist or new Chicano identities. In fact, the shift from the national to the postnational, *post-movimiento* is marked by this shift from homeland to urban home.

I will explore some transitional texts first, and then deal more at length with SANDRA CISNEROS's *The House on Mango Street*, a text that employs the house as the master metaphor for the construction of identity.

One of those transitional texts from ancestral land to domestic site is Gloria Analdúa's seminal work *Borderlands/La Frontera*, a bilingual text that breaks with traditional generic boundaries, mixing in a deliberately eclectic manner poetry, mythology, history, essays and personal testimonies. Let me begin with a quote:

Tierra natal. This is home, the small towns in the Valley, los pueblitos with chicken pens and goats picketed to mesquite shrubs. En las colonias on the other side of the tracks, junk cars line the front yards of hot pink and lavender-trimmed houses – Chicano architecture we call it, self-consciously (B, 89)... And if going home is denied me then I will have to stand and claim my own space, making a new culture –*una culture mestiza*- with my own lumber, my own bricks and mortar and my own feminist architecture (B, 22).

I call it a transitional text because on the one hand, Anzaldúa longs for the old, ancestral vernacular dwellings, which represents her collective Chicana identity, but on the other, she admits a flight from the domestic order and her new individual identity as a mestiza, as a hybrid being, which she elaborates in the chapter entitled "*la conciencia de la mestiza*". Or, in Monika Kaup's words, Anzaldúa both celebrates the survival of traditional Mexican vernacular landscape in the borderlands and offers her designs for a post-nationalist, lesbian restructuring. Her call to Chicanas to "deconstruct, construct" the worlds they inhabit relies on the building of routes and bridges across existing boundaries.

Anzaldúa's intention in writing this book is to raise what she calls a *mestiza consciousness*, one that enables her to reject all those binary oppositions or frontiers between black/white, American/Mexican, man/woman, English/Spanish that she sees as simplistic products of Western thought. And, as a lesbian Chicana, she feels like the homeless Kristevan *deject* who has to find her own race in an amalgam identity that she calls *mestiza*:

As a *mestiza* I have no country, my homeland cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races (Anzaldúa, 102)

If her own homeland cast her out for being a lesbian Chicana, she proposes to be the architect of a new homeland; a "third country" that she calls Borderlands; a space where there is no room for either anglo-centric nationalisms or Chicano male dominance over women. Indeed, as a feminist text, her *testimonio* relates the limitations placed on Chicana women under the rule of the fathers, as much as the cultural tyranny placed on Chicanos in general under the rule of American imperialism. Furthermore, her political agenda also offers an internal critique of those Chicano cultural practices that deny the indigenous part of el *mestizaje*.

"In the new mestiza, Anzaldúa projects an ideal borderlands citizen who is a street person and a nomad rather than an occupant of a house or an owner of the land" (Kaup, 371). That is, her new *mestiza* does not discard her genealogical inheritance, but constructs a new mixed race which is an amalgam of her Indian mother, her Spanish father, and her acquired American identity. She belongs to the homeland of her Mexican ancestry, of course, but refuses to dwell there, because she can't hold concepts or ideas in rigid boundaries. The borders and walls that are supposed to keep the undesirable ideas out are, she says, "the enemy within" (Anzaldúa, 101), because "rigidity means death". So, the *mestiza* has to move away from set patterns and goals towards a more complete or unified perspective, one that includes rather than excludes. Because the new *mestiza* learns to develop a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity and ambivalence; she learns to "be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view" (Anzaldúa, 101). In *Borderlands*, the Chicano architecture of her past and her new feminist architecture strike a provisional balance. Her utopian prediction, constructed in architectural terminology, is really a proclamation against hyphens, against dashes, against borders:

En unas pocas centurias, the future will belong to the mestiza. Because the future depends on the breaking down of paradigms, it depends on the straddling of two or more cultures.... The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts" (Anzaldúa, 102)

In short, Anzaldúa does not live in the old house of her Mexican ancestry. On the contrary, in *Borderlands*, permanence and change, rigidity and alterability are in balance. And she achieves this balance between consent and descent, between Mexican affiliation and the formation of new Mexican-American and lesbian affiliations thanks to a model environment –rather than a

model house- that she calls the *Borderlands*, a configured space that would be, in Leo Marx's words, a "landscape of reconciliation" (72).

And so, this transitional text takes me to the one that has clearly changed the ancestral homeland for the urban and domestic site: Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street* (1984), a work that has reached canonical status as a coming of age story, and whose overwhelming popularity and canonical status has positively paved the way for the mainstream acknowledgement of Chicana authors.

Cisneros's text is narrated from the point of view of a young Chicana aptly named Esperanza (Hope), and it is a collection of forty-five vignettes about young Esperanza's desire for social, cultural, and personal space, framed around her desire for a "house of her own."

Indeed, Cisneros uses the metaphor of the house not as the cosy place of one's Edenic childhood where one wishes to return, but on the contrary, to represent the ideological, cultural, and economic limits imposed on the young Chicana adolescent growing up in a Latino community. In doing so, she aligns herself with many other female-authored domestic narratives that have traditionally used the space of the house as the symbol of gender oppression. So, she rejects her paternal house in Mango Street, because she finds it unworthy of her aspirations:

They always told us that one day we would move into a house, a real house that would be ours for always so we wouldn't have to move each year. And our house would have running water and pipes that worked. And inside it would have real stairs, not hallway stairs, but stairs inside like the houses on T.V [. . .] Our house would be white with trees around it, a great big yard and grass growing without a fence [. . .] But the house on Mango Street is not the way they told it at all. It's small and red [. . .]. Bricks are crumbling in places [. . .] There is no front yard [. . .] Everybody has to share a bedroom [. . .] I knew then I had to have a house. A real house. One I could point to. But this isn't it. The house on Mango Street isn't it.

Cisneros denies the Bachelardian sublimation of the house, when she rejects what Monika Kaup has called the "voice of filiation", which never stops insisting that the house is home as Bachelard defines it ("our corner of the world"); the space of original well-being to which allegiance is owed". In fact, Cisneros herself said in an interview that when she read Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, she thought: "What was this guy talking about when he

mentioned the familiar and comforting 'house of memory'? It was obvious that he never had to clean one or pay the landlord for rent like ours."

If Emerson believed that nature is "an appendix to the soul", Esperanza's soul finds it appendix in the house of her dreams. But that house is not the one in Mango Street. Instead of this imposed but odious home, Esperanza's "house of her own" is free from both the patriarchal constraints and obligations signified by her father and the crowded living conditions of her poor neighborhood. It is...

Not a flat. Not an apartment in back. Not a man's house. Not a daddy's. *A house all my own.* With my porch and my pillow, my pretty purple petunias. My books and my stories. My two shoes waiting beside the bed. Nobody to shake a stick at. Nobody's garbage to pick up after. Only a house as quiet as snow, a space for myself to go, clean as paper before the poem

Like Virginia Woolf in "*A Room of One's Own*" - where Woolf argues that in order to become a successful writer, a woman needs a space of her own where she can work and make enough money to support herself – Esperanza's "house of her own" arises from a feminist critique of gendered space.

However, we must not forget that Cisneros's text is also full of ethnic specificities that other non-Latino texts lack, because Esperanza's desire for social, cultural, and economic space emerges from her particular experience as a gendered but also a racialized subject in American society. She thus uses the house as the metaphor for the configuration of gender, but also of ethnic identity. For example, Esperanza utters a communal voice, the voice of the inhabitants of Mango Street, that speaks for the silenced voices of many Latinas in the same conditions as hers: those of many women sitting in windows and watching life go by; those of women enduring domestic and sexual abuse in their homes; those of women who have lost the hope that her name symbolises. So, if on the one hand she conforms to the conventions of the traditional bildungsroman in her desire to leave her family and community to embark on her education, as we can perceive in these lines:

One day I will pack my bags of books and paper. One day I will say goodbye to Mango. I am too strong for her to keep me here forever. One day I will go away. Friends and neighbors will say, What happened to that Esperanza? Where did she go with all those books and paper? Why did she march do far away? (110)

On the other hand she departs from that convention. Because if traditional protagonists of coming-of-age stories abandon their homes of confinement never to return, Esperanza initiates a *return voyage*, as she clarifies in her last vignette:

They will not know I have gone away to come back for the ones I left behind. For the ones who cannot out. (110)

That is, Esperanza's departure from her community is not just a process of individuation, but rather a step in her re-connection with her community. In this way, Cisneros's text more closely follows what scholar Delia Poey identifies as an "alternative Chicano tradition" of the bildungsroman. In doing so, she diminishes the status of the individual and reintroduces the communal perspective –bringing us back to Chicano nationalism's concerns with the collective.

To conclude, one could venture that Aztlán is Chicanos what the Wilderness was to white Americans. Because the wilderness, always associated somehow with the other great American myth, that of the Frontier, was constructed upon an East-West axis. But Chicanos have introduced the North-South axis in their description of this new Frontier they call the Border (cf. Border Studies). But that ancestral wilderness called Aztlán is also all-male centered. That is why, maybe, Chicana women have had to invent other spaces more in tune with the female imaginary. In this way, through the landscapes of the Borderlands, the house and the Street, Anzaldúa and Cisneros have found the imaginary and the urban equivalents, respectively, to the Aztec homeland. (Kaup, 390)

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3. El estudio de los espacios mentales y lo femenino llevó, en una etapa inicial del proyecto, a relacionar la a menudo atribulada psique femenina y su proyección en espacios "embruados" o "poseídos", más allá de las ya estudiadas habitaciones de Lessing o el ático de Bertha Mason en *Jane Eyre*. Relacionando esto con el estudio de la contracultura en los años 50 y 60 en Estados Unidos, se inició una nueva línea de investigación referida a la creación de nuevos espacios domésticos a mediados del siglo pasado, los suburbia norteamericanos (que pueden ser analizados, además, como *locus* del "problema sin nombre" que identificara Betty Friedan en *The Feminine Mystique*). Más allá de la redistribución que estos espacios clónicos hacen de las esferas masculinas y femeninas de poder (estudiados recientemente por la sociología o la arquitectura), o de la celebración en la década de los 50 en Estados Unidos del "ama de casa" de clase media-alta como arquetipo publicitado, resultado de una época histórica y geográfica muy determinada (algo ya sugerido por autoras feministas de la segunda oleada), interesa el

estudio de lo que se ha dado en llamar "suburban gothic", es decir, el análisis de las representaciones literarias de espacios basados en el arquetipo de lo gótico pero ubicados en los suburbia contemporáneos. Si bien la mayoría de las obras que tratan el espacio de la "casa encantada" contemporánea se ubican dentro de la literatura de género (el thriller, las novelas de terror), resulta interesante ver cómo a menudo estos espacios oscuros, tenebrosos y peligrosos subyacen precisamente al hogar perfecto, pulcro y ordenado, que es responsabilidad de la mujer ama de casa, y a la vez reflejo del lado oscuro o creativo de ésta que no puede ser expresado en el espacio muy codificado de la casa familiar. También se estudiaron espacios liminales, que podríamos denominar "semi-domésticos", donde existe un encuentro de géneros pero donde las relaciones de poder y económicas condicionan distintas atribuciones y responsabilidades, que dan lugar a relaciones de tipo abusivo que se amparan en lo económico, y donde las dicotomías tradicionales de privado vs. público o doméstico vs. negocio se problematizan. El ensayo de Carmen Méndez que apareció en el número 3 (dossier "Espacios generizados") de la revista *Investigaciones Feministas* (ISSN 2171-6080, páginas 129-1399), [<http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/index>] se centra en la relación entre espacio y feminidad en *Ruined*, una obra de la escritora estadounidense Lynn Nottage, una revisión de *Madre Coraje* de Bertol Bretch, que estudia las relaciones entre géneros y la creación de domesticidad y espacios en el contexto de un burdel.

El ensayo, también disponible en la dirección web <http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/article/view/41141>, se copia a continuación en inglés, por ser la lengua en que fue publicado.

"This is my place, Mama Nadi's":

Feminine Spaces and Identity in Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*

(Carmen Méndez)

ABSTRACT

Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* (2009) takes place at Mama Nadi's, a brothel in the Democratic Republic of Congo during the civil war. Female identities, both physical and psychical, are constantly threatened (about to crumble, about to be "in ruins") by a masculine world of war and violence. The brothel as a business setting becomes a quasi-domestic setting and a sanctuary where identities can be, however feebly, defined and preserved within the unstable

walls of feminine solidarity. The use and exploitation of the corporeal female space by clients of the brothel are described in spatial terms that replicate the exploitation of the rich mineral land in Congo. Ultimately, *Ruined* reminds us that the borders of one's space, both in the physical world and when pertaining to one's identity, are constantly subject to transgression, invasion, and ruin.

Keywords: space, identity, violence, women, Lynn Nottage.

**"This is my place, Mama Nadi's":
espacios femeninos e identidad en *Ruined* de Lynn Nottage"**

RESUMEN

Ruined (2009), de Lynn Nottage, se desarrolla en el burdel de Mama Nadi, en la República Democrática del Congo durante la Guerra civil. Las identidades femeninas, tanto físicas como psíquicas, se ven constantemente amenazadas (a punto de derrumbarse, de convertirse en "ruinas") por un mundo masculino de guerra y violencia. El prostíbulo, un negocio, se convierte en espacio semi-doméstico y santuario donde es posible definir y preservar una identidad, acaso mínima, dentro de los muros inestables de la solidaridad femenina. El uso y explotación del cuerpo femenino por parte de los clientes del prostíbulo se describe en términos espaciales que recuerdan a la explotación de la riqueza mineral de la tierra del Congo. *Ruined* nos recuerda, finalmente, que las fronteras del espacio propio, en lo que respecta al mundo físico y a nuestra identidad, están constantemente amenazadas por la trasgresión, la invasión, y la ruina.

Palabras clave: espacio, identidad, violencia, mujeres, Lynn Nottage.

This paper is part of a larger project about women and domesticity, which started out as a study of domestic settings in the US as portrayed in contemporary United States literature⁸. Recently I have been trying to identify works by US authors set outside the United States where problematized "semi-domestic" settings can be identified, to ascertain whether dichotomies such as private/public, domestic/business, and feminine/masculine can be universally applied. It is in this context that I will analyze Lynn Nottage's play *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize for drama, 2009), a re-writing of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and her Children* (1939), albeit set in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nottage had already shown her interest in

⁸ The research for the writing of this essay was funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Sanidad, Política Social e Igualdad / Instituto de la Mujer (Cod. 28/09). This grant is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

the lives of women -- as seen in her first play, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (1996), but also in two more recent plays, *Intimate Apparel* (2003) and *Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine* (2004) --, she extends this preoccupation in *Ruined* to such a problematic space as the social and politically turbulent contemporary Congo. Nottage, as a writer, seems to be interested in the portrayal of characters that seem to live on the verge of society, and in studying "what she calls 'the space between the lines', that is, the innermost thoughts of marginal characters whose voices remain muted and whose stories have been deemed irrelevant by those around them who wield more power" (Shannon, 2007a: 187).

Nottage herself has acknowledged that she initially took Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* as a model for her play: Brecht's story of exploitation and loose moral codes in the times of war seemed to be the right framework for a story set in a small mining village in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country immersed in a civil war that has been raging for decades. However, as theater director Kate Whoriskey explains in her introduction to the play, this ended up being a "false frame" (Whoriskey, 2009: xi). When Nottage's play was finally done, Mother Courage's socialist critique of greed in the times of war had been turned into a portrayal of the abuse of the female body mostly unconcerned with politics, a "look at war from a woman's point of view" (Greene, 2008), and what Gener calls a "humanist exposé" (Gener, 2009: 21). Nottage has described the war at DRC as:

"A slow simmering armed conflict that continues to be fought on several fronts, even though the war officially ended in 2002 . . . [there is] one war being fought for natural resources between militias funded by the government and industry . . . [there is also] the remnants of a civil war, which is the residue of the genocide in Rwanda that spilled over the border into Congo . . . [and then] the war being waged against women" (Payne, 2010: 26)⁹.

⁹ For a personal reflection on the situation in DRC pertinent to the study of *Ruined*, see Nottage's contribution to the Study Pack released by the Almeida Theater for its 2010 production of *Ruined*, available online at <http://www.almeida.co.uk/Downloads/RuinedResourcePack.pdf>. Also, the program for the production includes an overview of the conflict in DRC (available at <http://www.almeida.co.uk/Downloads/Ruined/Ruined%20prog%20for%20web.pdf>). While in Nottage's play political analysis is underplayed to focus on personal histories, some background knowledge may be desirable for viewers not familiar with the situation in RDC. A study of the effects of the conflict on women and the use of rape as a weapon of war, provided by Amnesty International and also included in that same programme, provides background information that will be of use for our argument.

In the summer of 2004, Nottage visited Uganda and Rwanda --she was not, however, able to visit the Democratic Republic of Congo, precisely because of the war – she reflects on her visit in her piece “Out of East Africa” (2005). Her trip to Africa provided her with a series of personal stories of sexual abuse told by women from the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo in interviews organized by Amnesty International in Kampala. Nottage describes these stories as “heart-wrenching, horrifying and poignant [yet] . . . told with dignity and conviction”, and refers to these encounters as “one of the most emotionally taxing experiences of my life” (Nottage, 2005: 68). Even if Brecht’s play as an inspiration is still visible in her play, Nottage’s visit to Africa made her realize that her focus wouldn’t be so much on the flexible morality needed in times of war (of which *Mother Courage* is an example), but on the effect on women of fratricide war and the economic and sexual exploitation in these circumstances.

The play is concerned with the women who live and work at Mama Nadi’s, a bar and brothel in the turbulent region of Eastern Congo, and a space kept together by the impressive figure of its owner, Mama Nadi. A traveling salesman, Christian, who often visits the place, convinces Mama Nadi, who first claims that she is “running a business not a mission” (Nottage, 2009: 14), to take in two new girls, Salima and Sophie. As spectators, we are let on the stories of the girls at the place, what the meaning of being “ruined” is, we get glances of the political and economic situation that the long war is causing in the region, and we are also allowed to ascertain, through the depiction of bodies encountering other bodies in this problematic space, what the alternatives to helplessness and rape and the appropriation of the body in a war-stricken country may be.

Ruined as a text is keen on exploring feminine spaces and how external circumstances such as war and the exploitation of the land can both affect and reflect inner spaces, commenting on what the feminine experience of life in the margins of society is in those abject, not merely public, but not necessarily private (and therefore not completely safe) spaces. There is a clear move by Nottage towards naturalism in this play, a mode she had not used previously, claiming that while she was not entirely uninterested in “kitchen sink” dramas, most of her plays were “expressionistic” and not “entirely realistic” (Shannon, 2007b: 196). In this highly naturalistic, “well-made” play, however, a clear use of space as a symbol stands out, connecting two realities (land and women’s bodies) that are seen as similarly damaged and exploited, as we will expound later.

As part of her concern with feminine identities, in *Ruined* Nottage subverts the meaning of spaces traditionally considered to be domestic and the feminine stereotypes associated with them in Western cultural tradition. Stereotypes such as the “angel in the house” are shown as both ineffective and inefficient in the Democratic Republic of Congo: the traumatic experiences of the women who end up at Mama Nadi’s keep them from being innocent or angelic, just as after being abused or raped they have been expelled from both their houses and communities, i.e. their “natural” spaces, often by their own families or husbands. The bar/brothel, primarily a business setting (and a problematic one, since its economy is based on relationships of power and domination through sex and money), is ultimately, a safe haven for the girls, where “a lot of effort has gone into making the worn bar cheerful” (Nottage, 2009: 5), and turned into what Brantley calls a place of “hominess and familiarity” (Brantley, 2009: C1) especially for those who have already been “ruined”, i.e. raped and mutilated with bayonets. Even Mama Nadi, an apparently egotistic, business-like figure who lives off the exploitation of young women, is more often than not discovered protecting, though grudgingly, her “girls”. Nottage herself notices that “she’s exploiting them, but in a twisted way she’s able to nurture them and keep them alive” (Gener, 2009: 21). Mama Nadi is not, then, just the opportunistic, unethical figure that Mother Courage was, but rather an essentially contradictory figure who can be both compassionate and fierce, and who is able to define her space and business in her own terms, beyond the dominance of men, but still in a context open to them and therefore constantly in danger, as the war fields surrounding it can go through the porous walls in any moment.

Connected to the contestation of traditional female stereotypes such as the Brechtian abusive, dominant Madame and the angel in the house, the setting of the play itself also subverts dichotomies of domesticity, or private spheres, as equated to femininity and public spheres, or businesses, as equated to masculinity. Mama Nadi is a woman, but a business woman, and her place is both domestic to the girls (alliances are sealed, relations are created) and a business. Men (from both sides of the conflict) enter this problematic space leaving behind, at Mama Nadi’s requests, obvious markers of power traditionally associated with masculinity such as guns, but nonetheless still hold power over the girls there by paying them for sex.

The brothel, the main location of the play, is thus a dualistic space that changes constantly: sometimes it looks much like a domestic space, described in the stage directions as “a refuge” (Nottage, 2009: 50), while in some other moments it is clearly opposed to the sleeping quarters or resembles a cheerful business that contrasts with the bleak public space outside of

the front door, the other two locations in the play. Often, however, the bar takes on a menacing hue when men from both factions and miners enter it. Liminal, dual and complicated as this space is, it is one that Mama Nadi protects vehemently, thus turning it, ironically, into a neuter space, i.e. one where the unchecked aggressiveness of the outside world is not allowed and women can, if not thrive, at least survive. "Once you step through my door", Mama Nadi reminds a customer, "then you're in my house. And I make the rules here" (Nottage, 2009: 42). Mama Nadi is aware that the liminality and openness of her space ("the front door swings both ways", Nottage, 2009: 86) is, paradoxically, what makes it secure: "My doors are open to everybody. And that way trouble doesn't settle there" (Nottage, 2009: 76). The immediate reading of this situation for most of us living in countries not involved in a civil war is that a brothel is, primarily, a place of sexual exploitation -- however, in the situation described in the play, the girls working there are much more respected and safe that they would be outside, where they would be constantly in danger of being raped, ruined, or even murdered. Ironically, in such settings, a place where women have sex in exchange of money provides them with safety and some kind of dignity that is not available outside that space. As Mama Nadi says, "There must always be a part of you that this war can't touch" (Nottage, 2009: 53), and this need not be the body itself, but rather an identity that is dependent on how women feel in control of their own bodies.

I would like to argue that Nottage's play lends itself to an analysis of the different meanings of spatiality partly, precisely, because its setting is the result of a post-colonial situation. Not only are the history of colonization and the garbled process of de-colonization responsible for the civil war itself (as the colonizers tended to favor one ethnic group over the other for centuries), but the warring between different factions is also the result of a new kind of colonization: technological colonization. The Democratic Republic of Congo is rich in coltan, a mineral that is used for the fabrication of cell phones: developed countries are, through their continuous use of newer and newer technology, highly dependent on it. While this natural resource, coveted by other countries, should lead to the well-being of developing nations where it is abounding, the result is, however, that different factions fight over the land that contains it, destroying said land in the process and thus in the long term destroying themselves. Nottage's play refers to how the Congo wars were fueled, in part, by the mining of diamonds and coltan. As a result, as spectators we are not outside "the range of culpability for the vicious, often misogynistic violence depicted in the play" (Kuftinek, 2011: 104).

It is my contention that words used to refer to the mining of coltan can also be used when talking about sexuality and the female body: the miners plough, penetrate the earth, and, in the process, ruin it for agriculture. Gener explicitly identifies women's bodies in the play with "the ruined body of the Congo herself" (Gener, 2009: 21). While Nottage has characters deliver lines about this that are on the verge of melodrama ("You will not fight your battles on my body anymore", one of the characters cries out right before dying, Nottage, 2009: 94), the identification of land and womb is clear: one of the male characters reminisces about how "six months ago, it was a forest filled with noisy birds, now it looks like God spooned out heaping mouthfuls of earth, and every stupid bastard is trying to get a taste of it" (Nottage, 2009: 40). While the fertile and spooned out "it" in this utterance stands for the earth, it might as well stand for the female body, a sort of garden before the war, but constantly harmed and humiliated now. Political analysis of the situation in DRC is not detailed in the play (concerned as it is mainly with feminine experience ignored by politics), but one of the rebel soldiers, Kiseembe, wonders "how can we let the government carve up our most valuable land to serve companies in China. It's our land. Ask the Mbuti, they can describe every inch of the forest as if [it] were their own flesh" (Nottage, 2009: 78). It is, indeed, unfortunate that he cannot extend the metaphor of forest and flesh to the brutally carved up feminine bodies around him. In a more general way, the play invites the identification of both territories, land and body, as despoiled, something that would be in line with Friedman's observations of *Ruined* as a play that strives to "bring attention to sexual abuse, rape, survival sex, and psychological violence toward women in countries ravaged by conquest and conflict between government and insurgent forces" (Friedman, 2010: 594).

Ruined land cannot be used for agriculture and it is no longer fertile once it has been extensively plowed. The comparison between the land and the bodies of women is invited again: the earth is valuable and exploited, just as the feminine body is desired and used for pleasure or domination. Ruined women, no longer fertile due to sexual abuse, are also no longer "useful", since they cannot be used for economic trade, i.e. cannot be even used as prostitutes: as one character reminds one of the ruined girls, "you are something worse than a whore. So many men have had you that you're worthless" (Nottage, 2009: 37). Mama Nadi reluctantly accepts one ruined girl claiming that she has no space for "damaged goods" (Nottage, 2009: 16) and she will just be one more mouth to feed, unable to produce any gains. Similarly, the earth is ruined and barren, damaged, once all the ore has been extracted.

Body, as defined by the skin, is seen in Western society as the ultimate frontier of one's space. As something that "holds" our identity, it also defines the rest of reality as external: this conception of reality has remained constant throughout Western philosophy and can be found at the center of Western thought and culture. This idea of the body entails the notion that it is our right to decide who or what enters that body, in the terms that we individually decide. The intrusion, i.e. the unwelcome entrance of the outside is regarded as a violation not just in physical terms, but also a violation of what we find the innermost about ourselves: our identity. However, we cannot take for granted that the borders of one space, both in the physical world and when pertaining one's identity, are universally shared by all women, especially in circumstances where the social environment may not be as protective when it comes to unwelcome intrusions. As Friedman points out, women in circumstances such as the one portrayed in *Ruined* are "doubly victimized—sexually assaulted and impregnated or left unable to reproduce . . . they [also] must endure shaming by male members of their families and communities, who perceive the violation of 'their' women as another form of defeat" (Friedman, 2010: 598). Friedman also mentions Enloe's argument that "rapes of captured women by soldiers of one communal or national group [are] aimed principally at humiliating the men of an opposing group" (Enloe, 2000: 110): just as land is often raided while conquered from the other, the female body is used as a territory of shame and revenge on other men, who in turn often project this shame and humiliation into the victims themselves. First recognized as genocide by the United Nations in 1998 (precisely after the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, one of the places that Nottage researched for her piece), rape is now only prosecuted accordingly. It has also been considered, after the adoption by the United Nations Security Council of Resolution 1820, as a war crime, as a crime against humanity, and as a "constitutive act with respect to genocide"¹⁰. However, in a context where rape is often considered a war crime only nominally, and where it is almost impossible to bring every case of rape to justice (raped women are a shame to their own families and often expelled from their own communities)¹¹, we might want to reconsider a simplistic analysis of prostitution. It would

¹⁰ Resolution 1820 (2008), "Women and Peace and Security", adopted by the Security Council at its 5916th meeting, on 19 June 2008 [S/RES/1820 (2008)]. The complete text for the resolution can be found at the UN Security Council website (http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions08.htm).

