



THE LONELINESS OF THE “WILD HEART”: CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE PSYCHIC PAIN IN THE WORK OF CLARICE LISPECTOR

*Pedro Walisson Gomes Feitosa*¹
*Mariana Oliveira Aragão*²
*Pedro Lourenzo Oliveira Cunha*³
*Heloísa Fernandes Caraca*⁴
*Fabio Gomes de Oliveira*⁵
*Yasmin de Alencar Grangeiro*⁶
*Modesto Leite Rolim Neto*⁷

Abstract: The book ‘Near to The Wild Heart’ was the first novel of the writer Clarice Lispector, it tells the story of Joana, a character that since childhood shows herself provocative, questioner and uncertain of self and from the own world. Lispector’s character reveals, since the first phrases from the book, a suffering for something that her own can’t understand. A silent and constant pain. It remained for the character, in the meantime, to wait. We seek to analyze the descriptions about the suffering of the character, associating with the psychosocial representation of the woman in the work of Clarice as a representative of The Generation of 45. This article followed a method of documentary analysis, using, in addition to Lispector’s masterpiece, bibliographic studies related to the themes of the research. The character Joana faces a discomfort of imprecise location and undefined location. Yet, a suffering that transgress in time. A wild time is drawn in the work, in which Joana lives in streams of events. The work is a rupture of linearity. The childhood wouldn’t be only a memory of the character, but the own present alive. We highlight as a latent difficulty the reduced amount of research in this methodological line that could contribute to the inferences about the literary work of Lispector. Certainly Joana faces a process until then unrecognizable in Brazilian literature: the pain of the lack of the “I”. Knowing that something is missing and awaiting the revelation of this lack in silence, reverberates in the character a psychic pain.

Keywords: Clarice Lispector, Literature, Psychology, Mental health

¹ Federal University of Cariri, Ceará, Brazil. gomesfeitosa.walisson@outlook.com

² Federal University of Cariri, Ceará, Brazil. marianaaragaonovo@gmail.com

³ Federal University of Cariri, Ceará, Brazil. pedro-l-cunha@hotmail.com

⁴ Regional University of Cariri, Ceará, Brazil. helocfernandes@hotmail.com

⁵ Regional University of Cariri, Ceará, Brazil. prof-fabio1@hotmail.com

⁶ University Center Leão Sampaio, Ceará, Brazil. yasmindealencar2@live.com

⁷ Federal University of Cariri, Ceará, Brazil. modestorolim@yahoo.com.br

Introduction

Every pain is, above all, a wait. Initiated after a specific moment for each human existence, the fact, being capable of breaking the psychological balance of the people, initiates a process of psychic pain. Diverging to the principles of the medical semiology, this painful episode, commonly, can't be located, it's impassive to qualify, independent from the chronology of hours and days. Maybe undressing a process of psychic pain, Clarice Lispector denotes in her inaugural work about her character Joana: "The best thing was to remain in silence. Another thing: if she had any pain and if while it hurt, she looked at the watch hands of the clock, she saw that the minutes counted in the clock were passing and the pain continued to hurt. Or otherwise, even when it didn't hurt anything in her, if she stood in front of the watch peering, what she wasn't feeling was also bigger than the minutes counted on the clock. Now, when there was joy or anger, she would run to the clock and watched the minutes in vain" (Lispector, 1980).

Lispector's character reveals, since the first phrases from the work, suffering for something that she can't understand herself. A silent and constant pain. It remained for the character, in the meantime, to wait. To keep your feelings, your necessity of transcend, to live, this way, always near a solitary "Wild Heart". This study analyzes the descriptions about the character's pain, associating to the psychosocial representation of the woman in the work of Clarice Lispector and in the historical context in which it is inserted. This study followed the method of documentary analysis using besides the masterpiece of Clarice Lispector, bibliographical studies related to the theme. We also consider pertinent a brief history and theoretical foundation on the psychic pain and the work under analysis.

