THE ACCUSING VOICE OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN WOMAN IN *INSUBMISSAS LÁGRIMAS DE MULHERES* BY CONCEIÇÃO EVARISTO

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Abstract

In the past, numerous Brazilians, white male authors usually present an Afro-Brazilian woman in only deformed and stereotyped characters without presenting the reality and experiences of this woman in their literary works. The subjugation that started from the slavery time continues to be reproduced in the contemporary Brazilian society. This literary approach has affected the systematic naturalization of some negative or stereotyped images of the Afro Brazilian woman. However, many Afro-Brazilian intellectuals and activists have worked tirelessly to change the condition and retell their story, to this end, this article seeks to study the Afro-Brazilian woman as a protagonist through the Afro-Brazilian voice in the current literary work written by a prolific Afro-Brazilian female writer Conceição Evaristo, Insubmissas lágrimas de Mulheres,. It will also analyze the condition of the Afro-Brazilian woman in the face of some social challenges and racial discrimination within the theoretical framework of Escrevivência with the intent of looking at how contemporary Brazilian literature is responding to the imperative of projecting the condition of Afro-Brazilian woman.

Key Words: *Domestic violence, Racism, gender, racial identity*

Introduction

An Afro-Brazilian woman is a victim of triple discrimination: she suffers prejudice for being a black, for being a woman and finally, for being poor, all these are discriminatory tags originated in the institution of Slavery.Lília K. Moritz Schwarcz, (2006:33) displays a particular aversion to the masterpiece of famous Brazilian anthropologist Gilberto Freyre, whose *Casa Grande & Senzala*[1] (1936) is considered worldwide as not only the Bible of Portuguese benevolent kind of chattel slavery in Brazil, but also the underlying manifesto of the Brazilian official myth of Racial Democracy. This author projects a Racial Democracy within which there purportedly exists a cordial relationship between Blacks and Whites in Brazil as a result of slavery devoid of the

[1] This is a title of a book written by Gilberto Freyre to show the period of Slavery in Brazil, *Casa Grande* literarily means the big House that is the Slaves' Master's Quarters while *Senzala* means the Slaves Compound.

segregation and power abuses normally associated with slavery in other climes. According to Lílian K. Moritz Schwarcz, the work gave many false accounts and analyses of many events that happened during slavery in Brazil, especially on the sexual relationship between the slave masters and the female slaves. Intentionally Freyre, played down the horrors and violence committed against the enslaved black population in Brazil, especially the constant rape to which the slave women were subjected in the hands of the white masters, a fact that accounts for the proliferation of mulattoes as the single largest 'ethnic' group in Brazil.

Today, many Afro-Brazilians reject the freyrian ideology and the myth of Racial Democracy in Brazil. The destruction of the concept of the African family and the proliferation of mono-parental Afro-Brazilian households have been traced to the violence of slavery. The situation has locked up the blacks into a vicious cycle of social and economic exclusion aggravated by very low educational qualifications which in turn limit them to menial jobs such as daily labourers, carpenter, bricklayer, drycleaner, cooks, street hawkers. And the black womenfolk turn out to be successive generations of housemaids serving in the house of the descendants of the erstwhile slave masters. Over the centuries, especially since Brazil's projection into modernity, the situation of Afro-Brazilian woman has gradually evolved into a stereotyped commonplace in the minds and imagination of most Brazilians, especially the white elites who feel aggrieved whenever a black dare to break out of this vicious cycle. As vividly captured by a t-shirt message used by Gelede, an Afro-Brazilian woman's organization: "A casa grande surta quando a senzala aprende a ler". This refers to the fact that each time an Afro-Brazilian (represented here with the freyrian metaphor of the *senzala*)gets to improve his/her socio-economic and educational lot in the society, the white elite, here represented by the freyrian's *Casa Grande*, gets mad and becomes uncontrollably intolerant[2].