¹¹ The article by Amnesty International for the Almeida Theatre incorrectly states that the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs provides the following numbers for 2009 in the Kivu Provinces: about 1600 women raped every week, mainly by armed men; with more than 8000 cases of rape reported in 2009. Comparing the second figure, in its enormity, to the first one would suggest that almost all of these rapes go unreported. The original report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), however, gives 160 as the figure per week – this would roughly add up to more than 8000 cases

not be simply akin to the appropriation, however consensual it may be argued to be, of this most intimate space, or an act of penetration that replicates schemes of patriarchal domination. Cahill describes how sexuality can be a means of political and social power, and how feminist theories often locate sexuality as “one means by which patriarchal culture maintained control over women” (Cahill, 2000: 44), also signaling the social sexing that underlies rape. However, Nottage’s intention lays not so much in denouncing prostitution itself (as shown by the ambivalent characterization of Mama Nadi and the two-fold definition of the space of the brothel as both refuge and business). She is, rather, denouncing the fate, worse than prostitution, that often awaits women, as passive as the land is, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This needs not mean that Nottage is justifying the existence or benignity of prostitution, of course: rather, she seems to be proposing that, in such dire situations, prostitution on female terms may be a much more viable exit for women that have been rejected by society due precisely to their ruined sexuality, such as Sophie in the play, or abandoned by their husbands after being raped, such as Salima. As Mama Nadi claims, “My girls . . . they’d rather be here, than back out there in their villages where they are taken without regard. They’re safer with me than in their own homes” (Nottage, 2009: 86). Women in this context are completely kept away from the public space (much as women up to the 20th c. were kept inside the house) and cannot enter the business model that is running the country: mining. As Mama Nadi says:

“I want a powerful slip of paper that says I can cut down forests and dig holes and build to the moon if I choose. I don’t want someone to turn up at my door, and take my life from me. Not ever again. But tell, how does a woman like me get a piece of land, without having to pick up a fucking gun?” (Nottage, 2009: 27).

The survival of these women cannot be connected, as is the case with other societies not immersed in a civil war, with their claiming and appropriating public and clearly masculine spaces. Rather, it has to be based on negotiating liminal spaces, such as Mama Nadi’s, where they can be in control and where, by using a false sense of submission, as is the case with the girls, they are allowed a certain agency and security.

a year, and in fact the per week figure in the UN-OCHA report is a calculation from the yearly total. In any case, the operative word is still reported: even if 160 cases are reported a week (and thus over 8000 are reported a year), still many go unreported, and therefore are not acknowledged in this calculation, for fear of, in the most benign of cases, family shame. Sources: Payne, C. (2010): Almeida Projects Resource Pack, Amnesty International UK (2010), Humanitarian Information Group – OCHA (2010).

It is in the crossroads between femininity and space, precisely, where the often criticized, sentimental and emotional end of the play (the confession by Mama Nadi as to why she would help ruined girls, and a semi-conventional happy-ending for the three most sympathetic characters, including the “salvation” or “rescue” of Mama Nadi through heterosexual, romantic love) can be explained. Minus, reviewing *Ruined*'s run in Manhattan during the 2008/2009 season, suggests that “dramatic accounts of brutalities cause a typical audience to gasp and recoil; and . . . certain incongruities tend to make the play more palatable for an average Broadway theatergoer” (Minus, 2010: 100). The deliberate sentimentality in parts of the play would, then, produce a certain distance from a horror which could have been portrayed much more crudely, but always considering that a cruder portrayal might have put audiences off. In her introduction to the play, Kate Whoriskey reflects on how “In the United States, we have the money to create weaponry that removes us from the violence we enact. By contrast, in the Congo . . . the human body becomes the weapon, the teenage boy the terror, and a woman’s womb ‘the battleground’” (Whoriskey, 2009: 11). Nottage chooses for her denouncement in the play to focus on women who inhabit the borders of what is considered the “big picture” problem, war, just as the space they marginally inhabit, the Democratic Republic of Congo, exists, as Minus says, “in the corner of the consciousness of the rest of the world” (Minus, 2010: 100). Friedman suggests that there need be places where “ethical encounters with distant ‘others’” exist, “in ways that avoid a kind of cultural imperialism in appropriating their stories and at the same time distancing them through a lens of ‘pure relativism’” (Friedman, 2010: 609). *Ruined* brings these stories out of the corners to a Western audience, a wider one than a more experimental play would have reached, and an audience which, in the end, is able to empathize with these women, even with Mama Nadi in all her complexity. After their wandering through violent spaces, Nottage seems not to be able to bring herself to leave her female characters (and the spectators) without a last glimpse of hope. She claims that, as a writer, “You can’t reconcile the incredible beauty and gentleness of the culture with the horror and the suffering. The play is about how they coexist. It’s the gentle balance I had to negotiate” (Gener, 2009: 21). Empathy is, of course, also easier to achieve with plays written in the style of realism, with a conventional structure and sympathetic characters, something that may also account for the extreme naturalism and sentimentalism of the play, which has been defined as a “comfortable, old-fashioned drama about an uncomfortable-of-the-moment subject” (Brantley, 2009: C1). The denouncement of the situations created by the irresponsibility and greed of both factions at war in Congo (with the West and former metropolises as accomplices) is evident, but the final dance of Mama Nadi suggests a

certain hope - "possibility" is the word Nottage uses (Nottage, 2009: 102) - , for ruined women, and we could also claim for the land (the Congo) itself, similarly exploited and ruined, but maybe able to rise again from its ashes once the fight is over. Mama Nadi, earlier in the play, is offered a way out, once by Christian and once by Mr. Harari, but both times refuses to leave her brothel, first claiming that she has her own business (Nottage, 2009: 41) and then explaining that she has "ten girls here. What will I do with them? . . . I can't go. Since I was young, people have found reasons to push me out of my home, men have laid claim to my possessions, but I am not running now. This is my place. Mama Nadi's" (Nottage, 2009: 90). The brothel as a space for Mama Nadi ends up being not merely geographical, but also "moral", a place where one belongs and where one should be. She claims to have "found herself" there after being pushed out of other spaces:

"I didn't come here as Mama Nadi, I found her the same way miners find their wealth in the muck. I stumbled off of that road without two twigs to start a fire. I turned a basket of sweets and soggy biscuits into a business . . . This is my place, Mama Nadi's" (Nottage, 2009: 86).

She is willing to share this found space, in her own terms, with the girls, because "they are safer with me than in their own homes, because this country is picked clean . . . I give them something other than a beggar's cup" (Nottage, 2009: 86). "This is your home now. Mama takes care of you" (Nottage, 2009: 66), she says to Salima: in accepting, appropriating and sharing this unique space, Mama Nadi moves towards a status that Nottage uses to describes real life Rebecca Lolosoli, the founder of the all-female village of Umoja, in Kenya: "an extremely articulate and passionate advocate for her community" (Gener, 2010: 122). Umoja ("unity" in Swahili) deeply impressed Nottage during her visit in 2005 as a sanctuary for "women who had all been shunned by their families or their husbands or had been forced out of their communities because they had been raped, or they rejected hysterectomy for a host of reasons" (Gener, 2010: 122). Umoja also takes young women trying to escape genital mutilation or running from a forced marriage.

At the end of the play, the suggestion of salvation for Mama Nadi through Christian's love is also connected to this sense of community in a specific place. Christian suggests to Mama Nadi, in the last scene, that he should stay and "help you run things. Make this a legitimate business. A shop. Fix the door. Hang the mirror. Protect you. Make love to you" (Nottage, 2009: 99). At this point, she has acquired a sense of responsibility towards the girls that may

not be incompatible with Christian's offer. From Umoja to Mama Nadi's, Nottage's hope for women in the play extends from the community to a nurturing relationship with a caring, atypical man, and transforms the stage, in Friedman's words, into "an alternative space onstage that denaturalizes the gendered, racialized, sexualized, and classed dynamics through which war operates for perpetrators and victims" (Friedman, 2010: 609-10). De Angelis proposes that Mama Nadi's be read as "a deeply compromised haven [that] becomes a meeting ground for possibilities of renewal, a new male/female contract that . . . offers a fragile hope for a new order that loves, respects, and acknowledges dependence upon women/women's sex" (De Angelis, 2010: 559).

The collective or group protagonist used by Nottage has been identified as recurrent in feminist theatre. (Friedman, 2010: 600). This collective protagonist, defined by the activities taking place in a given space, is also reinforced as a group precisely because they inhabit said space, and "share secrets and confer about how they will negotiate their survival" (Friedman, 2010: 600). Friedman documents how Janet Brown has analyzed bell hook's concept of "merged ego" (Brown, 1999: 159) where the self exists "in relation, . . . dependent for its very being on the lives and experiences of everyone, the self not a signifier of 'I' but the coming together of many 'I's', the self as embodying collective reality", that is necessary for "psychic [and] physical survival" (Hooks, 1989: 31). The final dance at the brothel in *Ruined* would thus celebrate the possibility of this collectivity, this "merged ego" in a paradoxical space where women, in extreme circumstances, are still able to create an identity based on dignity, courage and a new found sense of community.

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4. Una de las nuevas aproximaciones teóricas a lo doméstico y lo femenino en la crítica estadounidense es el concepto de **“neodomesticidad”**, es decir, el estudio del regreso en las dos últimas décadas de la mujer al hogar, tras haber conquistado su espacio en el mundo laboral (véase, por ejemplo, Jacobson, K. *Neodomestic American Fiction*. Winesburg: Ohio State University Press, 2010). La neodomesticidad no concibe, sin embargo, este regreso al hogar necesariamente como el retorno a un espacio opresivo, sino como una forma de expresión liberadora que en ocasiones se conecta con la posibilidad de compaginar las tareas domésticas con pequeños negocios, en forma de empresas casi unipersonales, en actividades relacionadas tradicionalmente con lo femenino, como la artesanía o las *arts and crafts*: este retorno “sin complejos” a los lugares y actividades de las que trataron de escapar las mujeres durante el siglo XX indicaría la superación por parte de la mujer (y quizá de la sociedad como un todo) de modelos económicos agresivos basados en lo masculino y se inscribiría en la creación de un nuevo sistema económico “femenino”. Paradójicamente, son precisamente autoras que se definen a sí mismas como feministas, como las que lucharon durante todo el siglo XX por ampliar los espacios en los que la mujer podía desenvolverse más allá de lo doméstico, las que ahora celebran este retorno a lo doméstico como un triunfo de la mujer. Al mismo tiempo, los estudios de lo neodoméstico también tratan de iluminar el status social de aquellos hombres que aceptan como su actividad principal el papel de “ama de casa” tradicionalmente asociado a la mujer, o cómo en parejas y familias heterosexuales los roles de género en ocasiones se invierten en torno a lo doméstico, con una nueva distribución, a menudo compartida, de las tareas del hogar, de los espacios privados, y de los espacios públicos. Por último, continuando la subversión de espacios tradicionales, ha resultado

interesante también estudiar la reestructuración de los espacios femeninos y masculinos en obras literarias relacionadas con experimentos utópicos y de corte comunal en la literatura de los Estados Unidos, como un estudio comparativo de *The Blithedale Romance* (1852) de Nathaniel Hawthorne, y *Drop City* (2003), de T. C. Boyle, en el que hemos analizado el contraste entre la obra del romántico norteamericano, interesado en la posibilidad de romper con los espacios tradicionalmente femeninos y masculinos dentro de una granja socialista inspirada en las ideas de Fourier en el siglo XIX, y las posibilidades de liberación genérica (no sólo social, no sólo sexual) de la comuna "hippie" que Boyle refleja en su mucho más reciente obra. Este estudio puede hacerse extensible a otras obras que estudian experimentos comunales como *In Watermelon Sugar* (1968), de Richard Brautigan, o a obras de ficción que presenten sociedades comunales utópicas cifradas en clave de ciencia ficción o de historia alternativa.

5. Espacios, feminismo y el blues. El binarismo esfera pública / esfera doméstica ha sido uno de los focos de atención de este grupo investigador. Unido a la teoría feminista negra de *womanism*, propuesta por Alice Walker, y su impacto en novelas como *The Color Purple* (1982) o *The Temple of My Familiar* (1989), esta antinomia merece una nueva interpretación. Gracias a la obra de Walker, emerge a finales de los años setenta y principios de los ochenta una corriente mitopoética que concibe a la cantante del blues clásico como intérprete de las particularidades histórico-culturales y familiares detrás de la opresión de la mujer negra. Estas reflexiones suponen por supuesto una perversión de aquellas publicaciones de índole tanto racista como sexista que fueron paradigma de la conceptualización de la familia afroamericana estadounidense a partir de mediados de siglo. Obras como *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944) de Gunnar Myrdal y el *Moynihan Report* (1965) de Daniel Moynihan contribuyeron vertiginosamente a la estigmatización de la raza negra como una estructurada de acuerdo con un sistema de matriarcado en el ámbito privado que impedía que el hombre se sintiese realizado en la esfera pública. No es que estos autores ignorasen el racismo como causa principal de lo que llaman la "patología negra"; sin embargo, propiciaron a nivel nacional la noción negativa de que la familia afroamericana, como núcleo económico, es deficiente en tanto a una jerarquía de matriarcado que se alimenta de la opresión del hombre, desviando así el "progreso" de la raza. Mediante la presente investigación, se ha

analizado cómo los espacios domésticos y su asociación con la dicotomía masculino / femenino se articulan de acuerdo con el discurso del blues clásico y con la teoría de *womanism* de manera que se subvierten e implosionan los estereotipos enraizados en la teoría de la "patología" negra. Dicha subversión no se produce, en el caso de Walker, mediante una concepción del matriarcado en la que las antinomias de género se nutran de sistemas de interrelación basados en el dominio. Lo que Walker propone es o bien fusionar las funciones ejercidas por cada género (las cuales originalmente se definen de acuerdo con las exigencias performativas de los espacios, ya sean públicos o domésticos), germinando, por ejemplo una mitología espiritual encabezada por un dios asexuado cuyo discurso se recoge en la contestación tragicómica del blues; o celebrar la multiplicidad de roles que ofrece la pluralidad de géneros una vez eliminado el *modus operandi* de dominación. Desaparecen así las connotaciones negativas asociadas al matriarcado y se incide en un sistema de interrelación femenina que había estado también consolidándose en la obra de otras autoras afroamericanas, como por ejemplo Ntozake Shange: la noción de *sisterhood*, la cual puede discernirse en un amplio corpus del repertorio de blues clásico. Debido al claro impacto sobre la espiritualidad que la visión de Walker sobre el blues genera, se puede extraer asimismo la conclusión de que el *womanism* está inspirado, en gran parte, en el movimiento del feminismo cultural desarrollado a partir de 1975 como la siguiente fase de evolución del feminismo radical (1967-1975). El feminismo cultural, entre cuyos mayores exponentes se encuentran nombres como el de Robin Morgan, Adrienne Rich o Gloria Steinem, y su noción utópica femenina de una sociedad "ginocrática," se organizó partiendo de la exaltación de las diferencias físico-espirituales de la mujer (en contraposición al feminismo radical, cuyos principios resaltaban las similitudes entre géneros). Es, precisamente, la interpretación de Walker del blues dentro de un contexto ideológico del feminismo cultural lo que en gran parte posibilita la concepción del *womanism* entre mujeres de raza negra. Esta investigación ha permitido el estudio, asimismo, del patrón de "mitohistoria" propio de la historiografía tradicional del jazz para cuestionar el papel de la mujer dentro del monomito masculino. Tomando como paradigma de la historiografía moderna del género musical del jazz el documental de Ken Burns, *Jazz* (2001), se examinó la deliberada negación de la crítica feminista de los últimos años en beneficio de la perpetuación de un canon de "grandes hombres" heredero de la teoría original de Thomas Carlyle, recogida en *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841). Como resultado de esta labor revisionista en cuanto a las topografías femeninas se refiere, cabe destacar la naturaleza paradójica de la imagería de los espacios domésticos dentro del corpus de blues clásico femenino y su reflejo en la

literatura. Si bien las cantantes de blues han sido tradicionalmente asociadas a ciertos estereotipos racistas (tales como la *mammy*, la *sapphire*, o la *jezzabel*) o a actitudes propias de víctimas (ya sea de abuso físico o psicológico por parte de la pareja o amante, o la víctima de un desahucio, una catástrofe natural, etc.) dentro de la cultura eurocéntrica, la revisión del tratamiento de los espacios en las letras del blues desde la perspectiva del *womanism* – la cual aún los intereses socio-estéticos tanto de la comunidad afroamericana en su totalidad como los del sector femenino dentro de dicho grupo – ha propiciado la emergencia de dicha paradoja. El *womanism* de Walker supone, ante todo, una reconsideración de las categorías de espacio público / espacio privado y su asociación a la condición cultural de la mujer. Al concebir, por medio del *womanism*, a la mujer afroamericana como agente independiente física y psicológicamente, se invierten, en parte, los significados asociados a los espacios domésticos. El hecho de que en incontables letras de blues la mujer hable sin tapujos de los abusos, engaños y violentas manifestaciones de poder que se producen dentro del hogar anticipa las actuales campañas en contra de la violencia doméstica y de acuerdo con las cuales lo privado se traduce como problemática de índole política. Sin embargo, son varias las ocasiones en las que las cantantes (o personajes literarios, como en *The Color Purple* o en *Another Country*, de James Baldwin) reiteran con vigor la necesidad de que dichos espacios domésticos obedezcan únicamente al discurso privado, al de la intimidad de los afectados. En estos casos la agencia de la mujer se materializa al romper con la noción de “the private is political” (frase que tiene su origen en un artículo de la feminista radical Carol Hanisch): la verdadera independencia psicológica de la mujer reside en la aseveración del hogar como terreno prohibido del discurso político, aun cuando esto se produzca a expensas del bienestar de la mujer. En otras palabras, la agencia de la mujer afroamericana consiste en reiterar, de modo performativo mediante el lenguaje del blues, que las circunstancias producidas dentro del ámbito doméstico (normalmente violentas y propias de la agresión de género) únicamente conciernen a la mujer afectada, y será ella, por lo tanto, la que se ocupará de salvaguardar dicho espacio como territorio discursivo propio. Estas paradojas y ambivalencias discursivas recogida en el repertorio del blues clásico en cuanto a espacios domésticos se refiere, son, en cualquier caso, características del mismo género musical. Tanto en el blues masculino como en el femenino, encontramos temas que contradicen las letras de otras canciones. En el caso del blues femenino, el repertorio de una misma cantante puede incluir temas en los que, como se ha mencionado anteriormente, la hablante se aferre a su derecho de privacidad (aunque el espacio doméstico vulnere su bienestar, pues normalmente este tipo de temas hace referencia al abuso físico y verbal), o temas en los que la hablante se dedique a ridiculizar públicamente a

su pareja, a mujeres demasiado débiles para rebelarse, o a exponer el abandono del espacio doméstico y lanzarse a la incertidumbre de un viaje sin destino concreto. Es precisamente la consideración de las distintas posturas psicológicas que ofrece el blues clásico en su totalidad lo que permite una exégesis que evite conclusiones históricas monolíticas sobre el colectivo femenino afroamericano, y lo que permite, a su vez, un análisis cualitativo sobre hasta qué punto las autoras y críticas negras tratan de implementar forzosamente una "mitohistoria" propia que toma a las cantantes de blues como agentes de poder.

A continuación se aportan dos apartados de la tesis doctoral europea *Mitografía y mitopoeia del jazz y del blues en la cultura estadounidense contemporánea*, escrita por **Claudia Alonso Recarte** y defendida en abril 2012, en los que se recogen parte de los resultados de la investigación sobre este punto. Dicha tesis doctoral está disponible para su descarga en la página web de la Biblioteca de la UCM: <http://eprints.ucm.es/16269/>

1. Blues Women as 'Race Women'

That the jazz sphere constitutes a primarily masculine aesthetic domain is an established fact for scholars. The hyper-masculinity (often combined with hyper-heterosexuality) of its players has been instrumental for the shaping of the canon. As David Ake writes,

Though perceptions of the genre are changing, jazz has been, since its earliest days, an overwhelmingly male domain. As such, it has served to create and recreate notions of manhood for its participants . . . It is neither coincidental nor insignificant that jazz and heterosexual prowess are two of the few areas in which black males have been perceived to be superior to their white counterparts. (1998: 27)

In Part 4 we shall attend to how the Great Man Theory functions within the jazz mythistory, empowering and reinforcing a received history that resists undertaking a feminist scope from

which to interpret women's contribution to the music. But for the unquestioned genius of a select few 'Great Women' (often epitomized by Billie Holliday, Sarah Vaughn and Mary Lou Williams), jazz was the sporting arena of black men.

Since the late 1970s, however, and due to the influence of Radical Feminism, Cultural Feminism, Black Nationalism and Black Feminism, there is one era that scholars have increasingly sought to reinvent through feminist critique: the classical blues of the 1920s. Sung primarily by women, the performances were carried out in rural ambiances through the circuit organization of the Theater Owners Booking Association (TOBA) as complementary acts to medicine shows, minstrelsy, etc., and became highly popular when they reached the more sophisticated urban environment, particularly Memphis (which, although geographically set in the South, provided the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the Northern cities), New York and Chicago. In spite of the homogeneous characteristics that encircle all the 1920s classic blues women, their personal qualities and their performances has allowed a unique, individual appreciation of how each contributed to the blues idiom. The style of Ma Rainey, the 'Mother of the Blues,' for example, answered to a more country, rural sound, while Bessie Smith, the 'Empress of the Blues,' and Ida Cox developed a more refined, cosmopolitan style. Other levels include the cabaret style of Alberta Hunter, the urban vaudeville of Sara Martin, or the rural vaudeville of Trixie Smith. These are just a few names of the hundreds of African American women who pursued a singing career in the 1920s. During the Depression, most of them passed into oblivion, and some tried to adapt their art to new commercial demands. Yet their accomplishments never gained as much sensation as they had had in the preceding decade; the 1920s represents their truest legacy not only because of their aesthetic achievement, but also because they were among the first who opened the door to commercialism and the professionalization of African American art.

The classical blues period is the only epoch in jazz and blues history that has been solely dominated by the success of women. Contrary to the commercial triumph of Holiday or Williams, whose talent sprouted along with that of male soloists, composers or arrangers, the classical blues can emphatically be regarded as the golden age of female singers. Men also appeared as singers, but the overwhelming presence of women has ultimately made the classical blues an essentially female art. Short-lived as it was (during the 1930s commercial interest would shift to the more earthy male country blues),¹² the classical blues not only

¹² The post-World War II years marked the beginning of what would later be termed as men's country blues. These musicians were generally from the Mississippi Delta region; they belonged to the Southern rural environment scarred by racism, segregation, and impoverishment. The country blues' potential for

marked a turning point for African Americans in the music industry, but it also provided a vast body of songs where the morality and identity of the Southern agricultural community could be researched and reconstructed. Blues women became the quintessential emissaries of Southern working-class consciousness with a repertory where raw realism intermingled with irony, performative subtleties and other forms of signifying that absorbed and articulated the psychological, social, and economic concern of the individual. Natural to the aesthetic was an understanding of plurality inherent to the singularity of the singer; that is, the blues woman, a shaman-like figure, was conceived by her people as a medium through which the troubles and hardships of the race were identified, named, and challenged.

We must keep in mind that during the 1920s, the kind of black feminism that was being endorsed was that propounded by the charismatic Oberlin College spokeswoman, Mary Church Terrell (1863-1944), and Fannie Barrier Williams (1855-1944). Their Northern perspectives of the elevation of the race went hand in hand with that of the elevation of the black woman, in an effort to emphasize on her virtue as a mother and as a domestic provider for the family. Thus, although changes in the black woman's public sphere were considerable in the North (primarily on the basis of education), the private sphere remained an immaculate space for the reproduction of the woman's natural role under patriarchal terms. Appealing from the standpoint of one of the most educated women in the country, Terrell expressed in

commercialism, however, was not acknowledged until after World War II, and especially, during the 1950s and the 1960s, when blues revival enthusiasts resuscitated the 1930s and 1940s recordings of Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, Skip James, Son House, and the more urbane Muddy Waters, among others. From these names, it was the by then deceased Robert Johnson who reached epic status through his 1936 and 1937 recordings. Folklorists and revivalists found in Johnson the archetype of the frontiersman and the soul of a poet. Johnson's music represented, for them, the unprocessed subjectivity of a man who was a dissenter within America's social and political 'progresses,' and who yet refrained to counteract through direct political protest. His songs, according to revivalists, responded by returning to basic human emotions, to the tragedies and the good times resulting from a direct connection with the immediate environment. Douglass Henry Daniels states that in this preparatory phase towards the Civil Rights movement,

There are no songs which counsel blacks to resist oppression through violent struggle. The reworked spirituals of the 1960s, the civil rights songs, were part of a protest movement, but a non-violent one – non-violent for the activists, that is. This alone should remind us of the humanistic core in the Afro-American heritage and the kinds of values it perpetuates. (1985: 18)

Revivalists found Southern musicians' songs from two or three decades earlier uninterested in violent, political scrambles. They were artists concerned with "personal expression over money" and "freedom over conformity" (Daniels 1985: 18). The hostile Delta atmosphere had provided the male blues singer a cruder acoustic sound, one that was disentangled from urban distractions. All in all, the country blues man was the rural counterpart to the city's bebopper, who was the romanticized urban outsider of the beatnik and hipster movement.

her speeches for black women's club movements that it was in the interest of the race to educate black women. In June 1893, she published an article entitled "What the Colored Women's League Will Do" in which she stated:

A national organization of colored women could accomplish so much in a variety of ways that thoughtful, provident women are strenuously urging their sisters all over the country to cooperate with them in this important matter . . . There is every reason for all who have the interest of the race at heart to associate themselves with the League, so that there may be a vast chain of organizations extending the length and breadth of the land devising ways and means to advance our cause. We have always been equal to the highest emergencies in the past and it remains for us now to prove to the world that we are a unit in all matters pertaining to the education and elevation of our race. (2005: 186)

These sorts of organizations and club movements constituted almost a world apart from the reality of the lower African American caste of the South, still immersed in the aftermath of slavery and for the most part oblivious to these Northern associations fighting for equality and suffrage. The Church had a powerful influence over the black population in the South, but morality could not be read under the same terms that Terrell was claiming. Morality had to be coherent with survival skills, wit, and street smarts that often did not correspond to Christian values. There was a different reality, one that involved a daily quest to survive in the post-bellum South, and one where prison, lynching, verbal abuse, and humiliation required a more speedy solution than State and Congress support could provide. Even the Mississippian Ida B. Wells (1862-1931), raised in an atmosphere of devastating poverty, who went on to become one of the most active warriors in the cause against lynching and in the women's rights movement, abandoned the South and left for Chicago to continue her provocative writing and activism. After three close friends of hers were lynched and the headquarters of her Memphis newspaper, *The Free Speech*, were attacked and burnt to the ground, Wells pursued her mission not only in the North, but in England as well, where the death threats she had received could not reach her.

The conflict of interests between Northern club women and Southern working-class women explains the latter's fertility as a symbol of 'the people.' It is necessary to stress the value of these singers as 'race women' before we venture into the feminist perspective. In the previous chapter, I referred to Sterling A. Brown's poem as an aesthetic, multi-vocal

reconfiguration of the signifying patterns involved in the blues. If we read carefully, we find that this multi-vocality is illustrated as a network connecting Southern individuals, regardless of sex. For Brown, Ma Rainey erects herself not as a feminist icon, but as a race woman; she is the vessel for the entire community, and there is not a single hint in the poem to indicate that the singer reserves any sort of performative space for female concerns. Generally, in literature, male writers have recurrently used blues women as characters or motifs to denounce racial discrimination. By adapting the mythical potential of the singers to the historical and intellectual context of the writer, blues women have become emblems of endurance and perseverance for the entire working-class black group. The problem is that the hardships of the group are defined by male standards, thus limiting the scope to racial and economic issues while ignoring sex and gender-based complexities.

More than thirty years after Brown published "Ma Rainey," Amiri Baraka's highly controversial play, *Dutchman* (1964) recuperated the image of Bessie Smith as a race woman through allusions made by the main character, Clay. Baraka's more militant approach represents the transition from the Civil Rights to Black Nationalism, a transition marked by the influence of Hegelian and Marxist dialectics, and by the vehement discourse adopted by Malcolm X in his speeches. In Baraka's view, the black individual has been alienated from his culture and is tragically immersed in a struggle towards the assimilation of white middle-class values. This breach between the psyche and the race's history and culture leads to neither solace nor completion of identity. Instead, identity is violently fragmented and the black individual cannot acknowledge himself in his work or in his lifestyle. Baraka, who had been raised in a middle-class African American family in Newark, found himself during the 1960s reacting against the values in which he had been bred, rejecting mainstream institutions and speech which answered to white middle-class expectations. As he saw it, the middle-class African American was erroneously imitating those values, betraying his own culture by assimilating multiple layers of masks to define negritude. A year before *Dutchman* was published and staged, Baraka wrote in *Blues People* that

The middle-class black man . . . developed an emotional allegiance to the middle-class (middle-brow) culture of America that obscured, or actually made hideous, any influences or psychological awareness that seemed to come from outside what was generally acceptable to a middle-class white man, especially if those influences were identifiable as coming from the most despised group in the country. (2002: 132)

Influenced by Sterling A. Brown, who was his professor at Howard University, Baraka envisioned black music as an aesthetic that encodes the emotional history and the culture of negritude in America. While Brown, as we have seen, aimed to recuperate the blues idiom as a valuable idiomatic treasure of the race, Baraka reached even further to provoke not only a re-examination of the heritage, but a cultural revolution. According to Maurice A. Lee, Baraka sought to take Marxism into praxis, beyond the Civil Right Movement's use of it as a mere theory, by way of "calling for more aggressive action from black leaders and decrying the inability of all lower class people to start their own revolution in America" (2004: 102). Jazz and the blues harbor the facet of black culture untainted by the white middle class; they are cryptograms ciphering a black culture that reacts against the mainstream. If well interpreted, they can lead to a revolution of the masses to subvert race and class hierarchies.

