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The New Latin American Women Chroniclers. Violence Against Women in Contemporary Narrative Journalism

*Las nuevas cronistas latinoamericanas. La violencia contra las mujeres en
el periodismo narrativo contemporáneo*

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Abstract:

This article highlights a segment of the diverse array of contemporary Latin American women chroniclers, born in and after 1980s, whose significant contributions and exceptional journalistic quality have been marginalized, undervalued, or dismissed as outliers within narrative journalism. Specifically, this study explores their portrayal of violence against women as a central and defining theme within contemporary chronicles published in the 21st century.

Keywords: women chroniclers, narrative journalism, contemporary chronicle, feminism, violence against women.

Resumen:

Este artículo muestra la amplia nómina de mujeres cronistas latinoamericanas contemporáneas que, pese a su numerosa presencia y a su gran calidad periodística, han sido invisibilizadas, infravaloradas y/o tratadas como excepciones dentro del periodismo narrativo. El estudio se centra en el análisis de algunos de los trabajos publicados en pleno siglo XXI realizados por cronistas nacidas a partir de los años 80 en países latinoamericanos. En particular, se analiza el tratamiento de la violencia contra las mujeres como tema crucial y estructurador de la crónica contemporánea.

Palabras clave: mujeres cronistas, periodismo narrativo, crónica contemporánea, feminismo, violencia contra las mujeres.

1. INTRODUCTION

In its contemporary form as the chronicle, narrative journalism distinguishes itself from both modernist chronicles (Ramos, 1989; Rotker, 2005) and the foundational “Chronicle of the Indies” (Añón, 2008). Today’s narrative chronicle is deeply rooted in journalism yet transcends mere information transmission (Poblete Alday, 2014). Consequently, its examination requires an interdisciplinary approach that amalgamates journalism and literature while incorporating criteria, concepts, and analytical tools from other domains of the social sciences and humanities. Within the framework of “post-autonomous literatures” (Ludmer, 2010), contemporary narrative journalism falls within the transdisciplinary field of “nonfiction,” challenging the traditional conception of the genre in both journalism and literature (Angulo Egea, 2017; Aguilar Guzmán, 2019).

The writer’s authority in the chronicle is linked to the author’s presence, serving as a foundation for textual discourse. The chronicle’s discourse offers insights into the subjectivity that shapes the narrative almost as much as it provides information about

the reality it depicts. “Every chronicle constitutes, beyond the social instances it portrays, an esthetic-ideological exploration into popular imaginaries, which the chronicler uses and reworks, interprets and recycles” (Moraña 2021, p. 209). Therefore, it becomes essential to validate a method of navigating and observing the territory (Bencomo, 2003) and reclaiming the voices of the diverse individuals that populate it (Reguillo, 2000). When scrutinizing contemporary narrative journalism, it is crucial to integrate a gender perspective and explore how the subaltern condition of these groups is portrayed in their non-fictional narratives. As a documentation of the region’s cultural and social phenomena, the Hispano-American chronicle demands an examination from a gender perspective, exploring power dynamics within the intricate fabric of generic intersections and the diverse realm of cultures where the subordination of women represents just one facet of the subaltern experience.

2. FEMININE GENEALOGY OF THE CONTEMPORARY CHRONICLE

The invisibility of women chroniclers in roundtable discussions, competitions, and anthologies, and even the unequal treatment they receive compared to their male counterparts across all platforms reflects women’s challenges in knowledge production. Scientific knowledge, permeated by social factors, perpetuates the inequalities witnessed in science, where the “invisibilized presence” or portraying researchers as “good girls” (Herrero & García-Jiménez, 2023) extends into the realm of chronicles and narrative journalism. Touton’s (2018) feminist analysis of the narrative field illustrates how women writers often feel like intruders in a domain dominated and legitimized by patriarchal values. Chronicler Gabriela Wiener, in her prologue to the anthology *Criaturas fenomenales* (2023, pp. 7-12), articulates this sentiment by defining herself and her peers as “the Indians of the chronicle.” They represent, in contrast to the New Chroniclers of the Indies, a term coined for all the chroniclers at the first meeting held by the Gabo Foundation in 2008 in Bogota:

the true tenebrous reverse of the Chronicle of the Indies. Not as conquerors of a new territory but as new subjects—the missing identity, the one who was not entirely invited, the one who had to pay her fare to attend the congress, the one who had to share a room with another chronicler to save expenses, the one who had to endure harassment

