

The lyrical of Sub-Saharan Africa on the perspective of two female poets in the French language / *A lírica da África subsaariana sob o olhar de duas poetisas de língua francesa*

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ABSTRACT

Historically, within the scope of literature, poetry has always been understood as the art of the word in its best manifestation. Parallel to this conception, it is known that literary writing seems to have always been a space reserved for man. So how could poetic art be produced by women? This problem is anchored in our study, since we seek to present a panorama of the female lyrical production of Sub-Saharan Africa written in French. In this treadmill, we attempt to quali-quantitatively expose the richness of this female poetic production; and then we develop our considerations from the following question: in which countries of Sub-Saharan Africa of the French language would be the greatest production of female poetics? We found in Gorceix (2000), Gontard (2005), Doucey (2008; 2010; 2011) and Touraine (2007), the bibliographic and theoretical bases that support us to develop such reflections. Therefore, in this article we identify the quantitatively place of the African poet in Sub-Saharan Africa, today; we present the main space for the dissemination of this poetry and reveal the most recurrent themes in the poetry production of these women poets.

KEYWORDS: Female lyrical; Sub-Saharan Africa; ‘Francophone Literature’.

RESUMO

Historicamente, no âmbito da literatura, a poesia sempre foi entendida como a arte da palavra na sua melhor manifestação. Paralelamente a essa concepção, sabe-se que a escrita literária parece ter sido, sempre, espaço reservado ao homem. Então, como a arte poética poderia ser produzida por mulheres? Nessa problemática ancora-se o nosso estudo, uma vez que buscamos apresentar uma visão, “à vol d’oiseau” da produção lírica feminina da África Subsaariana escrita em língua francesa. Nessa esteira, buscamos expor quali-quantitativamente a riqueza dessa produção poética feminina; e, então, desenvolvemos as nossas ponderações a partir da seguinte questão: em quais países da África subsaariana de língua francesa estaria a maior produção da poética feminina? Encontramos em Gorceix (2000), Gontard (2005), Doucey (2008; 2010; 2011) e Touraine (2007), as bases bibliográficas e teóricas que nos dão suporte para desenvolver tais reflexões. Portanto, neste artigo expomos o lugar da lírica feminina africana na África subsaariana, na contemporaneidade, a partir do olhar de duas poetisas; apresentamos o principal espaço de divulgação dessa poética e revelamos as temáticas mais recorrentes na produção lírica dessas poetisas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Lírica feminina; África subsaariana; “Literatura francófona”.*

1 Introduction

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The women's presence in male spaces has always been a fact, considering that, even in a panoramic vision, the main spaces have been reserved for men in History. This could be perceived in several sectors of the society, especially when it comes to intellectual property, even knowing the presence of women in writing history, since the ancient times. The first woman known as a mathematician was Hypatia of Alexandria (370-415), a Greek Neoplatonist, astronomer and philosopher (also professor of philosophy). Why does not mention the Italian Caterina Sforza (1463-1509), Lady of Imola, fearless in politics and love life; Or, the French female poet Louise Labe (1520-1566) and many others that only nowadays have been recognized.

Regarding to Literature, it seems that the relation between women and literature still have not engaged in the course of the centuries. When we analyze the women position in the literary world, we notice that they are always in the least favorable and ignored places, even those who represent and fill spaces of great value in the society. It is possible to affirm, that in the previous years, there was a substantial interest on the subject, resulting in some studies and documents that ratify the importance of the women's role in different areas. Researches in sociology, history, literature and among other areas show that women have an important role in the construction of several societies across the world, not only in supporting roles, but as protagonists of History and of their own lives.

From these presuppositions, we aim to analyze the lyrical of Sub-Saharan Africa written by women in French, including the Sahara: region geographically located in the south of the largest desert of the world. Despite the notable strength of men in several African societies, many women stand up against the social obstacles. In this view, literature gives voice to these female writers, since they can express themselves through poetry. If in literature/poetry the space for women is rather limited in a branch of countries, whatever developed or in the process of development, what about those traditional countries which women do not have any social recognition and they are designated 'only' to give birth? Our research lies in this issue, and we reiterate that there are still a minimum degree of women representation in the literature world, especially in poetry.