This revolutionary message is the one that Clay tries to convey in *Dutchman*. Set in a New York subway car, the play depicts how Clay, a young middle-class African American, is seduced and humiliated by Lula, a white woman, who ultimately sentences him to death on the hands of the rest of the passengers. The flirtatious and aggressive Lula debases Clay's middle-class image by conjuring all the racist stereotypes concerning black masculinity – from the myth of the black rapist to that of the emasculated black man. As his name suggests, Clay is 'molded' into grotesque 'nigger' stereotypes through Lula's manipulative language. Towards the end of the second scene, Lula's verbal harassment finally unleashes Clay's fury. He slaps Lula around the car and bursts into a speech where he conjures Bessie Smith:

You don't know anything except what's there for you to see. An act. Lies. Device. Not the pure heart, the pumping black heart . . . Old bald-headed four-eyed ofays popping their fingers... and don't know yet what they're doing. They say, "I love Bessie Smith." and don't even understand that Bessie Smith is saying, "Kiss my ass, kiss my black unruly ass." Before love, suffering, desire, anything you can explain, she's saying, and very plainly, "Kiss my black ass." And if you don't know that, it's you that's doing the kissing. (2003: 2312)

Clay is alluding to the cryptic, signifying quality of black music, forever inaccessible to whites because of their impossibility to ever grasp or understand the cultural significance of the black experience in America. Bessie incarnates the trickster who deceives white domination by letting them onto the game of interpreting her music under Eurocentric standards. In the same

way that Lula is thrashing onto Clay what black masculinity means to her (and by extension, to all white institutions), white bohemians from the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s (such as we have seen in the case of Carl Van Vechten) had created out of the black songstress a mask with which they felt comfortable with, one where exoticism and primitivism were embedded within the high art / popular culture dichotomy. Through Clay's speech, Baraka is warning his black audience and readers that they should not fall prey to the white opinions and images of Bessie Smith, that her message went beyond what the white public could and can fathom, and that this very message has immediate relevance to their own lives, as individuals and as a community. William J. Harris notes that in Baraka's work, "the creation of black identity cannot be arbitrary: there must be something real behind the ideal, a cultural continuity" (2004: 318). That 'realness' is the belief that black culture needs to rid itself from the suffocating, brainwashing influence of the white upper and middle class, both in the aesthetic and in the socio-political sphere. The 'continuity' should not be broken by the black middle class and its rejection of folk music.

Following the previous excerpt, Clay continues his speech by calling forth another jazz legend: "Charlie Parker? Charlie Parker. All the hip white boys scream for Bird. And Bird saying, 'Up your ass, feeble-minded ofay!' Up your ass." And they sit there talking about the tortured genius of Charlie Parker" (Baraka 2003: 2312). Smith and Parker stand under equal terms for Clay and for Baraka: they are race icons, oddly enough very popular among the white avant-garde circles. While Smith was sought by rich white socialites such as Carl Van Vechten, we have seen how Parker became the perfect martyr to support the hipster and Beatnik ideology. Beneath this popularity, Clay states, there breathes an immense amount of hatred in each of them, a hatred that can only be appeased through the utilization of music as its metaphor.

Baraka, however, reveals his ambivalence about the purpose of black music as metaphor of violence. Clay heatedly tells Lula that "Bird would've played not a note of music if he just walked up to East Sixty-seventh Street and killed the first ten white people he saw" (Baraka 2003: 2312). He equally refers to Smith's persona when shortly after he says that

If Bessie Smith had killed some white people she wouldn't have needed that music. She could have talked very straight and plain about the world. No metaphors. No grunts. No wiggles in the dark of her soul. Just straight two and two are four. Money. Power. Luxury. Like that. All of them. Crazy niggers turning

their backs on sanity. When all it needs is that simple act. Murder. Just murder!
Would make us all sane. (Baraka 2003: 2313)

In this scope, black music as a metaphor for violence is an unnecessary shield, a buffering zone for repressed emotions. Smith and Parker succeed in making great art out of their anger, but are unable to go beyond the music and take action. David Ikard pointed out Baraka's enigmatic position when he wrote that in the play "Smith is not a true revolutionary . . . because she is not 'manly' enough to express her feelings openly and strike down her oppressors" (2007: 12). But if Smith and Parker are criticized for their lack of revolutionary action, Clay's unleash of violence, his revolutionary praxis, only leads him to his death. When he finally extricates his own language from "metaphors" and "grunts," when he is emotionally empowered, all Lula has to do is to give the order to have him murdered. The colloquialism and simplicity of her sentencing words ("all right") only renders Clay as a helpless, pathetic puppet whose greatest moment proved futile. White supremacy can crush these empowered black men in a matter of minutes, without even the need of acquiring a more belligerent language to annihilate them; their incompetence as enemies makes them unworthy of even sentencing them through a more formal discourse. Clay is stabbed in the chest; he is frontally attacked and he never sees it coming. In just a few seconds his body is dragged down the aisle and thrown out the coach. Dispensing of a black man's life and body need not be more complicated.

2. Shug Avery and the Signifying Rhetoric of the Blues

Having viewed the male-centered approaches to blues women in the line of Brown or Baraka, we can now posit the following questions: how is the blues woman divested of this masculinist appeal? Does a feminist critique of the classical blues imply a sexualization of race and/or a racialization of sex? What elements of signifying are involved in a feminist (and more specifically, in Walker's) development of the blues singer? How do these elements endorse strictly feminist archetypes and how are they mythopoeic? Let us address these issues as we deconstruct the womanist and feminist characteristics that are contained within the character of Shug Avery.

Considering the material and existential differences separating the Southern African American women from their Northern sisters, it is no wonder that there was little room for talk of elevating black women in the South. However, Walker initiated a trend in the reinvention of blues women as bearers of feminist sentiment through *The Color Purple*. Structured in the

form of letters, the novel depicts the path towards the assertiveness and economic and emotional independence of Celie, a poor black Southern girl. Celie is brutally raped by a man whom she believes is her father at a young age; she is twice impregnated and the father, Alphonso, gives the babies away. Her mother having passed away, Celie can only find support in the loving arms of her sister, Nettie. Mr. _____, a widower with four children at his care, arrives one day at the household asking for Nettie's hand, but the father turns him down, offering him to marry the by-now-sterile Celie instead. What follows are years of physical and psychological abuse for Celie at a male supremacist homestead. Nettie runs away from Alphonso but is soon vanished by Mr. _____ at her determined refusal to have intercourse with him, and the sisters promise to write to each other. The years wear Celie out; she becomes even more silent and introverted. Deprived of her voicedness, her only medium for expression are the letters that we read, addressed to God at the futility of not having an address where Nettie can be reached. Neither does Celie receive any letters from Nettie. Devastated by the uncertainty of her sister's whereabouts or well-being, and traumatized by the continual abuse at the hands of Mr. _____ and his wild children, Celie suffers in the quietude of her fragmented self.

Her healing process begins with the appearance of two strong female characters: Sofia, the amazon who weds Mr. _____'s son, Harpo, and Shug Avery. Shug, who is a blues singer, has been Mr. _____'s lover for years, and despite the fact that she scorns him for not having considered the possibility of marrying her and disobeying his father's wishes, she continues her sexual entanglements with him. But Shug's sexual relationship with Mr. _____ (whom she calls by his first name, Albert), is far from destructive; unlike the relationship between Celie and Mr. _____, there is not a trace of patriarchal domination between Shug and Albert. Rather, the opposite system is operative: Shug erupts into the household and subverts the hierarchies that had, until then, governed and justified Celie's abuse. Mr. _____ grovels at Shug's feet; her every wish is his command. The first hints that Mr. _____ might be capable of love are given. The sassy and hip-swinging Shug initiates Celie in a therapeutic journey of self-discovery as she teaches her how to embrace the pleasures of the flesh as much as how to spiritually embrace God, nature, and love. Although Celie also finds inspiration in the robust Sofia, who, because she refuses to be annulled by domestic beatings has left Harpo, Shug reaches her at a womanist level. Furthermore, Sofia's strength turns to ashes when she is arrested. Having retorted her signature phrase, "Hell no!" at the request of the Mayor's wife, who had asked for her services as a domestic hand, Sofia responds to her

husband's slap with a fist punch. The following years are a painful decline for Sofia, as she is forced to work as a maid at the Mayor's house as the alternative sentence to jail.

By the time Sofia is working as a servant, Shug has not only gained nationwide popularity as a singer, but has married a young man by the name of Grady, which is as hard a blow for Mr. _____ as it is for Celie. On one of her visits from Memphis, Celie opens up to her about her childhood molestation; Shug, who is moved to tears, kisses her and they make love. When Celie and Shug discover that Mr. _____ has been hiding the letters from Nettie all those years, Celie volcanically confronts her husband for the first time in her life. Her empowered hatred is symbolically represented through her awareness of her long-silenced word:

I curse you, I say.

What that mean? he say.

I say, Until you do right by me, everything you touch will crumble.

He laugh. Who you think you is? He say. You can't curse nobody. Look at you. You black, you pore, you ugly, you a woman. Goddam, he say, you nothing at all.

Until you do right by me, I say, everything you even dream about will fail. I give it to him straight, just like it come to me. And it seem to come to me from the trees. (2003: 209)¹³

Unlike Clay's self-condemnation through the unleashing of his words in *Dutchman*, Celie's curse represents the first conquered stage towards independence and agency. The cycle is far from complete, however, for as Cutter has noted, "Walker is not content with showing Celie's use of 'the master's tools' against the master. Celie must learn that language can be used to understand, rather than destroy, another's subjectivity" (2008: 153). Shug has intitated Celie in the use of language as weaponry; however, her final objective is to show her to use her discourse in constructive terms. The womanist in Shug, which is germinating in Celie, seeks independence and self-love, but not through the oppression of up-down hierarchical binarisms, as I will later on argue, but through the transcendence of them. A womanist's preference of the female culture does not imply subdual of the other sex, for above all, a womanist is a universalist.

¹³ Hereafter all citations from *The Color Purple* will be indicated solely through page number.

Celie, who has now learned that Nettie is a missionary for the Olinka people in Africa and is taking care of Celie's long-lost children, and that their actual father was not Alphonso, but a businessman who was tragically lynched, goes with Shug, Grady, and Harpo's second wife, Squeak (Mary Agnes) to Memphis to gather her strength. Shug and Celie live as lovers, and while Shug is on the road, Celie finds her professional calling in the designing and making of pants for men and women alike, calling her company Folkspants, Unlimited. Alphonso dies and Celie inherits his house, which had actually legally belonged to her actual father. Her happiness, however, becomes clouded when Shug leaves her for Germaine, a nineteen-year-old blues flute player. In the months that follow, she awaits for Shug to return to her, and in the meantime, she befriends Mr. _____, who has turned his life (and himself) around. Celie's curse had actually become Mr. _____'s salvation: he has not only learned to appreciate women and repented for his treatment of Celie, but has also come to accept his feminine side: his womanist appreciation of nature comes in the form of collecting seashells, and he joins Celie as a seamstress after she teaches him to sew and make clothes in accordance to each person's physique, attitude, and needs.

After having made amends with one of her sons in the West, Shug leaves Germaine and returns to Celie. The novel symbolically closes on a Fourth of July, when Shug, Celie, Mr _____ (who Celie now calls Albert), Harpo, Sofia, Mary Agnes and the children prepare to celebrate each other. As they are getting ready, an automobile approaches, and Nettie, Celie's children, Olivia and Adam, Adam's African wife, Tashi, and Nettie's husband, Samuel, appear. After more than thirty years, the sisters are reunited.

Within this account, it is Shug who guides Celie towards the affirmation of herself, hinting that liberation must begin in language, and must continue through the acceptance and love of God through 'Its' creation, including herself. The novel's opening epigraph is a quotation by Stevie Wonder: "Show me how to do like you / Show me how to do it," and indeed, the relationship between Shug and Celie is one that begins in imitation, transforms into a highly personal form of the master / disciple archetypes, and ends in their sublime murgence as one. The first time Shug enters into Celie's life is through a picture that Mr. _____ accidentally drops from his wallet at Alphonso's house. It is significant that already from this image, the tragic and the comic aspects of the blues idiom somehow profess their presence. Celie is completely blown away by Shug's image:

[Shug Avery was] the most beautiful woman I ever saw. She more pretty than my mama. She bout ten thousand times more prettier than me. I see her there in

furs. Her face rouge. Her hair like somethin tail. She grinning with her foot up on somebody motorcar. Her eyes serious tho. Sad some. (6)

Her mimicry of Shug takes place when she dresses up like her to deviate Alphonso's attention from Nettie, trying to allure him to protect her sister from his incestuous drive. Like the Signifying Monkey, Celie succeeds in tricking the 'master,' although at the expense of her own body and spirit: "He beat me for dressing trampy but he do it to me anyway" (7). The image also offers Celie a sense of resignation to some of the tragic experiences that are bound to happen in life. When Mr. _____ gives in to marrying her, she takes out the picture. "I look into her eyes. Her eyes say Yeah, it bees that way sometime" (8). It will take some time for Celie to come to the realization of that message, for it is not quite resignation what Shug conveys, but endurance within the contesting, adverse situations. Ironically, it is through Alphonso that Walker hints the signifying qualities contained within Celie. When Alphonso hands her to Mr. _____, he warns him that "she tell lies" (8). Neither Alphonso nor Celie are aware of the implicit message in this statement, through which Walker is most likely indicating Celie's potential to signify, to reverse given hierarchical orders through the mastery of language. It must be through the lessons taught by Shug that Celie will find her signifying self. In the words of Hortense Spillers, "the black woman must translate the female vocalist's gestures into an apposite structure of terms that will articulate both her kinship to other women and the particular nuances of her own experience" (2003: 167). This signifying self is construed by Walker in feminist and womanist terms through the blues discourse.

Precisely what are the womanist features that Walker sees are embedded within the blues? A surface reading of a survey of classical blues lyrics will indicate that the speaker often appears in the form of a victim of physical and psychological abuse. I referred earlier to the adherence of lyrics to tragedy; from the woman's standpoint, this tragedy is usually illustrated in the form of beatings, masochism, willingness to be 'played' by a man, sense of abandonment, loneliness, suicidal and murderous instincts, asphyxiating rage, relief through alcoholism, or just plain depression. Yet Shug personifies the opposite values: strength, agency, verbosity, autonomy, independence, and free will, and she does so primarily through her vociferous enjoyment of sex, a claim that, as we have seen, places her at a significant distance from the black women's club movements of the North. When the relationship between Celie and Shug turns from one of visual mimicry to one of friendship between master and disciple, the most important lesson Celie learns is about the pleasures of sex. Having known no other form of intercourse than rape and the numbness of lying beneath Mr.

_____ (Celie describes it to Shug as Mr. _____ doing "his business" (78) on top of her, as if defecating), the severance between body and spirit has alienated her completely from her female biology. Shug hands Celie a mirror and orders her to look for her "button":

I lie back on the bed and haul up my dress. Yank down my bloomers. Stick the looking glass tween my legs. Ugh. All that hair. Then my pussy lips be black. Then inside look like a wet rose.

It a lot prettier than you thought, ain't it? she say from the door.

It mine, I say. Where the button?

Right up near the top, she say. That part that stick out a little.

I look at her and touch it with my finger. A little shiver go through me. Nothing much. But just enough to tell me this the right button to mash. Maybe.

She say, While you looking, look at your titties too. I haul up my dress and look at my titties. Think bout my babies sucking them. Remember the little shiver I felt then too. Sometimes a big shiver. Best part about having the babies was feedin' them. (79).

Shug shows Celie how to invert traditional conceptions of sex as an instrument through which to subdue women. It is evident that such a patriarchal exploitation of the woman's body has led Celie to annul herself: until this moment, her body has been objectified and abused, and her mind silenced. By calling her clitoris her own, Celie is not only discovering her body, she is also possessing it; transforming from an object to a subject, from the possessed to the possessor. Shug does not theorize about the liberating qualities intrinsic to sexuality; she merely teaches Celie that pleasure can induce agency. Shug, like Janie in Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, suggests that freedom to choose one's sexual partner, freedom to enjoy and rejoice in one's body, and freedom to find beauty in it enable a purely black feminist scope through which to counteract the tragedy of life with celebration of the self. Walker's Signifiyin(g) on Hurston and her characters through the blues women is intentional. In *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*, she writes that:

Zora Neale Hurston, Billie Holiday, and Bessie Smith form a sort of unholy trinity. Zora *belongs* in the tradition of black women singers . . . There were the extreme highs and lows of her life, her undaunted pursuit of adventure, passionate emotional and sexual experience, and her love of freedom. Like Billie and Bessie

she followed her own road, believed in her own gods, pursued her own dreams, and refused to separate herself from the 'common' people. (1983: 91)

In the same way that Janie asserts herself through her tumultuous, yet ultimately constructive, relationship with Tea Cake, so does Shug stand emblematically as the womanist that, in the eyes of Walker, impregnated the spirits of Hurston, Holiday and Smith.

In a later passage, Celie describes Shug as a beautiful "big rose" (197), using the same flowery imagery through which she had described her genitalia. The connection between Shug and female sexual organs is one that stems from the rich allegorical imagery of classical blues songs through which singers referred to their own (and men's) body parts. These metaphors were understood by the audience, for they were part of the African American vernacular discourse. They were recurrent images that attested not only to the uniqueness and versatility of black speech modes, but to its position inside a mostly oral culture, where phrases and metaphors were methodologically borrowed and transmitted from one musician to the other. Female sexual organs were often referred to as 'cabbage,' 'cake,' and 'pie,' while men's attributes were designated through 'bacon,' 'lemon,' 'hot dog,' and 'jellybean.' In "Empty Bed Blues, Part 2" Bessie Smith sang:

He boiled my first cabbage and he made it awful hot
When he put in the bacon, it overflowed the pot. (B. Smith 1993c)

In another Bessie Smith classic, "I'm Wild About That Thing," the speaker, like Shug, openly discusses the female 'button':

What's the matter, papa, please don't stall
Don't you know I love it and I want it all
I'm wild about that thing
Just give my bell a ring
You can press that button, I'm wild about that thing (B. Smith 1993b)

Using Shug as a womanist trope, Walker stands her ground that through the affirmation of the body and the senses as a physical extension of the soul, the black woman can divest herself of the collective trauma of rape (as institutionalized by slavery) and objectification (in the hands

of male partners) and come to possess her individual body. Hazel Carby has subsequently written that:

What has been called the 'Classic Blues' . . . is a discourse that articulates a cultural and political struggle that is directed against the objectification of female sexuality within a patriarchal order but which also tries to reclaim women's bodies as the sexual and sensuous subjects of women's song. (1998: 472)

Carby goes on to add that "[blues singers] are representations of women who attempt to manipulate and control their construction as sexual subjects" (1998: 473). The emphasis on sensuality is one that contravenes male supremacy in that it aims for agency and autonomy.

Shug could not have come to life as anything other than a blues singer. Her profession requires that she be open about her sexuality, an openness which undoubtedly would have clashed with the 1920s black women's club movement of the North and their advocacy on the moral virtue of the African American female. It is not lost on Celie that the church-going community shuns Shug when she is sick precisely because she is an instrument of the antichrist:

Even the preacher got his mouth on Shug Avery, now she down. He take her condition for his text. He don't call no name, but he don't have to. Everybody know who he mean. He talk bout a strumpet in short skirts, smoking cigarettes, drinking gin. Singing for money and taking other women mens. Talk bout slut, hussy, heifer and streetcleaner. (44).

For Walker to have made a case of the blues woman as a feminist is to have struggled against the past (black feminism in the 1920s) and against the present (the negative masculine and feminine stereotypes against which the 1970s Black Nationalism constructed an identity based on hyper-masculinity and hyper-heterosexuality). She negotiates with male writers who have found in blues singers their potency to stand as race women and carves out a new symbolic dimension from which to interpret the sexual politics permeating their discourse. We have to be aware that this is not at all a simple argument to foster. The first time that Shug appears singing in public is to perform Bessie Smith's "A Good Man Is Hard To Find." Walker does not quote the lyrics, which are as follows:

My heart is sad and I'm all alone
My man's treating me mean
I regret the day that I was born
And the man I ever seen

My happiness is less today
My heart is broke, that's why I say
Lord, a good man is hard to find
You always get another kind

Just when you think that he's your pal
You look and find him foolin' 'round some other gal
Then you rave, you all crave
You want to see him in his grave

So if you man is nice, take my advice;
Hug him in the morning, kiss him at night
Give him plenty lovin'; treat your good man right . . . (B. Smith 1997)

In the line of most classical blues themes, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" initially presents the woman as a victim of the man's wrongdoings. The speaker masochistically indulges in her pain and her ill luck. She even suggests that she may be the one to blame, as she has not satisfied her partner domestically, and offers advice to women on how to keep their men interested. All in all, it conveys a series of male-supremacist ideas: the woman is worthless without a man by her side; she is miserable because she is incapable of living autonomously and the only way reach fulfillment (that is, to keep one's man) is by acting the role of the female / lover / nurturer. Not only are these the words to the song Shug sings, but she sings them for Mr. _____, as if letting him know all the pain he caused her when he refused to marry her. The next song in her repertory, which, to Celie's delight, is dedicated to her, is also about a no-good man, however. From the other Bessie Smith songs I have quoted above a parallel dependency from the man could be interpreted; the woman cannot be liberated sexually unless there is an experienced man to stimulate her.

But to focus on a surface reading leads to miscomprehending the signifying nature of the blues and, by extension, to a misinterpretation of Shug. Regardless that many women's

blues, such as the examples above, enhance masculine prowess, the fact that the speaker is openly expressing how satisfied and fulfilled she feels thanks to her bedmate's talents renders her as an autonomous subject. By confirming that sex is pleasurable and by affirming her right to enjoy it, the speaker reasserts the connection between physical and emotional fulfillment. Carby is just one of the scholars to have constructed a sociological model of feminist critique in which to inscribe the kind of blues agency that Walker delineated through Shug. Angela Davis's seminal study, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* (1998), most notably, can be credited as the most solid and persuasive work to squeeze from the classical blues discourse a feminist (or pre-feminist) indication. In her words, "the blues woman challenges in her own way the imposition of gender-based inferiority. When she paints blues portraits of tough women, she offers psychic defenses and interrupts and discredits the routine internalization of male dominance" (Davis 1998: 36). Throughout the book, Davis continues to invoke the signifying powers of blues women to allude to the double-voicedness of their discourse. The moans and groans as much as the ironic inflexions of tone performed by the singers appear as indications that they are parodying their own words, conveying a different message for the women in the audience who identify with the abuse and ailments depicted in the lyrics.

We must be careful, nonetheless, in examining Shug's signifying through song: not only are her songs not quoted (the result being that the contesting game between lyrics and attitude is somewhat shadowed) but Celie is disheartened by the fact that Shug looks at Mr. _____ throughout her performance of "A Good Man Is Hard To Find," which indicates that Celie is herself unfamiliar with double-voicedness. Towards the end of the novel, Celie does regard Shug's performances as an art of indirection, and it is because of this that Shug refuses to let her go on the road with her: "She can act like she not bored in front of a audience of strangers, a lot of them white," Celie writes, "but she wouldn't have the nerve to try to act in front of me" (214). As readers familiarized with the tradition of signifying in the blues, and because of this last remark, we are aware that Shug's singing is one that involves the double discourse of the Signifying Monkey. But Shug's relationship to the Esu deity is one that is more transparently expressed through her everyday attitude than through song. It is striking that being as empowered through the blues as Shug is, Walker grants very little space for Celie to write about her performances. Moreover, Shug's blunt and straightforward language initially presents a contradiction to motivated and unmotivated signification; for she means exactly what she says and makes nothing of circumlocutions, euphemisms or indirect forms of persuasion. Thomas Marvin has established the connections between Shug and the orisha god

Legba (Esu) on the basis of the use of *nommo*, an African discursive technique whereupon the speaker gains power over the thing it names directly:

The sometimes bewildering lyrics of many blues songs can be understood more fully in the context of West African philosophy, which views the cosmos as an intricate network of spiritual and physical forces in which intelligent beings, or *Muntu*, exert their power over lower forms of life through *nommo*. (1994: 412)

Indeed, *nommo* presents a viable way through which to salvage a feminist critique, one that has as well been used by Davis in her argumentation. Likewise, Daphne Duval Harrison finds that many classical blues songs seek the healing of the collective black female consciousness by “identifying the source of pain, acknowledging its effects, then taking a step to deal with it” (2000: 101). Many songs, therefore, become “purgative,” a form of “aesthetic therapy” (Harrison 2000: 101). In this way, a critic may provide an argument for a feminist construction of Shug that always conjures some mythical referent: when her language is indirect (when she is singing), she resembles the Signifying Monkey, and when her language is direct, she resembles Esu and his control of lower beings through direct calling of their names. While it is not my intention to discredit Walker’s character, I believe it is necessary to understand the cultural constructs that are at play in the development of a supposed feminist principle of the 1920s classical blues. The identification of these constructs, which are contradictory in nature but naturalized through the compatibility with which they appear in the novel, provides us with very telling insight into the mythopoeic possibilities that writers can endow historical figures with, shaping them and molding them into symbolizing a set of values that gives form and order to the disconnected direction of history.

Walker’s transformation of chaos into cosmos through the blues discourse reaches beyond the establishment of a signifying tradition between Afro-American texts. Her negotiation with Hurston, the blues singers, and male writers such as Brown or Baraka extends enough to include post-Radical and Cultural feminist values. In his essay, Marvin, like other critics before and after him, refers to Shug as a unifying entity. Within her persona, binarisms are presented and destroyed. Particularly, he is interested in the manner by which Shug “crosses the boundaries which usually separate the sacred and the profane by bringing the spiritual power of music to her ostensibly secular performances” (1994: 414-415). Indeed, it is significant that although she is shunned by the church, Shug is the one who instructs Celie in the acceptance of God. The ‘blues God’ has no iconography other than its creation, including

the self. The old, white-maned, white man of the Bible is symbolically slain by Shug from Celie's spiritual universe. Instead, she tells her to concentrate on the trees, the sky, the rocks, the people, and the color purple in the fields, for that is where she will find what she is looking for: "God ain't a he or a she," Shug says, "but a It" (196). Shug recognizes the Eurocentric God as a cultural construct of man, and like Hurston, she makes a god of her own:

Man corrupt everything, say Shug. He on your box of grits, in your head, and all over the radio. He try to make you think he everywhere. Soon as you think he everywhere, you think he God. But he ain't. Whenever you trying to pray, and man plop himself on the other end of it, tell him to git lost, say Shug. Conjure up flowers, wind, water, a big rock. (198)

Shug is unwelcomed in the church, yet she practices her own religion, one that begins in the self (the body and the soul) and is metonymically extended to the rest of the sexless (or doubly sexed) creatures created by God. Shug is as well an emissary of 'the devil's music,' the blues. In a significant passage, Celie retells how Shug tries to persuade Squeak (Mary Agnes) to take up blues singing:

I tell you something else, Shug say to Mary Agnes, listening to you sing, folks git to thinking bout a good screw.

Aw, *Miss Shug*, say Mary Agnes, changing color.

