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3. Symbolic Violence and Women's Daily Lives in Rural Areas: Scope and Impacts in Galicia (Spain) and Paraíba (Brazil)

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Abstract

This article analyses the impact of symbolic violence against women in rural spaces. Specifically, we are interested in understanding how the symbolic dimension of two specific forms of violence, patriarchal and/or gender-based violence and urban discrimination of the rural, constrain the social representation that women farmers have of themselves and of rurality. A qualitative research method is the basis of the study and an in-depth interview is the main research technique. The areas selected were Galicia, in the North of Spain, and Paraíba, in the Northeast of Brazil. Initially, we analysed the daily practices of women farmers in both areas to identify the social representations that women farmers' groups have about the rural world and the presence of women in it. The results allow us to affirm that the symbolic dimension of the different forms of gender violence and territorial violence, which accompany the life story of these women, condition the construction of their representations of the rural world and themselves.

Keywords: symbolic violence, rurality, women, Paraiba/Brazil, Galicia/Spain

Introduction

This work focuses on rural women and conveys two concepts that will help us understand the objectives set. Firstly, violence, the meaning of which goes far beyond that of a physical nature and Secondly, rurality as a form of territorial marginalization. The combination of the two has particular consequences which are manifested in a double discrimination against women, aggravated to the extent that the dominant urban thinking stereotypes and naturalizes the rural, based on a traditional social organization dominated by patriarchy that is a practice consubstantial to these territorial areas.

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In this double scenario, the social context of gender and the territorial context of the rural world, our objective focuses on analyzing the representation that these rural women have of themselves in two different geographical areas: the Brazilian semi-arid region and the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula. From these representations, which include their interpretations of violence, inequality and rurality, we are interested in understanding the collective responses that seek their empowerment in the situations described. The work is situated within gender/feminist geography and rural/agrarian geography and the contributions of critical social studies, with a cultural approach. This theoretical-methodological option allows us to establish a direct relationship between the social construction of symbolic violence (against women and/or against rural areas) and the territory.

The rural spaces that we have selected, based on criteria of rurality and the presence of organized women farmers' collectives, are located in the municipality of San Sadurniño in Galicia, a region of NW Spain, and in the Cariri Oriental Paraibano, corresponding to the semi-arid Sertanejo, in NE Brazil. In the Galician case, women farmers have found in the virtuality of the WWW network the possibility of giving visibility to their lives, of publicly recognizing themselves as rural women, of celebrating this condition and of wanting to share their ancestral knowledge and personal experiences with the world. They are the *Youtubeiras* de San Sadurniño who, from an experience of technological inclusion of women farmers, created their own YouTube channel.

In the north-east of Brazil, in the state of Paraíba, the CASACO/Cariri-Oriental collective is an association of peasant farmers, linked to a large network of rural organizations throughout the country (more than 3,000), organized under the name of ASA-Brasil. It is a network of rural trade unions, associations, cooperatives and NGOs active in the semi-arid region, whose political project since 1989 has been to coexist with the semi-arid rural environment. Many of the CASACO/Cariri-Oriental women reconcile their lives as peasants and farmers with seasonal non-agricultural and paid activities, both in their places of residence and in nearby urban areas. Women's participation in this collective stems from the need to win the right to remain on the land as farmers.

Both examples, in very different social and territorial contexts, highlight aspects of life in rural areas: the leading role of women in family-based agriculture and livestock farming; the positive difference in women's administration/ management of rural spaces; and the

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construction and preservation, from the differential perspective of women, of agricultural knowledge and practices. At the same time, *Youtubeiras* and CASACO/Cariri-Oriental are collective female spaces where the multiple forms of violence against women and its representations are verbalized and shared, reinforcing awareness against patriarchy and, therefore, also its fight.

The forms of violence that are the object of this study are material and symbolic practices that lead to double discrimination, not the only one, to which these women are exposed: gender and territorial. By analyzing how the rurality-femininity relationship and its social imaginary have been constructed in both spaces, we aim to highlight this double discrimination, which manifests itself fundamentally through the symbolic violence that permeates the daily lives of women farmers and livestock breeders, also contributing to the physical and mental appropriation of the countryside.

Theoretical Framework

To build bridges between violence, rurality and gender, we start with the contemporary debate on violence and the multiple sociological and philosophical ways of conceptualizing it. Galtung is perhaps one of the contemporary authors who has most deeply explored the concept of violence, with an initial text from 1969 and several subsequent reinterpretations. His starting principle is that violence represents a deprivation of fundamental human rights. In 1990, Galtung developed the idea of cultural violence, which adds to and complements direct and structural violence. By cultural violence he means "those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence...that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence." (Galtung 1990, 291). It is therefore, as the author points out, about aspects of culture and not about culture itself. This reading links directly with Bourdieu's (1977) symbolic violence. Therefore, violence does not exclusively imply the physical use of force.

Related to this sense of violence is oppression that, for Young (1990), is the cause and social condition of injustice. It is, in general terms, the exercise of tyranny by a dominant group. For the oppressed group, social rules become a restrictive structure of forces and barriers that immobilize and reduce them. Oppression is not an injustice to an occasional person or group but presupposes a social character. Young (1990) differentiates five forms in which oppression can be expressed, violence being the most visible, as it refers to any and all actions that involve harassment, intimidation, humiliation, and stigmatization of members of

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a particular group. Concomitantly, any concrete action that starts from an oppressor-dominator, contains a symbolic dimension that inter-generationally builds the necessary amalgam to perpetuate the various injustices that shape the social world, among them gender inequalities and territorial discriminations. One of the actors involved in this oppression can be institutions.