3

and accompany the sacred cows until the end, the one who didn't write according to the decalogue of the 'good chronicler' (Wiener, 2023, p. 11).

In this 21st century, many chroniclers have been added to the list who, explicitly or implicitly engaging in feminist activism, publish exceptional chronicles with a gender, decolonial, and ecological perspective. It is a literary and immersive journalism undermining the gap of previous denunciation. While great female masters in journalism exist, they have not been recognized or vindicated until very recently. Chroniclers like Elisa Lerner, María Moreno, Maruja Torres, Lydia Cacho, Pedro Lemebel, Marta Dillon, Rosa Montero, Maria Sonia Cristoff, Cristina Rivera Garza, Hebe Ubart, Lucrecia Masson, Gisela Kozak, Nuria Varela, Adriana Carrasco, Magali Tercero, and Claudia Acuña, among many others, have lately been receiving awards. Elena Poniatowska was honored with the 2013 Cervantes Prize; Belarusian Svetlana Alexievich received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2015 for her exclusively journalistic work (Dader, 2023), and Alma Guillermoprieto received the Princess of Asturias Award for Communication and Humanities in 2018.

Without establishing a predefined framework that allies all these women's writings in a historical, social, and political context of discrimination and repression, these chroniclers share certain traits and unveil the tension produced by power asymmetries. Authors of different ages and backgrounds who have left an indelible have carved out a space for themselves, after many years with innovative themes and perspectives within the Spanish narrative landscape. Women, both young and not so young, rightfully and confidently occupy a prominent place in the field of the narrative with their compelling contributions (Angulo Egea & Gobantes Bilbao, 2022). The perspectives and themes brought forth by women chroniclers born in the 1970s and shortly before attest to this reality. They "introduced the new topics, the new airs, and the new bodies, the new horizons, the new struggles, the new. They persist in pushing against the cold door, having camped on the periphery" (Wiener, 2023, p. 11). Among them: Patricia Nieto, Cristina Fallarás, Leila Guerriero, María Eugenia Ludueña, Sonia Budassi, Patricia Almarcegui, Lydiette Carrión, Selva Almada, Carolina Reymundez, María Fernanda Ampuero, Rita Indiana, Josefina Licitra, Marcela Turati, Gabriela Wiener, Daniela

Pastrana, Catalina Gayà or Lina Meruane. These were the first contemporary chroniclers to leave their indelible mark in prominent positions as journalists, writers, teachers, editors, and workshop leaders over the last fifty years. Some of these chroniclers have been subjects of academic study.

