

Panel 4: Gender and Migration

1. Leonor Arfuch, U de Buenos Aires [larfuch@yahoo.com.ar]

El exilio de la infancia: memorias y retornos

Leonor Arfuch (Universidad de Buenos Aires, IIGG)

En el marco de las dolorosas migraciones actuales, mi trabajo se propone abordar la problemática del exilio político, donde la opción de salir “fuera de límites” se juega a menudo entre la vida y la muerte, a partir de una experiencia singular: la de hijos cuyos padres tuvieron que escapar del accionar represivo de las dictaduras latinoamericanas, la de Chile (1973- 1989), la de Argentina, (1976-1983). Hijos que nacieron en el exilio, afectados por la carga traumática familiar, exiliados-hijos, los que partieron, junto con sus padres a un incierto destino, llevando apenas unos pocos objetos como vestigios de lo que fue el hogar. Algunos de ellos fueron luego dejados en Cuba, al cuidado de “padres sociales” en comunidad, cuando sus padres militantes decidieron volver a sus países a enfrentar las dictaduras. Mi análisis se centrará en la obra reciente de cuatro mujeres que vivieron esas experiencias, cuya narrativa también está fuera de los límites de los géneros (genre) canónicos: dos escritoras, Verónica Gerber-Bicceci y Laura Alcoba, con novelas autobiográficas y autoficcionales; dos cineastas, Macarena Aguiló (Chile) y Virginia Croatto (Argentina), con documentales autobiográficos y testimoniales. Pese a las diferencias de estilo al abordar una experiencia común, aparecen inequívocamente marcas de género (gender) -miradas, imágenes, apreciaciones, valoraciones- que expresan una peculiar subjetividad, donde lo personal se articula a la memoria colectiva y tiene, por ende, un definido impacto ético y político.

Childhood Exile: Memories and Returns

Leonor Arfuch (Universidad de Buenos Aires, IIGG)

In the context of contemporary forced migrations, my paper tackles the problem of political exile. I will take as my main area of concern a unique experience—that of children whose parents were obliged to escape the repression of the Chilean (1973-1989) and Argentinian (1976-1983) dictatorships and for whom living “outside the lines” was often a matter of life and death. I am referring to children born in exile and who were affected by family trauma, or exiled-children who moved with their parents toward an uncertain destiny, carrying with them only a few objects as vestiges of home. Some of these children were later sent to Cuba to live in the care of “social parents,” caretakers who took responsibility for the children when the children’s militant parents decided to return to their countries of origin to fight against the dictatorships. My analysis will focus on recent works by four women who have lived through these experiences and whose narratives lie “outside the lines” of canonical genres: Verónica Gerber-Bicceci and Laura Alcoba (Argentina), who have written autobiographical and self-fictional novels; Macarena Aguiló (Chile) and Virginia Croatto (Argentina), who have produced autobiographical and testimonial films. Despite differences in style, we find in their cultural production some undeniable marks of gender –looks, images, assessments- that reveal unique subjectivities. In all of these narratives,

personal experience interfaces with collective memory and, for that reason, has an important ethical and political impact.

Leonor Arfuch is Full Professor at the University of Buenos Aires, in the Social Sciences School. She is also Director of Research on Cultural Studies at the Gino Germani Research Institute (UBA), where she has conducted several projects since 1992. She works on questions of subjectivity, identities, memory, and narrative in literature, arts, and the media from a multidisciplinary perspective that combines discourse analysis, literary critique, semiotics, and aesthetics. She has been a Visiting Professor at Essex University; Universidad Autónoma de México; Iberoamericana, Pedagógica, Pontificia Universidad Católica, and Universidad Diego Portales, among others. She also served as a Tinker Visiting Professor at Stanford. She was awarded the UBA Thalmann Scholarship (1998); the British Academy Professorship Award (2004); and the Guggenheim Fellowship (2007). She is the author of several books, including: *La entrevista, una invención dialógica* (1995, 2nd edition 2010); *Diseño y Comunicación. Teorías y enfoques críticos* (1997); *El espacio biográfico. Dilemas de la subjetividad contemporánea* (2002); *O Espaço Biográfico: Dilemas da Subjetividade Contemporânea; Crítica cultural entre política y poética* (2008); *Identidades, sujetos y subjetividades* (2002); *Pensar este tiempo. Espacios, afectos, pertenencias* (2005); *Imperfecto. Lecturas críticas del acontecer* (2008); *Visualidades sin fin. Imagen y diseño en la sociedad global* (2009).