Thus, this study focus on two axes: firstly, we try to map out the female poetry known as Sub-Saharan 'francophone'; secondly, we analyze the production,

highlighting the role of poetry in our society. From these data, we verify the role of female writers in the notion of the international concept of ‘francophone’. Furthermore, we identify the most appreciated themes by these contemporary female poets.

Considering the focus of the study, this is a quali-quantitative, documental and bibliographic approach (MOREIRA; CALEFE, 2008). We first make a quantitative analysis and then a qualitative analysis that are divided in two steps: identification/registration and a precise analysis of two lyrical poems. We investigate the qualitative elements that characterize a written piece as poetry and that emphasize the Sub-Saharan female voice in specialized sites as well as in catalogs and blogs. After, we analyze two poems, that in our point of view, represent significantly the female voice in the Sub-Saharan Africa (specially in Ivory Coast, due to the high female production) written in the French language.

We are theoretically based on the assumptions of Gorceix (2000) and Gontard (2005), who focus on African literature called ‘francophone’, Doucey (2008; 2010; 2011), that presents anthologies regarding to the poems written by the female writers of the study, Touraine (2007), that emphasizes the place that has been given to women in a society that is in constant change and Joubert (2001; 1997) and Allouache (2013), who support us with reflexions to think about literature and the francophone notion in this context.

2 The social role of African women writers

In the last few years, we have identified some studies that are concerned about the production of African women writers ‘called francophone’¹ (Joubert, 2006). It is known that the French language is not only used in the Hexagon²; This is reaffirmed by the International Organization of La Francophonie (IOF, 2018), an institution that was established in 1970 and update annually the data of its members. Today, there are 84 states and governments (including 26 observers), across the five continents. The IOF

¹ The frequent use of the quotation marks with the ‘francophone’ term is due to the huge variety of the concept, since it reaches all the people who have the French language in common as a mother tongue or as an working language.

² The map of France has the geometric figure known as Hexagon. Because of this, some scholars of ‘francophone’ mention the country as Hexagon, which differentiates it from other spaces/countries where the French language is used across the continents.

shows the highest numbers of francophone countries in the African continent, around 55% of speakers allocated in 31 francophones countries with an average of 42% of the speakers who use the French language as their official or working language (IOF, 2018).

From this reality, we can reflect about the ‘francophone’ literary production of the continent, which is designed by the supremacy of men, as in the history of literature. Thus, this aspect has been constituted as a inexhaustible source for the expression of thought of women writers in Africa. In this geographic space, it is possible to identify women who emerge through writing. This allow us to find a meaningful literary production in the Sub-Saharan countries of the French language, even these countries being the scenario of constant presence of men, and, by consequence, misogynist. Taking into the consideration the significant growth of a richness and dynamic literary production in these countries, the African women writers make the spread of some indispensable facts possible. In this way, Ndiave (2004) states that:

[...] présenter des faits marquants de l’histoire de cette critique de ces littératures en tenant compte de l’évolution des perspectives de la critique littéraire. Il s’agit en même temps de faire apparaître toute la richesse et le dynamisme de ces littératures dans un aperçu d’ensemble qui cherche à situer les ouvres par rapport à l’évolution de l’écriture littéraire au fil du temps et dans le cadre des principaux genres³. (NDIAYE, 2004, p.5).

Therefore, within the social-historical framework perceived as key factors to the literary production of African poetry, the women are quite often put in a position of submission, with their dreams and desires being replaced by imposed values of a completely sexist society. These female writers have an important social role, since their literary manifestations reveal us that ‘The attempt to break with the sacral discussions of the tradition, in which the women occupy, by default, a secondary place in relation to the one occupied by men, marked by marginalization, submission and resignation.’ (ZOLIN, 2009, p.218). According to the same author, in history, women have never

³[...] Presenting significant facts about the history of the critics of these literature, taking into consideration the evolution of literary criticism perspectives. It reveals all richness and dynamism of these literatures in a overview that aim to situate the works with regard to the literary writing evolution over the time and in the context of the main genres. (NDIAYE, 2004, p.5).

occupied a prominent place in society. For many centuries, they have been submitted to roles that subordinated and designated them only to domestic activities without being given the same opportunities as men, that is, excluded from society.