Institutional violence refers to those actions by the powers of the State that, by action or omission, prevent the full exercise of rights on equal terms. Directly related to the idea of institutional violence is the concept of symbolic violence developed by Bourdieu (1977). Here, the State plays a major role (Burawoy, 2008). According to Bourdieu, through violence, in an invisible way, domination is legitimized and accepted as something natural and non-arbitrary (Swartz, 2013). It is, therefore, a soft violence (Bourdieu, 1980), of a structural and lasting nature, which implies a self-acceptance, usually unconscious, of the situation and, consequently, the recognition of the power held by the dominant. Although Bourdieu hardly considers gender as a category of analysis (McCall, 1992), his work also offers opportunities for feminist reading (Moi, 1991; McCall, 1992; Adkins & Skeggs, 2005; McLeod, 2005). For example, Moi (1991,1023) points out that "symbolic violence is legitimate and therefore literally unrecognizable as violence". This type of violence is exercised by those who hold symbolic power, i.e. those who possess symbolic capital (Moi, 1991). Moukarbel (2009) already pointed out that symbolic violence can be as or more dangerous than other more visible forms of violence, as well as being more lasting over time.

Tyner and Inwood (2014) make an effort to re-theorize the concept of violence in the social sciences to enrich the understanding between violence and space. These authors, taking up Galtung's work, criticize the separation between direct and structural violence, which only serves to reproduce existing inequalities in society. Indeed, they point out that the ways in which attempts are made to understand violence "do very little to transform the fundamental social relations that undergird society." (p. 781).

The contributions of Tyner and Inwood (2014) and other geographers such as Springer (2011) have served to give space a relevant place in the conceptualization of violence (Little, 2017). If gender relations vary across space (Massey, 1994) then we can assume the uniqueness of the rural context. However, we cannot fall into a simplification of the rural as

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opposed to the urban. Thus, Woods (2005) advocates a more robust and flexible definition related to the social representation approach that implies different ways of understanding, of constructing, the rural. Cloke (2006), in his effort to conceptualize rurality, also includes the theoretical framework of social construction and the danger of deterritorialization. In any case, rurality is defined in a more complex way and moves away from the binary vision that opposes rural and urban.

The framing of the rural, from the perspective of mainstream narratives, as a single reality has led to the exclusion of different visions and identities (Philo, 1992). The inclusion of women in these neglected others leads Little (2006, 365) to assert that what distinguishes "the study of women as a group from other neglected identities, is the sense in which the focus on gender, challenges dominant perspectives in rural studies, in a reconfiguring of ideas of power and inequality...". For Little (2006) gender identity is not fixed, it is constantly changing and responds to different national and local realities. The study of masculinities should also be considered in this context (Little & Jones 2000; Campbell & Mayerfeld Bell 2000; Little 2006, 2015, 2017).

It is in the context of the social and cultural construction of rurality that Little (2017) says we need to situate a more critical study of rural domestic violence. As Little (2017) insists, rurality is understood and experienced in different ways, shaped by individual circumstances and by geographical and historical contexts. The urban background of most feminist scholars has not allowed for sufficient exploration of this more flexible concept of rurality (Pini, Branth & Little, 2015). However, "Violence sits in places... (and) we experience the world through our emplacement" (Springer 2011, 97).

From what we have seen so far, we can accept that different forms of violence are spatialized, that rurality, although a social construct, is also spatialized and that gender identity responds, in the same way, to different spatial realities. Based on the assumption of these ideas, we can say that the different forms of violence against women are manifested, perceived and suffered in different ways. However, as much as violence is spatialized and place can make a difference in the way violence is experienced, the truth is that we must consider place as part of a relational assemblage (Springer, 2011), which will allow us to have a much more holistic view of violence.

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If Springer (2011) refers to the theology of neoliberalism to explain the immutability of violence to place, Kasabov (2020), in a similar vein, identifies 5 moments of increasing violence culminating in the present day "marked by rural constituencies being hijacked by populist forces." (Kasabov 2020, 143); speaks of assaults on the countryside and the domination of the countryside by urban-metropolitan elites that has led to conservative, protectionist and nationalist positions, referring to the violence of neoliberalism against the countryside that has led to a dramatic increase in inequalities. Shucksmith (2012, 384) in his studies on rural poverty and social exclusion, points out that "Inequality exists between places, just as between classes". Shucksmith (2012) himself argues that place is inextricably linked to class, power and inequality. The construction of rurality would be nothing more than a vehicle for increasing inequality in which the rural, as a dominated space, does not cease to be a realm that suffers from symbolic violence. Rurality is constructed not as a reflection of itself but in its comparison with another space, in this case the urban.

Conway, McDonagh, Farrell and Kinsella (2017), approach rurality from one of its most enduring symbols, the farming family and the process of inherited transmission in which power and symbolic violence are deeply embedded, naturalized and serve to transmit and perpetuate existing hierarchy. Saugeres (2002, 382), notes that "A woman who inherits a farm and farms on her own is then represented as only doing so because she lacks a brother or a husband or because she lacks femininity". Although Conway et al. (2017) do not incorporate a gender perspective into their research, it is easy to infer that preserving the status quo in the hierarchy entails the application of practices that involve discrimination against women.

For Saugeres (2002) it is patriarchal ideology that excludes and marginalizes women in farming families, in so far as "land and farming are constructed as essentially masculine spheres of activity" (Saugeres 2002, 381). In other words, nature (associated with women) is dominated by men through agriculture. Patriarchy and one of its consequences, violence against women, is a structural problem that affects all kinds of spaces and social classes. From a spatial perspective, the question of a double incidence of violence should be raised. On the one hand, there is the direct and symbolic violence that is rooted in the culture of patriarchy. On the other hand, there is the symbolic violence exercised by urban elites against the rural, which is based on a culture that asserts urban control in terms of economic, cultural

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and symbolic capital. The under-supply of public and private services or increased physical isolation reinforces different forms of violence, which are furthermore naturalised under the discourse of traditional society.