This article highlights the work of some of the next generation of women chroniclers—those who have published their chronicles in the last twenty years, squarely in the 21st century. Hispanic American women chroniclers born from 1980 onward: the “New New Chroniclers of the Indies” (Angulo Egea & Aguilar Guzmán, 2023, pp. 14-21). Among them are Amalia del Cid (Nicaragua), June Fernández (Spain), Daniela Rea (Mexico), Marcela Ribadeneira (Ecuador), Ana Teresa Toro (Puerto Rico), Ángeles Alemandi (Argentina), Margarita García Robayo (Colombia), Dunia Orellana (Honduras), Natalia Sánchez Loayza (Peru), Ireland Sotillo (Panama), Mónica Baró (Cuba), María Fernanda Cruz (Costa Rica), Hulda Miranda (Costa Rica), Carolina Méndez (Bolivia), Elena Salamanca (El Salvador), Luisa Salomón (Venezuela), Ana Fornaro (Uruguay), Andrea Ixchíu (Guatemala), Irma Oviedo Paredes (Paraguay), Indhira Suero (The Dominican Republic), Arelis Uribe (Chile), Florencia Alcaraz (Argentina) Andrea Aldana (Colombia), Silvia Cruz (Spain), Diana del Ángel (Mexico), Jazmina Barrera (Mexico), Jéniffer Ávila (Honduras), Mónica Campos (El Salvador) María José Carmona (Spain), Rosa Chávez Yacila (Spain), Carla Gloria Colomé (Cuba), Daniela Catrileo (Chile), Evelyn Erij (Chile), Ana Muñoz Padrós (Spain), Carmen Valeria Escobar (El Salvador), Gloria Susana Esquivel (Colombia), Juana Gallegos (Peru), Verónica Gerber (Mexico), Thelma Gómez Durán (Mexico), Marina Hernández (Spain), Sabrina Duque (Ecuador), Berta Jiménez Luesma (Spain), Rafaela Lahore (Uruguay), Karen Gil (Bolivia), Catalina Lobo Guerrero (Colombia), Vanessa Londoño (Colombia), Belén López Peiró (Argentina), Valeria Luiselli (Mexico), Fernanda Melchor (Mexico), Virginia Mendoza (Spain), Brenda Navarro (Mexico), Isabela Ponce Ycaza (Ecuador), Quya Reina (Bolivia), Carla Santángelo (Spain), Margarita Solano (Colombia), among many others, some of whom are featured in the anthology *Criaturas fenomenales* (Angulo Egea & Aguilar Guzmán, 2023, pp. 315-320).

They are all widely published journalists and writers with various awards and scholarships. They have undertaken extended stays in various countries, including North

America and Europe. These women journalists embody the transnational movement and experience of the 21st century. Their chronicles reflect the tension and ambivalence between opening up to the globalized world and advocacy for regional issues and turns. They present diverse interpretations “of the notions of community, identity, gender, and affection, along with concepts of homeland, border, and citizenship” (Moraña, 2021, p. 19). Their feminist, decolonial, and ecologist narrative journalism is supported by complicity traditionally granted by certain prestigious journals and supplements, such as *Anfibia*, *Provinci*, *Animal Político*, *El Faro*, *El Estornudo*, *Relatto*, *Malquerida*, *Carátula*, *Plaza Pública*, *The Clinic*, *Lento*, *Altair Magazine*, *Rascacielos*, *Jot Down*, *5W*, *El Malpensante*, among many others, as well as an ever-growing list of publishers.

These chroniclers exemplify a literary, journalistic exercise that observes and recounts realities that do not always reach the category of interest worthy of media coverage. However, it is not just about the themes but also about the voices. In Spanish letters, a new reality is emerging, as emphasized by Edurne Portela, with an avalanche of excellent female writers keenly aware that they deserve a place in the literary field. According to Professor Anna Caballé, young contemporary women writers publish not “from a subordinate position but from a place of arrogance. There is nothing to apologize for; instead, there is an ancestral wound that requires healing” (in Angulo Egea & Gobantes Bilbao, 2022, p. 86). In the realm of female writers, the chroniclers aptly reflect a part of that avalanche of women writing excellent literary journalism and critical work that dismantles clichés to build alternative meanings and social imaginaries. “It’s about creating or achieving a space of enunciation as a political and esthetic gesture that shakes up its social context. With their narratives, these chroniclers empower an esthetic that lays bare and disrupts many social codifications, driving new forms of subjectivity capable of intervening in hegemonic discourses” (Angulo Egea & Aguilar Guzmán, 2023, p. 20).