Each timean Afro-Brazilian woman is projected in literary works and films, the authors, scriptwriters and producers almost and always fail to show the reality of her quest to improve

[2]The recent political upheavals are a loud testimony to this. Political and racial analysts are beginning to see that the real reason behind the vicious attachment on the PT (Partido dos Trabalhadores)-led government of President Dilma Rousseff, who, by the way, happens to be the first female president in Brazil, and her embattled predecessor – Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, is actually a determined bet by the white ruling class and their media right-wing allies to unseat a government which, over the past twelve years of PT rule has succeeded in bridging the gap between the rich and the poor. Most significantly, the attacks on Lula, Dilma and PT have been linked to the vengeance of right-wing Brazilian white elites to destroy former president Lula da Silva for the numerous Affirmative Action policies of his 8-year rule which empowered the black population educationally, economically and politically through the creation of programmes like Fome Zero, Pátria Educadora, Land Reforms for the Quilombola populations, etc.

hersocio-educational situation. Other black groups and militants of the organized black movement in Brazil such as Ile Aiye, Olodum, Muzenza of Bahia as well as female groups like Geledes, mulheres negras (Geledes, Afro-Brazilian Women) of São Paulo are incessantly denouncing such stereotyped roles and the racism that underlie them. However, among the contemporary Afro-Brazilian female writers is Conceição Evaristo, today she is one of most important black writers in Brazil.

Having been exposed since childhood to the cruelties of racism, she becomes a black writer of international recognition. Among her short stories books is, *Insubmissas Lágrimas de Mulheres*, (2011) to be studied in this work. Frontline Afro-Brazilian female writer and literary critic, Conceição Evaristo, cited some Brazilian literary works in prose that are guilty of the racial discrimination against Afro-Brazilian woman. Notable among such literary works are *São Bernardo* written by Graciliano Ramos (1934), and *Agosto* written by Rubem Fonseca (1990). These literary works project *voiceless black characters* within the molds of the myth of Racial Democracy in Brazil. Conceição Evaristo was forced to raise this question, "(...) *O que uma ficçãoquecriapersonagenssemfala está construindo*? (...) *A literaturabrasileiranega a presençanegra na constituição da nacionalidadebrasileira?*(...)"[3].Conceição Evaristo is bringing a new phase into the Brazilian literature, one can see in this her work an Afro-Brazilian female characters as a professional woman unlike the images we see in many other literary works of Brazilian mainstream literature like that of Rita baiana in*O Cortiço* by Aluísio Azevedo. Also in*Gabriela Cravo e Canela*; *Teresa Batista* and a series of other female Afro-Brazilian characters in the works of Jorge Amado,etc in which Afro-Brazilian women are projected within the stereotyped frame of fickle-minded sex symbols. Adélcio de Sousa Cruz, a visiting lecturer at Faculdade de Letras da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Minas Gerais, Brasil and Pedro Leopoldo, a researcher at the Núcleo de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Alteridade (Neia/UFMG) comment on *Insubmissas lágrimas de mulheres* (2011),joining their voices to the necessity of producing an Afro Brazilian literature with real, true-type Afro-Brazilian characters:

[3](What is the aim of a literary works that creates a voiceless Black character? (...) Does the Brazilian Literature intend to deny the presence of blacks in the formation of Brazilian nationality?)Cited in Jacques Legoff, *História e Memória.*4ª Edition. São Paulo. 1996:427.

> A literatura produzida a partir da condição diaspórica africana nas Américas, vez ou outra, atua no intuito de despertar olhares adormecidos e ouvidos nem tanto atentos às vozes dos diversos "outros/outras" que nos constituem."[4]
>
> The literature produced from the African diasporic condition in the Americas, from time to time, acts as a wake-up call to reveal the various voices of "others" that make up our being. (Translation).

This is what Conceição Evaristo's work represents in entire Brazilian literature and this will be established further through the analysis of few characters in *Insubmissas lágrimas de Mulheres* (2011).

The Voices of Afro-Brazilian Female Characters

Aramilde Florença is the protagonist of the first story, for the first time we see an Afro-Brazilian woman in a fictional work as a senior public servant. Conceição Evaristo uses this character to condemn male oppression and domestic violence among Afro-Brazilian families. Aramildes works as a director in a Company while her husband is also a public servant. The shock and hurt are unbearable as Aramildes expresses her disgust while she narrates her experience of domestic violence:

> *I was breastfeeding my son… when Emildes' father arrived. Suddenly he pulled my hands…almost throwing off the child (…).And in this form, Emildes' father raped me … This man has turned me to his personal object (…) (Evaristo, 2011:17-18).*

In her anguish, Aramides perceives not only a case of uncontrollable possessiveness, but also a non-valorization of a woman, the man had reduced her to a thing to be used at his whims and caprices, his personal object. To this end, this overrides some literatures that focus only on the erotic aspect of Afro-Brazilian woman. Eduardo de Assis, (Ibid, 2014:65), rightly stated that the reality and the valorization of an Afro-Brazilian woman is highly recommendable in literary production:

> *... Creio que hoje, não pela linha do politicamente correto, mas pela linha talvez do pudor, nós escritores negros temos muito receio de extravasar a sensualidade, o erotismo, porque é aquela preocupação: "puxa, a mulher negra foi violentada no passado...". quer dizer, "como é que agora vou cantá-la com erotismo?".* [5]

[4] Adélcio de Sousa Cruz, Pedro Leopoldo. Estudo. Lit. Bras. Contemp. no.39 Brasília Jan./June 2012, http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S2316-40182012000100014 Accessed 28th Feb., 2018.