Methodology

The methodology used was qualitative, focusing on two cases for the comparative study: the group of women, farmers and *youtubeiras* of the collective "Teño unha horta en San Sadurniño" (I have a kitchen garden in San Sadurniño) in Galicia, Spain and the group of women, farmers and members of the " Association of community leaders, farmers' organizations and family farmers' organizations of Cariri Paraibano" - CASACO, in the interior of the state of Paraíba, Brazil.

The technique used was an in-depth interview, conducted online, with semi-structured scripts, involving flexibility and adaptation, around three main axes: a) female representations of rurality in Galicia and Paraiba; b) the daily experiences, in the productive and reproductive spheres, of women farmers; and c) representations of femininity in the rural world of Galicia and Paraiba.

There is a significant debate about the number of interviews needed to validate the research (Baker & Edwards, 2012; Hennink, Kaiser & Marconi, 2017). In total, we conducted eight interviews with audio and/or audio-visual recordings, each lasting about two hours (about 15 hours of recording). We have considered the sample size to be appropriate based on the concept of saturation as understood "when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of your core theoretical categories." (Charmaz 2006, 113).

Four of the interviews were conducted with Galician women farmers, in both Galician and Spanish, and the other four were conducted in Portuguese with Brazilian women farmers. The ages of the interviewees were very different, ranging from 35 to 75 years old. All of them were alone at the time of the interview, except for exceptional moments when other people were present to help with the use of the technology.

In the Galician case, all the interviewees were women over 65 years, with a predominance of married women; all the Galician group have grown-up children living outside the parental home and working in jobs outside of agriculture. These women are rural pensioners, which

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implies the existence of a monthly income acquired from agricultural and/or livestock work during the time of their past "productive life". They are women who have always been involved in agriculture, although in different ways depending on the various stages of their life cycle: as daughters, wives and mothers.

Nowadays, their work focuses on tending their vegetable gardens as well as caring for the household and dependent family members. They are united by the know-how of years of personal experience in agricultural practices for family self-consumption. They are also the living memory of ancestral knowledge about the management of the Galician rural space and the bearers of a unique knowledge, which is the female management of resources and space. The visibility of the group, given by their participation in the project "I have a kitchen garden in San Sadurniño", represents for these women the public recognition of their knowledge and practices as rural workers, but above all, as women of the countryside.

In Paraíba, women farmers are younger, although in this case, they have dependent children. They are women farmers with active working lives, with long working days in rural areas, both in paid activities not linked to agriculture, such as teaching or domestic service, and in direct work on the land and in their vegetable gardens. The prevalence is of single women, although with partners, not necessarily fathers of their children. The primacy of single-parent families headed by these women means that reproductive responsibilities fall mainly on them. For this reason, the possibility of having a vegetable garden that guarantees access to agricultural production for family self-consumption and the sale of surplus produce is one of their priorities. Participation in the CASACO association of women farmers facilitates the sale of these surpluses in free markets and the strengthening of the group in the struggle for the conquest of a fundamental right: a dignified and full life as rural women.

For the analysis of the interviews, we based ourselves on Seid (2016), which establishes the following guidelines: transcription, coding, hypothesis formulation, thematic analysis/analysis by case and synthesis. In the transcription phase, we recorded verbatim the testimonies of the women who participated in this research, following the segmentation into thematic axes into which we had structured the interview script. In the coding phase, we opted for the identification of indicators of symbolic violence present in the narratives already transcribed and the creation of categories. We initially identified 14 indicators, which we finally synthesized into five macro-indicators, based on Young's Five Faces of

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Oppression (1990): Exploitation, Marginalization, Powerlessness, Cultural imperialism, and Violence. These have been used as central concepts for the formulation of ideas, the analysis and the subsequent synthesis of the eight interviews conducted.

Areas of study

Two areas with very different characteristics have been selected for this study. Firstly, a small municipality that is representative of the rural world of Galicia. Like many others in this region of northwest Spain, it is characterized by its ageing population, largely due to intense migratory processes dating back to the 19th century. From the economic point of view, activity, traditionally based on smallholder agriculture and livestock farming, has become increasingly marginalized, being limited almost exclusively to tiny vegetable gardens for family consumption. Forestry, on the other hand, has become one of the mainstays of the municipality's economy.

In this context of depopulation and ageing, the initiative “I have a kitchen garden in San Sadurniño” was born in 2015, with the support of the municipality based on a digital literacy course. From there arises the initiative of a group of retired women who, in the same project, are going to expose their traditional knowledge using technological tools to which they were strangers. In this way, they not only contribute to highlighting their acquired and inherited knowledge of the land, but also, through collective action, create a forum for empowerment as rural women.

Secondly, we have selected a community in the north-east of Brazil, an area of former European colonization traditionally associated with large agro-exporting and cattle-raising properties in the semi-arid Sertanejo. However, despite intense emigration, a small peasantry survives with them, whose crops are grown both within the large estates, in areas destined for the supply and consumption of the families who work and live on the farms, and in neighbouring and/or marginal areas.

Rural organizations, mixed or formed exclusively by women, in the semi-arid region of the state of Paraíba, such as CASACO/Cariri Oriental, originated at the end of the 1980s and under the same historical conditions: democratic opening of the country, a guarantee of labour rights, struggle for land redistribution and demand for social and gender justice. Today, CASACO/Cariri Oriental is a way of mobilizing and organizing work and life in rural

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areas based on the needs of the women who live there. From its origin to the present day, it continues to represent a way of living in the countryside in Brazil: as women and as farmers. But it is not only the recognition of the role and protagonism of women that is the objective of this collective but the demands that gave rise to the group in the 1980s that are still present among them: the achievement of more and more gender justice in the semi-arid and the eradication of all and any form of violence against rural women and/or sertaneja.