2. Rose Mary Allen, U of Curaçao [adr550@hotmail.com]

Women Making Freedom: Rethinking Gender in Caribbean Intra-Regional Migration from a Curaçaoan Perspective

In recent decades, the number of scholarly publications on the feminization of migration has grown exponentially, as women increasingly migrate in the contemporary era of globalisation. Although migration is rooted in Caribbean history, very little attention has been paid to the autonomous migration of women in the past and they have been made invisible by sidelining gender in historiography. Yet, in similar ways to men, women in the Caribbean left their countries and migrated to seek employment elsewhere.

The intra-migration movements of women from Curaçao to other Caribbean countries provides sufficient evidence that also women from a Dutch colony in the Caribbean participated independently from their males in these migration dynamics. After emancipation in 1863 in the Dutch colonies, a large group of people of African descent, both men and women remained at the bottom of the social hierarchy and used the demand for labor in other Caribbean countries to realize their aspirations.

My paper, “Women Making Freedom: Rethinking Gender in Caribbean Intra-regional Migration from a Curaçaoan Perspective” draws on archival documents and some auto/biographies of Curaçaoan women who have participated in intra-Caribbean migrations in the 19th and 20th century. I will look at the experiences and concerns of these working-class women, migrating from one post-emancipation Caribbean society to another at a time when these societies were still struggling to deal with the legacy of slavery and colonialism. The paper also situates the migration of these women in the wider context of Caribbean women participating

independently in migration movements in search of work and it will consider the implications for studying migration as a survival strategy for women in particular in post-emancipation Caribbean societies

Hende muhe hasiendo libertat: konsiderando genero den migrashon intra-regional for di un perpektiva Kurasoleno

Den dekadanan resien, e kantidat di publikashonnan sientífiko riba femininashon di migrashon a krese masha hopi, komo hende muhé masi mas ta migrá den e period kontemporareano di globalisashon. Anke ku migrashon tin rais den historia di Karibe, poko atenshon a keda duna na e migrashon outónomo di hende muhé den pasado i nan a keda invisibel dor di omete hende muhé for di historiografía. Sin embargo, meskos ku hende hòmber, hende muhé den Karibe tambe a bandoná nan país i a migrá pa buska empleo otro kaminda.

E movement intra-migrashon di hende muhé for di Kòrsou na otro paisnan den Karibe ta duna sufisiente evidensha ku hende muhé for di e kolonia ulandes a partisipá independientemente for di nan hende hòmber den e dinámika di migrashon. Despues di 1863 den e colonial Ulandes, a grupo grandi di hende di desendensia afrikano, tantu hende hòmber i hende muhe a keda na base di e hierarkia.

Mi ponensha “Hende muhé hasiendo libertat: konsiderando genero den migrashon intra-regional for di un perspektiva Kurasoleño” ta basa riba dokumentonan di archif i algún outo biografia di Kòrsou ku a partisipá den e migrashon intra-Karibe den siglo 19 i siglo 20. Mi lo wak e ekperensha i preokupashon di e hende muhé trahado, migrando for di post emansipashon sosiedat Karibeño na e otro den un tempu ora e sosiedatnan tabata xxxx pa dil ku e legato di esklabitut i kolonialismu. E paper ta situata e migrashon di e hende muhe den un konteksto mas amplia di hende muhe di Karibe partisipando independentoemente en buska di trabou i e ta considera e implikashon pa studia e stratelia di sobrevensha di hende muhe en particular di sosiedatnan d Karibe post-emansipashon.