3. PATRIARCHAL VIOLENCE AS A STRUCTURING AXIS OF THE CONTEMPORARY CHRONICLE

One of the crucial motifs of the current Ibero-American narrative with a gender perspective written by women is violence. However, contemporary narrative journalism captures many forms of violence. Indeed, drama and violence constitute the structuring axes of the contemporary chronicle. Chroniclers, irrespective of gender, have been paying attention to the individuals abandoned by the State in Spain and Latin America—individuals, either violent or violated, living in ghettos and suburban areas, coexist with the accusing glances of the rest of society, which often suffers the ravages of their criminal acts (Angulo Egea, 2012). Chronicles awarded by the Gabriel García Márquez Foundation in 2004, such as “Pollita en fuga” by Josefina Licitra or the well-known volume *Los suicidas del fin del mundo* (2005) by Leila Guerriero, accurately reflect this structural, destabilizing violence, especially evident in a youth living on the fringes (Angulo Egea, 2012, pp. 62-100). “Mexican narcocronistas” recount the minimal stories, the daily struggles of a devastated population, stories linked in some way to social crises and violence stemming from drug trafficking (Angulo Egea, 2015). No type of symbolic creation can ignore today’s necro-culture established in Mexico, palpable also in Central America, Colombia and elsewhere associated with drug trafficking and organized crime, and frequently in collusion with state law enforcement agencies.

The political art, the esthetic-ideological commitment inherent in the narrative journalism of the “New New Indian Chroniclers of the 21st Century” appears permeated by patriarchal violence (Segato, 2003, 2016; Canevari, 2019, pp. 23-25 and 38-41). This violence is a historical, structural, and cultural process in our society, acting in collusion and connivance with capitalist forms of domination and conservative religions, especially monotheistic ones. “The violence and the subjugation of women (and all those associated with the feminine) by the patriarchy are made visible through institutionalized manifestations: religions, the State (police, school, schools, the judiciary, hospitals), the family” (Canevari, 2019, p. 40). It is normalized violence, not considered as such, rendering it invisible despite being deeply rooted. Hence, the importance of promoting a paradigm shift, a new way of seeing the world, that

questions violence against women in order to stop legitimizing inequality, subordination, and symbolic non-existence of women (Magallón, 2005, p. 34).

As Carmen Magallón (2005) notes, following the triangular model of Swedish theorist Johan Galtung (2003) regarding the three forms of violence (direct, structural, and cultural), which encompass the entire spectrum of possible violences, violence against women is expressed in all its forms and degrees. We encounter 1) *direct violence*:

against the imperative of survival, symbolized by the deaths of countless women; against the pursuit of well-being, manifested through instances of abuse, contempt, disqualification, and harassment; against the quest for identity, marked by alienation resulting from the imposition of stereotypical female models or reduction to male roles, all while considered second-class citizens; and against the needs to freedom, evidenced by denial of rights and the narrowing of life's options (2005, p. 36).

Direct violence, while defined as a specific event, is often experienced by women as a daily occurrence, a way of life from which they may or may not escape.

2) Structural violence against women that reveals domination processes reflecting the place they occupy in economic and hegemonic power order. Lower wages, the feminization of poverty, and the sexual division of labor... are examples of structural violence that articulates a power system skewed in favor of men.

3) Cultural, symbolic, or moral violence against women, which persists over time as a result of deep-seated patriarchal roots. Its function is to legitimize the previous forms of violence. It is observed in religious beliefs, in ideas about the nature of women that place them closer to animals than to rational beings, in art that perceives them as objects and rarely as creative subjects, and in language and in the media that undermine their autonomy and agency, among countless other things (Magallón., 2005, pp. 36 and 37).

It is a violence that erupts, is named, and is interrogated in these contemporary nonfiction narratives. There is a concerted effort to point out, denounce, and unmask the various forms of oppression and control that the underlying patriarchal structure has naturalized. Cristina Rivera Garza (2022) speaks of “geological writings” to refer to

those texts revealing the layers of oppression, violence and suffering on which communities and territories have been sustained. Sediments that emerge through fractures or faults allow us to perceive how present-day violence and afflictions are merely the tip of the iceberg—the most superficial, perhaps the symptom. These geological writings work in these liminal territories to engage in a necessary process of desedimentation. They dig, trace, and remove the undergrowth of structural capitalism (Rivera Garza, 2022, pp. 9-18). They are literary gestures that tell of existing and pre-existing territories and bodies. Among these geological writings are many contemporary chronicles that address patriarchal violence. They are contributing to the paradigm shift demanded from various quarters, particularly gender-informed journalism, searching for a way to bring visibility to violence against women—a way of writing that challenges the dominant narratives and gives voice to the experiences of survivors, a way that allows for a vertical reading, revealing the layers of accumulation and invisibility and demanding justice. (Villalobos-Ruminott, 2016, p. 155).