Results

The interviews conducted with rural women in Galicia and Paraíba allow us, based on their life stories, to identify how rurality has conditioned their personal and family trajectories. At the same time, the interviews have allowed us to detect how attributions inherent to the historical and cultural formation of the rural world, such as the development of productive agricultural and livestock activities, the use of family labour, self-consumption and sale of surpluses, preservation of and contact with nature, the production of knowledge contextualized with the physical-natural environment and/or, demographic dispersion and territorial isolation, have been modified according to the transformations experienced by the women.

We agree with Little (2017) when she states that there is no common understanding or experience of rurality, but rather different "lived realities" that are shaped by individual circumstances as well as local histories and geographies. Taking into consideration the diversity of these experiences brings us closer to what Cloke (2006, 21) claims to be the importance of rurality: "the fascinating world of social, cultural and moral values". In addition, to avoid the risk of rural studies continuing to define rurality through experiences situated in the Global North, which is not the case in this study.

We have organized the content of the interviews according to Young's (1990) Five Faces of Oppression. Although Young focuses much of her work on the division of labour, she points out that "Women's oppression consists not merely in an inequality of status, power, and wealth" (Young 1990, 50), offering a perspective that goes beyond the superficial to deal with structures. At the same time, these five forms of oppression lead directly to the concept of symbolic violence.

Early Practices in the Process of Marginalization of Rural Women and Girls

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For the Galician women farmers interviewed, being born in rural areas meant, during their childhood and adolescence, less schooling than their male siblings, cousins or men in the rural community, had access to. The early association of men with the public sphere and women with the private and/or domestic sphere means that activities and practices characteristic of this phase of life, such as schooling itself, are differentiated:

In my case, men went to school for longer because it seems that men had to leave the house, while for women learning to sew was enough (...) at the age of 12 I had already stopped going to school. (Galician Woman 2-GW2)

Mastering the tasks linked to the domestic and care sphere would be sufficient for a woman's full development or what was expected of her, hence, the need to dedicate themselves to these activities and not to others, such as intellectual or professional training, at an early age. It is an early and radical practice of marginalization of women in rural spaces, which excludes them from the needs of the labour system. It is, as Young (1990, p.53) states, "Perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression" as it potentially subjects these women to severe material deprivation.

Of the group interviewed, only one of the women had the opportunity to attend school and receive training for a longer period, although the justification for this was related to the family's underestimation of her capabilities as a woman to carry out other activities:

I was the one who studied the most. As they said I was good for nothing, they sent me to school. They all said it: that one is worthless, she should go to school. (GW1)

For the Cariri women farmers, being born in rural areas did not represent gender discrimination in terms of the time they spent in school. The difference with their brothers, or other men in the family, is not seen as a dimension of female oppression in rural areas, since men did not have access to full schooling either. One of the women interviewed said:

I studied in the mornings, went to school and in the afternoons I helped with homework. Of the five siblings, only I managed to finish secondary school, then I stopped studying (Paraíba Woman 2-PW2).

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In this case, we are dealing with a social class conditioner since it is the sons and daughters of low-income peasant families who do not enjoy the guarantees of a full education. At the same time, it is a device of territorial discrimination, since generations of men and women who live in the countryside have been forced to give up studying or interrupt their training cycles due to the lack of public educational institutions in the countryside.

During the childhood and adolescence of the women interviewed in Cariri, gender roles were deeply rooted in the productive needs of the large families in the semi-arid northeast. The soil and climatic conditions mean that work on the land is arduous and not very technical. For this reason, it is traditionally the men of the house, who have the masculinized attributes of strength and efficiency, who are obliged to take on agricultural work from an early age. However, this does not mean that during their childhood, rural women in Paraíba have not participated in agricultural and livestock tasks on their farms. As their testimonies show, they have been discriminated against on the basis of their gender, mainly because of: a) the differentiated use of time, prioritising their presence in reproductive work without taking time away from productive work; and b) the undervaluing of work/activity when it is carried out by women, classifying it as easy or light, or as a complement or help. As some of the women interviewed said:

As women, we had to cook the food and wash the dishes, wash, iron and do all that, and they didn't do it. We help out, but the more brute work of going to the fields, ploughing, that sort of thing, is done by the men. (PW3)

The interruption of schooling for rural women in both areas led, among other things, to limiting the possibilities of their professional training at the corresponding age. In the Cariri group of women farmers, however, there are women who have taken up their training again in adulthood, especially in courses related to family farming and agro-ecology. The rapprochement between this form of agriculture and women is a phenomenon that is becoming increasingly widespread throughout Brazil, sometimes as a form of resistance (Siliprandi, 2015; Ferreira & Mattos, 2017).

In rural Galicia, we also observed a re-signification of traditional gender roles in the group of *Youtubeiras* de San Sadurniño; the return to training processes, such as participation in a course that enables them to acquire a driving license. This personal conquest made in

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adulthood has meant the modification of habits in their lives. One of the farmers interviewed reported that:

*I was the first one to have a driving license: ufff! A woman with a driving license! There was no one around here who had one. Because, since nobody had one around here, it seemed to me that it was a man's issue (*GW2)

Dependency, especially in relation to women's lack of mobility in rural areas, makes them more vulnerable. The fact of creating autonomy to move around, for example in one's own vehicle, implies breaking with the territorial isolation to which many women are subjected in rural areas.

Experiences of Exploitation in Rural Women's Lives

For Young (1990, 53) "The injustice of exploitation consists in social processes that bring about a transfer of energies from one group to another to produce unequal distributions". When groups are defined by unequal power relations, as are gender relations in rural areas, domestic work, performed primarily by women, is one of the most visible and evident forms of this transfer.