From this social-historical scenario, more women writers have emerged over the years crying through their writing, -intrinsically authentic and gradually stronger-, the denounces and revindications, or thought their characters, narratives, mainly autobiographies, or even in poems and other literary manifestations. Many women, who are protagonists of their own lives, bring us, readers, their way of looking at the world from their experiences. It leads us to some critical reflections about their choices as well as how they arise.

In this way, Cazenave (1996) states that:

[...] Le contour du monde des femmes, montre ses “paradoxes”, et détaillés dans le choix des textes et des extraits d’auteurs francophones et anglophones, les étapes de l’écriture au féminin: des peines du mariage et de la prise de conscience de soi et “la venue à l’écriture” “ à l’apparition de “nouvelles écritures” qui montrent les “femmes en lutte” face aux “dérapages de la société”.⁴ (CAZENAVE, 1996, p.12).

Cazenave (1996) allows us to amplify even more the women writing reality due the reflections based on the Sub-Saharan Africa and on the francophone and anglophone authors, calling our attention to these realities. When it comes to the anglophones authors, there are many of them, but they are little known. Among them, the ones that are most known and have their works published in several countries, we can mention the Nigerian author Buchi Emecheta, the Kenyan Warsan Shire and the Zimbabwean Yvonne Vera (one of the most important voices of anglophone literature), and by her side Chimamanda Ngozi Adchie. These authors and the Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and German female authors bring us, through their works, an insight into History, as countries that left colonization.

⁴[...] The world outlines of women shows the ‘paradoxes’ and the details in the choice of the texts and excerpts of francophone and anglophone authors, the steps of female writing: the suffering of marriage, self-consciousness and ‘the starting point of writing’ in the apparition of the ‘new written pieces’ that demonstrate ‘the women struggling’ in front of ‘the weakness of society’ (CAZENAVE, 1996, p.12. quotation marks by the author).

It is clear today that these African women writers have a social engagement manifested through their writing. The themes shared by them are crucial for millions of women's lives, and in many cases, they are in favor of women's emancipation. In this way, Miampika (2002) highlights that women's literature owns the poetry that emancipates the gender and reinvent the women's identity.

[...] La literatura femenina propone una poética emancipadora del género con el fin de reencuentro consigo misma (...) Dicha poética (re)elabora una nueva redefinición de la identidad femenina, y la necesidad de ser considerada como sujeto histórico en un contexto de violencia estructural y de modernidad inacabada.⁵ (MIAMPIKA, 2002, p. 178).

When we chronologically analyzed the trajectory of these women writers, we notice a reduce number of published works when we compared to the number of female authors. Even with the difficulties, these works have occupied an expressive space in the literary world. They bring essential information, in an intrinsic and peculiar way, mainly in poetry, as the author states. It is important to mention that this obliteration of women in literature, in the course of history, is not only a characteristic of the African continent, but it is a reality of European and American literature, and even of the ocean and Asiatic continents. Thus, the fact of the right of go to school have been neglected to girls (only in 1970 it came to change), fortified the women situation, since many girls could not have the right to education before 1970.

Considering the lyric and the narrative, it is possible to observe that thought literature the writer has transformed the way people see African women and valorize them. It creates strong women and protagonists of their own lives, breaking the silence in which they have been subjected for a long time, as Mugo (1998) states:

[...] Las mujeres africanas escriben para romper el silencio en el que han estado sumidas tanto tiempo y para acceder a una parcela de poder ya que la escritura otorga poder a la vez que, mediante el acto social

⁵ [...] Women's literature suggests an emancipatory poetry of the gender and a meeting with themselves [...] This poetry reworks a new definition of women's identity and the necessity of being considered as a historical individual in a structural violent context and unfinished modernity. (MIAMPIKA, 2002, p. 178).

de escribir, la escritora pretende ser **la VOZ** que representa a todas las mujeres del continente.. (MUGO, 1998, p. 54)⁶

It is notable, from these data, in the African reality more than in the other continents, that women have overcome the obstacles that began since the early age among their family and go beyond the border of their countries. Historically, out of the difficulties, it has been observed the lack of consideration by the critics as well as a space for publication.