4. CHRONICLES AGAINST EXTREME SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Direct, extreme sexual violence against women is evident (Poyatos Matas, Maleno Garzón et al., 2017). Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women are “pedagogies of cruelty,” acts and practices involving plunder and consumption of bodies” that constitute the most precise language expressing the reification of life. Their remains don’t end up in cemeteries but in landfills” (Segato, 2003, p. 27). Journalist Helena Maleno Garzón, using the life stories of women from various parts of the world, explores the violent, transnational, and destructive process of trafficking in her chronicle “Resistencias en la industria de la esclavitud.” She asserts: “Victims of human trafficking are ‘things’ in countries of origin, transit, and destination, spanning different political regimes, particularly in Western democracies” (Poyatos Matas, Maleno Garzón et al., 2017, p. 31).

Mexican activist and chronicler Lydia Cacho has contributed a comprehensive examination of how 21st-century slavery functions in her work *Esclavas del poder: Un viaje al corazón de la trata sexual de mujeres y niñas en el mundo* (2010). After years of

research and risk and infiltrated reporting, Cacho has managed to expose the globalized and systemic dimensions of this extreme violence against women's bodies, where prostitution is only the most visible aspect of the prevailing corruption.

Now, violence in Latin America epitomizes cruelty in femicides: that boundless violence against women's bodies (Lagarde, 2006). It is described as "One of the most abhorrent forms of gender violence, which is pervasive and omnipresent" (Poyatos Matas, Maleno Garzón et al., 2017, p. 16). The terms "Femicides" or "femicides," which Rita Segato (2016) attempts to elevate to the legal category of women's genocide by introducing a new term: "femigenocide." Segato differentiates between femicides and femigenocides, ascribing the former to the family, domestic, and private sphere, whereas the latter lacks these features entirely. Segato believes that this distinction better underscores the criminality of these acts and that it would be possible to intervene in some way in the established patriarchal legal discourse to inscribe the crime of femicide in the state jurisdiction and femigenocide in the international jurisdiction of Human Rights (2016, pp. 127-152).

Rossana Reguillo (2021) describes Mexico's extreme violence as the "Necromachine," a concept that can be extended to many other parts of Latin America, where the liberal apparatus—comprising politicians, drug traffickers and businessmen—that navigates paralegality, administers death better than life. This capitalist drift has led to gore and its transformation into snuff. Gore capitalism thrives on violence, (narco)trafficking and necropower that stages certain dystopias of globalization and its imposition (Valencia, 2010). Reguillo has focused her analysis on this horror and the absurdity of these violences. She mentions the existence of an "abysmal machine" as "the transition from the sinister (something familiar that becomes threatening) to the abysmal, that unfathomable, deep and profound condition of violence" (2021, p. 14). This abysmal machine of the necromachine narrates, names, and organizes the images and grammar of brutal scenes, the grammar of violence, for which it normalizes the effects of extreme violence. This machine elaborates the script, presenting the characters, the scenes, and the images that compose the snuff movie.