The interviews show that in both areas, the priority of agricultural and livestock work is present in the first years of women's lives, while they also take on domestic care tasks at an early age. However, what is defined as *household chores*, those necessary for the reproduction of the family's daily life, in the rural world are much more extensive, spatially, and diversified than in the urban world. As one of the women farmers interviewed said:

I wake up early, at five in the morning, make myself a coffee and go to look after the chickens and then go to the vegetable garden. At home there is always something to do, the food, the clothes, the beds, collecting the eggs from the hens, looking after the kids and the pigs (PW4).

In the reproductive sphere, rurality has its own spatial forms that increase the demands of care work which, as in the urban world, falls primarily on women. In other words, in the rural world, a sexual and spatial division of labour is established in which the house, the home, and the space near the dwelling are fundamentally the responsibility of the women and girls of the family. The plantation areas, stables, warehouses and environments further away from the

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residential nucleus are spaces where agricultural activities are the responsibility of men and their sons. Although productive tasks such as the care and feeding of animals, the preparation of areas for cultivation, harvesting and collection and/or the management of herds and their milking are assumed inter-generationally, rural family work involves educating/teaching sons and daughters to be men and women of the countryside. However, this is not the case when it comes to family work in the domestic sphere. In this space, the work only assumes an educational/training dimension in the case of girls, who are almost exclusively instructed by their mothers or other women in the family.

We used to go to work in the fields like them and then when we got home they sat and waited while we did the housework. (GW2)

Children did not work indoors. I was already slaughtering chickens when I was 10 years old. We each had a task to do. Although there were choices, I liked to cook, bake cakes, sew, my mother taught me all that (PW1).

Women used to make us sew or do work that was said to be women's work. My father used to look after the cows at night. He didn't milk them; that was my mother's task and she was the one who taught me. (GW1)

Much of the knowledge about agricultural work transmitted by adult peasant women to younger women is related to the care of garden crops or the raising of small animals and poultry. The vegetable garden is a diversified space rich in food crops, both in Galicia and in Paraíba, and it is primarily a place of work that is cared for by women. It is a space for women's decisions, knowledge and action, sometimes an area of rural women's power and control over agricultural production and work. In both cases, these crops are used for family's consumption and exchange with neighbors and relatives, as well as for feeding the animals that live on the farms. The production of the vegetable garden is also a source of income through the commercialization of surpluses in the fairs/free markets, in the Galician case, and in the vegetable distribution shop of CASACO, in the Brazilian case:

I have sown linen, chia seeds, buckwheat, I have broccoli, I have courgette, I have peas and Castilian chickpeas (...) I choose everything, I plant everything and I harvest everything. My husband does nothing in the vegetable garden. I work by myself (GW2)

ISSN: 2583-8687
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Double Blind Peer-reviewed, Bi-Annual (English) April-September, 2025, Volume-3, Number-1
Website: www.apijgs.com , **Email:** apijgs@gmail.com

In the vegetable garden, I plant carrots, coriander, garlic, potatoes, etc. When I sell at the CASACO street market, depending on what I send to sell, I get about 100.00 R$. With this money, I buy seeds so that I can always have a vegetable garden. I don't buy anything for myself (PW4).

The income of the Galician and Paraiban families, of the women interviewed, is divided between the money they receive from the paid work they and their fathers and/or husbands carry out outside the farms; the income from the sale of the family farm crops, from the sale of milk in the case of the Galicians and goats in the case of the Paraiban, and finally, the income from the sale of garden produce. Decisions on how and where to invest the family budget are mainly made by men. However, the money generated by the sale of garden produce is, in both cases, managed by women.

The adult life of these rural women also involves a large number of hours dedicated to cleaning, organizing and maintaining their homes. It is common that there are also other relatives living in the house, usually elderly, who are dependent on special care and are therefore responsible for them:

I got married and decided to stay with my father because he was getting sick and I wasn't going to abandon him. For 19 years I hardly slept, and now I don't know how many years I've been taking sleeping pills. (GW1)

I take care of my husband, the plants, the vegetable garden, the children, the bugs, the in-laws (PW2)

Rural Sociability for Women: Coexisting with Powerlessness and Violence

Entering into a relationship, getting married and/or starting a family are dimensions of adult life that are also conditioned by rurality. Although marriage was not the only life option for rural women in both areas, it is common that it was through this link that they formed new families. The Galician women interviewed who have married have done so young and with only one man, generally the father of their children. In contrast, the Paraiban women have had children alone, i.e. they have not formed lasting ties with the parents of their offspring or they have separated from them. Despite this difference, it is significant that in both single- and two-parent families, the time and dedication to the care and education of children falls

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mainly on women, mothers and older sisters. This responsibility is assumed by women and although motherhood has been naturalized, it is still a challenge for many. As one of the women interviewed said:

I was so naive! This cultural thing against women is so strong that when I separated, even I thought I would not be able to take care of my house and my daughters (PW1).

Powerlessness, as a way of oppression, is defined by Young (1990, p.56) as a lack of authority or power. In the case of the rural women interviewed, they must take orders and rarely have the right to give them.

We identify the self-representation of the woman-mother as being primarily and sometimes solely responsible for her offspring, is repeated. Even in the case of women who have lived with violent fathers and/or husbands and have been forced to leave the family home, they have done so with their children. The obligatory nature of education and childcare implies abandoning the space of family life with their children. Rurality also conditions the decision to leave. Leaving the family home means leaving their farms, their crops and vegetable gardens, their animals, in other words, any and all property linked to the wider rural domestic space, as well as the productive one. The link with the land and the dependence on access to it for their reproduction as farmers makes them more vulnerable. Forced departure from the family property is possible when there is a network of support and solidarity, mainly female and urban, of friends and relatives who take them and their children in.