[5](I think that today it is not seen as being politically correct, but, may be in line with chastity that we the black writers have a lot of reservation to expose the sensuality, the erotic, because it is that worry: wao, the black woman was violated in the past…" That is, "how then will I praise her erotically?).

This condition of keeping women in an oppressed group is what bell hooks (1984) Simone de Beauvoir, (1980), condemned. Simone de Beauvoir also condemns the exploitation of women and violation of their rights in marriage is unacceptable:

> *Hoje o casamentoconservaemgrandeparte esse aspecto traditional...a mulher fica sendo a servado pai, dos irmãos, dos cunhado, o êxodo para as cidadesnão está a seualcance; o casamento escravizando-a a um homem."*[6]

Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi, (2014: xxix), equally agrees with these two feminists, stating that women's Human Rights should be protected in every sphere, «*I belong to the school of thought, women's human rights are universal and we have a role to play in naming and addressing injustices wherever they occur »*

Natalina Soledad is another protagonist in the collection that point at the revalorization of an Afro-Brazilian woman in the literary work. She decides to give herself a new name after the death of her parents. She narrates how she suffers a lot of abandon and humiliation due to the original name given to her by her father who refused to accept the fact that she was born a girl child while all the preceding seven children were male. Silveira lamentes that her greatest pain comes from the fact that even her mother not only accepts, but actively supports her father's tyranny against her.What is apparent in the case of Silveira's mother is the conformity of the female folks to the patriarchal norms and their total passiveness in the decision making process. Elizabete Rodrigues da Silva (2013) describes such a situation as one of the greatest oppressions suffered by women in a society where they are rendered voiceless by patriarchal traditions:

> *Pornãoparticipar da construção do social, as mulheres se viam subjugadas por estas instituições e conceitosque as silenciavam, perpetuando a violênciafísica e moral. Dessa forma, paracombater e se libertar da culturapatriarcal, as mulheres deveriam redefinir o espaçosocial e tornarem-se agentes da construção de conceitos e instituiçõessociais.*[7]

Unfortunately, Troçoléia Malvina could not fight against the patriarch cultures that enslave her. It was at 32 years oldafter her parents' death that she now changes her name to Natalina Soledade:

> E sonoramente, quando o escrivão lhe perguntou qual nome adotaria, se seria mesmo aquele que aparecia escrito na petição de troca, ela respondeu feliz e com veemência na

[6] Simone de Beauvoir. *O segundosexo*Rio de Janeiro. Éditora NovaFronteira, 1980:175. (Today the marriage conserve a great part of traditional concepts…the woman continues to serve her father, brothers, inlaws, the exodus to the public sphere and rights are not accomplished ; the marriage enslave her under a man…)

[7](The non participation of women in the social construction makes women to be subjugated by the institutions and concepts that silenced them, thus justifying and eternalizing physical and moral violence against her. In view of this, to be free and at the same time fight against such abusive patriarchal cultures, women need to redefine the social space and become active agents in the construction of social institutions and concepts).Elizabeth Rodrigues da Silva, "FeminismoRadical, Pensamento e Movimento". www.feminismo_radical.org 2013:5 Accessed 16th July, 2017.

> voz e no gesto: Natalina Soledad...Natalina Soledad-nome o qual me chamo...(Ibid, 2011:24).
>
> *And loudly when the clerk asked her what name she prefers, wanting to know if it was the same name she had indicated on her application for change of name, she answered happily, with a vehement voice and gesture: Natalina Soledade – that is the name I want to bear henceforth…. (Translation)*

It is important to state that this type of female representation in Afro-Brazilian literature will make a little change, there is a need to have an image than can impress forcefully on the established structure of sexism in Brazil, an image of a courageous woman that is ready fight and overcome her oppressors.