Shug say, What, too shamefaced to put singing and fucking together? She laugh. That's the reason they call what us sing the devil's music. Devils love to fuck. (117)

In the previous chapter, I explained a number of interpretations that have been given to Robert Johnson's "Crossroad Blues," and how one of them was that Johnson was singing about the moment he sold his soul to the Devil. Indeed, there is a longstanding tradition of the Devil as character in both classical and country blues (Albert Murray even traces the origin of the term 'blues' to the English expression 'blue devils'). That the Devil appears in the form of a character in the song (either as the Devil or as the blues as a personified, tricky entity) attests to the strong bonds between the music and the oral culture where it was bred and where hundreds of oral narratives featured the Devil as its trickster of choice. But within the blues sphere, the music itself was an indication of moral deviancy, one that added to the pariah

qualities of the singer. Davis enumerates the main social structures that viewed the blues woman as an outcast: "belittled and misconstrued by the dominant culture that has been incapable of deciphering the secrets of her art," she claims, "she has been ignored and denounced by African American middle-class circles and repudiated by the most authoritative institution in her own community, the church" (1998: 124-125). Despite the fact that blues lyrics also often turned to God in preaching-like pleas and prayers, the abounding content on matters of the flesh no doubt alarmed religious institutions and followers. The blues must to some extent have been deemed a stigma by those artists who turned to the church in later years: Ma Rainey and Ethel Waters both sacrificed performing and dedicated themselves to religion when they became older. But Walker, through an excellent manipulation of antinomies, allows Shug to transcend the dichotomy. In the same way that in blues lyrics both the Devil and God can appear fully without implying a moral contradiction (the contradiction is only created outside of the discourse itself, at a societal level), so can Shug materialize her life through forms that have traditionally been associated to both symbols. As a womanist, she preaches freedom, love and benevolence (God), and she can also act cruelly and be blinded by jealousy (her initial mistreatment of Celie is marked by her spite for her being Mr. _____'s wife) and follow her sexual drive (the Devil). Shug herself settles the matter through the 'It' God that cherishes traditional beauty just as much as sex or other 'demonic' attributes.

Walker's play with antinomies is extremely complex; while some of them appear dissolved, such as in the case of the apparently sexless God who, nonetheless, rejoices in the fact that It has created men and women who take pleasure in sex, other times antinomies do not appear melted, but juxtaposed. In these instances, plurality is celebrated, as opposed to being annihilated. What is particularly significant about this fact, I believe, is that they represent the joints in the development of Walker's cosmos, for it is in this celebration of plurality where blues women meet feminism and womanism and at the same time connect with West African mythology. Indeed, all dichotomies tend to function as tools to sustain and justify a male-centered supremacy (male / female, religious / secular, mind / body, rationality / emotion), but the solution to oppression need not always rely on the fusion between categories. Instead, juxtaposition offers transcendence through the redefining of their role as signifiers. In West African mythology, antinomies are not necessarily dissolved: the deities that gather both masculine and feminine traits, such as Esu, who often appears with a large erect penis and with female breasts, do not annul their sexuality; they are simply personifications of both. According to Gates, Esu descended from such a creature: "The primal god of the Fon is a Janus figure; one side of its body is female and is called Mawu, while the other side is male and

it is called Lisa. Mawu's eyes form the moon; Lisa's eyes form the sun. Accordingly, Lisa rules the day and Mawu rules the night" (1989: 23). In a similar way, Shug symmetrically juxtaposes her traditionally female and traditionally male features. When she complements Sofia in a mannish manner, Celie notes the following:

That when I notice how Shug talk and act sometimes like a man. Men say stuff like that to women, Girl, you look like a good time. Women always talk bout hair and health. How many babies living or dead, or got teef. Not bout how some woman they hugging on look like a good time.

All the men got they eyes glued to Shug's bosom. I got my eyes glued there too. I feel my nipples harden under my dress. My little button sort of perk up too. Shug, I say to her in my mind, God, you looks like a real good time, the Good Lord knows you do. (82)

The first paragraph refers to her 'masculinity' and the second to her 'femininity' – one that arouses Celie's 'masculinity.' These qualities are juxtaposed; what is destroyed is their male supremacist connotations, that is, not only the power relations they traditionally convey, but their male-centered functions as signifiers. Later in the novel, once Celie and Mr. _____ converse in friendly terms, the complexity of Walker's womanist principles on supremacist binarisms reemerges:

Mr. _____ ast me the other day what it is I love so much about Shug. He say he love her style. He say to tell the truth, Shug act more manly than most men. I mean she upright, honest. Speak her mind and the devil take the hindmost, he say. You know Shug will fight, she say. Just like Sofia. She bound to live her life and be herself no matter what.

Mr. _____ think all this stuff men do. But Harpo not like this, I tell him. You not like this. What Shug got is womanly seem like to me. (274)

Celie, as the rest of the empowered women in the novel (Shug, Sofia, Nettie, Tashi, and even Squeak, who in her own quest to becoming a womanist, sacrifices being raped in exchange to letting Sofia complete the rest of her sentence as a maid) has learned to redefine what being a black woman is and entails. Her professionalization as a seamstress of pants for both men and women must not be interpreted as a symbolic act of uniting the sexes: she makes the pants in

accordance with each person's shape and spirit. Nor should it be interpreted as an attempt of making women masculine; in the same way that she admires how the Olinka wear robes and dresses regardless of sex, so does she regard the juxtaposition of women and pants as a way to implode the associations between supremacy and male clothing (and by extension, male attitudes). In other words, she continues to separate the two sexes, but classifies their attributes in a way that is not only more becoming to their nature, but that destroys the power relations they traditionally connoted.

The juxtaposition of binarisms is distinctly a womanist principle. Contrary to latter feminist critiques of blues women, juxtaposing presupposes a commitment to the freedom of the individual. Carby, Davis, and Harrison have commented on the amount of classical blues songs (in their majority, of a comic nature) about sexual role reversals. These role reversals were produced both thematically (for example, the speaker brags about her sexual talents or disposes of a man as soon as she grows sexually bored with him) and in terms of aesthetic performance. As to the latter, gender reversal did not only appear in relation to sexual themes. Davis states that the multiple blues about the female speaker seeking economic independence were deeply feminist in the subversion and inversion of not only the way by which men and women were expected to make a living, but also in spatial terms: a woman with economic independence was a woman who had ventured into, and colonized, the public sphere. Regarding the latter method, by which role reversal is produced through the blues pattern, Harrison claims, for instance, that "in a public arena the blues woman would receive an affirmative response from her audience because she had demonstrated that she was as bad as a man in mistreating a lover" (2000: 102). At both levels, the assumption undertaken is that the blues woman implodes sexual binarisms through an affirmative act of appropriation. While this is sociologically more realistic, Walker, through womanism, appears to suggest that it is not necessarily a matter of colonizing, but of naturally being oneself. In other words, it is not about there being a role reversal (although, because of the heavy male-centered shape of history, this may be the apparent effect) but about liberating concepts from the chains of signifier / signified, and consequently, freeing them from an up-down hierarchical system. In this way, the individual, although inspired by previous womanist legacies, adopts and accepts concepts, occupations, speech patterns, etc. in accordance to her own spirit, not because of what they represent. Celie does not choose to become a lesbian; she merely is. Neither does Shug choose to be bisexual (or more womanistically adequately, to love women sexually and sometimes men); she talks and behaves the way she does because that is her true self, not because she seeks to become more masculine. Shug is aware that by freeing her voice she

becomes empowered; but this power does not rest in the fact that it is a masculine one, but on the fact that it is her own, that she is the possessor, the subject.

The emphasis that Shug (and Walker) place on the female biology and on lesbianism reassert such a separation between the sexes, and it is here where Walker is able to link womanism with the Cultural Feminism of the end of the 1970s. In contrast to Radical Feminism (1967-1975), Cultural Feminism confronted sexual discrimination by promoting and celebrating womanhood through the proclamation of a feminine counterculture. Echols describes this fundamental antagonism by establishing the movements' opposing aims: "we find radical feminists mobilizing women on the basis of their similarity to men and cultural feminists organizing women around the principle of female difference" (2003: 6). Cultural Feminists embraced the biological uniqueness of women, from the beauty of the body to the possibility of motherhood. Cultural feminists' quest was closer to a spiritual and pseudo-religious pursuit than that of Radical Feminists; it simply avoided the class struggle, perceived as a male-centered battle, because it was believed to be inconsequential to women. The more effective solution was to create a space for women where universal sisterhood would reign. In contrast with radical feminism, the tensions created by racial difference and lesbian preferences would ideally evaporate, favoring an all-embracing system of matriarchal lineage. Ecofeminist critique owes much to the biologically-grounded arguments initiated by Jane Alpert and Kathleen Barry, who discursively recuperated the mythology of goddesses and the natural qualities and essences of women in order to promote a female counterculture:

We must look to our matriarchal past for guidance in defining a culture that is a logical extension of nature. With the essence of motherhood and a sense of the preservation of life imprinted in our genes, matrilineal descent will naturally become the organization of the society we envision. (Barry 1973: 24)

Through the blues discourse and the play with antinomies, the matriarchal past that Walker proposes is one where black women emerge as nurturers of each other and caretakers of those willing to respect and cherish women spiritually and physically. The alternative to a capitalist, patriarchal nucleus is one based on sisterhood, a form of relating that has been carefully weaved and sewn and is symbolized through the multiple quilts and clothing crafted throughout the novel. To heal Celie's pain at finding that Mr. _____ has been hiding Nettie's letters from her, Shug tells her that they shall sew every day. "A needle and not a razor in my hand" (147), Celie thinks. Again Shug has shown her that pain can be managed constructively,

and seeks to suppress Celie's visceral instinct to kill. In order to avoid any form of patriarchy, one must never attempt to overpower the other, much less by force. Within sisterhood, each member is colorfully distinct, like each of the patches, but they are bound together by a thread that makes them a single unit, a sort of family. This thread is built through the discourse of the women, through which they have shared the tragedies and joys of their experiences, and through which they have constructively revoked supremacist dichotomies of cosmogonies. In this sense, Walker again links the blues to contemporary feminism. The agency conjured in the blues is one that is also shaped by the call-response pattern of the bars. The themes of domestic violence, psychological abuse, abandonment, depression, masochism, etc. that are so prevalent in the discourse and upon which the blues women either signify or control through *nommo* additionally procure an aesthetic platform from which to break the silence of the private sphere. If true womanhood had once implied keeping one's private space private, that is, creating a space where the absence of discourse fortified its strength as a female domain, Walker embraces the contemporary feminist notion that 'the personal is political.' In several instances, Shug incites Celie to tell her about her abuse, either at the hands of Alphonso or at the hands of Mr. _____. In return, Shug tells her about her pain for not being loved by her mother, nor enough by Mr. _____ to marry her. Her sexual drive has condemned her in the eyes of African American society, but it has liberated her at the same time. Their sharing of their experiences is not only therapeutic for Celie, but it presents a form of consciousness-raising: by understanding, identifying with, and interiorizing each other's experiences, they are exposing the male-centered, socioeconomic structures of the domestic sphere. The sexual antagonism contained within the private space is a construct obeying to oppressing principles of patriarchy worldwide (through Nettie's letters, Africa also emerges as a de-mystified land where women are subdued). The conversations between Shug and Celie mirror what Davis would subsequently regard as the most subversive strategy towards the development of a feminist consciousness through the classical blues:

The historical omnipresent secrecy and silence regarding male violence is linked to its social construction as a private problem sequestered behind impermeable domestic walls, rather than a social problem deserving political attention. . . . [The blues] names domestic violence in the collective context . . . and therefore defines it as a problem of public discourse. (1998: 28)

The slogan of 'the personal is political,' which is usually attributed in origin to Radical Feminist Carol Hanisch, is a way of life for Shug. Her everyday praxis attests to her belief that by sharing each other through language and through the body, a small community of sisters can flower.

This chapter has aimed to show Walker's unique construction of blues women as black feminist (womanist) archetypes through signifying. We have seen that beyond Walker's signifying on Hurston and female writers of the Eurocentric tradition, her mission was also one of negotiating with male writers the image of the blues woman as a symbol. This is her repetition with reversal characteristic of signifying: beyond the race woman, she seems to suggest, stands above all a womanist. Moreover, she has uses the sexual politics of women's blues as an instrument through which to establish a historic continuum: from West African mythologies and their conception of natural binarisms, through the 1920s classical blues and their subversion of Northern black women's club movements' cult of womanhood, all the way up to 1960s and 1970s feminism. This endeavor is deeply mythopoeic in that it crafts a unique history for black women with an ancient beginning (the creation myth) in a lost, faraway land. The 1920s blues women appear as natural outcomes of these mythologies, the ultimate embodiment of the essences of antinomies before the alienation of patriarchy. At the same time, they incarnate the 'mothers' of post-Civil Rights Movement Feminism, indicating a progress within the cycle. The womanist, African diaspora of *The Color Purple*, in much the same way as Eliot's mythical method, weaves creation and deliverance in its quest to connect antiquity and contemporaneity. In the same way that Shug teaches Celie that God is everything and that everything is connected, this time-defying mythical frame connects past, present and future in an effort to rewrite history, to bestow upon the much-silenced black woman the power of the Word.

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6. Estudios ecofeministas y "animal studies." Respecto a los estudios relacionados con el ecofeminismo, podemos concluir que mientras que los estudios ecofeministas y las investigaciones andro-zoológicas de índole feminista ciertamente han abusado de la representación del animal doméstico como motivo adyacente a la escenificación de la

claustrofobia y el confinamiento de la mujer (ejemplos clave se encuentran en *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* de Maya Angelou, en *Jazz* de Toni Morrison, o incluso, de manera más compleja, en "Cat in the Rain" de Ernest Hemingway, entre otros) , se ha ido germinando, a su vez y no obstante, una concepción también más positiva que implica la misma redefinición de la domesticidad. Tomando como ejemplo la obra de autoras estadounidenses como Joyce Carol Oates (particularmente en *Bellefleur*) o de Martha Reben (sobre todo en *The Healing Woods*), nace un concepto alternativo de la domesticidad donde la simbología asociada a los animales que habitan estos espacios es una basada en la autonomía e independencia de la mujer. Desde el gato y la araña que representan una extensión de la indómita Leah en el ambiente neo-gótico de *Bellefleur* hasta el elenco de mapaches, pájaros, zorros y ratones que transitan por la cabaña de Reben en su autobiografía, estos animales contribuyen al concepto de la intimidad y privacidad como claves en el retrato de los espacios domésticos como santuarios espirituales. Aun en compañía masculina, tanto Leah como Reben muestran que dichos espacios, de los cuales estos animales son su expresión más viva, potencian su autonomía como mujeres, permitiéndoles alcanzar un estado de liberación personal que representa la sublimación de la feminidad. La actitud maternal de Reben hacia los animales en principio contrasta como la imagen de *femme fatal* que sugieren los tótems de la araña y el gato en el caso de Leah; no obstante, existen paralelismos en tanto a que el tipo de maternidad retratada y la sexualidad de Leah suponen un desafío a las connotaciones negativas del ámbito doméstico difundidas por una cultura arraigada en una sociedad patriarcal. La serie autobiográfica de Anne LaBastille, titulada en su conjunto como *Woodswoman*, se asemeja también a la obra de Reben en su reinención del cliché popular del hombre de la frontera propio de la conquista de lo salvaje. En el caso de LaBastille, una ermitaña de los Adirondacks, sin embargo, la autora deliberadamente reniega del concepto de maternidad y propone a sus lectores la concepción del espacio doméstico como territorio privado sujeto a leyes organicistas que se hacen eco del trascendentalismo al tiempo que también de la filosofía pre-mecanista de la Europa previa a la revolución industrial (magistralmente recogida y descrita por Carolyn Merchant en *The Death of Nature*).

Como resultado de esta investigación, Claudia Alonso Recarte publicó el ensayo "Organicism and the Politics of Space in Anne LaBastille's *Woodswoman* Saga" en la revista *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 21 (2013): 1-17. Taylor & Francis. ISSN: 0966-369X DOI:10.1080/0966369X.2013.810604. Link para la obtención o consulta del artículo: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0966369X.2013.810604#.U3uNcFh_u7w

Aparte de una labor de crítica literaria basada en la simbología animal y organicista, este proyecto ha permitido la inclusión del campo de la ética animal tratada por intelectuales como Peter Singer, Paul Waldau, o Tom Regan, dentro de los géneros literarios, ensayísticos y de panfleto escritos por mujeres en abogacía animalista. Para ello, ha sido necesario recapitular en los orígenes del movimiento de la liberación animal en la Inglaterra del siglo XIX y el rol fundamental que tuvieron sufragistas como Ouida (Maria Louise Ramé), Frances Power Cobbe o escritoras como Anna Sewell en su desarrollo. Es particularmente mediante la enfatización de la ética filosófica de Jeremy Bentham sobre el sufrimiento que estas mujeres elaboran un discurso en torno al bienestar animal y a la abolición de la institucionalizada práctica médica de la vivisección. El revisionismo de los espacios privados y su relación a la ética feminista y al derecho animal supone un campo de investigación fundamental para comprender la primacía de las mujeres en el activismo animalista. Si atendemos a ciertos espacios por separado y recorremos su historiografía y la literatura que la refleja, podemos desarrollar la conexión entre la explotación animal y las tradicionales imágenes de la mujer relacionadas con estereotipos emocionales tales como la locura y el histerismo. Este proyecto ha permitido atender a tres espacios clave: la cocina, el hogar en su totalidad, y el laboratorio. A pesar de que sólo los dos primeros responden a la categoría de topografías domésticas, el laboratorio guarda una estrecha relación con la noción de la privacidad por su adherencia al secretismo con el fin de mantener un orden social establecido. Si bien en la literatura infantil de mujeres la denuncia en contra del maltrato animal se centra en los espacios públicos (*Black Beauty* de Sewell aparece como obra pionera al retratar la violenta explotación de los caballos en el ámbito urbano), el activismo femenino británico frente a la vivisección producida en los espacios privados de dominio científico masculino encabeza los intereses del colectivo femenino dentro del entorno económico y sociopolítico. Si bien la ciencia mecanista del siglo XIX apuntaba a la concepción de la mujer como animal irracional susceptible a la histeria, activistas y sufragistas como Ouida (sobre todo en su panfleto *The New Priesthood*, publicado en 1893) y la irlandesa Frances Power Cobbe (y en Estados Unidos, Caroline Earle White) reinventaron esta asociación para denunciar el abuso masculino sobre las víctimas de la ciencia. Mientras que la regulación de laboratorios de vivisección continúa siendo una problemática lejos de resolverse, el activismo feminista sobre el derecho animal ha ido evolucionando en busca de la redefinición de aquellos espacios tradicionalmente relegados a la mujer. Por una parte, la cocina, donde se define y sistematiza una relación de consumo

entre ser humano y animal (y la cual implica rituales como la matanza y el despiece), pasa a retratarse, sobre todo a raíz de las emblemáticas obras de Carol J. Adams *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (1990) y *The Pornography of Meat* (2004), como escenario femenino emblemático de la cultura del vegetarianismo y veganismo. La relación entre mujer y animal deja de ser mediada por “el plato”, y la cocina emerge como templo de lo que ecofeministas como Karen Warren o Greta Gaard denominan *care-ethics* y según la cual se obliteran las jerarquías de poder implícitas en los binarismos generados por la antinomia masculino / femenino.

Como resultado de esta otra línea de investigación, Claudia Alonso Recarte publicó el artículo “Espacios y especies en intersección: Cuerpos femeninos y la esfera doméstica en el activismo por los derechos de los animales // Intersecting Spaces and Species: Women’s Bodies and the Domestic Sphere in Animal Rights Activism” en la revista *Investigaciones Feministas* 3 (2012): 85-98. ISSN: 2171-6080. A continuación se recoge el texto completo, que también está disponible para su descarga en <http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/article/view/41138> .

INTERSECTING SPACES AND SPECIES:

WOMEN’S BODIES AND THE DOMESTIC SPHERE IN ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISM

(Claudia Alonso Recarte)

Much postcolonial feminist scholarship has focused on an interpretation of women’s bodies as a site of knowledge, a sort of palimpsest inscribed with competing cultural meanings, structures and images through which identity is negotiated. Consequently, theoretical approaches to the female body as a space in itself have stimulated new readings of the traditional gendered dichotomy of the private/public spheres, where the body-as-experience enters in performative dialogue with the two domains. The object of this article is to examine how women’s bodies within the domestic sphere are portrayed in current animal rights campaigns so as to analyze the discursive intricacies motoring new identities of womanhood and non-human others. I begin with an overview of how female activists have, since the nineteenth century, conceptualized their own bodies as akin to that of animals and explored the possibilities of these connections, ultimately subverting women’s confinement to the domestic sphere as well as other gender stereotypes. In the second part I analyze two samples of video campaigns from two prominent animal rights groups, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). In both campaigns women’s bodies play an instrumental part in making a plight for

animals, and both strategically feature the domestic sphere as the setting of choice for different reasons. These campaigns are of course aimed at raising awareness about animal cruelty, not feminist issues; however, the creative choices underlying their rhetoric provide significant insight as to the type of gender identities that are envisioned and sought for an anti-speciesist ideal.

I. Connecting Women and Non-human Others

In her recent study *Animal Lessons*, Kelly Oliver offers an alternative reading to De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* in which she cleverly exposes the inconsistencies and contradictions of the text regarding non-human others: De Beauvoir initiates her discussion by drawing on biology to articulate the underlying cultural assumptions that endorse the shared oppression of all female subjects, regardless of species. "De Beauvoir points out that patriarchal values are placed on these female animals and then that valuation becomes biological data, which in turn support the patriarchal thesis that women are inferior to men" (OLIVER, 2009: 158). However, when De Beauvoir turns her attention to history, she advocates the necessity for women to transcend their animality and be like men, for biological features do not justify women's cultural emplacement. "The ambivalent conclusion," Oliver writes, "is that female animals teach us something about ourselves because they are like us but that woman is human because ultimately she is not like them" (2009: 159).

Indeed, the degree of commonness and difference between humans and animals and between women and animals has always loomed within philosophical and cultural explorations of anthropocentric identity. Within animal liberation discourse, activists defend commonness with non-human others on the grounds of identification, an anagnorisis that is revealed through epistemic processes of sympathy and empathy. Yet likeness between species becomes ever so much more problematic when animals are to be exploited. While the case of meat-eating may be more transparent (differences are emphasized to as to justify the slaughtering and consumption of animals), Rachels observes the dilemma arising from animal experimentation: "In order to defend the usefulness of research, [researchers] must emphasize the similarities between the animals and the humans, but in order to defend it ethically, they must emphasize the differences" (qtd. WALDAU, 2011: 71).

The matter of likeness and the moral and legal difficulties it poses creates additional disputes when dealing with the particular type of connection that women feel towards animals. In her observations as to the reasons for joining the movement, patrice jones writes that "boys and men tend to make their decisions on the basis of laws or abstract principles

while girls and women tend to make their decisions on what is best characterized as an *ethos of care*" (2004: 146). It has often been argued that this ethos of care stems from the position that both women and animals share as the less advantageous subjects in the respective value dualisms they occupy. The victimization of women and non-human others through a patriarchal system of domination and exploitation has reached modern acknowledgement mostly thanks to Carol Adam's classic study, the extensively documented *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (1990), whose leveling of male supremacist ramifications has inspired and consolidated current animal rights propaganda based on the equalization of institutionalized systems of oppression:

Meat eating is to animals what white racism is to people of color, antisemitism is to Jewish people, homophobia is to gay men and lesbians, and woman hating is to women. All are oppressed by a culture that does not want to assimilate them fully on their grounds and with rights. (ADAMS, 1990: 70)

Ecofeminists and animal rights feminists have frequently resorted to accessing animal emotional lives through the commonness of bodies. "Perhaps it is our own [women's] bodies that remind us that we, too, are animal, kin to those we work with, live with, love, and swallow" (HOGAN, METZGER, and PETERSON, 1998: xiii). Female activists' empathy for animals on the grounds of bodily suffering can be traced back to Victorian England and the anti-vivisectionist stance of leaders such as the suffragette Frances Power Cobbe, Ouida, and Lind af-Hageby. Ouida emphasized the thin line separating vivisection from conducting scientific procedures on women and working-class human subjects (POLLOCK, 2005: 153). Cobbe made laboratories the target of her stinging criticism, as they represented a space where men with sadistic inclinations were free to exercise torturous procedures in the name of science. In the midst of the vivisection debate was the controversy surrounding ovariectomy in the 1870s and 1880s, which linked the brutal surgery to physiological research on animals. Sympathy for nonhuman others developed as "women were explicitly invited to identify themselves with the animals, as potential victims of sexual assault by materialist medical men" (ELLSTON, 1987: 279). Isabella Ford, anti-vivisectionist, chair of the Leeds RSPCA branch and a socialist feminist evoked "the experience of non-human animals to illuminate the experience of women" (KEAN, 1995: 29) in her pamphlet "Women and Socialism" (1907): "In order to obtain a race of docile, brainless creatures, whose flesh and skins we can use with impunity, we have for ages past

exterminated all those who show signs of too much insubordination and independence of mind" (Qtd. KEAN, 1995: 29).

Contemporary female scientists have provided us with ground-breaking insight into animal minds by releasing their own bodies from cultural constraints and human language. Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey studied and imitated the body language and communicative codes of apes; Temple Grandin revolutionized the meat industry by crawling through the pens that livestock were harassed into and applying animal-adapted hug mechanisms to relieve stress, thus connecting autism to animal cognition. More recently, Alexandra Horowitz's 2009 New York Times bestseller, *Inside of a Dog*, invites readers to interiorize the capabilities inherent to canine senses. "Anyone who wants to understand the life of an animal must begin by considering what [Jakob von Uexküll] called their *umwelt* (OOM-velt): their subjective or 'self world.' Umwelt captures what life is like *as the animal*" (HORROWITZ, 2009: 20).

In connecting their bodies to that of animals, women have also challenged the traditional spatial distribution associated to the masculine/feminine dichotomy. Nineteenth-century activists recognized the commodification of animals' and women's bodies as one institutionalized through the confinement to specific spaces. In much the same way that animals, deemed as servants, were enslaved within certain spaces for the sake of civilization (prominent Victorian spaces of animal exploitation include vivisection theaters and laboratories, zoos and modern zoological parks, abattoirs, and even the streets, where passers-bys were witness to the abuse of horses, cart-dogs and to reminiscent practices of baiting), so were women relegated to the private sphere on the basis of their alleged emotional, wild and irrational nature. These private domains were customized for the performance of female labors. As S.J. Kleinberg summarizes, "in the nineteenth century, domestic space delineated social and economic hierarchies" and "separated the responsibilities of the sexes at the same time that it defined their geographical ranges" (1999: 142). Through campaigning for the humane treatment of animals, women were challenging the limitations and the surveillance they were subjected to by negotiating their niche within the public sphere.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the escalating participation of women in the movement gained much public attention, and it was not long before opponents back-lashed with accusations of sentimentalism. Richard Ryder has noted that "the scientist's oft-voiced castigations of anti-vivisectionists as 'emotional' and 'sentimental' . . . imply that overcoming a natural reluctance to inflict pain is a sign of rationality and manliness" (1989/2000: 153). Consequently, men who supported the cause were deemed as effeminate, whereas women were stereotyped into hysterical 'old maids' and spinsters (RYDER,

1989/2000: 142). The stigma of animal advocacy as emotional and irrational subsists today. Josephine Donovan has observed that the two leading philosophers in animal rights, Tom Regan and Peter Singer, are also biased by these assumptions, as they tend to dismiss emotion on behalf of a rationalist cause. Consequently, “they expose the inherent bias in contemporary animal rights theory towards rationalism, which, paradoxically, in the form of Cartesian objectivism, established a major theoretical justification for animal abuse” (DONOVAN, 1993: 168).

II. Womanhood and the Domestic Sphere in Current Animal Rights Campaigns

Philo and Wilbert note that “the conceptual placing of animals is first about what is or is not an animal” (2000: 7), and that “related to the conceptual placing of animals is also a strong human sense of the proper places which animals should occupy physically” (2000: 10). The cause-effect principle governing between the ontology and the situating of non-human others, of course, has been directly and indirectly discussed by anti and pro-animal rightists alike. Animal ontology, I have suggested above, is for better or for worse generally discussed in terms of commonness. If animals are different and inferior to humans, the logical conjecture is that they are deserving of different moral and legal consideration, which results, often enough, in their *belonging* to a given set of spaces such as slaughterhouses, laboratories, or cages. If ontology legitimizes placing and vice versa, then the counterargument can also be easily justified by animal liberationists. Karen Warren, for instance, claims that one of the stipulations structuring ecofeminist philosophy is that “*what* a thing (person, community, population, species, animal, river) is partly is a function of *where* it is – a function of the relationships in which it stands to other things and to its own history, including the evolutionary history and geographic location” (2000: 153).