“La herida de un pueblo en la frontera,” by Costa Ricans María Fernanda Cruz Chávez and Hulda Miranda Picado (2023, pp. 181-197), is a “geological chronicle” about the extreme violence of violence, and this analysis is also a “geological reading” that closely follows the insights from Cristina Rivera Garza (2022). The chronicle initially depicts violence that involves two countries, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, due to their ineffectiveness and lack of accountability for their dead. It recounts the rape and murder of Darys, a Nicaraguan-born woman living in San Vicente, a border town in Costa Rica. Darys was brutally assaulted, raped, and strangled in the *monte*, a frontier wilderness — a “no man’s land” — separating Nicaragua from Costa Rica. Men and women regularly traverse this wilderness for work or to sell wares. However, they are also preyed upon by extortionists, both the police and the *coyotes* smuggling migrants across the border. Homicides are frequent in the *monte*, including femicides. “For the Costa Rican judicial system, Darys is invisible,” recount the chroniclers:

No investigation was initiated into the murder due to a legal principle called “territoriality”, as deputy prosecutor of Liberia, Elvis Lopez, later explained to us over the telephone. Territoriality is a legal term that requires a country to apply its law only to acts committed within its borders. ‘It’s a question of sovereignty,’ emphasizes the prosecutor. Darys was killed a few meters from that imaginary line that delineates the border. She was murdered where Costa Rica no longer exists (Cruz & Miranda, 2023, p. 193).

This supposed territorial limbo is the tragedy of Darys’ family, who cannot seek justice and have no information beyond what they can fathom because there is no ongoing investigation. What they have, the chroniclers point out, is a mental construct:

“She must have screamed while they were torturing her.”

“If she was barely alive, she must have drowned right there. She couldn’t breathe with the body on top of her.”

“It looked like there was water in the hole.

“Certainly, that’s where she drowned.”

The death certificate doesn't mention the word rape, but the family and locals insist that the forensic doctor said at the scene that a sexual assault had occurred.

"[The report] only says that; it doesn't give any other details. But it does reflect what the forensic doctor stated —that she was raped, hanged, and her neck was broken," recalls Iveth (Cruz & Miranda, 2023, p. 192).

Iveth Gutiérrez is Darys' sister-in-law and the president of the association of farmers and cattle ranchers of San Vicente and Pueblo Nuevo. She says the women in this area live in fear because of everything that happens here, especially since the brutal murder of Darys, as the village knows the perpetrator of the femicide, whom neither the Nicaraguan nor the Costa Rican government will prosecute and imprison. None of the institutional explanations convinces Iveth: "Does being a trans-borderer mean we're worthless?" (Cruz & Miranda, 2023, p. 96).

The *monte* has long since transformed into inhospitable territory, a space conducive to atrocity and where violence remains unpunished. This is the territory explored by Cruz and Miranda. The *monte* opens and closes this chronicle because it is the space where life unfolds, and death is perpetrated. The *monte* is much more than a territory; it is a whole encompassing various perspectives:

The monte here, in San Vicente de Santa Cecilia, is a ubiquitous term woven into the fabric of everyday life. It's what encircles the handful of houses nestled within this cross-border community of La Cruz in Guanacaste. The monte is the chagüite, the toil, the untamed grassland, the place where baseball is played, the mud, the mahogany, the trails... (Cruz & Miranda, 2023, p. 183).

This territory is home to a transnational population that lives, survives, and resists despite the neglect and the absence of legislation and protection from the authorities. That is why the residents advocate, even if it is just a first step, for the installation of a cell tower so that women do not have to venture into the wilderness in search of a signal; for now, "the *monte* is death, and it's everywhere" (Cruz & Miranda, 2023, p.197).

Rural narratives have gained prominence in the 21st century from new natural, social and literary criteria. These accounts highlight the continuous natural disasters caused

by the speed of climate change, as well as the rampant expropriation and extractivism of late capitalism. This chronicle also underscores the absence of urban planning in San Vicente. Freddy, a resident, wryly recounts how a downhill stone-paved street was built thanks to Hurricane Otto, which “grabbed the entire mountain and tossed it into the river” (Cruz & Miranda, 2023, p.184). The land is always in dispute due to production and accumulation processes. Ancillary characters, peasants, small traders, and agrarian workers still populate the area, although migrants and evictees from urban centers now predominantly represent its inhabitants. These new settlers reflect the precariousness, impoverishment and uprooting resulting from new colonial and exploitative forms.