Rural women have naturalized and reinforced gender roles that establish innate duties for them, such as caring for and educating children or remaining in abusive and/or violent relationships. The representation of rural women as obedient and strong enough to live in the countryside, despite sometimes limiting their full development, becomes a virtue. This is the perverse effect of the naturalization of gender inequality and injustice. Women who have suffered different forms of violence and who reproduce it, thus create a spiral of violence that is difficult to break and easy to silence in rural areas. As some of the women interviewed recounted:

The male figure is very important to my mother; at the time of my separation my husband was more important to her than me. She was not the one who threw me out of the house, but she tried to force me to live with the man I no longer wanted (PW1)

ISSN: 2583-8687
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Website: www.apijgs.com , **Email:** apijgs@gmail.com

One day I was under so much stress with the psychological violence I was suffering that I spoke to my parish priest. He asked me if I was not able to change all that (GW2)

Related to the development of non-abusive affective ties outside the family, such as dating, or the practice of safe and satisfactory sexual relations, as well as the care of the body, is sexual education and reproductive health for women. In rural areas, the absence of this training is not a phenomenon exclusive to areas such as Galician or Paraiban. This lack also defines rural areas and how men and women who live and work there have historically been treated by the public authorities. Territorial discrimination again has a more problematic impact on women, as it is their bodies that suffer the consequences of unwanted pregnancies or problems related to pregnancy, childbirth and the first months of their children's lives. In addition, it is their bodies that are the most neglected in terms of a satisfactory sexual life.

The interviews carried out show that female sexual and reproductive education, both in rural Galicia and Paraiba, has been a solitary exercise in self-knowledge for women. A taboo subject within and outside the family. In the case of Brazil, there have been substantial changes and many of these uninformed mothers are now concerned with the sexual education of their daughters, something that is not the case in Galicia. This is how the women interviewed describe the sexual and reproductive education received, or the lack of it:

Not at all, in those subjects as if I were born blind, nothing, neither of menstruation nor of anything. You have to learn it by yourself (GW1)

I explained to my daughter how it was going to be, I told her not to be afraid that it was going to be normal. I told her that this happens to all women (PW4)

The Rural Feminine: Tensions of Cultural Imperialism on Female Rurality

When we asked the Galician and Paraiban women farmers about their femininity and how it had been forged in the course of their lives, we aimed to identify gender values and representations that shape the social imaginary of this group. We also investigated how behavioral norms have been present in the symbolic construction of what it means to be a peasant woman over time in the two rural areas studied. According to Young (1990, p.59), "cultural imperialism involves the universalization of a dominant group's experience and culture". This means that those who live under its effects are defined from the outside. In the case of the rural women interviewed, their particular perspectives on themselves or the rural world are persistently disempowered and sometimes stereotyped.

ISSN: 2583-8687
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Double Blind Peer-reviewed, Bi-Annual (English) April-September, 2025, Volume-3, Number-1
Website: www.apijgs.com , **Email:** apijgs@gmail.com

The permanence of gender stereotypes, which link women to the private sphere and men as providers responsible for the family, coexist with the unequal representation of sexual freedom for both genders. Women's bodies are seen as objects of sexual desire and male possession, and must therefore be made invisible. Meanwhile, male desire and sexual freedom are socially accepted, as the women interviewed express:

That woman who is inside the house is the ideal woman for the rural man. She is economical, she doesn't need to take care of herself, she just needs to be there. There is no need to encourage her to look pretty, so there is no risk of anyone being interested in her (PW4).

A good man is someone who works, who takes care of family expenses, who is recognized by the community as a father, who may even betray his wife but does not let society see it: that is a good man (GW1).

Femininity and its representations have been polarized between the conception of the strong, hard-working woman at one extreme and the self-sacrificing, obedient woman at the other. However, the devaluation of the feminine, as subaltern, has been present for much of their lives as reflected, in different ways, in the responses of the women interviewed:

All my life I had the illusion of being a man. I would like to build houses, I like carpentry. These are men's things. In my day a woman doing that was frowned upon (GW1).

Many times he would arrive on Saturday and I would have to iron his clothes, make him look nice so that he could go out to the bars, with his friends. I stayed at home, he never told me to come with him, nothing like that! (PW1)

At the same time that the devaluation of the feminine has constructed their gender representations, in the Galician case, the subalternity of the rural world in relation to the urban world has conditioned their self-representation as rural women for a large part of their lives. For the rural Galician women interviewed, the hierarchical distance between them and urban women is a way of belittling their territorial and gender identity:

The difference between them and us is huge. It seems that we are not even women (GW1).

I feel a bit uncomfortable with people from the city because they treat us rural women as if we were stupid, as if living in the village makes you stupid. They leave us behind (GW2)

Paradoxically, in the context of male cultural domination, the women interviewed recognize vital female references in their lives. The image of other women close to them, such as

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mothers, sisters or even women farmers in the community, is recurrent when we ask them with whom they have learned the most in their lives:

I learned the most about agro-ecology in my life from the women who work at ASA-Paraíba (PW1).

My sisters are my references of effort and dedication. My mother, despite her limitations. My neighbor, who is a religious woman and whom I respect a lot and we take care of each other. I can't stop saying that I have learned a lot from my daughters (PW2).

I can't say with whom I have learnt the most in my life. With my mother the first things, then I had to find my own way (GW4).

The recognition of the role played by other rural women in their lives means that certain dimensions of the rural women are recognized as positive values in their lives. To be a rural woman is to be aware of a territorial identity that allows them to recognize themselves as bearers of knowledge and practices about the land and its care, about animals and their exploitation, about the work that defines them:

They [urban women] come to the village and they don't know where they step (PW1).

The countryside has everything. It has a vegetable garden, it has healthy food (...) It has changed a lot but it has to keep changing a lot (GW1).

The girls who live in the countryside, any of them can make a coffee.... Now the girls in the city, let's see who can? In that we are more advanced than in the city, we are more different (GW3).