In the two campaigns which I will now consider, women’s bodies become spaces that incorporate animality within the domestic setting. These symbols raise compelling questions as to *what* a subject *is* and *where* that subject *belongs*. The processing and assimilation of animality within women’s bodies and the house, I argue throughout, provokes a disrupting vision as to the assumptions regarding animals, women, and spaces, and, although aiming for similar goals, the creative manners through which each campaign fathoms the woman/animal hybridization ultimately lead to different appreciations of womanhood.

II.1. The RSPCA’s Domestic Violence Campaign

In April 2008, the RSPCA launched its Domestic Violence Campaign with the airing of a video commercial that shocked audiences with its connections between women battering and pet abuse. The ad shows a man unmercifully beating a woman whose cries come out in the form of piercing dog yelps and whimpers. As the man punches and kicks her to the floor, she is further animalized through her attempt to get away on four legs. The triviality of domestic abuse is emphasized through the lack of communication; before taking his swing at her already-swollen face, the man and the woman/dog stand for a second opposite each other in silence, avoiding eye contact. The woman/dog makes no effort to subdue her attacker: her helplessness and innocence lock her within her victimhood. Captivity within a body unable to retaliate is concentrically symbolized by the setting itself: the beating takes place within the living room of what appears to be a middle-class residence, the private space in which the family comes together to constructively interact. Batterers can come in the form of the most unlikely guise, and they unleash their fury in the most secretive places. The rules of the domestic sphere become shattered: as a space denoting the systematic routine of everyday life, the un-exceptionality of the ordinary and the quotidian, the images suggest that the middle-class value of the home as the haven is instead substituted by an imprisoning entity whose indifference (emphasized by its stagnation in stark contrast to the violence and the camera movement) only invites its use as a space for fortuitous physical domination. The pattern followed by the visual perspective is significant: beginning with a close-up on the woman's face from behind the man's shoulder, the camera gradually increases its distance to include the whole setting. The upwards angle peeking from behind a wall suggests that perhaps it is the couple's child who is witnessing the atrocity; seeking refuge first within and then outside the house (from which, through the glass windows, we can still look on to the violence). Even the night, with its capacity to obscure and isolate, seems yet another protective agent to the covertness of what goes on within the home. The supposed child's final view coincides with what could be the scope of a passer-by strolling by the house. The imaginary passer-by has become a witness, and now *knows*, like the viewers of the ad themselves, what that space actually represents and whose actions it actually enables. The final shot seems to linger on a very precise ethical question: how should one react to this responsibility of knowing? The viewer has the obligation to make a choice: ignore or intervene; let the incident remain private or acknowledge its sociopolitical nature. In the final scene, a female narrator interferes to explain: "Thirty-seven percent of violent criminals admit to being cruel to animals in their childhood. To break the cycle, the RSPCA runs programs teaching kids

to respect animals.” As the screen turns to black and the yelping comes to a halt, the campaign’s slogan appears: “You need the RSPCA. The RSPCA needs you.”

The ad’s education-through-awareness *modus operandi* simultaneously uses metaphors and temporal overlapping as its tools: on the one hand, metaphorization sustains the ontological tautology that the woman is the dog and the dog is the woman. This metaphor also draws on a fairly common behavioral display of domestic abuse, the emotional injury of the woman through the assault on the beloved pet. As Zilney explains, “a batterer may turn to harming an animal in order to emotionally or psychologically harm his partner” (2007: 101). On the other hand, the narrator’s comments indicate that the semiotic layers that are intertwined are those of cause and effect, the past (animal cruelty) and the present (domestic violence against women). Moreover, the presence of the supposed child eye-witness suggests that it is not just the cycle between the abuse of animals and women that must be broken, but also the cycle that is perpetuated when the child becomes accustomed to such cruelty; it is precisely the restriction of physical violence to that secretive, private space of quotidian routine which causes children to imitate and incorporate such behaviors into their own adulthood.

A TV campaign ad represents a space that is able to penetrate within the walls of the domestic sphere, violating the emotional retreat by ‘inoculating’ that room with intruding images of the world outside. The RSPCA commercial lasting roughly thirty-three seconds, it complies with many of the exigencies of a successful political campaign ad while at the same time it strives to nourish its mirroring of animals and women as victims to criminal behavior. Sanders states that one of the strategies employed to captivate and persuade audiences is to use “common genres that allow viewers with limited knowledge of the details of politics (or products) to understand the message” (2004: 3). A favorite amongst these genres is horror, which shocks the spectator enough to create a lasting memory of the images witnessed. Horror has the power to fabricate “a mood and theme that viewers can easily absorb.” Thus, Sanders continues, “effective ads draw on common themes, phrases and storylines . . . coupled with dramatic images and sounds, to create a memorable and compelling message” (2004: 3). In the case of the RSPCA ad, the use of horror is evident: the viewer, probably sitting down on the couch, is subtly invited to identify that home as his/her own, and to feel uncomfortable at his/her own stagnation before such an atrocity. It is also the horror at the arbitrary, the fortuitous: there is no explanation to the beating because there is no justification for violence. The shrieking pitch of the yelps augments the dramatic effect as it vividly illustrates pain and fear; the identification with the woman completely breaks from the eighteenth and nineteenth-century vivisectionist view through which “the screams and howls of the tortured

animals were assimilated to the concept of mechanism: the howls were merely the grinding of machinery" (BIRKE, 1986: 120).

Another prime creative feature that campaigners often resort to is the portrayal of individual people: "Viewers find it easier to relate to characters than to more abstract principles. They can empathize with or despise the people they see" (SANDERS, 2004: 4). Sanders is referring throughout his piece to political campaigns, yet his observations also apply to the RSPCA ad. The characters in the commercial are representative of what goes on in many homes, but it is important for the campaign to stress at the same time the individuality of each of the victims, woman and dog. By placing part of the emphasis on the individual self (through the close-up on the woman's countenance or the yelping, for instance), the victim resists objectification in the eyes of the viewer, and is conceived instead as a subject. Indeed, the RSPCA has always attempted through its videos to picture the individuality of each animal (a common RSPCA commercial will feature a succession of images of abused or neglected individual animals, often named and having their situation explained by the narrator). In this case, the dog whose presence is marked by the yelping is further individualized through two main strategies enabled by the symbolic association with the woman: (1) the emphasis on sentience, and (2) the emphasis on the dog as 'charismatic megafauna.'

(1) Practically since the eighteenth century, animal rightists have made sentience their banner of the discourse. "Sentience is more than the capacity to respond to stimuli;" writes DeGrazia, "it is the capacity to have at least some *feelings*. Feelings include (conscious) sensations such as pain – where 'pain' refers to something *felt* and not merely the nervous system's detection of noxious stimuli – and emotional states such as fear" (2002: 18). The treatment of animals had occupied eighteenth-century philosophers who were skeptical of the Cartesian separation of man/animal on the basis of reason. Most notably, these philosophers asserted that exploitation of animals, as sentient beings, should involve as minimal an infliction of pain as possible. To do otherwise attested to the cruelty of the individual and the tyranny of humankind as a whole. Rousseau wrote in 1755 that "if I am obliged not to injure any being like myself, it is not so much because he is a reasonable being, as because he is a sensible being" (Qtd. Donovan 1993: 171). In a similar line, Bentham famously wrote what today headlines the main sub-fields of the animal rights movement: "The question is not, Can they *reason?* nor, Can they *talk?* but, *Can they suffer?*" (1789/2005: 311). Sentience offers an escape from the anthropocentric veneration of reason to focus on suffering. What the commercial provides through its metaphoric layout is a spatial meeting point between the visual suffering of the woman and the suffering of the dog by way of soundscape. As subjects

made vulnerable to the domination exercised by the male figure in the household, both beings fuse into one another through both animalization and personification on the grounds of sentience and in the hopes of effectively creating a new ontological identity for both canine and woman.

(2) The term 'charismatic megafauna,' often used in the fields of conservation and biodiversity, refers to those non-human others that hold a sympathetic appeal for people. Usually, this group includes "wildlife groups that have drawn the most attention from the animal protection movement," such as large mammals, exotic birds, or animals with "interesting personalities, lifestyles, and communications" (WALDAU, 2011: 49). Although not wild, domestic animals such as cats and dogs could also classify as such in that they are often perceived as distinct individuals whose capacity to communicate and understand their owners earns them a membership in the family. Pets' individuality is invariably dependent on their adherence to a home (in contrast, stray or feral cats and dogs are still systematically exterminated). According to Dorothee Brantz, "these cultural classifications [divide] the animal kingdom into the tame and the wild, the clean and the dirty, and the desired and the unwanted, with the result that some animals [are] cherished while others [are] forcefully eliminated" (2007: 80). I would argue that the RSPCA's choice of a dog to identify with the woman is not just due to its being a domestic animal and to its capacity to produce poignant sounds, but to the fact that dogs themselves hold a very privileged position in Anglo-Saxon culture for their alleged loyalty and capacity to empathize with humans. The loyalty associated to the dog extends on to the image of the woman; received by audiences as a faithful housewife, her victimhood is incremented.

The violent home is hence stripped from its privacy and exposed for its capacities to perpetuate, legitimize, and conceal abusive relationships implicating both gender and species divides. The commercial violates the automatic correspondence between ontology and location: the dog's individuality is humanized and the woman's individuality is animalized; as a simultaneously single and plural sentient being, they do not *belong* to a space in which the only purpose is to objectify them.

II.2. PETA's "Fur Belongs to Animals" Campaign

Founded by Ingrid Newkirk and Alex Pacheco in 1980 and based in Norfolk, Virginia, today PETA is the largest animal rights organization with over three million members and supporters worldwide. Its active campaigning and undercover research have led to unprecedented legal action against animal cruelty, and its aggressive reliance on shock-tactics

to boycott and sabotage industries, businesses, research facilities, franchises and even individual people have rendered it the most controversial (and despised) animal rights organization. One of the aspects most frequently subjected to public suspicion, even within the animal rights groups, is the organization's branded campaigns of nudity and its subsequent questionable representation of women's bodies. The sexualized and racialized posing of women in PETA's campaigns and protests has received ample attention by recent scholars, including Phelps (2007), Deckha (2008) and Gaarder (2011). In this last item, I examine three video campaigns to analyze how female bodies and domestic spaces operate and how they compare to the RSPCA ad. Before beginning, however, I would like to clarify that despite my own focus on these videos for this article, it is important to keep in mind that these represent just one of the factions of the organization, and that although they have captured and initiated fruitful public response, it would be reductive to overshadow PETA's many triumphs and long-standing humane war against animal exploitation solely by analyzing it through its campaigns.

The most frequent exposition directed against PETA's use of naked, provocative women for its campaigns is that the ads perpetuate the heterosexual norm of women as consumable objects. Phelps explains that "the argument is that PETA is exploiting women and contributing to gender stereotypes that have been used for centuries as instruments of female oppression" (2007: 242). Deckha very tellingly observes that connected to the danger of overlooking the connections between the domination of women and animals, is the fact that "any campaign that relies on standard representations of women that associate them with and even reduce them to their bodies continues the very same logic of commodification and objectification that is used against animals" (2008: 55). With celebrities such as Pamela Anderson headlining the ads, the usual image of PETA's anti-fur campaign is that of a scantily-clad white female seductively inviting beholders to rejoice at the gazing of her body, which, incidentally, answers to the heterosexual standards of the 'bombshell.' On the other end, obese and decrepit women are used to denounce inhumane choices and behaviors, as if external decadence were a mirror of the impurity of the soul. As Deckha points out, although there are male and black female ads (which, she argues, are controversial in themselves for their penchant towards a racialized animalization of sexuality), those of white women clearly outnumber the rest, which may suggest that the organization seeks attention not only by conforming to a type of nudity that is evocative of mild pornography, but also by complying with the mainstream beauty canon of the white woman. In these white women campaigns, Deckha also notes, the slogans themselves provide different exegesis of the types of ads that, if closely examined, resist monolithic appreciations of the entirety of the campaigns as anti-

feminist. This is a central concern to keep in mind, as the three video ads that I will now be considering do not necessarily intend to be representative of PETA's use of women's bodies as a whole.

The three videos (available at the PSA section of peta.org) belong to the "Fur is for Animals" campaign. Each feature a model, dressed in a fur coat, in a specific space within a sparkling clean middle-class home. Like in the RSPCA commercial, the subjects appear as hybridized beings because of their performance of common animal conducts; however, identification on the grounds of sentience and suffering is completely absent. Rather, the object is to elicit disgust at the model's awkward and explicit behavior. In the "toilet" video, the camera travels into a bathroom following an unidentified sound until it reaches a woman covered in a fur coat with her head in the toilet, engaged in the act of licking and slurping from the can. As if realizing she is being interrupted, she momentarily glances back, and then unassumingly returns to drinking. The webpage features an explanatory note: "dressing in animal skins in no different from acting like animals in other ways." In the "hairball" video, viewers encounter a woman indulging in licking the sleeve of her fur coat on the living-room couch. Yet what sensual allusions could be gathered from her lapping are immediately lost as she begins to choke. Slightly erecting herself as she leans on her front 'paws,' she coughs out a giant black hairball, after which she resumes her hygienic occupation. The explanatory note points out that "the revolting nature of human fur-wearers becomes clear." Finally, in the "litterbox" clip, the camera briefly moves along a kitchen counter following the sound of some kind of leak. Squatting on the floor, a model in a fur coat looks on nonchalantly. She peeks between her legs as the dripping is momentarily interrupted. When the leaking finally stops, she gets up and glances down to the floor, revealing the litterbox where she has been urinating. According to the note, the video is "reminding us that wearing animals' fur is on a par with mimicking their toilet habits."

Through these shock tactics, PETA implicitly and explicitly aims to incite abhorrence at the symbolic overlapping of women's and animals' identities, as opposed to inspire sympathy, as in the RSPCA advertisement. The resulting trans-species perverts even the perfection of the setting: the bathroom, the living room and the kitchen, all characterized by their immaculateness and the excellent taste of their inhabitants, betray the type of domestic behavior that one would like to associate to only one type of creature. At this concession of privacy, spaces themselves become contaminated, tainted by the impurity of the repugnant miscegenation of species. Whereas in the RSPCA's clip the home represented the unpenetrable fort that protected and enabled domination, in this case the home emerges as the

space that shelters a different kind of monstrousness, the mongrel and vicious nature of fur-wearers. The horror genre and the leitmotif of victimhood are no longer operative: what revulsion is provoked stems from the conception of the body itself as a single space to be occupied by two different species, a body whose presence pollutes the entirety of the setting. Paradoxically, the cat's much appreciated natural sense of hygiene (cleaning its fur and using the litterbox) within the home becomes disgusting when enacted by a woman – and an attractive one at that. Domestic sounds and soundscapes themselves are used to intrigue and to take the incongruent 'storyline' to its climactic shock of shame and loathing, not to stir pity and catharsis.

PETA's trans-species miscegenation in these videos raises a series of interpretative matters that challenge the basic ontological principle that PETA nonetheless assumes in other campaigns: that humans and animals are equal as sentient beings and as bearers of a body susceptible to pain and pleasure. It is not so much the overlooking of a more dramatic story that perverts the woman/animal hybridization as it is the loss of sentience as the argumentative axiom. The RSPCA ad pictures a metaphor and/or an overlapping of time to state the indignities suffered by women and animals, who, it is implied, are akin to one another. The RSPCA makes use of the high statistic of domestic violence against women to build a case for animals because empathy is deemed as the most vital tool from which to raise awareness, for "when humans who have themselves experienced suffering as both a material and emotional condition recognize parallels between their experience and those of . . . animals, they are more likely to be empathetic" (MALESH, 2010: 65). PETA, on the other hand, twists the rhetoric of empathy by omitting suffering from the scene; its metaphor advocates the separation of beings, suggesting that *where* one is (inside the fur) is indeed *what* one is (an animal). Sentience provides a meeting ground in which animals are humanized and humans are animalized: both processes are regarded as elevating the subject, for, in accordance with ecofeminist and animal liberation philosophy, full entelechy of the self must be reached through interconnectedness. In the PETA videos, not only is the animalization of women's bodies deemed as degrading, but the cycle is furthermore imploded because the animal referent (the fur) is itself dead, so completely objectified and commodified that it impedes the exegesis of a humanized animal.

Nonetheless, it is precisely the notable absence of the animal through the 'dead' fur which allows PETA to denounce another aspect: the invisibility of animals through institutionalized exploitation (ADAMS, 1998: 327). In these commercials, the acceptance of institutionalized exploitation is exalted because of the stark contrast of private and public

domains provided by the household setting. Whereas standard anti-fur campaigns feature footage of fur-bearing animals being anally electrocuted or skinned while still alive (to name just some of the many cruel practices sustaining the industry), these ads create a playful interplay between fur and spaces to illuminate the invisible. We assume the social norm to be that women only wear fur coats in public and thus, the placing of a fur coat on a female body within the domestic sphere becomes disquieting in itself. The fur is doubly de-centered through its placing on the women's bodies and through its use within the private realm, creating an incongruence that incites the viewer to question one's own responsibility in the choice to wear fur. Undercover recordings of animal cruelty can potentially either alienate viewers because of the stark realism of violence (and hence invite spectators to look away or change channels), or redeem them as consumers, for the images focus on the *producers*, located in an unknown and unidentified place to which the viewer can hardly relate. Such footage deepens the divide between spaces and the actions performed within them, whereas PETA's campaign turns the spotlight on the female consumer in her private habitat and, through its dislocation of accepted norms of when and where to wear a fur coat, establishes the connections between industry and buyer, rendering the process of exploitation as a single continuum in which all individuals play a decisive role.

III. Conclusion

Women's bodies provide multiple rhetorical possibilities for the animal rights cause. As a cryptogram engraved with contesting valuations of the masculine/feminine and human/animal antinomies, they emerge as powerful instruments through which to explore animal sentience, ontology, and placing. What identities result from the homogenization of animal and woman within the female body-as-space and within the domestic sphere, however, may vary. Current representations such as the ones included in the campaigns described are heir to traditional epistemic processes of identification in accordance to sameness and difference, yet they lead to different implications regarding womanhood. While likeness through suffering invokes the image of woman-as-victim, the metaphor of likeness through fur ultimately endorses the conceptual separation of species to protect animals. As we venture into new terrains in the discussion of animal and human ontology on the basis of commonness, women's bodies, ever the palimpsest, strengthen their agency through the reinvention and reinterpretation of previous discursive layers, asserting themselves as powerful cosmoses through which to combat the chaos of cruelty.

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7. Respecto al corpus de literatura afroamericana y latino americana estudiada a la luz de la crítica teórica, podemos concluir que los personajes femeninos víctimas de abusos psíquicos y físicos dentro de los trabajos de Toni Morrison siempre demuestran que es necesaria la ayuda de la comunidad y la inclusión de sus miembros en ella para poder así romper las barreras del espacio doméstico traumático, mientras que en *La casa de los espíritus* de Isabel Allende se nos muestra un paradigma radicalmente diferente. Por una parte, en *The Bluest Eye* y *A Mercy* de Morrison, la comunidad no hace nada para salvar a las víctimas de estos traumas, por lo que se ven encerradas en el espacio doméstico, narrando desde allí su historia. En el caso de *The Bluest Eye* esta reclusión forzosa se sitúa no solo dentro del espacio doméstico, sino también dentro de la psique de la pequeña víctima, creando así una doble personalidad de la que no puede salir al ser dada de lado por la comunidad. Por otra parte, las protagonistas de *A Mercy* se ven abandonadas a su suerte y desligadas de la comunidad, aunque protegidas por el espacio donde habitan. De esta manera, el trauma se ve repetido en futuras generaciones, siendo de esta manera muy difícil escapar del mismo por hijos, nietos, etc. al faltarles la información del hecho primigenio, condenados a repetir una y otra vez comportamientos de sus antenatos y sintiendo dolor por situaciones que ellos no han sufrido ni han podido controlar. Por otra parte, en *Beloved* se nos demuestra cómo el salir del espacio doméstico traumático y unirse a la comunidad tiene una labor terapéutica para las mujeres de la obra. Es el momento en el que Sethe, la protagonista, abandona la casa y al fantasma de su bebé y es aceptada por la comunidad que finalmente puede dejar atrás el plano doméstico traumático e

incluirse dentro del plano público liberador. En el caso de Isabel Allende, la solución que da en muchos aspectos es contrapuesta a la de Morrison. Para las protagonistas de *La casa de los espíritus*, el espacio doméstico es un espacio mágico que les sirve de refugio ante la situación política desastrosa que se desarrolla en el exterior. De esta manera pueden sentirse a salvo y no tienen por qué lidiar con los problemas sociales. El trauma en esta novela no se sitúa dentro del espacio claustrofóbico de la casa de los Trueba sino fuera, siendo el espacio traumático el espacio público y la comunidad. Los fantasmas en este caso sólo sirven a los personajes femeninos como compañía dentro de la casa, no como amenaza y recuerdo de un pasado trauma. Sólo al final, cuando Blanca se ve forzada a salir de la casa, es cuando la realidad les invade y la situación política y el trauma conquistan el espacio doméstico. El ensayo de David Yagüe que apareció en el número 3 (dossier "Espacios generizados") de la revista *Investigaciones Feministas* (ISSN 2171-6080, páginas 117-127), [<http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/index>] se enfoca en el papel de la comunidad y el espacio doméstico en las novelas de Toni Morrison.

El ensayo, también disponible en la dirección web <http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/article/view/41141>, se copia a continuación en inglés, por ser la lengua en que fue publicado.

HOUSE OF FEAR. DOMESTICITY AND COMMUNITY IN TONI MORRISON

(David Yagüe)

ABSTRACT. The questioning of the domestic sphere is one of the tropes of Toni Morrison's works. From her first work *The Bluest Eye* to her latest novel *Home*, Morrison has doubted the domestic space, setting in it the dramas that the African American community had to suffer due to the crisis unwrapping outside the domestic sphere, particularly focusing on how the women endured these traumas and how they managed to survive – or perish - through the contact with the community.

KEY WORDS: African American Narrative, Toni Morrison, Domesticity, Community

ABSTRACT. El cuestionamiento de la esfera doméstica es uno de los tropos más comunes dentro de los trabajos de Toni Morrison. Desde su primera novela *The Bluest Eye* hasta su último trabajo *Home* Morrison ha puesto en duda el espacio doméstico, situando en él los dramas que la comunidad Afroamericana ha tenido que sufrir debido a los problemas que se desarrollan fuera de este espacio, centrándose particularmente en cómo las mujeres han sido capaces de soportar dichos traumas y cómo han conseguido sobrevivir – o morir – a través del contacto con la comunidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Narrativa Afroamericana, Toni Morrison, Domesticidad, Comunidad

HOUSE OF FEAR. DOMESTICITY AND COMMUNITY IN TONI MORRISON.

When Sigmund Freud, father of the psychoanalysis, conveyed his theories onto literature, he focused on what he thought was “the realm of the frightening, of what evokes fear and dread” (FREUD, 1919: 123). To name this particular motif of literature, he decided to use the term *unheimlich* in the original German. This term has been translated usually – and correctly – as ‘uncanny’ or ‘ghastly.’ But if we analyze the etymological sense of the word, as Freud himself suggests in his essay “The Uncanny” (1919), we find that it comes from *heimlich*, which stands for “belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, [...] *homely*” (FREUD, 1919: 126, italics mine). Hence *unheimlich* would stand for all that contrary to the familiar or that does not belong to the realm of the house. But the frightening sights, the gloomy and ghastly presences are sometimes less frightening than reality within a household. As Toni Morrison has shown us in every one of her novels, sometimes the things we should be more frightened of are the persons that are part of our household, especially for women as she explains in her interview with Salman Rushdie in 1992.

Black women always felt themselves to be the most vulnerable in [...] society, and some of them prepared themselves and refused to be lightly attacked, refused to be [...] “easy prey.” It may happen because rape, abuse, sexual assault was understood to be the *menu* of Black women [...] There was no protection. (RUSHDIE, 1992: 57)

So where can one hide when the uncanny is very much earthly and common? When the *unheimlich* becomes *heimlich*? And more so, what happens when the terrors are not hidden but are visible and within the home? What if the outside elements are actually, no matter how unfamiliar, the ones that can help the individual overcome what is inside their homes? These are the main objectives of this article; to explain the different ways the victim of a trauma overcomes the aforesaid crisis within the Nobel prize winner’s novels.

Trauma, psychological and physical, has been one of the *leitmotifs* of literature, more so during the 20th century. From autobiographical works to fiction, different authors have portrayed the different experiences victims have had to endure in their lives. The authors feel the need to transmit the pain that either their communities or themselves have suffered through their art. As Cathy Caruth points out

Trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. (CARUTH: 4)

This way, literature is a milieu through which authors can exorcise their own personal demons and make a personal or communal struggle known, something that otherwise might have remained unknown to the reader. It is a way to “preserve personal and collective memories from assimilation, repression, or misrepresentation” (1) as Laurie Vickroy pointed out in *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (2002). We can find instances of such memories in autobiographies such as *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom* (1860) by William and Ellen Craft as slaves writing from freedom, *If This Is a Man* (1947) by Primo Levi as a Holocaust survivor or narratives such as *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007) by Junot Diaz within the Caribbean American narrative. And one of the authors that has better portrayed the memory of her community within her work is Toni Morrison. As she says in her essay “Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation”

If anything I do, in the way of writing novels (or whatever I write) isn't about the village or the community or about you, then it is not about anything. I am not interested in indulging myself in some private, closed exercise of my imagination that fulfills only the obligation of my personal dreams. (64)

Hence, Morrison narrates in her works stories that were “not a story to pass on” as she affirms in her novel *Beloved* (1987). She testifies with them that without the proper testament and without the sustain of a community, some trauma victims pass their personal demons on to future generations. The sons and daughters of survivors are usually the first ones to suffer the effects of an unhealed psychological troubles. As they are brought up, children look up to their parents for models from whom to form their own identities. When they search for a model to imitate in their traumatized parents, the outcome are transgenerational trauma victims or “second generation trauma victims” – although the effects of an unhealed psychological trauma can go on for several generations. Among these persons, it is common to identify their parents' trauma with their own, suffering all the symptoms of a post-traumatic stress disorder victim but without being able to determine the specific event that has caused their illness.

The illness of these second generation victims can develop in two different ways according to Dominick LaCapra. On the one hand, they can revive the past as if this time was present, blurring the difference between their parents past and their own present, reviving the experience over and over without being able to escape a situation they cannot control,

perpetuating the behavior they have learnt from their parents and being paralyzed within this parental traumatic loop that LaCapra identifies with melancholia.

The very conflation attests to the way one remains possessed or haunted by the past, whose ghosts and shrouds resist distinctions (such as that between absence and loss). Indeed, in post-traumatic situations in which one relives (or acts out) the past, distinctions tend to collapse, including the crucial distinction between then and now wherein one is able to remember what happened to one in the past but realizes one is living in the here and now with future possibilities. (46- 47)

On the other hand, the victim might be able to work through this traumatic past through a process of mourning. Through this process, according to Lacapra, the subject will be able to differentiate the present from the past, being capable of analyzing the past critically and incorporating it to their daily lives – the paradigm of this type of work-through would be Denver, one of the main characters from *Beloved*. But in order to do this, the victims must identify their parents' trauma and for this, sometimes, they need the aid of the community and the re-creation of a safe home outside.

As our initial thesis has stated, *home* and the *domestic sphere* can be places in which much of the suffering one person endures is perpetuated. Notwithstanding, according to the western patriarchal tradition, as Valerie Sweeney Prince explains, “ ‘The woman’s place is in the home’ – even if that home abuses, confines, perverts. The home as shelter is an enduring myth that both men and women found reason to support.” (Prince, 66.) Many of the inherited traumas the African American community – and specially women within this community – has had to endure have taken place within the four walls of their houses. As slaves, they had to endure the continual beatings of their masters and, in some cases, rape perpetrated by these same masters. Women had also to endure the selling of their children, being unable to protect their little ones from this system. They constituted the “easy prey,”

[S]elected women were brought to the “big house” and set up as cook, maid, or nursemaid in a room or cabin within easy reach of the exploiter. [...] About 5 percent of the Appalachian slave narratives describe Appalachian slaveholders who structured more long-term “concubinage” arrangements with enslaved women. [...] Some white parents tolerated their sons’ exploitation of house slaves, “if they wanted them”; and, subsequently, they “would heartlessly sell [their] own offspring to some other master.” [...] One ex-slave concubinage explained that

enslaved women endured such concubinage because “they had a horror of going to Mississippi and they would do anything to keep from it.” (Dunaway, 121)

This way, together with the recurring estrangement of husbands, female slaves were unable to protect their children – offspring of such abuses - from being sold. This was a common practice as Dunaway exposes in her book, in order to protect the slaveholder from the “ ‘social risk’ to the community” (42) the offspring of such rape would mean.