Lia Gabriel, a mother of three, is also another woman whose child suffers from the consequence of domestic violence. Her husband used to beat her in the presence of her children and this act caused a psychological trauma for her son. Her son suffers from schizophrenia[8]. Dr. Celeste Rosas discovers that the domestic violence against him and his mother affects his brain that is why the boy could not withstand the sound of the father's name. Lia Gabriel explains her son's feeling at the sound of the father's name:

> *O nome do pai, o maldito nome do pai, o nome da má hora...eu estava com as crianças assentadas no chão da sala, Não era a primeira vez que ele me agredia... as crianças choravam aturdidas... me chicoteando várias vezes. Eu não emiti só um grito, não podia assustar mais as crianças...(Ibid, 2011:86-87).*[9]

As if that punishment was not enough for a plate of food that her husband demands, in his ugly anger went as far as beating his own little son, "*Ele me chicoteando e eu com Gabriel no colo*…(Ibid, 2011:87), (He was beating me with Gabriel in my hand.). Here the author denounces the pure wickedness of some men towards their wives. The theory of *Escrevivência*embraces a factual projection of an Afro-Brazilian woman's experience, same to the challenges encountered. This is what Conceição Evaristo presents in her work, she affirms that representing the social life of Afro-descendants in fictional works is a way of denouncing social injustice,"*Nossa Escrevivência não pode ser lida como história para "ninar os da casa grande" e sim, para incomodá-los em seu*

[8] Schizophrenia is a serious disorder, which affects how a person thinks, feels and acts. Someone with schizophrenia may have difficulty distinguishing between what is real and what is imaginary, may be offensive or withdrawn; and may have difficulty expressing normal emotions in social situations.www.mentalhealthamerica.net/.../ Acessed 4th August, 2018.

[9] (The name of the father, the cursed name of the father, the name that brings bad time… I was with the children, sitting on the floor of the room, This is not the first time he is beating me… the children cried stunned… beating me many times. I did not make a single noise, I cannot frighten the children the more…).

sono injusto…" [10]. Despite the fact that the author fails to present other reactions expected of a character like Lia Gabriel apart from treating her son's sickness and living alone with her three children, Conceição Evaristo achieves her aim of sensitizing the general community to some domestic violence that affects woman's rights and public health.

Moreover, the author puts a protagonist called Shirley,who on the contrary decides to risk her life and her marriage in defense of her young stepdaughter who suffered from frequent rape and sexual abuse from her own father. Unlike Lia Gabriel that keepsto her three children after the domestic violence, Aramildes that separates from her husband or even Natalina Soledade that waits till the death of her parents before changing her name, Shirley takes care of the situation, attacks her husband and almost killed him. She confirms:

> *Queria matá-lo, queria acabar com aquele malafacento, mas ele é tão ruim que não morreu! Não adianta me perguntar se me arrendi. Arrenpendi não. Confessei à polícia o meu desejo, a minha intenção... (2011:25-25).* [11]

Here the assertion ofElizabeth Jelin becomes very relevant to support the Fundamental Human Rights of Afro-Brazilian woman.In her analysis, "Mulheres e Direitos Humanos", (Women and Human Right), she declares that it is the duty of the state in the patriarchal society to protect and defend the women who are sexually abused and are often victims of domestic violence. She believes that the respect for the family institution cannot justify the legal impunity for violence against any woman:

> *The dominant paradigm in Human Rights is constructed on the basis of difference: civil rights and political rights are both recognized in the public sphere. The violation of these rights in the private sphere of family relations is not considered. Different from the domination structure and political inequality among men, the form of domination of women by men are effectively social and economic in nature. This safeguard them before the law, without any explicit reaction from the state, the frequent instances of gender violence in domestic sphere are classified as normal family occurrences.(…) this dichotomization of the public and private spheres therefore brings about the mutilation of women's citizenship rights.*[12]

[10](our *Escrevivência* cannot be considered as the history of babysitting the people of the big house, the leaders but yes to disturb their unjust sleep...).Conceição Evaristo, *Nossa Escrevivência*, www.nossaescrevivência.com.br 2013. Accessed 23rd July, 2018.

[11](I wanted to kill him, I wanted to extinguish that worthless being, but his is such a bad thing that he did not die! Don't bother to ask if I regret my action. I didn't regret. I confessed to the police my wish, my intention…).