3 The lyrical production of the female poets in the Sub-Saharan Africa

Women in literature have always been subjected to gender decriminalization as well as prejudice of race and social status. All this happened due to a long history of subordination and devaluation that was strongly influenced by the patriarchalism, which resulted in their marginalization during an androcentric process of the formation of society. In a space where traditional values are linked to social and cultural practices, the women writers produce a particular piece of literature to break down barriers, to denounce and to go beyond rules imposed by the patriarchy. From this reality, it is necessary to reinforce that there are women writers in the Sub-Saharan Africa that transform the literature world through their stories of life. They have the works marked by their self-discovery and by their search for identity in some place.

Considering the fact that we aim to identify the female lyrical production of the francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, we listed below the female poets, their country of origin and their published works in some specialized bookstores. Obviously, the table below is not the only one or even completed, as new female writers, fortunately, arise day after day to share their pieces of literature works. The table 1 shows quantitatively only the female writers that achieved a social space with their published works and, consequently, the respect of their public.

Table 1: Female poets from the Sub-Saharan Africa of the French language published in printed form

⁶ [...] The African women write to break the silence they have been through a long time ago and to access a parcel of power, since writing gives them voice. It is through writing that the author aims to be the voice that represents all the women all over the continent. (MUGO, 1998, p.54).

FEMALE POET	ORIGIN	WORKS
Amina Sow Mbaye (1937)	Saint-Louis, Senegal	<i>Petit essai sur la vieillesse</i> suivie de <i>Les Bulles</i> . Saint-Louis du Sénégal: Chez l'auteur, 2007.
Angèle Bassolé-Ouédraogo (1967)	Abidjan, Ivory Coast	<i>Burkina Blues</i> . Québec: Humanitas, 2000
Bernadette Sanou Dao (1952)	Bamako, Mali	"Emeraudes" dans <i>Poésie pour enfants</i> Ouagadougou : Ministère de la Culture. Imprimerie Presses Africaines, 1986
Clementine Faik Nzuj Madiya (1944)	Tshofa, Republic of Congo	<i>Le temps des amants</i> , Kinshasa: Editions Mandore, 1969.
Emilie Flore Faignond (1948)	Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo	<i>Méandres</i> , Kinshasa, Saint-Paul (imprimerie Saint-Paul), 1995.
Elisabeth Françoise Tol'ande Mweya (1947)	Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo	<i>Remous de feuilles</i> . Kinshasa: éditions du Mont noir, 1970
Esther Nirina (1932)	Central Highlands, Madagascar	<i>Rien que lune: Oeuvres poétiques</i> , 1998
Fama Diagne Sène (1969)	Thies, Senegal	<i>Humanité</i> . Editions Maguilen et Editions Damel, Dakar et Genève, n.d. [2002]
Fatoumata Keïta (1977)	Baguineda, Mali	<i>À toutes les muses</i> , édité par Mandé Éditions
Fatou Ndiaye Sow (1956)	Tivaouane, Senegal	<i>Fleurs du Sahel</i> , Dakar, Les Nouvelles Éditions Africaines du Sénégal, 1990.
Gaël Kone (1976)	Burkina Faso, Ocidental Africa	<i>Poussière de mots et d'images</i> . Ouagadougou: Découvertes du Bukina/ Editions GTI [Graphic Technic International], 2000. (133p.).
Germaine Kouméalo Anaté (1968)	Kazaboua-Sotouboua, Togo	<i>L'écrit du silence, poésie</i> , Marseille, Les Belles Pages, 2006
Ghislaine Sathoud (1969)	Pointe-Noire, Democratic Republic of Congo	<i>Pleurs du cœur</i> , Paris, Éditions Expédit, 1995
Koumanthio Diallo (1956)	Labe, Guinea	<i>Comme les Pétales du Crépuscule</i> . Lomé: Editions La Semeuse-Togo, n.d. [Nouvelle édition en 2000, Castel Edition]
Marie-Leontine Tsibinda (1958)	Girard, Republic of Congo	<i>Moi, Congo ou les rêveurs de la souveraineté</i> . Jouy-Le-Moutier (France), Bajag-Meri, 2000,
Nadège Noële Ango-Obiang (1973)	Libreville, Gabon	<i>Les chants ultimes des naufragés</i>
Nafissatou Dia Diouf (1973)	Dakar, Senegal	<i>Primeur, poèmes de jeunesse (poésie)</i> , Ed Le nègre international, 2003
Ndèye Coumba Mbengue	Rufisque, Senegal	<i>Filles du soleil: poèmes</i> (em