After slavery, they had to suffer the relentless pursuit of racism within the United States, being unable to heal the wounds that the previous situation of slavery had inflicted upon their bodies and their souls, being unable to procure a stable and safe environment to their young, perpetuating their own trauma into future generations. The brutality of some racist acts was so deep that there was no chance of recovering from the past.

Analyses of rape play little or no role in most histories of the civil rights movement, even as stories of violence against black and white men – from Emmett Till to Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney – provide gripping examples of racist brutality. Despite a growing body of literature that focuses on the roles of black and white women and the operation of gender in the movement, sexualized violence – both as a tool of oppression and as a political spur for the movement – has yet to find its place in the story of the African American freedom struggle. Rape, like lynching and murder, served as a tool of psychological and physical intimidation that expressed white male domination and buttressed white supremacy. (McGuire, 907)

Therefore, as Evelyn Jaffe Schreiber affirms, “the trauma results from a lacking protective function, and treatment for trauma involves helping the ego to feel safe and secure” (8). They must, consequently, create a safe environment outside of the house in which they can retell and remember the trauma with the help of a supportive community in order to move forward, as she explains later on.

It is at this point that we must take into consideration the role that the community plays within the healing process of the trauma victim. If the victim of a traumatic experience does not have the appropriate tools and he or she is not surrounded by a community to protect him or her. If this is not so, as Kalí Tal affirms

If a trauma victim perceives herself as suffering alone, and has no sense of belonging to a community of victims, she will remain silent, imagining that her pain has no relevance to the larger society. She will likely come to believe that she has, in some way, brought her suffering upon herself. The internalization of blame for the evils that befall one is difficult to escape even when the notion of community exists. (124)

It is fundamental that a group of peers – that is, a group of persons that either identify with his/her suffering or that have gone through a similar experience – acknowledge the pain the victim is going through. We need the gaze of the Lacanian “Other” in order to create our own self image, in order to re-member an otherwise dismembered memory to accept the traumatic experience, work through it and break the cycle of traumatic experiences.

In case of Morrison’s black communities, this traumatic experience appertains to the field of their common story. Although some of the victims of such traumatic experience are individuals in particular – Pecola Breedlove in *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Sethe and Denver in *Beloved* or Joe and Violet in *Jazz* (1992), among others, – the experiences they need to share are communal. As Schreiber points out “race relations produce and perpetuate inherited parental trauma stemming from a history of slavery and discrimination” (16-17). The individual must then “recapture a sense of wholeness” (17) through the re-creation of a home, a community that understands the pain they are going through.

Within the works of Toni Morrison we can distinguish four different types of community responses towards trauma: the creation of a trauma as a result from the rejection of a community, the failure of the community to approach the victim, the acceptance of the victim within the community, and finally, the creation of a community of victims.

In order to distinguish among these four kinds of responses, we must consider a genealogy of trauma.¹⁴ We have to look for the primordial trauma that originated the suffering within the community in order to understand the different outcomes that the author offers us in her different works. That is why we are going to center our attention first on the creation of a trauma as a rejection from the community within the author’s work *A Mercy* (2008). The novel is situated in Maryland in the late 17th century, right at the origins of slave trade within the United States. In it, Morrison tells us the story of the Vaark household and their three slaves, Lina, Sorrow and Florence. For the intents of our study, we will focus our attention on

¹⁴ Term taken from Ruth Leys’ *Trauma: A Genealogy* (2000) where she explores the different implications and history of the term “trauma”

Florence, a slave taken from her mother at an early age, something not that uncommon as we have seen earlier.

Florence, the youngest and the most insecure of the slaves, is the clearest example of this primordial trauma. At a very young age, she was given away by her mother to Vaark as payment for her master's debts.

Her voice was barely above a whisper but there was no mistaking its urgency.

"Please, Senhor. Not me. Take her. Take my daughter"

Jacob looked up at her, away from the child's feet, his mouth still open with laughter, and was struck by the terror in her eyes. His laugh creaking to a close, he shook his head, thinking, God help me if this is not the most wretched business. (24)

The rejection she feels from her mother will haunt Florence during the entire novel – and her entire life – as she will appear to Florence in her dreams. Therefore, Florence will try to find a community in which she feels accepted and she can finally express herself, exorcising the apparition of her mother away. At first, she finds this validation in Lina, who treats her as her own daughter, teaching her how to do chores around the house. But then Vaark hires a free black blacksmith to forge the gates of his new state and Florence finds in him what she was looking for, his gaze to feel complete: "I run away not knowing then you are seeing me seeing you. And when at last our eyes hit I am not dead. For the first time I am live." (36)

This state of completion – that fits perfectly the paradigm of Lacanian "Other" that we explained before - does not last long, as once the blacksmith is done with his work, he moves on to the next, leaving Florence, once again, alone. She must look for him afterwards, looking for a cure to her mistress' condition, but when she finds him, he rejects her. This final rejection will doom her to the darkness and the solitude of the empty household where she will write her story in the walls: "My telling can't hurt you in spite of what I have done and I promise to lie quietly in the dark – weeping perhaps or occasionally seeing the blood once more – but I will never again unfold my limbs to rise up and bare teeth" (1). This way, the house acts out as a jail and a protection from the outside world, locking herself within the four walls of it.

What the reader finds out at the end is that Florence's mother gives her up to protect her from the terrible situation she was living in, from the constant rape and violence she had to endure. Henceforth, the act of kindness that her mother performed is misinterpreted by

Florence, though the roots of the trauma lay within the tragic acts that occurred at the plantation. Hence, Morrison changes the Christian notion of kindness that many slaveholders held as one of their reasons to have these slaves and corrupts it to show the agony they were putting the African American through.

The same kind of desperate kindness can be found in *Beloved* (1987), based on the real life story of Margaret Garner. Margaret Garner was a former slave that escaped from the her plantation with her four children. When she is found by her former master, she decides it is better to murder her own children than of having them live as slaves, although she is only able to kill one of them before she is found. After this, her captor decides it is better to leave her, as she is not stable.

In Morrison's story, Garner is transformed into Sethe who, after having successfully killed her daughter years ago and her two sons leave the house, is currently living with her daughter, Denver, in the house that the dead baby haunts. All this situation changes when Paul D, a former slave from the same plantation as Sethe, arrives to the house and the baby makes herself visible in the form of a teenage girl.

Because of the terrible act that Sethe had committed, she – and by extension, Denver – is a pariah. The rest of the community does not interact either with her or with her daughter. This way, the home becomes once again a barrier to protect themselves against the judgment of the community, making them leave in a permanent state of stasis from which they cannot escape by themselves. Furthermore, when her daughter tries to reach out and become a part of the community by going to school when she is a little girl, she learns what her mother did. Attaining such information causes her to become deaf-mute for years – what according to Freud would be one of the symptoms of hysteria, as Jean Wyatt points out

As in Freud's classic cases of hysteria, Denver's deaf-mutism is a symptom of past trauma: the body expresses what the voice cannot say. It is, however, not Denver's own traumatic experience that her deaf-muteness expresses, but the experience of her mother. (66)

When her sister Beloved comes back from the dead and starts feeding on their mother's stories and becoming more and more dependant on her, Denver must overcome her fears and go outside the household. She accepts her mother's past, works-through it in order to leave it behind – figuratively and literally, as she leaves the house behind – and claim her space within

the community. Once she masters this, she must then come back with the community in order to make her mother work-through her trauma and finally defeat her own fears. Consequently, we find in this case how the acceptance within the community can help the individual defeat her demons. This same kind of acceptance from the community can be seen in *Home* (2012),¹⁵ Morrison's latest work.

The same cannot be said for Pecola, the main character in Morrison's first novel *The Bluest Eye*, which takes place in Lorrain, Ohio, in the years after the Great Depression. In it, Pecola is the youngest daughter of Pauline and Cholly Breedlove, a couple which has been marginalized by their own community because of their destructive conduct – him being an alcoholic and her rejecting her heritage as African American. After her brother escapes, Pecola cannot find solace within the walls of her house, so she tries to find it outside. Her only friend is Claudia McTeer, the narrator, and even she is unable to protect her and finally rejects her. In consequence, Pecola hates herself and only desires to possess what might bring her mother's love, a pair of blue eyes like Shirley Temple's, the paradigm of children's beauty within Pecola's mother's mind.

The community sees in Pecola all the characteristics that white society affirms are wrong with them. Therefore, instead of fighting all the negative stigmas and stereotypes the community has, they put them all into Pecola, a helpless child that can be the vessel of all their problems. After that, they reject her and make her invisible to everyone, much alike the example that Ralph Ellison offered with his book *The Invisible Man* (1947) in which he commented with the duality of invisibility and hypervisibility of the African American individual. Ellison said in the introduction to his book that "despite the bland assertions of sociologists, 'high visibility' actually rendered one [the African American citizen] *un-visible*" (482).

The victimization of Pecola by the community and her father – Cholly rapes her in one of the most disturbing passages of the novel – produces her final state of madness. She believes at the end that she finally has blue eyes – a wish that a child molester grants – and the only company she has is the one of an imaginary friend

"If there is somebody with bluer eyes than mine, then maybe there is somebody with the bluest eyes. The bluest eyes in the whole world.

¹⁵ *Home* was published at the time of composition of this essay, thus the exclusion of this book for this particular analysis.

That's just too bad, isn't it?

Please help me look.

No.

But suppose my eyes aren't blue enough?

Blue enough for what?

Blue enough for... I don't know. Blue enough for something. Blue enough... for you!"

(161)

But even though the community can victimize an individual or a group of individuals, they can also find comfort with each other, creating a community of outcasts, which is the case of the main characters in *Love* (2003). In this narration, we find the story of Heed and Christine, two childhood best friends separated by the decision of Bill Cosey, Christine's grandfather, to marry Heed when she is only eleven. Heed's change of status added to the hatred Christine's mother, May, feels towards the young child separate the friends and creates a lifetime hatred between them. This added to the fact of both being unable to leave the house in which they lived. They stay in the house, in a sort of stasis, haunted only by the memory of Bill Cosey and their hatred.

Heed and Christine were the kind of children who can't take back love, or park it. When that's the case, separation cuts to the bone. And if the breakup is plundered, too, squeezed for a glimpse of blood, shed for the child's own good, then it can ruin a mind. And if, on top of that, they are made to hate each other, it can kill a life way before it tries to live. I blame May for the hate she put in them, but I have to fault Mr. Cosey for the theft. (199-200, italics in the original)

In this case, the need for a community is overpowered by the need to create their own community, their own family. They can only do so when they escape from the claustrophobic environment of the house and the permanent haunting of Bill Cosey and May in order to get to the Cosey's hotel to find the truth about Bill Cosey's will. They cannot find the testament but they find each other finally, being able to be honest with each other and revive their old friendship, even if for a brief time as Heed is dying. It is through the creation of this community-of-two that they can finally heal the wounds of their traumatic past and move on.

In conclusion, we can affirm that the different attitudes towards trauma victims in Toni Morrison's novels show us the various outcomes that the healing process in these victims may be. The acceptance within a community can save these persons from feeling invisible and alone – although the rest of the community may feel the same way – or they can condemn them to the *unheimlich* within their own homes, proscribing them to the madness that haunts them within their domestic spheres. This way they would be unable to interact with the rest of society, or they can help them heal their wounds, being therefore able to claim their own space within the community and move on. In Morrison's own words

The point of the book is that it is *our* job. [...] I want to point out the dangers, to show that nice things don't always happen to the totally self-reliant if there is no conscious historical connection. To say, see – this is what will happen (64)

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8. Partiendo de una base sociológica fuerte, en cuanto a estudios de mujer y del papel de la misma **dentro de la religión islámica** se refiere, se presentan espacios altamente subversivos y claramente contrapuestos en los estudios del feminismo islámico (*Islamic Feminism*). Este término, acuñado por Miriam Cooke en su libro *Women Claim Islam* (2001), aunque puede parecer a simple vista contradictorio, forma una nueva identidad que surge de ambas palabras para contradecirlas y darles un nuevo significado. La mujer musulmana se debe a su fe y a su comunidad (*umma*), pero también lucha dentro de ella por mejorar su situación y conseguir unos derechos que

le han sido negados por mucho tiempo por parte de los mismos que sostienen esa fe. Sin embargo, esto no tiene por qué posicionarlas dentro del feminismo occidental. Es un nuevo movimiento que parte, en gran medida, del poder de la mujer como persona creativa y que se plasma en literaturas de cualquier género, ya sea autobiografía como es el caso de *Leer Lolita en Teherán* (2003) de la iraní Azar Nafisi, ya sea un cómic autobiográfico como *Persépolis* (2004) de Marjane Satrapi, o unas memorias, como las *Memorias de la cárcel de mujeres* (1993) de Nawal al-Sa'dawi. Estas autoras entre muchas otras (Ahmed, Djebbar, Mernissi), no se definen a sí mismas como feministas islámicas, pero tienen en común el dar a conocer una nueva cara de la religión islámica que nada tiene que ver con lo que los fundamentalistas islámicos quieren patentar en el cuerpo de las mujeres. Estas autoras profesan un nuevo Islam con buenas nuevas para el género femenino, volviendo al estudio del origen del Corán y dándolo a conocer en una versión mucho más amable para ellas. Los espacios de opresión desde el harén hasta la universidad, pasando por la casa, la cárcel y el velo representan barreras que se sobrepasan con ayuda de elementos "prohibidos" como el arte y la solidaridad entre mujeres. Muchas de estas autoras miran a la más famosa contadora de historias árabe, Sherezade, la protagonista de *Las Mil y Una Noches*. Sherezade es un mito y un símbolo de cómo la palabra y la creatividad es el primer y último vehículo de expresión y de evasión. La palabra, el arte, la educación, la creatividad, son los elementos para retomar el poder más allá de la casa y de los sitios dispares de confinamiento. Lugares como cárceles que se convierten en "hogares" o casas que se convierten en cárceles; países que se convierten en cementerios o calles que se transforman en sitios continuos de opresión para la mujer, son algunos de los emplazamientos que utilizan las autoras donde las esferas públicas y privadas se entremezclan. La mujer, cuyo cuerpo es símbolo de la honra de una familia, que se ve recluida a un espacio privado y prohibitivo para salvaguardar la entereza moral de un nombre, de un hombre, retoma su papel en la sociedad más allá de la casa y de la familia. El apoyo de otras mujeres, como ocurre con la hermana de Sherezade en *Las Mil y Una Noches*, es fundamental para la creación de esos espacios de libertad, ya sea dentro o fuera del ámbito doméstico. Un buen ejemplo de la inspiración que provoca Sherezade se ve en la obra de la socióloga marroquí Fatima Mernissi, sobre quien Marina Roig centrará investigaciones futuras. Como conclusión al estudio realizado hasta ahora, se podría determinar que la mujer árabe se encuentra ciertamente limitada en muchos aspectos, sin embargo no es una mujer "domesticada", callada,

que no tenga nada que aportar. Desde el *Islamic Feminism*, las autoras citadas tienen mucho que decir, quizás desde un espacio que las enclaustra pero que, a su vez, deja espacios a la expresión disconforme.

A continuación se incluye el texto de la ponencia que **Marina Roig** presentó en las X Jornadas Internacionales de Estudios de la Mujer (UCM 2012). Marina Roig se centra en el análisis de los espacios en la obra de Fatima Mernissi *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* (1994).

***Cloistered, Yes. Domesticated, No: Notions of Domestication in Fatima Mernissi's
Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood.***

Fatima Mernissi's autobiography *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* (1994) has been much discussed under different shades of light. I would like to reread this autobiography in this article to present a spatial vision of the harem in which the author was born into and engage in a critical discussion about the conditions of women within it. More to the point, I will focus on how the act of “domesticating” and the power relations involved affect cultural and aesthetic constructions of domestic spaces.

Mernissi's domestic harem in Fez in the 1940s is a space relegated to women, as the roots of the word in Arabic defines, *haram* is what is sacred, a sanctuary, meaning the quarters reserved for women and children. Mernissi points to the fact that “[d]omestic harems [...] are more of an extended family, with hardly any erotic dimension to speak of. In these domestic harems, a man and his sons and their wives lived in the same house, pooled their resources, and requested that the women refrain from stepping outside” (35). The harem is a way to maintain order, based on gender and class-differentiated spaces, where women are the moral defenders of the community, with a strict commitment to family and domestic affairs.

The Mernissi household was constituted by Fatima's paternal grandmother and her two children with their families on their own, at least twenty people under the same roof counting slaves and occasional visits. Communal life works with strict timetables and keys that restrict access and freedom of movement. As Lynne Phillips states, “the concept of spatial domestication identifies a process that ranks, orders, tames, and monitors spatial domains [...] and the people who engage with them” (2000:206).

In the autobiography, the main characters are the nine years old Fatima Mernissi and her cousin Samir, who engage themselves in the arduous mission of defining the term harem and its implications. This search serves the adult Mernissi in her sociological debunking of Western stereotypes about Muslim women and their lives under the veil and segregation.

In order to visualize the spatial dimension of the Mernissi's harem, I will give a detailed description of the location. The domestic harem, as described in *Dreams of Trespass*, is full of frontiers and remarkably separated spaces. The house was divided in four main salons, where each family lived, and they all shared the courtyard, which Mernissi defines as "square and rigid [...], where symmetry ruled everything. Even the white marble fountain, forever bubbling in the courtyard center, seemed controlled and tamed" (4). The rigidity of the architectural space of her childhood situates the reader in a constricted place where "women dreamed of trespassing all the time" (2). Furthermore, Mernissi states that "since then, looking for the frontier has become my life's occupation. Anxiety eats at me whenever I cannot situate the geometric line organizing my powerlessness" (3).

Paraphrasing Aihwa Ong, Phillips asserts that "men derived their honour and their masculine identity through their control of women. When women were "at home" their virtue was protected" (2000: 212). Mernissi continues as far as to describe also the sky as "squared", "[i]t looked tame because of the man-made square frame" (5). Thus, the accurate description of the living place with the cold materials, the squared and geometric designs gives the impression of a fixed, organized and suffocating space for a living. The perception the reader has is of a prison where women are under constant surveillance. There were no windows facing the street, which was absolutely forbidden for women to step into without a male chaperone. Even the architecture of the physical space implies this gender-based segregation. Mernissi uses the harem and the courtyard enclosed by it as a powerful metaphor for women's imprisonment, a place of intellectually stifling and unpaid work (McCulloch, 126). Women become subjects in the Foucauldian sense, as materially constituted by power relations and always part of them (Phillips).

It should be noted though that however oppressing, harem life also permits women some kind of power. Fatima's mother, for example, exercises a subversive but effective influence. Mernissi states that "Mother would not allow any publicly visible distinctions to be made between our salon and Uncle's, although Uncle was the firstborn son, and therefore

traditionally entitled to larger and more elaborate living quarters" (5). So, in the constricted space of the harem, power relations imply a spatial dynamics.

The first anecdote that illustrates this is about the circulation of an unlawful key to listen to the radio, located in the men's salon and only for their access. Even though the house structure and functionality is gender and class-based, the first pages of this memoir let the reader acknowledge that a harem in the inside is not what it seems or what it seemed to be in the past. Hence, the masters of the house, namely Mernissi's Father and Uncle are not despotical characters in *Dreams of Trespass*. Fatima's Uncle respected Mernissi's mother's whims, "because in a well-managed harem, the more power you have, the more generous you ought to be" (6). Surprisingly, the most despotical character is Fatima's paternal grandmother, Lalla Mani and Lalla Tam, the teacher at the koranic school, who Mernissi describes as "wolves posing as sheep" (141).

Indeed, there were two opposing visions of the harem; on the one hand, the traditional "camp", formed by Lalla Mani and the second more powerful woman in the harem, Fatima's aunt Lalla Radia; and on the other hand, the modern "camp", composed by Mernissi's own Mother, her divorced Aunt and her cousin Chama. The modern camp enjoy their time in the harem among the other women telling stories, performing theatrical plays or even dancing, all of these activities sanctioned as *haram* or prohibited by the traditional camp. Most importantly, these "forbidden" activities took place in the lower terrace, which was the place where women dreamed of trespass and where women's solidarity existed in order to make life in the harem sufferable. But the traditional camp tried to adoctrinate children to their own vision of the harem. "If women were free to run about in the streets", Lalla Mani would say, "men would stop working because they would want to have fun. [...] So, if famine were to be avoided, women had to stay in their place at home" (40).

Nevertheless, the young nine-years old Fatima who recounts the memoir, softens the rigidity of the space with her naïvete. Mernissi describes in some occasions her house in the context of a game, namely "the seated promenade", which "consists in contemplating familiar grounds as if they were alien to you" (4). Seated on the threshold of her family's salon, she describes her perceptions. The stairs which communicate the first and second floor "were important because even grownups could play a sort of gigantic hide-and-go-seek on them" (5). Authority in the harem is altered by the confusion of roles. Where traditional male supremacy should be

exercited, women find a way to recount their dreams of freedom; furthermore, to recount their own version of life, higher than the walls of the harem.

To illustrate this point, Chama's story about the invention of harem takes place on the second floor, among many other stories, some of them extracted from *The Thousand and One Nights*, that clearly help to flee the constricted spaces and the rigidity of communal life. Scheherazade is presented as the mistress of anti-domestication. Among the favourite tales, birds and faraway islands are the most important characteristics. Most importantly, the tales are the expression of fleeing and escaping those domestic spaces. The sky is squared from the courtyard but from the terrace one could see it without walls, expanding endlessly.

In this careless setting, out from the men's gaze, Mernissi's cousin Chama enacts a theatrical performance to recount how the first harem started.

"Once upon a time, men fought each other constantly", Chama argued. So, in order to have peace, there would have to be someone "[w]ho would organize things, exercise *sulta*, or authority" (43). The *sultan* or master would have something the others do not have; thus, they organized "a race to catch women" and in order to have proof "houses with gates and locks were needed to contain women" (43) for women in the old days were strong and fearless warriors. First, the Byzantines won the race and both East and West obeyed them. Then the Arabs under Harun al-Rashid chased one thousand slave girls; "[h]e built a big palace in Baghdad and put them in it, so no one would doubt he was the Sultan" (44). However, while the Arabs were perfecting the art of chasing women, the Romans and the other Christians changed the rules and declared that from now on the authority would be for those able to build the most powerful weapons. They decided not to tell the Arabs, who still keep harems but are no longer powerful. In fact, in Morocco in the 1940s, the man exercising authority was a Christian, "[h]is title is *Président de la République Française* [...] he has, oh surprise, only one wife! No harem in sight. And that single wife spends her time running in the streets, with a short skirt, and a low neckline. Everybody can stare at her ass and bosom, but no one doubts for a moment that the president of the French Republic is the most powerful man in the country. Men's power is no longer measured by the number of women they can imprison" (45).

At this moment, Mernissi's paternal grandmother, Lalla Mani, and her aunt, Lalla Radia, would cry out desperately for the conversion of Chama, who was confusing young Mernissi and his

cousin. Furthermore, Chama's stories were again confusing the power dynamics inside the harem. Who is the active force, the domesticator, and who is the passive and domesticated?

A harem is *per se* the place of domination and seclusion, however, as I intend to describe in this article that does not imply an expected role-playing by the women living in the harem. In fact, I would argue, that this recount of a harem life (for westerners) implies a new vision, for the relation master/men-slave/women is softened. The *dominus* of the harem, is weakened in his roles as such.

This alternative education, coming back to the spatial construction of the harem, takes place in the second story of the house, as I have already stated. Upstairs was the place of storytelling, of women's solidarity and the constant violation of *hudud*.

In order to go a little deeper into this point, I will explain the term *hudud* that is crucial to understand segregation in *Dreams of Trespass*. The concept of *hudud* frames Mernissi's memoir as well as the power relations in the domestic household. *Hudud* is defined as "sacred frontier" (1) in the first pages of the memoir, and in order to avoid chaos frontiers must be respected. There is a *hudud* between Christians and Muslims and between men and women. Thus, "education is to know the *hudud*, the sacred frontiers", Mernissi states (3). In a domesticating fashion, the teacher at the koranic school, that Mernissi and her cousins attended, "had a long, menacing whip", and Mernissi "totally agreed with her about everything" (3). To respect the *hudud* for children but also for women was to obey. Mernissi's autobiographical persona is anxious about the physical and actual frontier, because of her incapacity to locate it in real space.

This concept of "sacred frontier" is explained to the girl by her beloved maternal grandmother Yasmina, that clarifies the way *hudud* works in her harem, located in the countryside and where freedom of movement exists. Yasmina states that every space has its own rules, and even though they are not tangible, when you disobeyed you get hurt (63).

I would argue that these concepts of frontiers, trespassing, freedom, obedience, rules and hurt share many commonalities with the domestication of animals. Even the physical punishment women suffer for their rebellion imply a disciplining of the subjects.

Nevertheless, Mernissi's harem as a "space in transition" (Phillips, 2000) for Mernissi is not taught how to be a good wife as should be expected in a patriarchal household. According to Marilyn Booth, "as autobiography, *Dreams of Trespass* could be subtitled "The Making of a

Feminist," for its prescient young narrator, growing up in an aristocratic urban traditional house- hold, is weaned on the desires of her female elders to overcome and subvert the barriers of their familiar, constrained world" (1995: 419). Mernissi is taught by her Mother and Grandmother Yasmina to rebel. The female "polyphonic voices" (Turhan-Swenson, 2007:114) in the harem, noticing without any whip to impose their teachings but with a lot of tenderness and sensuality, push Fatima to "find a way to change rules and turn the whole planet upside down" (63). Phillips points to the fact that "positive social change begins with women's own efforts to improve their lives" (2000:210). Although Mernissi's rebellious women are subjects of the domestication, they are also agents. As Alina Sajed asserts, these women are "painfully aware of their limitations and restrictions, but with a deep sense of their political role"(2006:6).

To conclude, in Mernissi's autobiography *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*, women are not subjugated under patriarchal rules in the way Westerners would expect. The women in the Mernissi household are confined in a constricted space, with reduced mobility; however, they manage to live on their own terms and "squeeze some happiness out of this damned life" (64). Cloistered, yes. Domesticated, no.

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LOS RESULTADOS se ajustan a los objetivos relacionados en la solicitud. Lo más destacable de la **prospectiva** ha sido la publicación del volumen *En torno a espacios y géneros / Negotiating Gendered Spaces*, publicado en 2013, ya citado anteriormente. En dicho libro constó el logo del Instituto de la Mujer como entidad financiadora del Proyecto.

Asimismo, en 2012 y también como fruto del presente Proyecto, la revista científica de la Universidad Complutense, *Investigaciones Feministas*, publicó el dossier titulado "Espacios generizados." Este volumen, editado por Isabel Durán Giménez-Rico y Joanne Neff, recogía los artículos de investigación de tres de los miembros del Proyecto (Carmen Méndez García, David Yagüe y Claudia Alonso). Los artículos, junto con el resto de ensayos especializados incluidos en el dossier, están disponibles en acceso abierto en el siguiente enlace: <http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/issue/view/2350/showToc>

Tanto el volumen *En torno a espacios y género / Negotiating Gendered Spaces* como el dossier de *Investigaciones Feministas* fueron en gran parte el resultado de unas Jornadas Internacionales celebradas en mayo de 2012 en la Facultad de Filología de la UCM, gracias al apoyo de este Proyecto. Las Jornadas, tituladas "**Topografías domésticas y género/ Negotiating Gendered Spaces**" reunieron en la Facultad de Filología de la Universidad Complutense a especialistas en el campo de los estudios de género dentro del panorama académico español e internacional. Además de servir a los miembros del equipo para exponer el resultado de su investigación, contamos con otras expertas invitadas, como Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, arquitecta que relacionó la arquitectura y el género, Isabel Carrera, reconocida académica que estudió los espacios de la identidad étnica, Santiago López Ríos, que estudió los espacios privados y públicos en la España de los años 30, Margarita Barañano, que estudió los espacios de inmigración y numerosos ponentes (más de 80) procedentes de 42 universidades de 22 países distintos (de todos los continentes). Este congreso, por tanto, sirvió como foro de discusión internacional respecto a los conceptos de género y espacio en los que se basaba nuestro Proyecto. Se adjunta como **ANEXO 1** el *Call for Papers*, y como **ANEXO 2** el Programa del Congreso.