[12] Elizabeth Jelin. "Mulheres e Direitos Humanos" In: Estudos Feministas. São Paulo. Vol.2 nº3/94. P. 126

Shirley's image represents a decisive and courageous woman that is expected to be in an Afro-Brazilian literature not the likes of the characters mentioned above nor that Gabriela of Jorge Amado. Shirley herself spends three years in prison for taking the law into her own hands while her husband was jailed for moral damage and violence against his daughter. Seni, the daughter eventually becomes a pediatrics doctor, ready to care for other children. Meanwhile this gradual improvement in terms of judicial intervention as narrated in the story of Shirley, can be associated to the Black Militants and Feminists' past struggles and it is commendable.

Afro-Brazilian Women, Victims of a Triple Discrimination

As amply demonstrated by theorists of literary and cultural studies like Stuart Hall (2003), identity is paramount to the survival of every individual in any given society. Essentially, people in Brazil like in other part of Diaspora like Caribbean society are identified and classified racially by their physical pigmentation and other phenotypical elements such as the size and shape of the lips, nose and ear, hair texture, etc. What this means is that, instead of the strict racial division which polarizes a given society into white and black, there is room for a wide colour range that situate people along the race or colour spectrum, making it possible for a *pardo* or a *mulato claro* to pass for or declare him/herself as "white" or "black" according to her social and economic circumstances, this is the peculiarity of Brazilian racial system. It is important to note at this juncture that these racial elements and classifications play a great role in the social ascension within the Brazilian society and can indeed be a determinant to the physical, material, economic, social and political survival of the individual.[13] Gomes Nilma Lino (2004:171) analyzes the importance of hair texture as well as skin and hair colour and she refers to the two as double identity icons in the construction of black identity in Brazil. She declared that the body serves as a support for the black identity while the black-styled hair that the mainstream society condemns as 'rough' and 'ugly' is seen as a strong identity icon used as a sign of defiance and counter-culture by Black Brazilians. Oftentimes, Afro-Brazilians are deprived of a job for which they are highly qualified simply because of their black skin or hair texture. This racist exclusion of Afro-Brazilians from the labour market is often couched under the innocent expression of a "good appearance" as employment criterion.

[13] GOMES, Nilma Lino. "Educação, Identidade Negra e Formação de Professores: Um Olhar sobre o Corpo Negro e o Cabelo Crespo". Educ Pesqui. (online) Jan/jun. 2003, vol 29, no. 1. ISSN 1517-9702 www.scielobr/scielo Cited 13 October, 2004:167-182. Accessed 24th April, 2017.

To denounce the depth of racism in Brazil, Conceição Evaristo in her work *Insubmissas lágrimas de Mulheres (*2011), creates characters that fought and conquered in a racist society like Brazil. Mary Benedicta is one of them. As a small child, she aspires to be educated and live in the big city, she pretends to be sick and unable to walk so that her parents could allow her to go to the big city to achieve her dream. She confesses to her Aunty in the city, "*Eu estava bem, muito bem, só queria mais chão e mais céus do que o que eu via em Manhãs Azuis no interior*".(Ibid, 2011:62). [14]She did not only learn so many foreign languages like French, Spanish, English and some African languages, she also teaches her students to play the piano. Mary Benedicta knows that as an Afro-Brazilian woman, she cannot fold her arms, she needs to acquire more than the ordinary qualification to achieve social ascension and her dream. Gary Alan Fine and Patricia Turner, *Whispers on the Color Line: Rumor and Race in America,* (2004), explore the enormous impact of racial legend and rumour in white folklores showing the grade of hatred that is attached to racial colours and the implication of being attacked by one's racial colour as it was in the case of Rose Dusreis another protagonist in the work. In her disappointment and anguish she expresses her disgust: "*Aguardei o porquê da minha substituição, já na semana da festa, quando uma menina branca, pintada de preto, no meu lugar, fingiu ser a bonequinha negra que eu era*. (Ibid, 2011:93).[15]This idea of using a black colour against a black child is more depressing than white/black racial discrimination[16] She feels more oppressed by seeing a white girl painted black, the teacher uses a black colour as a weapon of racial oppression, just like all bad things are classified blacks e.g. black day, etc. Rose Dusreis steps over all forms of racism in her school to become a professional dance teacher andcreates an African dance of the Kendiá people. These two characters project a deep sense of self determination and self-affirmation which are tools to affirm their Afro-Brazilian identity. Their strong and determined characters give the lie to the racist affirmation commonly assumed and expressed in Brazil about the indolence and atavism of Afro-Brazilians generally. Florentina de Souza declares:

> *… Despite the proclamation of the mestiço culture or the so called racial democracy in Brazil, the Afro-Brazilians encounter a lot of naturalized racial prejudice and humiliation in their daily life, due to this, there is the need for them to develop a racial conscience by accepting their (African) cultural heritage as a way of affirming their cultural identity".*[17]

[14](I was okay, very okay, I just need a chance to see more of the world than what was available in Manhãs Azuis).
[15](I waited for a plausible explanation for my replacement in the very week of the presentation, when a white girl, painted black, in my place, pretended to be the gracious black doll that I was).
[16] Gary Alan Fine, Patricia A. Turner. Whispers on the Color Line: Rumor and Race in America. Berkeley; University of California Press. Ix. 2001. www.scholarworks.iu.edu/.../2172Accessed 15th March, 2018.
[17]Cited in Conceição, Evaristo. "Gênero e Etnia: Uma Escrevivência de dupla face. In Mulheres no mundo, etnia,marginalidade e diáspora. João Pessoa. Ideía. 2005:2; Florentina Souza &LIMA, Maria Nazaré(org), *Literatura*

Conceição Evaristo provides another explanation for this racist act on the part of Saura amarantino and her man friend, she explains that the act of racism is constructed, concerning the black and white race. The contrary is the case of Regina Anastácia who got married to a white Brazilian man despite the refusal of his parents. A representation of a rare theme in Brazilian literature, "the marriage of a white man, Jorge D'Antanhos and a black woman, Regina Anastácia" as we have it in this book can only be in the imaginary of many brazilians very rare even in Brazilian films. (Ibid, 2011:115). Explaining some of the functions and objectives of Afro-Brazilian literature, Eduardo de Assis Duarte emphasizes the need for a counter-discourse to that of the hegemonic Brazilian writers:

> *A metáfora do renascimento remete à adoção de uma vida,mundo próprio e distinto do branco, à superação da cópia de modelos europeus e à assimilação cultural imposta como única via de expressão. Ao superar o discurso do colonizador em seus matizes passados e presentes, a perspectiva afro-identificada configura-se enquanto discurso da diferença e atua como elo importante dessa cadeia discursiva. (Ibid, 2014:394).* [18]

This plurality of social perspectives and of course, this type of discourse is hardly seen in the canonical works of Brazilian writers. The effort is to awaken the consciousness of Brazilians to the evil in racial discrimination. It will also overwrites many stereotyped images and racial relations that we have in the like of Jorge Amado's novel, *Gabriela, Cravo e Canela*, where Gabriela is only a sex object. Regina Anastácia's situation is different from the case of Dias Gomes's Soap Opera, (Novela) titled, "Roque Santeiro" (1985/86),[19] where a true marriage between a black man and a white lady was avoided in order to maintain the status quo of white to white marriage.

Afro-Brazilian Women And Brazilian Social Reality

Conceição Evaristo`s collection of short stories, *Insubmissaslágrimas de mulheres*, exposes the ills of the Brazilian social context and the effect of western culture on the people. An issue like "*eternal juventude*" (eternal youthfulness), using the words of Cecilia Sardenberge[20]of men sexual potency is condemned by the author. The urge for eternal sexual potency has become a normal culture and indeed, a way of life in Brazil and many parts of the world. In Brazil, it is common to see young and

*Afro-Brasileiro, Literatura Afro-Brasileira.*Salvador: Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais / Brasília: Fundação Cultural Palmares.2006:14.

[18](The metaphor of rebirth refers to the adoption of a life, a personal world and distinct from that of the whites, moving beyond the European model and its attendant cultural assimilation imposed as the only mode of expression. By surpassing the colonist discourse in their past and present trends, the afro-identified perspective configures itself as a *discourse of difference* and act as an important connector of this discursive chain.).

[19]See Joel Zito Araujo, "A Negação do Brasil, O Negro nas Telenovelas brasileiros". Ministério da Cultura. Casa de Criação. 2001.