Diakhaté (1924)		francês). [S.l.]: Nouvelles Editions africaines. 1 de janeiro de 1980
<i>Sokhna Benga</i> (1967)	Dakar, Senegal	<i>La ronde des secrets perdus</i> , Éditions Maguilen, 2003
Tanella Boni (1954)	Abidjan, Ivory Coast	Il n'y a pas de parole heureuse, ill. Jacques Barthélémy, éditions Le Bruit des autres, 1997
Werewere Liking (1950)	Douala, Central Africa	<i>On ne raisonne pas avec le venin</i> . Paris: Saint-Germain-des-Prés, 1977.

SOURCE: Table elaborated by the authors of this article

In this table, it is possible to notice the intensity of the lyrical francophone production written by women. Thus, we notice that these productions reaffirm that the scenario needs to be visible, since there are female poets as Tanella Boni, Werewere Liking, Nafissatou Dia Diouf, Angèle Bassolé-Ouédraogo and Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya, among others (listed in the table below), which have not had their works translated to the Portuguese language. We highlight this fact because it shows and valorizes the interest of the Brazilian reader in literature. Thus, the work dissemination is limited from millions of readers, not allowing that they learn about this lyrical production.

Among the female poets that are identified in this study, we listed below those ones who already have achieved social acknowledgment with literary prizes. In this way, we intend to generally ratify that these literary prizes provide a social recognition to the authors' works, showing the lyrical quality of the female poets. In the table below, we present the female poets who won prizes for their production.

We must question whether the prizes really evaluated the poetic quality or they only reflected the androcentric vision of the society in general? The fact is that the prizes, in a certain way, is a result of reading.

Table 2: Female poets from the Sub-Saharan Africa who won the prizes

FEMALE POET	ORIGIN	ACKNOWLEDGMENT
Bernadette Sanou Dao (1952)	Bamako, Mali	1er Prix de poésie pour enfants, Bobo (1986)
Elisabeth Françoise Tol'ande Mweya (1947)	Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo	Le Prix de poésie Sébastien Ngonso en 1967 et le Premier

		Prix de poésie Mobutu Sese Seko en 1972
Ghislaine Sathoud (1969)	Pointe-Noire, Democratic Republic of Congo	Nomination au Gala de Reconnaissance Communautaire (GRC), catégorie « encouragement littéraire ». (2001) Lauréate des prix littéraires Naji Naaman, « Prix de la créativité ». (2008)
Koumanthio Diallo (1956)	Labe, Guinea	1er Prix de poésie pular (1990)
Nadège Noële Ango-Obiang (1973)	Libreville, Gabon	Grand prix de la poésie (2000)
Tanella Boni (1954)	Abidjan, Ivory Coast	Prix Ahmadou-Kourouma (2005) Prix international de poésie Antonio Vicarro (2009)
Werewere Liking (1950)	Douala, Central Africa	Le Prix Noma (2005)

SOURCE: table elaborated by the authors of this article

Among this rich production, we selected two poems, which, in our point of view, represent the francophone voice of the African female poet. Thus, we choose *Surimpression (Overprint)*, by Tanella Boni and *Lianes and (vines)*, by Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya. They are two important names in the francophone literary world. Tanella Boni, born in January 1, 1964, in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, is one of the greatest contemporary authors of the poetic of the French language. She is a poet, philosopher, novelist, literary critic and art critic. She writes to share her knowledge, to support the human rights, the coexistence, the notion of humanity and the women daily life. These works reflect an infinity of meanings, which bring us to a meditation in order to understand the women's place in the society.

Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya, born in January 21, 1944, in Tshofa, Republic of Congo, is one of the greatest writers of the francophone literature universe. Her love with poetry drove her to win the prize of Léopold Sédar Senghor, in poetry festival in Dakar, in 1969. She is an African poet, writer and philosopher. She contributed to the studies of Banto language and to the oral literature.

4 Tanella Boni and Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya: an invitation to the beauty of the female poetry

The poem selected is the previous mentioned *surimpression* by Tanella Boni. It was published in 1984, in the poetic anthology called *Labyrinthe*, (Éditions Akpagnon). The poem seems to invite us to appreciate its characteristics and it leads us to a critical appreciation, highlighting its lyrical beauty.

POEM	VERSION⁷
<i>Surimpression</i>	<i>Overprinting</i>
<i>Une boule de cristal</i>	A crystal ball
<i>Sur un lit de montagens</i>	On the mountains floor
<i>Je rêve debout</i>	Sleeping standing up
<i>Mais je crois avoir des ailes</i>	But I believe I have wings
<i>Dans ce labyrinthe où</i>	In this maze which
<i>Nul ne croit en rien</i>	No one believes a word
<i>Dans cette poubelle où</i>	This wastebasket where
<i>S'entassent des ordures malodorantes</i>	Smelly trash piled up
<i>Ce lieu sans foi ni loi</i>	This place without faith and law
<i>Lieu de l'instinct et du verbe vide</i>	A place for instinct and empty verb
<i>Qui va à la derive</i>	That goes nowhere
<i>Sans foi ni loi</i>	Without faith and law
<i>Une boule de cristal</i>	A crystal ball
<i>Sur un lit de montagens</i>	On the mountains floor
<i>Le promeneur solitaire est toujours</i>	The lonely walker is always
<i>La risée de la foule</i>	The laughing stock of the crowd

Tanella Boni (*Anthologie de la poésie d'Afrique noire d'expression française*, MATESSO, 1986, p. 98)

The poem invite us to a soft reading, allowing us to put ourselves in such a disenchanting place. Since the beginning, the speaker shows a maze where no one believes a word, with such an unbelief, all lost of their own dreams, conviction and fascination with the future, with the certainty of what expect of it. It is possible to rescue from the memory the presence of colonization in the history of the African people. That is, by knowing the history, the reader can see a manifestation against what was imposed to the Africans. The speaker shows a deprivation of liberty, with suffering and struggling, as people were designated to live an inexplicable solitude and drifting without direction. This representation of strong elements, made by the speaker, makes the poem a remarkable piece.

⁷ We chose to use this term due to the interpretation from one language to another similar one, not being exactly considered a poetic translation.

We faced a tense and suffocating atmosphere in reading in a space of hope ‘*S'entassent des ordures malodorantes*’, related to the smelly trash piled up in a waste dump, which can represent a denounce of a neglected and abandoned city or people, bringing to the surface the life conditions of this nation.

In the poem, it is possible to feel a touch that seems to be full and enchanted of hope when the speaker affirms: *Je rêve debout/ Mais je crois avoir des ailes*, since when we dream, even awake, we believe we have wings in the moments of disillusion. In spite of that, it is possible to reflect about hope, having dreams and wings, as Icaro.

With a mixture of anguish, bitter experiences and hope, we identified some of the most recurrent themes present in the lyrical in the study. In addition, we noticed suffering, resistance and even religion in the poem, taking into consideration that women’s place in the society has an strict relation to the Koran. *Surimpression* warn us to read between the lines, that is, the unsaid, what is implicit in the poem, since literature is a construction of the culture of a people and it brings an important historical and social-cultural context.

Regarding to the *Lianes (vines)*, written by Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya, it is a result of a mix of several sources of inspiration, in which the female poet based herself, as the deepest and most sincere emotions where the image of woman, lover, mother and wife prevails. Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya uses elements that cause, impact and enchant the reader in much of her work, revealing the life trajectory of the African people and calling our attention to some facts that are little recognized.

The selected poem was published in the poetic anthology called *Lianes*, in 1971, by *Éditions du Mont Noir* and brings a mix of melancholy and softness.