Tres de los investigadores/as del presente grupo, Marina Roig, David Yagüe y Claudia Alonso, presentaron en estas Jornadas una mesa redonda titulada "Taming the 'Shrew': Feminist Explorations of the Notion of Domestication." Se expusieron las conclusiones de la investigación de cada uno de los miembros (desde las perspectivas de estudios islámicos, estudios afroamericanos y estudios ecocríticos, respectivamente), comparando la noción de

domesticación de la mujer según cada marco crítico e invitando al público y al alumnado a reflexionar y a debatir sobre ello.

Además de estos dos aspectos (publicación monográfica y celebración de congreso internacional) que son el resultado de nuestro trabajo en equipo, cada uno de los miembros del equipo investigador ha realizado estancias de investigación, asistencia a congresos, y ponencias relacionadas con el tema. Para evitar hacer una exposición exhaustiva de dicha actividad, nos limitaremos a enumerar las **PUBLICACIONES** que se derivan de este Proyecto, y que recogen varias de las conclusiones anteriormente expuestas:

- Antón Pacheco, A., **DURÁN, Isabel, MÉNDEZ, Carmen** et al. (eds.) *Diferencia, (Des)Igualdad Y Justicia Differences, (In)Equality And Justice*. Madrid: Fundamentos (Colección Ciencia), 2010. ISBN: 978-84-245-1235-4
- **DURÁN, Isabel**. "The Personal Essay as Autobiography: a Gender and Genre Approach". *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, 58: April, 2009: 41-65 (ISSN: 0211-5913).
- **DURÁN, Isabel**. "A Transatlantic Approach to Chicano Lifewriting". Joseph Raab (ed.), *Interculturalism in North America: Canada, United States Mexico*. Germany: 2012. (en prensa)
- **MÉNDEZ GARCÍA, Carmen M.** "The Ultimate Secrecy: Feminist Readings of Masculine Trauma in Vietnam War Literature", en José Liste Noya et al (eds.), *American Secrets: The Politics and Poetics of Secrecy in American Culture*, Lanham, Maryland, Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011, pp. 37-48. ISBN 978-1-61147-006-2.
- **MÉNDEZ GARCÍA, Carmen M.**, "The Complications of the Erotic: Eroticism in *Last Tango in Paris* and *Une liaison pornographique*". *Literatura y Erotismo* (ed. Eugenia Popeanga). Madrid: Cersa, 2012.
- **MÉNDEZ GARCÍA, Carmen M.** "'This is my place, Mama Nadi's': Feminine Spaces and Identity in Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*." *Investigaciones Feministas* 3 (2012): 129-139. ISSN: 2171-6080
- **ALONSO RECARTE, Claudia**. "Espacios y especies en intersección: Cuerpos femeninos y la esfera doméstica en el activismo por los derechos de los animales // Intersecting Spaces and Species: Women's Bodies and the Domestic Sphere in Animal Rights Activism." *Investigaciones Feministas* 3 (2012): 85-98. ISSN: 2171-6080

- **ALONSO RECARTE, Claudia.** "Organicism and the Politics in Anne LaBastille's *Woodswoman Saga*." *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 21 (2013): 1-17. Taylor & Francis. ISSN: 0966-369X. DOI:10.1080/0966369X.2013.810604
- **YAGÜE, David.** "I promise to lie quietly in the dark: Legacies of trauma in Toni Morrison's latest novels" Actas Del 4º Congreso de Estudiantes Internacionales Científico Prácticos *The Priorities of Contemporary Philology: Theory and Practice*. Universidad de Poltava (Ucrania).
- **YAGÜE, David.** "House of Fear. Domesticity and Community in Toni Morrison." *Investigaciones Feministas* 3 (2012): 117-127. ISSN: 2171-6080.

Finalmente, es la intención de este Grupo, tras estos dos primeros años de investigación en este Proyecto, continuará con esta línea de investigación, incorporando otros géneros literarios (la poesía, la dramaturgia y el cine) así como otros/as autores/as y textos a analizar desde el punto de vista de la domesticidad, para lo cual ampliaremos el grupo a la incorporación de otros miembros especialistas.

8. BIBLIOGRAFÍA GENERAL COMENTADA

ADAMS, Rachel. *Hemispheric American Studies*. Rutgers University Press, 2007

Esta colección de 15 ensayos presenta una aproximación interdisciplinar que favorece lo cultural y lo regional por encima de lo nacional. Aborda temas sobre la mezcla racial en la época colonial, las complejas identidades urbanas, el desarrollo de una "americanismo mediterráneo", los espacios cambiantes que separan el sur de los EEUU y Centroamérica, las literaturas con influencias afroamericanas y latinoamericanas, la diplomacia norteamericana, la unión panamericana, el Islam en la literatura de las Américas, y la experiencia de los latinos en Canadá.

AUERBACH, Nina. *Communities of Women: An Idea in Fiction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Tratado de crítica literaria feminista donde la autora analiza el éxito o fracaso de la comunidad de mujeres en diferentes obras de la tradición literaria angloamericana. A través del estudio de obras como *Little Women*, de Louisa May Alcott, *Pride and Prejudice* de Jane Austen o *The Bostonians* de Henry James, la autora hace un análisis histórico-crítico de los espacios vitales por los que las protagonistas de las diferentes obras se desenvuelven. También analiza las actitudes y rituales domésticos que aparecen en las comunidades femeninas de cada una de las obras analizadas, comparándolos con sus equivalentes masculinos dentro de los mismos textos.

ANDERSON, Douglas. *A House Undivided: Domesticity and Community in American Literature (Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Colección de ensayos cuyos autores se centran en el estudio del espacio doméstico, la virtud doméstica y las heroínas o los héroes feminizados de la literatura norteamericana, en obras de los escritores clásicos norteamericanos como Ann Bradstreet, Jefferson, Franklin, Hawthorne, Melville, Whitman, y Emily Dickinson. Sin minimizar las diferencias que separan a estos autores, Anderson muestra hasta qué punto todos ellos estaban comprometidos con una empresa común: la reconstrucción social y cultural, basada en los valores domésticos del hogar ideal.

BACHELARD, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. 1958. Trans. Maria Jolas. Foreword by Etienne Gilson. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.

Tratado en el que el filósofo Bachelard analiza los espacios domésticos desde una perspectiva fenomenológica. Los espacios vitales se estudian en relación con las diferentes actitudes psicológicas y emociones que producen en los individuos. En el tratado se evalúa cómo el ser humano utiliza los espacios en los que se mueve, cómo utilizamos las estancias de nuestros hogares y en qué medida dicho uso afecta a nuestras emociones y desarrollo como individuos. En este volumen se aúnan filosofía, literatura y arquitectura, explorando las habitaciones por las que se mueven los personajes femeninos de obras literarias y sus implicaciones filosóficas.

BENJAMIN, Jessica. "A Desire of One's Own: Psychoanalytic Feminism and Intersubjective Space." *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*. Ed. Teresa de Laurentis. London: Macmillan, 1986. 78-102

Benjamin analiza, desde una óptica feminista, cómo el cuerpo femenino se relaciona con el espacio y la comunidad de mujeres que lo rodea. La autora estudia cómo los diferentes espacios por los que se mueve la mujer y las representaciones que existen del rol femenino dentro de la sociedad condicionan la relación que la mujer tenga con su sexualidad. De esta manera la mujer debe luchar por construir una identidad propia al margen de los prejuicios sociales y de los espacios en donde la sociedad ha previsto que se mueva, mientras intenta no alienarse de dicha sociedad, a fin de construir una serie de interrelaciones que la ayuden a desarrollar su identidad de forma completa.

BENNET, Michael, and Vanessa D. DICKERSON (Eds.). *Recovering the Black Female Body: Self-Representations by African American Women*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2001.

Colección de ensayos en la que se analizan obras literarias ejemplares de escritoras afro-norteamericanas en las que se ha reivindicado el cuerpo de la mujer negra como cartografía demostrativa de las contradicciones y los prejuicios sobre los que la historia de los Estados Unidos se ha edificado. Realizando un recorrido a través de la obra de Nella Larsen, Lucille Clifton, Barbara Neely y Toni Morrison, entre otras, la colección promueve una interpretación del cuerpo como ente espacial que refleja tanto el trauma de los estereotipos como la transición hacia el culto a la fisonomía de la raza negra.

BERGLUND, Birgitta. *Woman's Whole Existence: The House as an Image in the Novels of Ann Radcliffe, Mary Wollstonecraft and Jane Austen*. Lund University: Lund Studies in English, 1993.

Berglund explora la relación que las escritoras inglesas del siglo XIX tenían con el espacio donde se movían sus personajes femeninos, mediante el análisis de las diferentes implicaciones que tienen los espacios domésticos en Radcliffe, Wollstonecraft y Austen, y analizando la concepción de la mujer en los diferentes momentos del siglo XIX a través de los movimientos literarios que tuvieron lugar en él – gótico, romanticismo y principios del feminismo.

BLOOMER, Jennifer. "The Matter of Matter: A Longing for Gravity." *The Sex of Architecture*. Ed. Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Kanes Weisman. New York: Henry N. Abrams, 1996. 161-166.

Ensayo en el que se estudian las diferentes imposiciones de la arquitectura masculina sobre la mujer, y cómo los espacios construidos por los hombres tienden a encerrar a la mujer dentro de la casa, sujetándola así en espacios privados mientras que el hombre tiene la posibilidad de reinar sobre los públicos. Se analiza también cómo, si bien el hombre puede reinar sobre los espacios artificiales que construye, a la mujer sólo le queda el recurso de ejercer su poder sobre los espacios naturales, abandonados por el hombre.

BRAIDOTTI, Rosi. *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Ensayo donde se aboga por la unión del feminismo con otros discursos establecidos por los medios de comunicación. Al incluirse el pensamiento feminista dentro de un pensamiento filosófico más amplio se abandonarían las maneras hegemónicas establecidas por ciertas teorías. A lo largo del libro se explora cómo se enfrenta el discurso epistemológico actual a la cuestión de la mujer y el feminismo, y la relación que éste tiene con la bioética, o cómo las corrientes feministas norteamericanas se pueden relacionar, y en muchos casos unir, con el pensamiento feminista europeo.

BUSCH, Akiko. *Geography of Home: Writings on Where We Live*. Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2003

Colección de catorce ensayos sobre la arquitectura e historia de la casa en Norteamérica. En sus análisis de los espacios domésticos que componen el hogar, los autores ofrecen perspectivas sobre las condiciones cambiantes de nuestros habitats. La evolución de la puerta principal, por ejemplo, la creciente importancia de los armarios para acumular posesiones, la decoración de los salones como reveladora de nuestra personalidad, la ampliación de las cocinas como centro neurálgico de los nuevos hogares son sólo algunos de los temas tratados, desde el punto de vista de la arquitectura, la sociología y la psicología.

CIERAAD, Irene. *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006.

En un volumen que crea sinergias entre un variado grupo de disciplinas tales como la historia del arte, la sociología, la arquitectura, la antropología cultural y la psicología medioambiental, Irene Cieraad reúne una colección de ensayos que analizan las prácticas y la simbología del espacio doméstico en la sociedad occidental. El volumen aporta una visión antropológica sobre cómo las diferentes culturas utilizan la casa como modelo visual de la estructura social de una cultura.

COOPER, Clare. *House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home*. New York: Nicolas-Hays, Inc, 2006

El estudio de Cooper, profesora de arquitectura, es un estudio de campo, basado en entrevistas a sesenta personas a lo largo de diez años, sobre los lazos emocionales entre las personas y sus casas. Partiendo de un punto de partida jungiano, que mantiene que la casa es el espejo simbólico de nuestro interior, la autora ordena las respuestas recibidas en categorías. En un extremo estarían las visiones de la casa como ámbito estable y acogedor, sustituta de relaciones interpersonales, y en el otro, estarían las personas que no pueden atarse a un lugar demasiado tiempo, lo cual es indicio de sentimientos emocionales infantiles no resueltos. Finalmente, Cooper explora cómo las crisis personales, la necesidad de privacidad, los conflictos familiares o de pareja y los cambios profesionales afectan el diseño del lugar donde vivimos.

DUNCAN, Nancy. "Renegotiating Gender and Sexuality in Public and Private Spaces." *BodySpace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*. Ed. Nancy Duncan. London: Routledge, 1996. 127-145.

Duncan explora la importancia del espacio y del lugar en el desarrollo de la identidad sexual y de género. En el texto se analizan las diferentes esferas públicas y privadas en las sociedades norteamericana y anglosajona. La autora estudia cómo la comercialización, la privatización y enriquecimiento estético de la esfera pública han hecho que en ocasiones ambas esferas, pública y privada, colisionen. Según Duncan, se deben replantear las dinámicas socialmente establecidas sobre los espacios públicos, aceptando en ellos a minorías sexuales y étnicas que se han visto tradicionalmente recluidas al ámbito privado. La autora, pues, abre el debate sobre las barreras entre estas esferas y cómo se pueden amoldar a los nuevos valores modernos.

EHRENREICH, Barbara. Por su propio bien: 150 años de consejos expertos a mujeres (1973). Madrid: Taurus, 1990

Una provocativa historia de las mujeres que nos brinda una perspectiva sobre la mujer y la medicina radicalmente diferente de la que se nos había contado. El resultado es una poderosa denuncia, tanto más eficaz políticamente en cuanto que científicamente fundamentada. La irrupción de los «expertos» (es decir científicos varones) en ámbitos tradicionalmente femeninos -cuidado del hogar, salud de la familia, embarazo y parto, etc.- ha sido el hecho social más destacado del último siglo y medio, y constituye la coartada perfecta para desalojar a la mujer de estos dominios. A través de una extensa documentación (desde revistas femeninas a discursos políticos, pasando por tratados de higiene), las autoras de este clásico de los estudios de la mujer desvelan una confrontación por el poder que todavía continúa.

ENKE, Anne. *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism*. Urham and London: Duke University Press, 2007.

Estudio en el que se relata el activismo del feminismo radical y del feminismo cultural de los Estados Unidos en los años 60 y 70 bajo una nueva perspectiva. En vez de partir de los ideales que estos movimientos predicaban, Enke toma el concepto de transgredir e irrumpir en el espacio público como metáfora explicativa de la revolución feminista. Mujeres de distintos orígenes raciales y étnicos, de distintas clases sociales e inclinaciones sexuales, fueron tomando y conquistando espacios donde fundamentar una contracultura basada en la comunidad femenina. Así, Enke reduce el movimiento feminista a un análisis locativo, estructurando el libro como si se tratase de un plano: los capítulos se dividen temáticamente en campos deportivos, mercados y lugares de comercio, centros médicos, clubes, bares, asilos, etc.

FAQIR, Fadia. *In the House of Silence: Autobiographical Essays by Arab Women*. London: Garnet Publishing, Ltd., 2009.

Colección de relatos autobiográficos escritos por 13 escritoras de origen árabe. En sus testimonios, las escritoras describen sus experiencias de confinamiento, subyugación, lucha por obtener una educación y la eventual experiencia de la escritura como terapia. Interesante para obtener un corpus textual sobre el uso metafórico de los espacios domésticos, en escritoras árabes que escriben en inglés a ambos lados del atlántico.

FRIEDAN, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Bantam, 1963.

Es éste un clásico del pensamiento feminista que se publicó originalmente en Estados Unidos en 1963. Se trata sobre todo de un libro de investigación respaldado por un abundante trabajo descriptivo, y sólo como consecuencia de esto se acaba convirtiendo en un libro militante, lo que lo aproxima al otro gran clásico del siglo XX, «El segundo sexo», de Simone de Beauvoir. Friedan llama “mística de la feminidad” a esa imagen de lo “esencialmente femenino”, eso de lo que hablan y a lo que se dirigen las revistas para mujeres, la publicidad y los libros de autoayuda. Es una horma moral, fabricada en los años 60, en la que se pretende hacer vivir a todas las mujeres. Es algo inauténtico que, si se intenta llevar a cabo, produce consecuencias cada vez más graves. Comienza por un difuso malestar y termina por producir enfermedades verdaderas. Precisamente el libro comienza con un capítulo titulado “El malestar que no tiene nombre”. Un libro extraordinariamente influyente que ha resultado ser decisivo en el acompañamiento de uno de los cambios sociales más determinantes del siglo XX: la posición y autoconciencia de las mujeres como grupo.

FRYER, Judith. *Felicitous Space: The Imaginative Structures of Edith Wharton and Willa Carther*. Chapel Hill and London: Universtiy of North Carolina Pres, 1986.

Fryer estudias las relaciones existentes entre la mujer y el espacio en las novelas de Edith Wharton y Willa Carther, relacionando los espacios domésticos en los que se desarrollan parte de las novelas de estas escritoras con su creatividad, exponiendo una nueva manera de interpretar textos de ficción escritos por mujeres. Se analiza cómo la mujer escritora se relaciona con el espacio vital, cómo lo miden y lo exploran a través de sus descripciones y la manera en la que sus personajes se relacionan con él.

GASPAR DE ALBA, Alicia (Ed.). *Velvet Barrios: Popular Culture and Chicana/o Sexualities*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Colección de ensayos en la que se analiza la identidad sexual chicana por medio de la iconografía y el arte urbano propio de los barrios de clase media y baja. La textura proporcionada por este espacio reafirma la vigencia de estereotipos y rituales que los jóvenes se ven obligados a perpetuar para cerciorar una identidad sexual. Así, tanto la masculinidad como la feminidad se ven condicionados por un entorno que se niega a ceder a formas no estándares de las mismas. Según estos parámetros, por ejemplo, los chicos han de ser lo que las autoras llaman "machitos," mientras que las chicas han de obedecer durante la adolescencia a la conducta propia de las "quinceañeras." La colección recoge tanto ensayos analíticos de este espacio y de estos rituales sujetos al tiempo, como ensayos sobre obras cinematográficas y literarias que han hecho tambalearse los muros del "barrio."

GILBERT, Sandra M. And Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979.

Este texto fundamental de Gilbert y Gubar analiza la figura de la mujer en la ficción anglosajona del siglo XIX, estudiando la dicotomía existente en los personajes femeninos, separando el llamado "ángel doméstico" - la mujer que estaba postergada a la cocina y al ámbito familiar - y los personajes femeninos que amenaza con destruir el *status quo* impuesto por la sociedad masculina, simbolizado por mujeres mentalmente inestables recluidas en lugares recónditos de la casa, habitualmente en los áticos. Las autoras analizan la necesidad de que las mujeres acepten esta parte de sí mismas, para lograr una posición integrada dentro de la sociedad.

GRANGE, Joseph. "Place, Body and Situation." *Dwelling, Place and Environment: Towards the Phenomenology of Person and World*. Ed. David Seamon and Robert Mugerauer. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985, 71-84.

Ensayo donde se estudia la relación entre el cuerpo del individuo y el espacio físico que ocupa dentro del ámbito doméstico. Para ello el autor se basa en los conceptos de la fenomenología, aunando filosofía y arquitectura. Se analiza la situación social en la que el hombre ha postergado a la mujer dentro del ámbito doméstico, examinando igualmente la situación pública y privada en la que los individuos se encuentran en los diferentes estadios de su vida.

GREWAL, Inderpal. *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms*. North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2005

En este volumen, Grewal examina cómo la circulación de personas, bienes, movimientos sociales y derechos durante la década de los 90, forjaron sujetos transnacionales, hijos de una cultura americana global. Huyendo de consideraciones sobre los EEUU como una nación-estado imperialista que impone su poder político unilateral en el mundo, Grewal analiza cómo el concepto de "América" funciona hoy en día como discurso nacionalista que traspasa las fronteras de los EEUU, al diseminar el ideal de la ciudadanía democrática. Desarrolla su argumento centrándose en la situación de los asiáticos en India y en los EEUU. Grewal combina la perspectiva postcolonial con la teoría cultural, para concluir que las nociones de género, raza, nacionalidad y clase están ligadas a historias de colonización. A través del análisis pormenorizado de tres novelistas asiáticas inmigrantes en los EEUU - Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni, y Amitav Ghosh—Grewal desarrolla un nuevo concepto de americanidad, ligado al cosmopolinatismo. En definitiva, la autora sugiere que los EEUU deben entenderse y estudiarse como una entidad dinámica producida y transformada desde dentro, pero también desde fuera de sus fronteras territoriales.

HORNER, Avril and Sue Zlosnik. *Landscapes of Desire: Metaphors in Modern Women's Fiction*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

La habitación, la casa, el paisaje y el mar son imágenes recurrentes en la escritura femenina. Esta obra analiza novelas escritas por seis mujeres (Perkins Gilman, Chopin, Wharton, Woolf, Rhys y Atwood) y presenta la tesis de que en su ficción estas escritoras presentan una configuración de significancia metafórica que va más allá de las exigencias del argumento. Si los límites de la habitación son la expresión metafórica de las restricciones impuestas por el discurso y la ideología, y el mar o el paisaje representan la huida de esos límites, en medio se encuentra el deseo femenino; de manera que la mujer debe configurar esa habitación para que sea una habitación propia.

JACOBSON, Kristin. *Neodomestic American Fiction*. Wineburg: Ohio State University Press, 2010

En su estudio, Jacobson identifica más de treinta novelas que renuevan formas tradicionales para cuestionar políticas de la domesticidad conservadoras. En lugar de presentar hogares unifamiliares estables, la "ficción neodoméstica" propugna políticas desestabilizadoras caracterizadas por la movilidad, la renovación, y los espacios relacionales. Este análisis de los espacios en las novelas domésticas a partir de 1980, sin embargo, no anuncia un mundo postfeminista. Empero, los espacios heterogéneos e inestables de la ficción neodoméstica

ofrecen la posibilidad de examinar jerarquías contemporáneas y hogares más igualitarios. Entre las novelas examinadas podemos citar *Paradise*, de Toni Morrison, *The Poisonwood Bible*, de Barbara Kingsolver, *Gardens in the Dunes*, de Leslie Marmon Silko, y *A Gesture Life*, de Chang-rae Lee.

JANEWAY, Elizabeth. *Man's World, Woman's Place: A Study in Social Mythology*. New York: 1978.

Janeway analiza los problemas a los que debe enfrentarse la mujer dentro de una sociedad patriarcal, estudiando los roles atribuidos a la mujer a lo largo de la historia de la sociedad occidental, y observando los diferentes espacios a los que la mujer ha sido postergada dentro del ámbito doméstico y la lucha en las últimas décadas del s. XIX y principios del s. XX por abandonar la esfera privada y conquistar la esfera pública.

JOHNSON, Nan. *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866-1910*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002.

Historia de la retórica anglo-americana como espacio que sublima, distorsiona y reinventa la identidad basada en el género. Partiendo de la retórica como práctica institucional dentro del espacio discursivo propio de las décadas que siguieron a la Guerra Civil de los Estados Unidos, Johnson analiza las manipulaciones lingüísticas de la época que promocionaban un código de conducta específico para la mujer. Manuales de elocución, libros que instruían en el arte de escribir y demás materiales pedagógicos dirigidos a la mujer promovían un conservadurismo en el que se publicitaba el espacio doméstico como el terreno que por ley divina y humana quedaba relegado a la mujer.

KAPLAN, Caren. "Deterritorializations: The Rewriting of Home and Exile in Western Feminist Discourse." *Cultural Critique* 6 (Spring) 1987:187-198.

Ensayo crítico donde la autora muestra cómo la mujer se ha visto obligada a romper en el contexto literario con los modelos formales impuestos por la sociedad patriarcal para obtener una posición de representatividad dentro de la misma. Esta situación se ve agravada en situaciones de desigualdad social donde se subyuga doblemente a la mujer en contextos de colonización, lo que hace imposible que la mujer colonizada alcance un espacio propio, complicado aún más por la imposición lingüística del colonizador. Kaplan propone que la literatura sea utilizada como arma para combatir los espacios de represión y entrar en la esfera pública.

KIRBY, Kathleen M. *Indifferent Boundaries: Spatial Concepts of Human Subjectivity*. New York: Guilford Press, 1996.

Se exploran las implicaciones políticas del lenguaje espacial y la subjetividad inherente al código lingüístico. La autora explora cómo los conceptos de subjetividad están íntimamente relacionados con las relaciones espaciales individuales. De esta manera se investiga cómo las diferentes concepciones del "yo" que han existido a lo largo de los años han cambiado de manera fundamental las corrientes críticas del momento, pasando así a un análisis de los movimientos a los que este cambio en el "yo" ha dado lugar. Este trabajo resulta especialmente interesante al proponer nuevos enfoques de análisis lingüístico antes inexistentes que nos acercan a la comprensión del lenguaje en sí mismo.

LEVANDER, Caroline F. y Robert S. LEVINE. *Hemispheric American Studies*. Rutgers: Rutgers UP, 2008.

Esta colección de ensayos supone un hito en los estudios transnacionales y hemisféricos y expande su rango de acción al ofrecer nuevas aproximaciones críticas que van desde lo nacional a lo hemisférico y lo global. La colección pretende descentralizar los Estudios Americanos; algo crucial en la evolución de este campo de estudios.

LLOYD, Fran, and Catherine O'BRIEN (Eds.). *Secret Spaces, Forbidden Places*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2000.

Colección de ensayos en la que, desde una perspectiva interdisciplinar, aun manteniendo siempre la literatura como eje analítico central, se contempla la noción de lo prohibido dentro del simbolismo espacial en el mundo occidental. Aunque no limitado al estudio de la mujer, la obra ofrece diversos ensayos entre los que se incluyen temas como el juego estético entre la visibilidad y la invisibilidad de la mujer, la interpretación del espacio doméstico bajo una retórica de carácter político, y la consideración de la memoria femenina tanto individual como colectiva como un cosmos de constantes negociaciones entre el sentimiento de obligación hacia espacios privados y la búsqueda de identidad en espacios públicos.

MATTHEWS, Glenna. *'Just a Housewife': The Rise and Fall of Domesticity in America: Rise and Fall of Domesticity in America, 1830-1963*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989

El libro de Matthews ofrece un claro y elocuente recorrido de la imagen del ama de casa a lo largo de la historia social de los EEUU, desde la época colonial hasta los años 60, que

constituye un complemento esencial y actualizado al clásico de Betty Friedan *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). A través del análisis de novelas, cartas, revistas y libros de cocina, la autora demuestra cómo el “culto a la domesticidad” decimonónico marcó a varias generaciones de amas de casa, pero también elevó la consideración social del ama de casa en el siglo XIX, profesión que posteriormente quedaría devaluada en el siglo XX, con el acceso de las mujeres al mundo profesional fuera del hogar.

MCDOWELL, Linda. “Spatializing Feminism: Geographic Perspectives.” *BodySpace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*. Ed. Nancy Duncan. London: Routledge, 1996. 28-44

Tratado de crítica feminista donde se analiza la necesidad de replantearse las barreras que el término “feminismo” posee en sí mismo. Así pues, estudia cómo las corrientes críticas literarias abogan por la clasificación de cada uno de los diferentes movimientos literarios, encasillándolos en muchos casos según la proveniencia de las autoras. Esto hace que se descentralice la obra femenina, quedándose a los márgenes de la literatura canónica. La autora investiga cómo la mujer debe tomar su puesto dentro de la literatura como figura central y fundamental, necesaria para la creación de una literatura universal y cómo para ello las mujeres deben ser consideradas simplemente escritoras, sin atender a su procedencia.

MCLEOD, Mary. “‘Other’ Spaces and ‘Others.’” *The Sex of Architecture*. Ed. Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Kanes Weisman. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996. 15-28.

McLeod explora el concepto de otredad, estableciéndolo como todo aquello que sale de la norma, de lo cotidiano. La autora examina cómo la mujer ha sido considerada dentro de la sociedad patriarcal como un paradigma perfecto de otredad, algo fuera del ámbito cotidiano público, dado que su lugar fue considerado dentro de la domesticidad y la familia.

MCNALL, Sally. *Who Is in the House? A Psychological Study of Two Centuries of Women’s Fiction in America, 1795 to the Present*. New York: Elsevier North Holland, 1981.

Tratado en el que se analiza la importancia de las obras de ficción popular en Norteamérica desde principios del siglo XIX hasta nuestros días. Se hace especial hincapié en la figura femenina como principal receptora de esta literatura dado que, al ocupar un lugar obligado en el hogar, recurría en sus ratos de ocio a la lectura de los que ahora son considerados clásicos populares. Se resalta la importancia del espacio doméstico y de los personajes femeninos dentro de estas obras, dado que los autores respondían a la demanda de las lectoras de forma

positiva. Así pues la autora mezcla conceptos históricos y psicológicos para examinar en profundidad las obras y la intencionalidad de las mismas.

