

Global Perspectives on Women's Writing

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When comparing narratives written by men to those composed by women, Isabel Allegro de Magalhães, author of *The Sex of Texts*, argues that what differentiates the two is precisely the author's perspective. Referring to women in particular, she writes:

They therefore lived the experience from another point of view, and this is one of the reasons why their narratives are so clearly different. But, on the other hand, this difference in viewpoint has to do with something more permanent: with a perception and attention that women, due to their history, were led to develop (Magalhães, 1995, p.30, our translation).

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Building upon such a premise, this volume focuses on contemporary women's writing that encompasses a multicultural and global perspective. Our objective is to bring together texts of different genres by women writers—from Brazil and around the world—who address different themes, from a very micro and local view to global/international and multi-ethnic issues. Our intention is to present possibilities that include literary analyses as well as creative texts for which the starting point is women's authorship.

With this in mind, we organized our dossier from two perspectives. The first considers the proposed literary genres and the second the place of origin of the authors of the texts. We started with prose, then poetry, and on to theater. We started in the Americas (Brazil and the United States), passed through Africa and Europe, and returned to our starting point (South America and the Caribbean). We wanted to highlight the diversity and universality of the proposals, covering the most varied themes directly related to the feminine and/or the subordinated place that women occupy, such as motherhood, writing, decoloniality, sexuality, violence, *gaslighting*, identity, body, and patriarchy, among others. It is worth highlighting, however, that some themes found here go beyond the issue of the feminine and also deal with issues that do not only concern gender, but intersect with other question such as race, stereotyping, the literary figure of the flaneur, and the theatre of the absurd.

From a theoretical point of view, our dossier is also multiple and diverse. The articles presented here engage with a range of theorists, national and international references from various areas of the Humanities and Social Sciences (Literature, Philosophy, History, Sociology), such as Adrienne

Rich, Ángel Rama, Antonio Candido, bell hooks, Conceição Evaristo, Édouard Glissant, Félix Guattari, Gaston Bachelard, Gilles Deleuze, Grada Kilomba, Helene Cixous, Homi Bhabha, Lelia Gonzalez, Luce Irigaray, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Michel Foucault, Michelle Perrot, Octavio Paz, Patricia Hill Collins, Roland Barthes, Simone de Beauvoir, Virginia Woolf, Zygmunt Bauman, Walter Benjamin.

The first section of our dossier consists of four articles that analyze works of prose, especially novels. We start with “Psychological Violence in Contemporary Literature: Scenes of the Invisible.” In it, the authors Daniel Almeida Machado and Angela Maria Guida begin by drawing attention to psychological abuse as a recurring theme in women’s literature dating back to at least the nineteenth century. From there, their comparative analysis of *In the Dream House* by US author Carmen Maria Machado and *With All My Resentment* by Brazilian novelist Bruna Maia highlights how a new generation of women writers are engaging with this difficult subject in a context of increasingly legal and social visibility. Second, “Compose *With*: Crossing Voices in the Body of Writing” examines the co-authorial dimension of *Her Corner*, written by Ana Kiffer and Marie-Aude Alia, from Brazil and Togo respectively. As authors Luciéle Bernardi de Souza and Luciane Bernardi de Souza argue, this collaborative prose innovates an alternative mode of writing that challenges the conventions of Western authorship.

Next, in “*My Home Is Where I Am*: Writing, Identity and Decoloniality in Igiaba Scego,” Daniela Araújo Virgens and Adriana de Borges Gomes draw on theorists such as Merleau-Ponty, Zygmunt Bauman, and Aníbal Quijano to offer a decolonial reading of Italian-Somali writer Igiaba Scego’s *My*

Home Is Where I Am. Reading the novel through the lens of Conceição Evaristo's concept of *Escrevivência*, the authors posit that Scego uses her writing to uncover hidden stories in the face of the coloniality of power and fascism. The final article in this section, "The Wrinting of Sally Rooney's and Convergences with the *Flâneur*," explore the aesthetics of walking in the city of Dublin in Rooney's novels *Conversations among Friends* and *Normal People*. Taking a phenomenological approach drawing on various theorists, author Andressa do Nascimento Gonçalves reads the protagonists as exemplifying what Lauren Elkin calls the "flâneuse perspective."

In the second section, we continue with prose narrative, but this time examining the short story, which is the focus of the following three articles. The first is Larissa Dias Barbosa's "'Grandma, Are You a Lesbian?': Compulsory Heterosexuality and Plural Lesbian Existences in Natalia Borges Polesso" In it, the authors draw on the work of various feminist theorists of lesbianism in analyzing the story's intertextuality with Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*. Next we have "'Declaring Not Knowing How to Sign, Born December 31st' by Estercilia Simanca Pushaina: The Proper Name as Territory," by Tatiane Silva Santos and Shirlene Rohr de Souza. As these contributors show through their decolonial analysis of the story, the Wayuu indigenous author denounces common practices by the Colombian government, including the forced standardization of Wayuu people's names and birth dates. And last but not least in this section is "The Contemporary Gothic: Backwards Motherhood In The Shortstory "Conservas", by Samanta Schweblin.