Rose Mary Allen was born in Curaçao and studied Anthropology at the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. She obtained her doctorate at the University of Utrecht. Allen has been conducting oral history interviews on the islands of the Dutch Caribbean. She is working as a freelance researcher and as a part-time lecturer at the University of Curaçao, where she teaches Caribbean studies. She has authored and co-authored several curricula on issues of Curaçao culture and society for the University of Curaçao and other institutions. She has co-published, edited and published several books and articles on the cultural and social history of Curaçao with special attention on cultural traditions, migration, gender studies, and cultural diversity. Allen has served as a representative of the government of Curaçao in numerous committees on cultural and on gender issues. In 2015, she was awarded the Cola Debrot Prize, Curaçao’s most prestigious national award in the area of culture, art and science, for her research on oral history. At the moment, she is a postdoc in the research project Traveling Caribbean Heritage, KITLV, University of Leiden and University of Curaçao, and in the research project of the University of Amsterdam ram ‘Cultural Practices of Citizenship under Conditions of Fragmented Sovereignty:

Gendered and Sexual Citizenship in Curaçao and Bonaire, Universiteit van Amsterdam, and University of Curaçao.

3. Farida Abla, Concordia U [abla.farida@gmail.com]

Iranian Women's Autobiographies: Hybridity and Gender in the Diaspora

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, many Iranian families fled to the United States. Their girl children grew up at the “border” between Iran and the US to become first generation Iranian/American women. This paper focuses on three autobiographies the latter wrote in English and examines how they have been influenced by the authors' diasporic identities. It also considers the politics of production, consumption and reception of these autobiographies by the American public and the international audiences.

Drawing from the feminist transnational and postcolonial theories that posit these texts as a form of knowledge production, the paper addresses the question of how gender shapes these representations. By analyzing how the authors represent their lives in their country of origin (i.e. Iran), experience the Islamic Revolution first hand, and portray their life journeys in the United States. This paper explores the differences and similarities in these texts across various identity markers such as religion, education, and socio-economic class. Moreover, it argues that the authors depict and attempt to rectify the political, cultural, and historical prejudices they face while growing up in the United States. It asserts that they articulate what Homi Bhabha defines as “hybrid” and “ambivalent” identities; and that they facilitate the traveling of knowledge from the First World (i.e. the United States) to the Third World (i.e. Iran). Furthermore, this paper aims to fill the gaps in the research conducted about these autobiographies by shedding light on the history of Iranian women autobiography writing and its characteristics.

Autobiografias das iranianas: hibridismo e gênero na diáspora

Depois da Revolução Iraniana em 1979, muitas famílias iranianas fugiram para os Estados Unidos. As meninas que cresceram na “fronteira” entre o Irã e os EUA se tornaram a primeira geração de mulheres irano-americanas. Este artigo destaca três autobiografias escritas em inglês por essas mulheres e examina como as identidades diaspóricas das autoras influenciaram esses textos. Considera também a política de produção, consumo e recepção dessas autobiografias pelo público americano e audiências internacionais. Partindo das teorias transnacionais e pós-coloniais feministas que colocam esses textos como uma forma de produção de conhecimento, o artigo tenta responder à questão de como o gênero molda essas representações. Isso é feito por meio da análise das maneiras em que as autoras representam suas vidas no país de origem (Irã), vivem a Revolução Iraniana e retratam suas histórias de vida nos Estados Unidos. Este artigo explora as diferenças e semelhanças entre os textos no que diz respeito a vários marcadores identitários, tais como religião, educação e classe socioeconômica. Além disso, argumenta que as autoras retratam e tentam retificar os preconceitos políticos, culturais e históricos que enfrentaram durante a infância e a juventude nos Estados Unidos. Afirma que elas articulam o que Homi Bhabha define como identidades “híbridas” e “ambivalentes”; e que facilitam a

difusão do conhecimento do Primeiro Mundo (Estados Unidos) para o Terceiro Mundo (Irã). Este artigo também busca preencher lacunas na pesquisa conduzida sobre essas autobiografias ao colocar em foco a história e as características da escrita autobiográfica das iranianas.

[Traduzido por Beatriz Vital - vitalb@riseup.net]

Farida Abla is a Ph.D. candidate in the Humanities Program at Concordia University where she serves as a Research Associate at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. Her research focuses on transnational feminism, cultural studies, Diasporas and autobiographies written by Iranian women in North America. She holds an M.F.A. in Translation from the University of Arkansas and a License in Translation and Languages (Arabic, English & French) from the Lebanese University.