This journalistic investigation and literary chronicle seek to bring into play, to name, and to point out the voices involved in the conflict, in this drama, in this extreme violence represented by Darys’ femicide in a wilderness known as the *monte*, protected by the grammar of judicial violence implied by the concept of “territoriality.” Chroniclers who present, in the words of Cristina Rivera Garza (2022, p. 14), the textual sediments, the voices that must be auscultated, lifted, interrogated, and subverted. These form part of the geological literary endeavor, of the immersive journalistic process requires by our environment: context, commitment, and truth. Cruz and Miranda explored the wound mentioned in the title, a wound that acts as a geological fault summoning society, a wound delineating a border territory, a wound inflicted on Darys’ body.

Rape is another of the most egregious and most frequent forms of direct violence exerted against women. The rapist, as Segato (2003, p. 29) points out, is often a moralizer who retaliates against his victim. The subordinate body that constructs his masculinity. Rape, she notes, has two axes that feed each other: a vertical one that spectacularizes the power of the act and enhances the aggressor’s cruelty; and a horizontal one, which responds to the relationship among male members of the fratriarchy, to find recognition for having fulfilled the mandate of masculinity (Segato, 2003, p. 30). Discourse and axes, double victimization, guilt, spectacularity, and cruelty are so often disseminated by the media because they create narratives that reinforce rape culture, which permeates society, and the exercise of what Nerea Barjola calls the *Microfísica sexista del poder* (2018), closely echoing the ideas of Foucault (1979).

Here, I present two chronicles that, far from reproducing the lines of the discourse mentioned, although they describe the event and highlight the extreme pain caused by those corporations of rapists, emphasize the feminist social mobilization galvanized by the event and the disastrous and patriarchal judicial response. Two chronicles that engage in dialogue across the Atlantic. Two so-called “wolf packs,” both of which gained notoriety in Spain for the name of the WhatsApp group used by the perpetrators of a gang rape that took place during the San Fermín festivities in July 2016. They are “Que la única manada seamos nosotras” by the Bolivian Carolina Méndez (2023, pp. 199-212), and “Cuando el feminismo me devolvió el cuerpo” by the Catalan Carla Santángelo, based in Mexico City (2018). The titles alone of these two chronicles reflect the fierce feminist backlash at the time. Both cases of gang rape faced justice systems in their respective countries that undermined the victims’ testimonies, particularly regarding concepts like “consent” and “resistance.” This sparked widespread feminist protests demanding a fair trial, with demonstrators chanting, “Sister, I do believe you” in unison and singing the “feminist anthem” that was disseminated from Chile and that serves as the opening for the chronicle by Bolivian writer Carolina Méndez:

We yearned to burn everything, to scream and howl until voices ran out. To curse and curse to say no more, never again, not one less, not one more.

It was the night of Friday, December twenty-first, 2018. Spontaneously, we claimed the city, embraced each other, and vented our rage, our outrage, and that tremor never died out. The batucada beat fueled our fury as our feminist battle cries echoed: ‘Now that we’re together, now that we’re visible.’ ‘Down with the patriarchy, it’ll crumble fall, it’ll fall’ / ‘It could be your daughter, it could be your sister, we refuse to be the next victim, wolf pack’ / ‘Sir, madam, don’t remain indifferent, they murder women before in plain sight (Méndez, 2023, p. 199).’

This narrative serves as denunciation and the expression of indignation against a system that fails to recognize sexual assault or intimidation, particularly in cases of gang rape. However, these chronicles also reflect a semantic and pragmatic struggle and the liberating emphasis of collective outcry. Added to this emancipatory and vindictive #Metoo narrative” is Carla Santángelo’s account “where bodies brought together by

affection in the public space have a possible alternative (...) in the horizontal articulation of demands at a higher, vertical, and truly political level” (Arfuch, 2018, p. 28). The (auto)biographical space in which these chronicles unfold account for the “affective turn,” the emotional aspect that inhabits contemporary discourses (Arfuch, 2018) and which it is crucial for analyzing the current subjectivities reflected in the chronicle. Carla Santángelo is emboldened in this chronicle, published in the feminist journal *Malquerida*, to recount her own rape experience and the feelings of fear and guilt that overwhelmed her. Simultaneously, she underscores how feminism played a pivotal role in helping her recognize the violation and reconstruct her narrative appropriately. Because the patriarchal violence pervading institutions is often nuanced and always contains fine print that discredits women’s discourse:

Therefore, I believe in feminism as a counterbalance. Because in this feminism, the body is at the center of the experience. It’s when we quicken our pace on a dark alley; it’s when we are touched without our consent; it’s when we literally bite our tongues when faced with workplace harassment. This feminism doesn’t theorize, has no deductive method, and isn’t constructed on the plane of ideas. It is not a moralizing authority; that authority belongs to the patriarchal framework. We’ve taken another route. We prioritize our lived experiences, not others’ perceptions of them. Whether on the street, in bed, at work. But the law fails to recognize the realities experienced by these bodies that we are. Here, I refer to ‘body’ in its broadest conception, not Cartesian terms (Santángelo, 2018).

It is worth underlining the collective aspect of this mobilization: a multiplicity of voices, the emergence of new subjectivities that shape a collective and performative denouncing barbarism, not just in the media or on social networks, but through the presence on the streets. These bodies represent that abused, assaulted, and intimidated “public body,” embodying the voice of the complainant (Angulo Egea, 2019, p. 88). Leonor Arfuch (2018) notes that this performative language is reflective and transformative. There are no objective “facts” outside the realm of symbols.” Hence, discourse and affect are not mutually exclusive but co-constitutive. This emotional intensity and discursive vehemence *do things*, fostering community and shaping the native of events, particularly in denouncing the so-called “discipline of sexual terror” (Barjola, 2018). It is a community

with a physical presence in public spaces and a digital presence on social media to promote change. The combined approach of online and offline activism represents the new strategies of visibility and protest harnesses by many social movements, including #Yosoy132, #OccupyWallStreet, among many others, and it appears to be an effective formula for denunciation in the 21st century (Reguillo, 2017).

5. CONCLUSION

This article has highlighted some of the many women chroniclers coming to the forefront who, nevertheless, until recently, have remained invisible or exceptional. Research and journalism need to acknowledge and consider the genealogy of women chroniclers and the themes, stances, and perspectives that embody their work. The handling and treatment of certain topics become more complex with the contributions of the many chroniclers until they attain the necessary depth, as demonstrated throughout this article in the examination of extreme violence in contemporary chronicles.

The analyzed chronicles contribute to the necessary paradigm shift: a new perspective highlighting violence against women. The commitment to immersive and narrative journalism (Angulo Egea, 2017; López Hidalgo & Fernández, 2021) like that presented by these female chroniclers is essential. This journalism acknowledges and dismantles the patriarchal mechanisms that violate, disempower, subjugate, sicken, and kill. In Rivera Garza's (2022) analytical terms, it is geological writing that undermines the earth and accounts for all these layers of accumulation of oppression and pain. Patriarchal violence, interwoven with capitalist exploitation and accumulation processes, emerges as a variable that structures the discourses of contemporary chronicles written by women. Narratives that blend feminist, decolonial, and ecological political aspects with specific esthetic forms (immersive chronicles, ethnographic accounts, portraits, intimate reflections, exploratory narratives, advocacy pieces, etc.) help shape a narrative that seeks esthetic and ideological coherence. In other words, these discourses allow us to comprehend, compare, equate, understand, and transcend literality to the extent possible. The narrative emerges as a subversive, dissenting, and rebellious tool in this

esthetic, social, and political commitment. It can also acquire emancipatory, liberating, and supportive value by reclaiming the victim's stories without re-victimization; by denouncing injustices, abuses, and violations; by proposing different models and diverse subjectivities; and challenging hegemonic discourses.

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