Although life in the countryside has allowed them to acquire a gender identity that positively differentiates them, the marks of violence against rural women are also present in their life stories. The expression of this violence is associated, for most of the women interviewed, with the frequent use of exclusionary and pejorative language by men in the family and/or community against them. This is the main manifestation of violence in their daily lives. This is what some of the women interviewed said:

Many women are afraid to do things. We are afraid of doing it wrong, of messing things up. Because we have been told many times that we are not good at it. That these are not women's things, that we don't know how to do them (PW2).

I have always lived with shouting and bad language at work. I used to go with them and they were so scary, they called us all sorts of names. There were always arguing and shouting (GW3).

ISSN: 2583-8687
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Double Blind Peer-reviewed, Bi-Annual (English) April-September, 2025, Volume-3, Number-1
Website: www.apijgs.com , **Email:** apijgs@gmail.com

For the Galician women interviewed, physical violence is more difficult to describe. However, they were all aware of its existence in the lives of other women: friends, neighbors or companions in the vegetable garden. For the Paraiban women, the collective of women farmers that they have formed is also a space for exchange and female solidarity in the face of the gender-based aggressions that they suffer. As a result, experiences of physical and sexual violence against them are more easily denounced and divided. Sorority has allowed them to build bridges to confront violence against women in the countryside. One of the implications of the exchanges in the women's networks that have been formed in both spaces has been the increase in self-care among these women farmers in their adult lives. These are practices that protect these women from the patriarchal offences and urban discrimination against which, throughout their lives, they have had to exist and resist as women, workers, mothers and daughters of the countryside:

My first concern is with food, I don't like bad food. I don't like a life of arguments, although some are necessary in life, I don't like it. I like harmony, especially in my home. My home is a place of peace and quiet, that is part of my care (PW1).

I like to dress nice, smell good, wear a nice shoe. My partner doesn't get involved in that (GW1)

The generational changes that have favoured the development of resistance practices against patriarchal violence and territorial discrimination, do not only refer to the process of self-affirmation through female care, they also refer to concrete day-to-day conquests in relation to the degree of autonomy and management that these women have acquired over their own lives:

I see within the life cycle of rural women and what is changing is the fact that the woman farmer no longer has to be ugly, toothless, disheveled, unkempt (PW3).

What is changing is the control of motherhood, you don't see so many women with a large number of children. Many social changes in public life, but at home we end up reproducing what we are fighting against, with our sons and daughters. It is very difficult (PW2).

I have everything my mother didn't have. I have everything I need to do whatever I want in the garden, at home and outside. I have a washing machine, I have water in the tap, I have everything. She didn't have it (GW2)

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Discussion and Concluding remarks

The study carried out with groups of women farmers and livestock breeders in San Sadurniño (SP) and Cariri (BR) showed how sexist stereotypes - naturalized by patriarchal violence against women - and the cultural imposition of the urban - as the only model of full progress - continue to determine the social representations of gender and of the rural space itself. Consequently, women's lives and the development of these spaces. Public policies through the constant marginalization of rural spaces have favoured institutional violence. The assault on the countryside referred to by Kasabov (2020) has accelerated with neoliberalism and has increased inequalities, also highlighting the importance of space referred to, among others, by Shucksmith (2012). However, we also note in our research the importance of support from local authorities, emanating from the rural spaces themselves.

In the Galician and Paraiban cases, the double discrimination faced by rural women is related, on the one hand, to the fact that they are farmers and peasants in industrialized and urban societies; on the other, to the fact that they are women in patriarchal-sexist societies. The cultural domination of the urban creates social representations that associate rural women with backwardness, lack of education and culture, lack of femininity, conservatism of traditions and backward morals. The cultural domination that patriarchy imposes on women implies being conditioned by unequal and hierarchical family, social and institutional relations, where female oppression is naturalized. Young's (1990) concept of oppression, understood as "everyday practices of a society that perpetuate structures" (Celentano 2019, 294) has allowed us to see the different faces of symbolic violence in our areas of study.

Although in Bourdieu's social theory "gender does not appear as a form of capital" (McCall 1992, 843), our analysis takes up the Bourdelian perspective of symbolic violence as an instrument/category for the study of rural-urban socio-spatial relations and gendered social relations. The Bourdelian concept allowed us to identify submissions that are not even perceived as such. Inequalities that are based on certain collective expectations, on socially unfounded beliefs that interpret relations of domination and submission, on other affective ones. Physical or economic violence and the more refined symbolic violence coexist without contradictions. The latter, the symbolic, turns out to be a legitimizing power that elicits the consensus of both the dominators and the dominated; a world making power insofar as it

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assumes the capacity to impose a "legitimate vision of the social world and its divisions" (Bourdieu 1987, 13).

Symbolic domination is based on ignorance and recognition of the principles in the name of which it is exercised. This domination is often exercised without physical coercion through the different symbolic forms that shape minds and give meaning to actions. The root of symbolic violence lies in the fact that the dominated think of themselves in the categories of the dominant. According to this argument, the fact that rural women in the areas analysed in this study, San Sadurniño (SP) and Cariri (BR), accept a set of fundamental assumptions of discrimination, implicit in practice, makes them act as if the social universe of gender inequality and discrimination in the rural world were something natural, since the cognitive structures they apply to interpret the world are born from the same structures of this world.

We would be dealing with what Galtung (1990) would define as cultural violence which, in our case, is also exercised through concrete actions which, in the daily lives of the women interviewed, go unnoticed but which serve to legitimize other forms of violence. In the study, the two groups of rural women showed signs of this violence in their representations of rural femininity and rurality. These are forms of submission, territorial and gendered, which are not even perceived as such, as Moi (1991) pointed out. In addition to its perception, as Little (2017) argues it is always localized and embodied and, as such, cannot be detached from the spaces in which it occurs. As a result, they incorporate practices and strategies into their daily lives from childhood that reinforce patriarchal and urban dominance. We observe that this process takes place especially during the first phases of their lives, childhood and adolescence, as well as in the early years of adulthood.