The construction of the rupture

Published in 1944, 'Near to the Wild Heart' was the first novel of the writer Clarice Lispector and represents one of the remarkable works of the third phase of the literary-artistic moment of Brazilian modernism, also called "Generation of 45". The Generation of 45 is inserted in the historical context of the redemocratization of Brazil, with the end of the New State (1937- 1945) the end of World War II, Nazi totalitarianism, the beginning of the Cold War and the arms race (Silva, 2014). In this context of global geopolitical remodeling, modernist prose also underwent transformations, having in Clarice Lispector as the exponent of an intimate and subjective literature, marked by the flow of consciousness and the

exploration of the mind and human psychology, counteracting the tendency of literary publications at the time. Literature was then dominated by a regionalist aesthetic, where the characters were constructed, highlighting their difficulties in the face of the social reality of the country, and Clarice, in an innovative way, introduces a literature based primarily on the existential problematic (Pereira, 2016).

The work tells the story of Joana, a character that since childhood shows herself provocative, questioner and an uncertainty about herself and her own world. She briefly loses her parents and starts to live with her uncles, where there is a disturbed coexistence. After stealing a book, the family conflict intensifies, and Joana is sent to a boarding school. At this point, the reader can visualize the development of a different character that displaces those commonly constructed by novels of its time. Her uncertainties and flows of knowledge that intersect childhood and adulthood occur during the work and make part of her process of self-knowledge (Gazzineli, 2015).

Clarice reveals a character with a peculiar desire for the “wildness”. A desire of going beyond the conventions socially accepted and expected for a good person, with even more restrictions because it is a woman’s case. “Kindness gives me the urge to vomit. Kindness was warm and light, smelled like meat kept long ago. Without completely rotting after all. They refreshed it from time to time, they put on some condiment, enough to keep it warm and still.” (Lispector, 1980).

After leaving the boarding school, Joana married Otávio. Although married, the relationship between the two is also troubled, and a sense of repudiation for him and the relationship soon emerges. There was no empathy or love between the couple. Otávio, who felt diminished by Joana’s indomitable strength, began to maintain a loving relationship with Lydia, his ex-fiancée, whom became pregnant of him, which would be the cause of his separation from Joana, as well the difference of temperament and understanding of the world between them. After the separation, Joana meets an unknown man and with him has some dates, which for her would be just another step to reach her self-knowledge. However, the stranger and Joana embark on different routes and she goes on a trip alone, without destiny. That would be the final step to discover what she really wanted, giving an end to its wait.

Clarice Lispector, by constructing the character Joana, the author breaks with the stereotyped image of the woman conceived by the romantic works of the nineteenth century written predominantly by men. The female image in literature was until then, a male construction, and Clarice by drawing Joana’s strong personality, breaks this pattern (Fernandes, 2010). The so-called bad attitudes and her flow of consciousness in search of the

self-knowledge shows an anguished character, that suffers from a process of pain and growing psychic suffering for passing the life only near the “Wild Heart”, making herself lonely and distant from discovering what was missing for her (Nasio, 1997).

Starting from the Freud ‘s thought that the experience of pain comes from a failure of the mechanisms of protection against the excessive excitation of the neuronal system, ϕ (phi) and ψ (psi), of perception (Rocha, 2011), this extreme excitation causes a tension that can culminates with the unpleasure or with the pain. The most optimistic closure is when this tension comes from a lack, also denominated “desire” by Nasio, causes displeasure by the tolerable state of dissatisfaction (Nasio, 1997), since existence is founded on dissatisfaction, the individual is faced with desires and, in order to achieve satisfaction, the individual strives, however, after the satisfaction there is the return of the state of dissatisfaction (Schaefer, 2012).

However, if this dissatisfaction is too much or unmeasured, the desire loses its goal and the pain appears. The psychic pain is constantly defined in a wrong way as exclusively the pain of losing a beloved. This way, the psychic pain results from the wreck of the fantasy, an unconscious representation, being this pain centered on the confrontation of the subject with his own inner self. This rupture of fantasy unleashes a pain that has an intra-subjective effect: the brutal and immediate encounter between the subject and his own maddened desire. This desire remains constantly trying to rescue the fantasy and these attempts promote intense manifestation of the pulse, causing pain, born from a tumultuous desire, contrary to what is expected, which is to reduce, it intensifies (Nasio, 1997).