[20]SARDENBERG, Cecília Maria Bacellar. "A Mulher e a Cultura da EternaJuventude".Campinas, São Paulo.2004.

oldwomen undergoing plastic surgeries to prevent themselves from ageing. This character, Adelha Santana Limoeiro, a black woman in her sixties is a character that the author uses to discuss this fad and fixation of some Brazilians on male potency, especially the aged ones as observed by Amanda Dal'Zotto Parizote[21]. This position of Amanda Dal'Zotto is not applicable to the case of Adelha Santa Limoeiro's husband, he prefers to flirt around with young ladies than keeping the position of a grandfather. While Adelha Santana Limoeiro, the wife, accepts the senior status of herself and her husband to whom she had been married for fifty years by not fussing over his diminishing sexual performance and even refusing to apply any "B*otox*"[22] to eliminate her signs of old age, her husband could not come to terms with the fact that he cannot perform so well in bed anymore. She preferred to sacrifice her female pride and jealousy to seeing her man depressed to the point of destroying his favourite musical instrument that he plays so well, (Ibid, 2011:36).[23]

The inability to cope with the loss of the machos power and patriarchal dominance on women that are considered as the property of their husbands can be used as an explanation for the character of Adelha Santana Limoeiro's husband. As Bisi Adeleye – Fayemi rightly agreed:

> *Patriarchy is a system of male authority which legitimizes the oppression of women through political, social, economic, legal, cultural, religious and military institutions. Men's access to, and control over resources and rewards within the private and public sphere derives its legitimacy from the patriarchal ideology of male dominance. (Ibid. 2014:93).*

Adelha Santana Limoeiro is serving as an agent of conservation for patriarch ideology. In this case, she is a bad image for the emancipation of Afro-Brazilian woman. Conceição Evaristo also underlines

[21](The grandparents are considered to be principal figures in family representation analysis and are positioned to be responsible for family values preservation), (2010:41)

[22]Lima Roberta Barbosa. Botox is a type of plastic surgery undertake for esthetic improvement. It is a toxin produced by Clostridium botulinum bacteria. Initially used by Opticians and Neurologists for muscular treatment caused by facial muscular contraction. it is used recently by Dermatologists to correct to correct deep wrinkles. In Brazil it is also called Dysport, Prosigne and Xeomin. www.dermatologia.net Accessed 23rd May, 2017.

[23](In his frustration at his sexual impotence, he would cry bitterly and openly, lamenting what he called his misfortune, he would repudiate his body which was now dead, lamenting the demise of his manhood, his penis that could no longer rise to the occasion… this led him more and more into depression and dissatisfaction with life… it pained me, but I did what I thought was best… I advised my man to go ahead and look for other women…And since then, I gave him the wings to fly into other nests. In his ignorance, his stubbornness, and his macho pride, he believed he could recover the irrecoverable, that he could regain the (sexual) vigour of his youth.)

the urge to bring to the lime lights some traumatic situations and experiences suffered by Afro-Brazilian.[24]

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the Afro-Brazilians generally are still in the process of stating their problems and conditions, this stage can be called problem recognition stage. It is true that there are many successful Afro-Brazilians like Pelé, Ronaldo, (first class sportsmen), Gilberto Gil, former Minister of Culture, Abdias de Nascimento, Tais Araújo, Lazaros Ramos, notable actors, etc, that became world stars through music, sport and Cinema today, but the fact still remains that they also experience systematic racial exclusion at one time or the other. Conceição Evaristo's *Insubmissas lágrimas de Mulheres,* (2011),is a literary representation that marks a point of difference and sensibility to societal issues as encouraged by the theory of *Escrevivência*. The author's focus on presenting Afro-Brazilian woman as protagonist as opposed to white Brazilian writers that give them voiceless character is competently achieved in this work. There is the need for the like of characters that rebel against all form of domination like Rose Dusreis that overcomes racial discrimination and achieves her ambition by creating an African dance and Shirley that exposes her husband to defend her stepdaughter. It is important to discontinue the complacent or conformed characterization like that of Aramilde that could not prosecute her husband for domestic violence or the shy Nalina Soledad that could not change her name while the father was still alive. Not even Adelha Santana Limoeiro that accepted humiliation from her husband.Above all this new literary act of Conceição Evaristo presents factual image of Afro-Brazilian woman and promotes her visibility.

[24] (Significantly, *Escrevivência* is a theory that seeks to engage itself in the process of rewriting the daily life and existence of Afro-Brazilians, pointing out their ethnic and cultural values, their pains, sacrifices, struggles, conquests, dreams, aspiration, beauty and ugliness…)Conceição Evaristo, *Nossa Escrevivência*, 2013:1. www.nossaescrevivência.com.br. Accessed 23rd September, 2017.

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