The study also evidences the permanence of sexist roles of control over the productive and reproductive lives of adult women in rural areas of Galicia (SP) and Paraíba (BR) in the 21st century. These results reinforce the idea of the existence of gender asymmetries in decision-making and management of resources/income originating in family farms; the permanence of control over women's mobility in rural areas; and the unequal sexual division of labor within farming families, rural communities and farms. We are therefore talking about long-lasting violence (Moukarbel, 2009), and when it takes place within families, it is a form of violence, nebulous and shifts over time (Little, 2017).

ISSN: 2583-8687
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Double Blind Peer-reviewed, Bi-Annual (English) April-September, 2025, Volume-3, Number-1
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One of the contributions of the research is the observation that the immediate effect of the daily exercise of symbolic violence on rural women has a direct impact on the absence of formal gender equality in these spaces. The symbolic domination present in the daily lives of rural women is the basis for sustaining and legitimizing other forms of structural violence, such as economic, institutional or patrimonial violence. In short, rural women's representations of rural life and femininity, in contexts of subtle or explicit symbolic violence such as those presented in the two areas studied, contribute significantly to: a) moulding subjectivities in the rural space itself, about the feminine and rurality and; b) legitimizing the different expressions of violence towards women and towards the rural, in different spheres. This leads to another of the results of this research: the evidence of a causal relationship between the gender *gap* in the countryside and discrimination in the rural space. Gender asymmetries reinforce the social imaginary that associates rural areas with backwardness.

The initial phases of the lives of the women interviewed represent the moment and consolidation of their symbolic domination. This process, in Bourdelian terms, is based on the ignorance and recognition of the principles in the name of which it is exercised. The rural man, in this case, possesses the legitimacy, prestige and authority to determine what to do inside and outside the home. Rural women, by not questioning patriarchal authority and creating other forms of silent resistance, allow their participation in the tasks of care and family reproduction to be assumed solely by them and their work on the farms to be considered secondary, thus legitimizing male control and submitting to it. This is the beginning of the process of adaptation to the imposed subalternity that allows them to continue being girls and women in the rural space. To naturalize this process is to perpetuate submission.

However, the results of this study show that it is not just a matter of passive submission. Adapting means subtly building daily, individualized and collective resistance to the complete expropriation of their rural and female identity. Not openly confronting patriarchy despite being aware of its oppressive situation means preserving the harmony on which their traditional values are organized (Brandth and Haugen, 1997). Rural Galician and Paraiban women, like the rural Pakistani women interviewed by Ahmed (2019), demonstrated an awareness of gender hierarchies and social relations within their families and communities.

ISSN: 2583-8687
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Website: www.apijgs.com , **Email:** apijgs@gmail.com

This is evident in their caution in negotiating their identities so as not to openly challenge these hierarchies and norms, thus avoiding conflict.

According to Young (2000), the perpetuation of oppression of specific groups, such as rural women, is expressed in different ways. Among them, in this research we found: a) the maintenance of gender inequality in the access to educational, reproductive, income and patrimony rights; b) the devaluation of the rural feminine identity, from the disqualification of attributes proper to women and the rural world; c) the control over the body, decisions and freedom of women and; d) the marginalization of rural women compared to urban women and rural men, as well as their invisibility in the different spaces of rural society, whether in the family, the community or the workplace. The results confirm Little's (2017) findings that although gender stereotypes may be breaking down, power relations within some rural families remain highly patriarchal. San Sadurniño and Cariri can be representative of what happens in other areas of family agriculture in the world. The symbolic violence against women and the rural space means that "ruralizing the feminine" or "feminizing the rural" are, initially, processes of discredit and precariousness of the social relations that determine them. As Springer (2011) argues, space and place underpin not only the diverse experience of violence but also the behaviours, techniques and social structures through which it is exercised.

To conclude, the research has made us take a step forward and point to the transformative power of female resilience in the field, its resistance and its challenges for reflection. It is necessary to think about and identify practices of what we define in this study as active submission, even at the risk of being misinterpreted politically and academically. In this direction, we draw on work such as that of Ahmed (2019, 12), who alerts us to the limits of the binary reading of institutions and practices, “which can fail to capture why women codeswitch to 'passive' behavior that appears disempowering at face value.” This counter-submission in San Sadurniño and Cariri is evident in the daily practices of the groups of women interviewed which, although they are permanent throughout their life experiences as rural women, are accentuated in their adult lives. The mastery of agricultural and livestock tasks; the preservation of popular knowledge about the natural environment; the management of water and nature; the care of life, of families and the community; and the solidarity and exchange of knowledge between women, generation after generation, are the *things women*

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Website: www.apijgs.com , **Email:** apijgs@gmail.com

do that build their identity and their own rurality. It is about adapting their gender identities and behaviours to demonstrate compliance with dominant gender expectations in certain contexts, while being agents of change in others (Ahmed, 2019).

This study shows that in the same way that practices of symbolic domination are present and condition the lives of rural women in San Sadurniño and Cariri, women's daily re-existence challenges this domination and modifies the symbolic power that sustains it. Remaining in the countryside and maintaining the feminine identity is possible thanks to a set of specific actions, with symbolic dimensions, that deny the urban-patriarchal domination and that re-signify the rural and the feminine. Participation in women's groups, whether they are productive, as in the case of the women farmers and agro-ecologists of Cariri, or groups focused on social development, such as access to digital technologies in the case of San Sadurniño, are strategies of resistance to symbolic gender and territorial violence. These mechanisms of inclusion open up possibilities for progress in levels of gender and territorial equality that are increasingly effective in the countryside. The study allows us to affirm that disregarding the impacts of symbolic domination on women and rural spaces will make it difficult to achieve increasingly broader goals of gender justice and territorial justice.

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