POEM	VERSION⁸
<i>Lianes</i>	<i>Vines</i>
<i>A la chute des feuilles</i>	In the fall of the leaves
<i>j'avoue ma crainte</i>	I confess my fear
<i>De voir cette Mort</i>	To see the death
<i>qui déshabille les arbres</i>	That undress the trees
<i>Le bruit des feuilles qui tombent</i>	The noise from the falling leaves
<i>s'accordent aux cadences de mon</i>	Are aligned with my heart beats

⁸ We chose to use this term due to the interpretation from one language to another similar one, not being exactly considered a poetic translation.

<i>coeur</i>	
<i>Car les pas inattendus de l'Innommable</i>	Because the unexpected paths of the unspeakable
<i>précédent aussi mes gestes</i>	Also precede my gestures
<i>Que l'on me pleure déjà</i>	That cry me already
<i>dis-je</i>	I say
<i>je suis plus morte que vive.</i>	I am more dead than alive

Clementine Faik Nzuji Madiya (*Anthologie de la poésie d'Afrique noire d'expression française*, 1986, p.191)

Since the beginning, the poem pictures a contrast between life and death, considering the 'death' as a natural process of life, but it obviously brings a feeling of fear. The sound of the falling leaves is compared to the cadence, *s'accordent aux cadences de mon cœur*, that is, the cadence which causes sadness in the heart. In the following lines, the speaker presents in a subjective way, that the actions is associated with the unsaid, the unexpected that makes people afraid. It awakes a feeling of restlessness and assurance that makes the speaker cry and, as in the end, she feels more dead than alive.

Getting a little bit deeper into the poem, we can build a bridge to the women's life story from the Sub-Saharan Africa. It seems like there is a close connection between each written line, with the thoughts of those women who passed through moments of slavery, sadness and desolation in life. *Surimpression* as well as *Les lianes*, by the female poets, bring such an aesthetic poetry that is unquestionable. The beauty is in the lines that mix the feelings of death and life.

These two poems only represent the strength of these women who succeed in breaking with a space that are historically formed by men. Furthermore, it is important to say they write in a space that women, even today, do not have any recognition. The several others poems listed in this article (table 1) also keep a sublime and solid lyric, which enhance the remarkable poetry of the women.

Conclusion

Throughout the discussions, we underlined the important productions of the female poets from the Sub-Saharan Africa of the French language, recalling that they

write in a space predominantly male dominated. These women's works ratify the importance of the contemporary movement that struggles for the women's place in the society and are concerned about the female empowerment.

From this reality, we understand that some researchers are required to stand out the voice of the women in poetry, which has been silenced for years. Therefore, we aimed to reveal the African female poets of the French language, since this poetry is very significant in our times. In this article, we also revealed, from poetry, the women's challenge to declare themselves as writers, in addition to the literary position attributed to them by the market. Thus, being a woman and a writer is a higher task, as the process of erasure of these women's voices, which are marked by their race and gender, shows how they are a differential representation to the literary canon and to the culture marked by the patriarchy and ethnocentrism.

We could notice that the female writers of the Sub-Saharan Africa keep struggling for their space in literature, gradually constructing their position against the daily difficulties and in the literary space. In this way, they have the opportunity to progress and to guide the reality they live. From this study, we notice some advances in the literary scene. However, even with great achievements, there is still a long path to cross by the female poets.

It is necessary to mention that the spaces of the published works are restricted to the French language, which are reduced to virtual spaces, as blog and sites. In these places we noticed how extensive is the literary world of the female authors and how the works should be spread and recognized to give more visibility to these female writers of the Sub-Saharan Africa. To achieve one of our goals, we mentioned that in Ivory Coast there is a greater production together with the other countries as Benin and Congo (Brazzaville). We cannot forget to mention that these women have a position of conviction, raising the question of 'me' full of sensibility and identity, that is, it express and assume a new representation of their places in the social life, even this life being linked to several aspects of a society rooted in traditions and beliefs.

The themes originated from the daily life experiences, the social-historical context of Africa, the struggles and experiences in the family environment and the women as an active and thinking human being inserted in the contemporary society, constitute the main themes of the female writers. Every lyrical piece resulted from this

reality reflects an important production that gives voice to the African women and can be understood as the voices of the women around the world.

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