MEYER, Esther Da Costa. "La Donna È Mobile: Agoraphobia, Women, and Urban Spaces." *The Sex of Architecture*. Ed. Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Kanes Weisman. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996. 141-156.

Meyer mezcla la psicología con la literatura y la arquitectura, analizando cómo la mujer puede verse amenazada ante la posibilidad de salir al ámbito público tras haber sido obligada a mantenerse al margen de dicha esfera a lo largo de los siglos. La autora subraya cómo dicha agorafobia no está sólo causada por la dicotomía entre el espacio público, dominado por los hombres, y el espacio privado, en el que las mujeres se vieron obligadas a mantenerse en una sociedad patriarcal. Existe otro factor importante en el diagnóstico de agorafobia femenina al que se refiere la autora, que es la falta de seguridad al explorar un nuevo campo, el espacio público social.

NAJMI, Samina, and Rajini SRIKANTH (Eds.). *White Women in Racialized Spaces: Imaginative Transformation and Ethical Action in Literature*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2002.

Colección de ensayos en la que se examina en el ámbito de la literatura estadounidense el papel de la mujer blanca dentro de los parámetros de raza y clase. Se contemplan personajes femeninos que desafían o cuestionan sus privilegios de raza así como su imagen asexual (en contraste con los mitos de mujeres de raza negra o hispana, contruidos dentro de paradigmas patriarcales de hiper-heterosexualidad). Los ensayos descifran el valor semiótico de carácter mítico que sostienen las barreras sociales que separan a las mujeres blancas de las mujeres estadounidenses de otras razas, no con el fin de cruzar al espacio opuesto, sino de contemplar la situación de la mujer dentro de su propio contexto racial y social.

PRATT, Annis. "The New Feminist Criticisms: Exploring the History of the New Space." *Beyond Intellectual Sexism: A New Woman, A New Reality*. Ed. Joan I. Roberts. New York: David McKay, 1976. 175-195.

Ensayo de crítica literaria desde la corriente psicoanalítica en la que la autora propone la creación de nuevos arquetipos aplicables al análisis literario feminista. Pratt aboga por el rechazo de los arquetipos heredados de la crítica de Carl Jung y por la formación de nuevos arquetipos y paradigmas. De esta manera se abandonarían los arquetipos impuestos por la

sociedad patriarcal para pasar a un nuevo modelo de crítica que sea útil para las futuras generaciones de crítica literaria feminista y psicoanalítica.

RELPH, E. *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion, 1976.

Relph indaga en la importancia del lugar, del espacio, dentro del campo de la fenomenología. Este texto, piedra angular de la crítica fenomenológica desde hace más de 30 años, estudia cómo el concepto de lugar ha variado a lo largo de las décadas y cómo la variación de dicho concepto ha ido unida al desarrollo y evolución de la sociedad en su totalidad, tanto de hombres como de mujeres. El concepto de lugar llama a la unión y a la búsqueda de soluciones para problemas actuales de muy variada índole, como el calentamiento global o la globalización de la sociedad.

ROMERO, Lora. *Home Fronts: Domesticity and Its Critics in the Antebellum United States*. Duke University Press, 1997

En su introducción, Romero explica que su libro no intenta re-escribir el canon literario norteamericano, sino que su objetivo es "to inquire into the theoretical assumptions about power and resistance underlying contemporary debates about dominant and oppositional cultures" (4). Más específicamente, Romero cuestiona la forma en que la domesticidad subvirtió o apoyó las estructuras de poder existentes durante el "Renacimiento" norteamericano. En su análisis de obras de James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Maria W. Stewart, Harriet Beecher Stowe y Catharine Beecher, Romero explica cómo el ámbito doméstico y la ideología de la domesticidad influenciaron la literatura Americana de este período. En mi opinión, el capítulo más convincente es el dedicado a la obra de Hawthorne, y las relaciones entre el "romance" y la domesticidad. Romero opina que el romance hawthorniano surge de su rechazo a la esfera doméstica femenina de la época; por tanto, el autor utiliza los lugares comunes de la ficción doméstica al uso para después subvertirlos con elementos góticos como la luz de la luna, las sombras, y otra parafernalia sobrenatural, que distancia a sus novelas de la realidad.

ROSE, Gillian. *Feminism and Geography: Disciplinary Discourse and Difference*. Cambridge: Polity, 1993.

Gillian analiza las ciencias geográficas como un campo dominado en su totalidad por el hombre y estudia cómo la mujer se ha visto siempre marginada en esta disciplina. El libro explora cómo el hombre ha sido a lo largo de la historia el conquistador de nuevas tierras y el que impulsaba

la búsqueda de nuevos territorios y fronteras. En contraposición, la mujer se veía reducida a la geografía doméstica, al ámbito privado. Se estudian las diferentes corrientes de crítica feminista que rompen con el modelo geográfico patriarcal, para que la geografía no sea definida por un concepto de poder masculino.

ROTHMAN, Sheila. *Woman's Proper Place: A History of Changing Ideals and Practices, 1870 to the Present*. New York: Basic Books, 1978.

Rothman analiza los diferentes movimientos que las mujeres norteamericanas han liderado desde finales del siglo XIX. La autora centra su análisis en dos conceptos fundamentales en los cambios sociales que se llevaron a cabo: el primero es la conquista de la mujer del ámbito público a través de la integración en nuevas profesiones, haciendo especial hincapié en la conquista de una carrera dentro del campo de la medicina. El segundo es la lucha por aunar esfuerzos entre las mujeres de diferentes estratos sociales, creando puentes entre las distintas clases como muestra de apoyo y solidaridad entre las mujeres.

RUSSEL, Danielle. *Between the Angle and the Curve: Mapping Gender, Race, Space, and Identity in Willa Cather and Morrison*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Russel presenta la obra de dos autoras como textos que desarticulan y subvierten los paisajes emblemáticos de la cultura y la literatura canónica de los Estados Unidos. Aunque Cather y Morrison difieran tanto en su origen racial como en su acercamiento a la narrativa (Cather se inclina hacia el realismo, mientras que Morrison destaca en el realismo mágico), ambas autoras realizan una labor exegética de paisajes y espacios que el canon literario había definido como unificadores y democráticos. La frontera de Cather y los ambientes afroamericanos de Morrison perturban esta percepción al mostrar espacios fragmentados que desorientan a los personajes.

SAID, Edward. "Reflections on Exile" *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*. Ed. Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West. New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1990. 357-366.

Said analiza el fenómeno de la emigración de un país a otro desconocido por cualesquiera que sean las razones, estudiando las diferentes razones por las que la gente se ve obligada a abandonar su país y mostrando su fascinación por la romantización reflejada en la literatura del exilio. Said reflexiona sobre cómo los autores de ficción han creado unas expectativas

falsas sobre el hecho de abandonar el lugar de procedencia, dado que la experiencia de dejar atrás la geografía propia es en ocasiones mucho más dura de lo que se retrata en las novelas.

SEAMON, D. *Dwelling, Place and Environment: Towards a Phenomenology of Person and World*. Krieger Publishing Company, 2000.

Este volumen examina cómo los edificios, los lugares y los ambientes contribuyen a la sensación de identidad y totalidad de los individuos. Los ensayos que comprende, escritos por filósofos, geógrafos, arquitectos y psicólogos, utilizan una aproximación fenomenológica a la exploración de temas como la experiencia del ambiente, el sentimiento de localidad, la arquitectura como "at-homeness", el diseño medioambiental y la construcción de lugares. Lo más interesante de la colección es el énfasis en la relación entre la persona y su entorno, que es perfectamente aplicable a la literatura.

SHANDS, Kerstin. *Embracing Space*. London: Greenwood Press, 1999.

La autora propone que tanto las metáforas de estatismo como las de movilidad deben ser radicalmente desconstruidas y reconstruidas. Puesto que las metáforas hipertransgresivas de movimiento han sido inspiradas por fantasías que pueden llevar a una nueva masculinización, a un sueño trascendente de totalidad que deniega las limitaciones materiales y que sigue devaluando la feminidad, las variedades de espacio que ella llama "abarcadoras" (*embracing*) son más prometedoras y más necesarias hoy día.

SPAIN, Daphne. *Gendered Spaces*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

En esta monografía se analizan las diferentes consecuencias de la dicotomía entre lo público y lo privado en diversas culturas alrededor del mundo, examinando cómo el ámbito privado es tradicionalmente aquél donde se desarrolla la familia y al que la mujer se ve postergada principalmente mientras que el público es donde desarrolla su vida el hombre. Por ello aboga por la ruptura de la dicotomía de conceptos como privado y público si van unidos a un género u otro, para que ambos sexos tengan las mismas oportunidades dentro de la sociedad.

STILZ, Gerhard (Ed.). *Territorial Terrors: Contested Places in Colonial and Postcolonial Writing*. Würzburg, Germany: Könighausen & Neumann, 2007.

Colección de ensayos en la que, entendiendo al hombre como criatura instintiva e intuitiva, se examinan diversos personajes de la literatura anglófona dentro de espacios urbanos, rurales, salvajes, y estéticos. Stiliz parte de la división entre espacios domésticos y familiares y espacios exteriores y desconocidos para explorar el comportamiento de estos personajes: su habilidad orientativa, la inutilidad de sus costumbres así como la indiferencia del espacio hacia las mismas, y su susceptibilidad a ser condicionado por el entorno. Estos ensayos, complementados por tendencias propias del análisis ecocrítico, aunque no centrados en interpretaciones del espacio desde el punto de vista del género, sí ofrecen una amplia gama de estudios donde se analiza cómo el bagaje cultural y racial de los personajes determinará su habilidad para desenvolverse en un espacio determinado.

TUAN, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.

Estudio sobre geografía humana donde se explora la manera en la que los individuos se enfrentan al espacio de forma cotidiana. El autor distingue entre dos conceptos fundamentales para el análisis de la experiencia humana: el lugar y el espacio. El primero de estos dos conceptos representaría la seguridad mientras que el segundo sería una metáfora de libertad. El autor mezcla conceptos de geografía clásica con novedosos aspectos culturales para proponer un mapa de la psicología humana donde se explora las diferentes interacciones del ser humano con el espacio en el que vive.

WEISMAN, Leslie Kanés. *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-made Environment*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

Weisman analiza las diferentes implicaciones sexuales existentes en muchas de las obras arquitectónicas que nos rodean en nuestra vida cotidiana o que simbolizan un poder ancestral como puede ser el caso de los monumentos. La autora ofrece una visión revolucionaria sobre la forma en la que es tratado el espacio dentro de las obras arquitectónicas, y sobre cómo la mujer resulta deshumanizada e ignorada mientras que los monumentos son tradicionalmente erigidos con formas fálicas que encumbran al sexo masculino.

WIGLEY, Mark. "Untitled: The Housing of Gender" *Sexuality and Space*. Ed. Beatriz Colomina. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992. 327-389.

Ensayo en el que el autor reflexiona sobre la necesidad de crear un lugar donde se pueda discutir sobre la sexualidad y la arquitectura. Afirma que la sexualidad es un elemento

cotidiano con el que muchos se niegan a enfrentarse directamente pero del que se hace uso indirecto de manera continua. Para Wigley, la arquitectura ha sido durante mucho tiempo campo de diseño masculino, dejando a las mujeres como meros habitantes de los edificios que se creaban pero sin tener en cuenta su opinión. Las mujeres se veían subyugadas al espacio privado diseñado por el hombre sin que además se les permitiera salir al espacio público. Se examinan las diferentes situaciones que este hecho ha provocado a lo largo de los años.

WOOLF, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. 1929. Rpt. London: Grafton, 1985.

Recopilación de una serie de escritos de la escritora británica Virginia Woolf y que es la base de la crítica feminista moderna. En él se trata la importancia de la mujer con escritora, pensadora, creadora, y como personaje dentro de las obras de ficción, la necesidad de crear un espacio vital propio, intelectual y económico, donde poder trabajar con comodidad en la creación de obras literarias y filosóficas, tal y como los escritores hombres han tenido a lo largo de la historia de la literatura. Woolf afirma la libertad que la mujer debe poseer, tanto económica como espacial, para lograr producir una obra literaria de calidad, algo que los hombres han tenido y le han sido negadas tradicionalmente a la mujer.

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ANEXO 1:

X Jornadas Internacionales de la Mujer



Women's Studies

TOPOGRAFÍAS DOMÉSTICAS Y GÉNERO

NEGOTIATING GENDERED SPACES

Facultad de Filología

16, 17, 18 Mayo, 2012

Los Departamentos de Filología Inglesa I y II de la Universidad Complutense le invitan a participar en las **X Jornadas Internacionales de Estudios de la Mujer**. Las Jornadas contarán con profesoras/es invitados de diversas universidades españolas y extranjeras, así como con la participación de todos/as aquellos/as colegas que deseen contribuir con una comunicación. Se publicará una selección de los textos presentados en el *VIII Volumen de Estudios de la Mujer*, tras una evaluación por pares. **Se concederán 2 créditos de Libre Elección a los estudiantes de Licenciatura de la UCM**

Comité Organizador: Isabel Durán, Noelia Hernando, Carmen Méndez, JoAnne Neff, Ana Laura Rodríguez

Posibles temas:

- Espacios públicos vs. espacios privados
- El hogar como metáfora de reclusión y falta de libertad /como espacio liberador en la literatura y en el arte
- Género y arquitectura: configuración de los espacios masculinos y/o femeninos
- Género y topografías domésticas identitarias
- Espacios transnacionales y feminismo
- Interpretar e interactuar con el espacio
- Los lenguajes de la domesticidad; nuevas definiciones del espacio doméstico
- La deconstrucción de hogar
- En torno a la violencia doméstica

ANEXO
2

Miércoles, 16 de mayo, 2012 / Wednesday, May 16th, 2012

8,30-9,00 Recogida de documentación / Registration, *Vestibulo / Main Hall*

9,00-9,30 Inauguración Jornadas / Conference Opening, *Paraninfo*

9,30-10,30 Conferencia / Plenary Lecture, *Paraninfo*
Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, ETS de Arquitectura, UPM. "Género y arquitectura. Reconsiderando el espacio urbano"
Moderadora: Isabel Durán Giménez-Arco

10,30-11,00 Descanso / Coffee break

11,00-12,00 Conferencia / Plenary Lecture, *Paraninfo*
Santiago López-Ríos, UCM. "Spaces of Sisterhood: Smith College and the Residencia de Señoritas"
Moderadora: Carmen Mander García

12,00-13,00 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, A-12
Esther de la Peña Puebla: "Interpretando el espacio doméstico a través de voces femeninas (in)visibles"; Gemma Delgado Puerto: "De la calle al after: María Magdalena en la literatura de Shakespeare"
Moderadora: Dobres Serrano-Niza

- Sesión B, *Literatures*, Salón de Grados
Myrta Alexandra Nader: "Elizabeth Bishop and Aesthetic Space"; Marta Soares: "And Home no Simple Matter of Hearth or Harbor: Power and Vulnerability in Adrienne Rich's Cartographies of Home"
Moderadora: Donna Diotchev

- Sesión C, *Literatures*, Aula Histórica
Blasina Cantizano Marquez: "Home as Homeland in Jhumpa Lahiri's Short Fiction"; Rebeca Campos Ferreras: "Imitación domesticada y autonomía de la subversión: El dilema identitario en la narrativa de Anzia Yezierska"
Moderadora: Elsa del Campo

13,00-14,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, A-12
Round Table: "The City and its Literary Meanings: Krishnamurthy, McWatt and Akbar" (Christina Juric, Alejandra Moreno Álvarez, Elena Igartuburu García.)
Moderadora: Christina Juric

- Sesión B, *Sociología*, Salón de Grados
"Controversias y desasosiegos en torno a la división público/privado": Amparo Lasen: "Relaciones de género, vínculo de pareja y telefonía móvil"; Silvia Rodríguez Martín: "Conectando lo doméstico en comunidades virtuales"; Antonio A. García García: "Desasosiegos masculinos en prácticas de seducción digitalmente mediadas"
Moderadora: Elena Casado

- Sesión C, *Literatures*, Aula Histórica
Rebeca Cordero Sánchez: "Madness, a Space of One's Own: Confronting Patriarchal Domains in T. William's *Cabbies for a Summer Hotel*"; Malka Aiza Gallardo: "Cuz It Turns Out the Nature of Rape Has Changed: Exploring Sexual Violence in *Shange's For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suitable When the Rainbow is Enuf*"; Maya Zalbidea Paniagua: "Espacios públicos y privados en la literatura electrónica feminista"
Moderadora: Rebeca Cordero Sánchez

14,30-16,00 Comida/Lunch

16,00-17,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, Salón de Grados
María del Mar Vega Esteban: "A Pragmatic Approach to John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*: The Logic of Anger and Despair"; Paloma Tejada Celler: "M.K. Hume's *Nimue*: A 21st Century Reinterpretation of (Barbarian) Women?"; Martina Coma Diaz: "Questioning the Tradition: The Portrayal of Cressida and Thersites in Dedan Dornellen's Staging of *Troilus and Cressida* (2008)"
Moderadora: Paloma Tejada Celler

- Sesión B, *Literatures*, Aula Histórica
Ana Moya Gutiérrez: "Neo-Feminism in-Between: The Female Cosmopolitan Subject in *Eat Pray Love*"; Patricia Álvarez Celdas: "What's the Use of Wonderin' if He's Good or Bad?: Carousel and the presentation of Domestic Violence in *Musicals*"
Moderadora: JoAnne Neff van Aerdtbaer

- Sesión C, *Literatures*, A-12
Yasmina Romero Morales: "Topografías de ficción: mujeres marroquíes en la narrativa española de finales del siglo XIX"; Mariana Libertad Suarez: "Una espesa cortina: espacio privado y rememoración femenina en *La mujer del cazaviento* (1952), de Nery Russo"; María del Carmen Alfonso García: "Un lugar en el mundo: espacio y género en *Nada* (1945), de Carmen Laforet y *Lucemagias* (1993), de Ana María Matute"
Moderadora: Esther de la Peña Puebla

17,30-18,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, Salón de Grados
Catherine Rottenberg: "Wallace Thurman's *The Blacker the Berry*, Urban Space and Racialized Gender Norms"; Tsai-letti Jiang: "Space, Gender, and Body in Lynn Nottage's *Intimate Apparel*"
Moderadora: Claudia Alonso Recarte

- Sesión B, *Historia social*, Aula Histórica
Dolores Serrano-Niza: "Ecosos para solo de casa. El *saber* como lugar de tránsito hacia el espacio público en *Al-Andalus*"; Concepción Pazo: "¿Cuánta política encierra lo personal? Notas sobre género y violencia doméstica contra las mujeres"
Moderadora: Begona Marugán

Jueves, 17 de mayo, 2012 / Thursday, May 17th 2012

9,00-10,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, Paraninfo
Somli Ahi: "A Working-Class Woman's Step forward to the Public Sphere in *May Banton*"; Francisco José Cortes Vieco: "Syndrome, Trauma and Sigma: Domestic and Gender Violence in Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*"; Agnieszka Lowczanin: "The Sad-Woman in the Attic - Domestication in Victorian Literature"
Moderadora: Francisco José Cortes Vieco

- Sesión B, *Historia social*, Aula Histórica
Begona Marugán Pintos: "Domesticar la violencia contra las mujeres, una forma de desactivar el conflicto intergeneracional"; Pilar Parra Contreras: "Mujeres de clases populares, autonomía e independencia económica"
Moderadora: Concepción Pazo

- Sesión C, *Literatures*, Salón de Grados
"Writing Women's Experience of Aggression and Marginalisation in Female-Authored Fiction From Spain"
Carmen Servén Díez: "Discurso doméstico y respuesta al maltrato: narrativa femenina española a inicios del siglo XX"; Maryanne Leone: "Transnational Feminism in Spanish Immigration Narratives"; Shelley Godstland: "Writing Women's Responses to 'Violencia Doméstica' in Early Twenty-First Century Spain"
Moderadora: Shelley Godstland

10,30-11,30 Conferencia / Plenary Lecture, *Paraninfo*

Isabel Carrera Suarez, Universidad de Oviedo: "Spaces of Strangeness and Emotion: Canadian Women Writing the Urban"
Moderadora: JoAnne Neff van Aerdtbaer

11,30-12,00 Descanso / Coffee break

12,00-13,00 Conferencia / Plenary Lecture, *Paraninfo*

Celia Valiente Fernandez, Universidad Carlos III: "Studying Gender in Spanish Society: Past Achievements and Lines for Future Research"
Moderadora: Ana Laura Rodríguez Redondo

13,00-14,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, Paraninfo
"Cuerpo americano excepcional: a la búsqueda de su espacio creativo"
Mª Rosario Piqueras Fraile: "¿Excluyó un mañana para Margaret Mitchell?"; Isabel Mª García Conesa: "Maryse Condé y Toni Morrison: En busca de sus propias raíces"; Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio: "Zelda Fitzgerald: El conflicto por encontrar su propia identidad creativa"
Moderadora: Antonia Sagredo

- Sesión B, *Literatures*, Aula Histórica
Susana Gala Pellicer: "Devoción femenina: importancia del espacio cotidiano en los milagros de San Antonio de Padua"; Isabel Damaso Santos: "San Antonio en el teatro español: el culto femenino"; M. Gloria González Galván: "Antecedentes literarios de maltrato a la mujer en la antigua Grecia"
Moderadora: Malka Aiza

- Sesión C, *Social History and Discourse*, Salón de Grados
Omar Mounim: "Billboarding Bodies: Gender and the Reinvention of Patriarchy"; Maznah Ibrahim: "Managing Work, Managing Waste at Home: Negotiating the Challenges of Both Spheres - Some Perspectives from Malaysian Working Women"; Ramiro Nieto: "The Linguistic Path of 'Romance': a Systemic Analysis and Gender Comparison of Songs of the 1950s and the 2000s"
Moderadora: Noelia Hernández Real

14,30-16,00 Comida/Lunch

16,00-17,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Art*, Salón de Grados
Mesa redonda: "El discurso ambiental en la obra de la mujer artista del siglo XX" (Mara Victoria Sánchez-Giner, Lorena Amorós Blasco, Manuel Fernández Díaz).
Moderadora: Mara Victoria Sánchez-Giner

- Sesión B, *Literatures*, Paraninfo
Round Table: "Taming the 'Shrew': Feminist Explorations of the Notion of Domestication" (Martina Roig Molins, David Yague Gonzalez, Claudia Alonso Recarte).
Moderadora: David Yague Gonzalez

17,30-19,00 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Law and Society*, Salón de Grados
"The Key Role of Law: Latest Advances in Gender Diversity"
Eva Nieto Garrido: "El papel del Tribunal Constitucional en la igualdad de género"; Mª Consuelo Alonso García: "Mujer y medio ambiente urbano"; Magdalena Suarez Ojeda: "Intersectionality and Gender Mainstreaming in a Globalized World: Breaking the Classic Standard Paradigms"; Adoracion Perez Trujía: "Gender Representation on Company Boards. Do We Need New Rules?"
Moderadora: Mª Teresa González Minguez

- Sesión B, *Literatures*, Paraninfo
"Challenging Gendered Spaces in the Multicultural City"
Patricia Bastida Rodríguez: "Beyond Fear: Karachiite Femininities and Urban Intersection in Kamla Shamsie's *Kartography*"; Emilia María Durán Almaraz: "Once Upon a Time in the Bronx: Building Homeness in the Transnational City"; Miasol Eguibar Holgado: "Ashima's in-betweenness: Struggling for Space in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*"; Alicia Menéndez Tarrazo: "Inside my Home it Will Always Be Punjab: Private and Semi-public Spaces in Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*"
Moderadora: Isabel Carrera

- Sesión C, *Política y sociedad*, Aula Histórica
Yarin Le Bihan: "Género, raza y espacio: El imaginario de los hombres buscando una esposa según su fenotipo"; Myriam Mubikayi Rojo: "Excluidas y 'The Cult of True Womanhood.'"; Alba González Sanz: "El monstruo emancipado: el peligro del feminismo anglosajón en la obra pedagógica de María del Pilar Sinués (1835-1893)"
Moderadora: Myriam Mubikayi Rojo

- Sesión D, *Literatures*, A-200

Natacha Andrada De Gregorio: "La figura de la sombra en el espacio doméstico. Sobre el arquetipo de la sombra en cuentos fantásticos escritos por mujeres (finales del s.XIX- principios s.XX)"; Concepción Gutiérrez Blesa: "La personificación espacial femenina en *Carmilla* de Sheridan Le Fanu: El elemento gótico legendario en el hogar de Laura y la tumba de Carmilla"; Francisco Javier Sánchez-Verdejo Pérez: "El espacio interior en el gótico femenino: arquitectura y mente"

Moderadora: Francisco Javier Sánchez-Verdejo Pérez

Viernes, 18 de mayo, 2012 / Friday, May 18th, 2012

9,00-10,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures and Art*, Salón de Grados

Lorena Amorós Blasco, María Victoria Sánchez-Giner: "La mirada artística y femenina en la potestad de lo privado. Estrategias conciliadoras en la construcción cultural de la subjetividad femenina"; Remedios Perni Llorente: "La memoria indomesticable: Elizabeth Siddal"; Felisa Maldonado Fernández: "El hogar como metáfora de reclusión y falta de libertad como espacio liberador en la literatura y el arte"

Moderadora: Mariana Libertad Suarez

- Sesión B, *Literatures*, Aula Histórica

Chi-sum Garfield Lau: "The Discourse of Family, Gender and Violence: J.M. Coetzee's *In the Heart of the Country*"; Cynthia Lytle: "Deconstructing Home in Zoë Wicomb's *Playing in the Light*"; Rebeca Gualberto Valverde: "Maladjusted (Cross)Gendered Spaces: Sites of Disruptive (Destitute) Sexuality in Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*"

Moderadora: Rebeca Gualberto Valverde

- Sesión C, *Espacios y educación*, Perseinfo

Mariana Zoe Arcanillo: "Juventudes y estereotipos de género en el ámbito escolar: continuidades y resistencias"; Presentación Ros Vallejo, Desiree Garcia Gil: "Mujer y espacio social: Estereotipos narrativos femeninos en actividades de creación en la formación para maestros"; Jane Martínez Palacios: "La construcción de los espacios públicos y privados en la literatura infantil y juvenil"

Moderadora: Carmen Méndez García

10,30-11,00 Conferencia / Plenary Lecture, Perseinfo

Margarita Baranano Cid, UCM: "Abrevesando fronteras. Vidas transmigrantes, escuelas, hogares y género"

Moderadora: Isabel Durán Giménez-Rico

11,30-12,00 Descanso / Coffee break

12,00-13,00 Conferencia / Plenary Lecture, Perseinfo

Noelia Hernando Real, UCM: "Dramatic Geopathology: Self and Space in Plays by Contemporary North-American Women Playwrights"

Moderadora: Barbara Oziebko Rajkowska

13,00-14,00 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, Perseinfo

Shan-Hsiang Shih: "De-dystopia, or A City of Her Own—Rethinking Gender, Space, and the Subversion of Dystopian Tradition in *The Handmaid's Tale*"; Barbara Oziebko Rajkowska: "Stage Space and the Deconstruction of Gender and Ethnic Stereotypes: Young Jean Lee's *Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven*"

Moderadora: Noelia Hernando Real

- Sesión B, *Literatures and Art*, Aula Histórica

Dorota Witsniewska: "The American Psycho(sis) Goes Suburbia"; Donna Drucker: "Speculum, Penis-Camera, and Vaginal Photoplethysmographs: Seeing the Interiors of Women as Sexual Space"

Moderadora: María Soares

- Sesión C, *Cine*, Salón de Grados

Marta Torres Cacharrón: "Cencienta, Yasmin y Mulán: Desafíos al espacio doméstico en Disney Land"; Mª del Carmen Camus Camus: "La violencia de género feminizada a través del doble filtro de la producción y la censura en el

Western"; Juan Gonzalez Ebeberria: "I'll Be Next Door If You Need Me": El hotel como refugio y cárcel de masculinidad en *Batton Fink*"

Moderadora: Jane Martínez Palacios

14,00-15,30 Comida/Lunch

15,30-16,30 Comunicaciones / Papers

- Sesión A, *Literatures*, Salón de Grados

Angela Frattarola: "The Crafting of a Bohemian Voice: Jean Rhys's Private Places and Inner Spaces"; Noelia Mallá: "A Gendered Reading of Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo*"

Moderadora: Noelia Mallá

- Sesión B, *Literatures and Art*, Perseinfo

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