The character Joana faces a discomfort of inaccurate location and undefined quality. Yet, a suffering that transgress in time. A *wild* time is drawn in the work, in which Joana lives in streams of events. The work is a rupture of linearity. The childhood wouldn’t be only a memory of the character, but the own present alive: “It is not nostalgia, because I have now my childhood more than when it was actually happening” (Lispector, 1980). Transgressing in her own time, the heroine of the work creates new chronological forms that supports her unpredictable feelings.

Certainly, Joana faces a process until then unrecognizable in Brazilian literature: the pain of the lack of the “I”. Knowing that something is missing and awaiting the revelation of this lack in silence, reverberates in the character a psychic pain. The lack and, consequently, the waiting for the “wild”. In this bias, loneliness is imposed upon her, once the “wild” is, irreversibly, a solitary patient. As she grows up, the character transmits to assume the

consequences of herself (the “I”) and passes it on to her cohabitants, who consider her to be a transgressor of values.

Final Considerations

Clarice breaks the pattern of female characters drawn by men’s perceptions and further challenges readers of her works to plunge into the universe of the innermost desires and identify, thereby, their own “wild hearts”. Joana, therefore, assumes the space of her alterity in a place that woman takes the place of absence. Consonant Sandra Regina Goulart de Almeida, the heroine “can everything”, imposing herself in a phallogocentric system. “The discovery of the power that habits in her own collides with the understanding that her words have power and capacity to create a place of the feminine speech of transgression” (Souza, 2008). By this principle, the work historically represents a rupture in Brazilian literature and perhaps, universal.

References

- Lispector, C.(1980). *Perto do coração selvagem*. 7. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira.
- Nasio, J.-D.(1997). *O livro da dor e do amor*. Zahar.
- Silva, J. C.(2014). Corpo e transgressão em *Perto do Coração Selvagem*: as vastas interpretações de Joana. Retrieved from: <<http://dspace.bc.uepb.edu.br/jspui/bitstream/123456789/4677/1/PDF%20%20Juliane%20C%3%A2ndido%20da%20Silva.pdf>>. Accessed in: 29 sep. 2018.
- Pereira, M. C. S. R. (2016). *Perto do Coração Selvagem: Um Discurso Lírico-Poético e Sintaxe Narrativa*. Retrieved from: <<http://www.ple.uem.br/defesas/pdf/mcsrperreira.pdf> >. Accessed in: 29 sep. 2018.
- Gazzinelli, G.G. (2017). Uma Leitura Espinozista de *Perto do Coração Selvagem*. Retrieved from: <<https://www.periodicos.ufop.br/pp/index.php/raf/article/viewFile/468/424>>. Accessed in: 29 sep. 2018.
- Fernandes, C.C. (2010). Transgressões na Obra Clariceana: Uma Leitura de *Perto do Coração Selvagem*. Retrieved from: <<http://www.ufjf.br/darandina/files/2010/12/Transgress%3%B5es-na-obra-clariceana-uma-leitura-de-Perto-do-cora%3%A7%C3%A3o-selvagem.pdf>>. Accessed in: 29 sep. 2018
- Rocha, Z. (2011). A dor física e psíquica na metapsicologia freudiana. *Revista Subjetividades*, 11(2), p. 591-621.

Schaefer, L. R. (2012). Schopenhauer: o ethos e o mundo. *Cultura e fé*, Porto Alegre. (35), p. 319-332.

Almeida, S. R. G. (1998). A modernidade da escrita de Clarice Lispector. In: Souza, E. M. de (org). *Modernidades tardias*. Belo Horizonte: UFMG. p.187-196.

How to cite this article (APA format):

Feitosa, P. W. G.; Aragão, M. O.; Cunha, P. L. O.; Caraca, H. F.; Oliveira, G. F.; Grangeiro, de A. Y.; Rolim Neto, M. L. (2018). The Loneliness of the “wild heart”: Considerations about the psychic pain in the work of Clarice Lispector. *Am. In. Mult. J.*, (5) 3, 89-94.

Received: 2/04/2018; Accepted: 2/16/2018.