In it, authors Fabianna Simão Bellizzi Carneiro and Marisa Martins Gama-Khalil argue that a new generation of Gothic

narratives like Schweblin's preserve some Gothic conventions (such as the poetics of anguish) while dispensing with others (such as ghosts, terror, and blood).

In the third section, we come to three articles that deal with poetry written by women. The first of them is "Ângela Lopes Galvão and Celinha: Pioneering Women of Cadernos Negros", deals with poetry written by black women. Author Ricardo Silva Ramos de Souza analyzes two poems, "Retraction" and "Interrogation," with the goal of bringing greater critical attention to these two underrecognized Black women poets, Galvão and Celinha (Célia Aparecida Pereira), respectively. In "Poetry Must be Kept: The Instant and Nature in Lenilde Freitas," authors Thaísa Rochelle Pereira Martins and José Hélder Pinheiro Alves examine the natural world and time as foundational elements that inform the lyrical imagery in Lenilde Freitas's poetry. And finally, in "The Representation of the Female Figure in Ida Vitale's poetry," Ana Carolina Oliveira Freitag analyzes the poems "A Woman" and "Fortune" and presents an overview of this important Uruguayan poet's career.

The last section concludes with two very different articles, one focusing on a theatrical play, and the other on black female writing in the Caribbean. In "Notes of the Theater of the Absurd in *The Birds of the Night* by Hilda Hilst," Ana Cristina Steffen examines one of Hilst's eight theatrical works, pointing out aspects of the play that correspond with elements of the Theatre of the Absurd as theorized by Martin Esslin. Lastly, in "Breaking the Horizon of Expectations Regarding the Literary Works of Black Caribbean Women," Jhonnatas dos Santos Sousa draws on the work of several theorists to highlight the ways in which

black Caribbean women writers challenge stereotypes and expose their role in discriminatory discourse.

In addition to the twelve articles of literary criticism that make up the dossier in this volume, we have included creative texts as well. The first is the essay “A Much Larger Room: A Dialogue with Virginia Woolf on a Young Woman’s Experience in Northeast Brazil Academia”. In it, Jorge Luiz Adeodato Junior and Joana Dávila Jovino Farias take as their inspiration Virginia Woolf’s classic 1929 essay “A Room of One’s Own” (translated into Portuguese as “Um teto todo seu,” or literally as a *ceiling* of one’s one) reimagining its premise from the perspective of a young Brazilian woman who is just starting out her career at a public university in the Brazilian Northeast. Not only does their text highlight the continued relevance of Woolf’s observations a century later in the Brazilian context, it also invites reflection on the hurdles faced by young Brazilian women embarking on literary careers.

Below we present an excerpt from the novel, still unpublished, entitled *You Are My Life*, by Egyptian-American writer Pauline Kaldas, which portrays the intertwining of the act of cooking with the characters’ dance movements to the sound of Egyptian music. These are very sensorial, imagery excerpts, presented in a very descriptive and poetic way. We have also included poems by Palestinian-American author Lisa Suhair Majaj, whose focal theme is the current condition of the Palestinian people in the face of the atrocities perpetrated by Israel since October 2023.

We close with two articles in the Free Section that also discuss questions of women and gender. The first of these is “Notes for an Analysis of the Relationship between Corpority

and Authority in the Field of Comics.” In it, Lucas Piter Alves Costa inserts comic books into scholarly debates over questions of authorship. Drawing on the work of Foucault, the author explores the role that the body plays in the case of comic book artist Laerte Coutinho, who famously changed gender while retaining her authorial name. Then, in “Multimodal Analysis of the Book *Voices in the Park: When Verbal and Visual Text Come Together to Construct Meanings*” Patricia Michelotti applies the metafunctions of *Visual Design Grammar* to the study of images in children’s books, particularly Anthony Browne’s *Voices in the Park*.

There are also two reviews that discuss poetry written by women in Brazil, namely: “Ana Martins Marques Scratches the Silence” and “Feminist Effects on the New Generation of Brazilian Poets: *The 29 Poets Today*.” The first review focuses on the work *Cross Out This Word* by Minas Gerais poet Ana Martins Marques in the light of Giorgio Agamben’s theory of the Contemporary. There is also a dialogue with the criticism of Wilberth Salgueiro. The second review, on the work of Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, examines transformations in the literary field relating to the place occupied by women through an analysis that reflects on the geographic, cultural and ethnic diversity of the authors included in the anthology.

Our goal with this issue of *Scripta* was to bring together a unique group of women’s voices from different parts of the world representing a range of literary forms and approaches. By juxtaposing essays and creative works by writers who are not typically examined together, we hope that this collection will spur new dialogues and ways of thinking about how women are reshaping the literary field. Therefore, we invite our readers

to delve into this set of carefully selected texts that make up this volume. We can say that it certainly represents diverse and relevant perspectives on texts written by women. We hope your reading is thought-provoking and useful, just as it was for us.

The organizers.