



POETIC VOICE OF ALMA LUZ VILLANUEVA'S "MOTHER, MAY I?"

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Annotation: This article discusses chicano poetry and the general themes of it. Also it explains Alma Luz Villanueva's masterpiece: "Mother, may I?" in which the feminist poet's thoughts about the society are written.

Keywords: Chicana, linguistic code, stanza, poetic discourse, cultural and literary conventions.

Аннотация: В этой статье рассматривается поэзия чикано и ее общие темы. Также это объясняет шедевр Альмы Луз Вильянуэвы: "Мама, можно мне?", в котором написаны мысли поэтессы-феминистки об обществе.

Ключевые слова: чикана, лингвистический код, строфа, поэтический дискурс, культурные и литературные условности.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada chikano she'riyati va uning umumiy mavzulari muhokama qilinadi. Shuningdek, u Alma Luz Villanuevaning shoh asari "Ona, maylimi?"ni tushuntiradi, unda feminist shoirning jamiyat haqidagi fikrlari bayon etilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: chikana, lingvistik kod, misra, she'riy nutq, madaniy va adabiy anjumanlar.

Alma Luz Villanueva is Chicano feminist poet of excellence, constantly engaged in her search for a universal female community. The poet published Mother, may I ?, the seminal autobiographical poem that chronicles the life of a woman from cyclical change and emergence to wholeness and hope as she redefines love and life and re-examines what it means to be a woman and a man, alongside ancient myths and the modern world.

My reflections on Mother, May I ? are primarily based totally on the idea that the textual content isn't an independent artifact, however as an alternative that it has reputation inside a determinate context. As such, it describes a connection among an utterance and the conditions of utterance. It presupposes a sure form of reader to whom it conveys a message. Because the poetic identification is likewise the textual content of Mother , May I ? or the end



result of narrating a life, the poem elucidates the connection among Villanueva's poetic voice and her implied audience[3]

Before analyzing the implicit audience in Villanueva's poetry, I would like to explain in more detail how I understand this concept. When composing a written work, a writer makes certain assumptions about his audience: for example, its members belong to a specific linguistic and cultural community, or they share certain beliefs and values about the world because they are connected by common bonds such as genre, race and social class. Writers assume their audiences are familiar with certain social and literary conventions. They make literary decisions based on the assumption that their readers will understand the meaning of the words used and that they will accept the linguistic, cultural and literary conventions that governed the composition of the text. These assumptions about an audience are of course, incorporated into the language used in this case by the poet to write the poem. The notion of implicit public therefore refers to the recipient or reader who is directly or indirectly characterized in the text. This fictional reader is a construction of the text, which may or may not correspond to the reader. The reader who is characterized by and in the text can be defined as a set of attitudes, backgrounds and values that the text assumes [5].

When I compose *Mother, can I?* I noticed that Villanueva made few concessions to the Spanish-speaking public. She writes in English, making the poem available to anyone who reads and understands it, both Anglo and Chicano, both men and women. She assumes a reader that she has little or no formal knowledge of literary forms and figures, although her poetry certainly does not fall within the scope of literary influences and traditions. However, unlike Bernice Zamora's poetry, sometimes requiring almost familiarity with some literary works, Villanueva's poems are more intended for the uneducated reader. Zamora's image patterns and allusions presuppose a well-trained reader, even in Spanish, although he uses linguistic codes from the everyday Chicano vocabulary. In contrast, Villanueva's vocabulary and situational references, although presented in English, are closer to everyday speech than to academic or poetic discourse.

Such is the nature of the audience implicit in *Mother, Can I?* Does not require passages from English to Spanish or from Spanish to English, as is the case in Zamora's poetry [2]. They are integrated into the speaker's words, his framing and sometimes, as in the epilogue, into the arrangement of the words on the page. The tendencies and prejudices determine the emphasis of a



topic and determine the status of a particular type of reader. I propose that the epilogue is the rendering of the relationship of Villanueva's poetic identity with her implicit audience. Villanueva chooses a strategy to juxtapose her recipients rather than synthesize them: she adapts the identities of women and Chicana and their implicit social context, Anglo and Chicano, rather than integrating them.

Villanueva directs her poetic voice alternately towards women and Chicanos, a division present in other parts of the autobiography. The "I" in the poem alternates between an "I" speaking with the voice of a little girl and an "I" speaking like a grown woman. Because it fluctuates, it appeals more to one audience than another does. In the passages where the "I" recounts his childhood, the "I" speaks more to Chicanos than to women. For example, when the narrator says in her little girl's voice, "You can't speak Spanish here", the colloquial "you" means / either herself or someone, even if the context of the passage directs the "you" towards Chicanos rather than Anglo men and women. References to the Mexican grandmother, the white teacher who does not allow Spanish in class, a character who says he can read, count and recite poetry in Spanish, and traditional Mexican food (pan dulce and tortillas) come specifically from the codes cultural Chicano[3]. In addition, the language-specific references in this passage assume members of a social group who have the desire, need or linguistic ability to speak Spanish. The Chicanos addressed here are, of course, readers who, like the narrator, have experienced a process of socialization in which they have lost their original language. In this way they experience the events described just like the author who writes about them, that is, in the language that has replaced the mother tongue. Anglo women and men in the audience also hear the message, but they are not its privileged recipients.

The narrator's statements, expressing her alienation from an Anglo-white society, are also heard by the Chicanos in the audience. In certain key passages, the "I" exposes certain myths that American society harbors about its Latino population. Although these statements may be familiar to a general audience, both Anglo and Chicano, they contain nuances that relate to Chicano in a specific way. For example, the family adopting the girl examines her hair for lice and accuses her of theft. The family of her teenage lover think Mexican women have too many babies, indiscriminately. To grasp the full linguistic power of these passages, readers must belong to a community of socialized Chicano readers who are aware, for example, that the American perception that Mexicans have lice in their hair



and give birth to large numbers of children led to a humiliation. This community shares the view that Anglo-Saxon society has promoted and may continue to promote such ideas about Chicanos [1]. In these passages, Villanueva reflects on social conventions familiar to a Chicano audience. When the narrator, as an adult woman, sends her "I" to a female audience, she usually uses lyrical language. Although processes unique to women, such as birth giving, are simply told as facts at the beginning of the poem, they later take on symbolic value and are meant to evoke magical and mythical feelings in women. The identities of mothers and daughters in these metaphorical passages are not defined in terms of racial and class categories. For example, in the section entitled "il filo (amputation)", Villanueva reevaluates her divorce from her mother. As a woman talking to women, she talks about her relationship with her mother and her daughter in the context of a mother-daughter model that she sees everywhere, as she has heard "mothers and daughters everywhere".

The thread (the amputation)

The thread is bloodstained. I	
gave it to you, as my	
mother to me, as her	
mother to her	
and it is thick with	
blood, with life	
and we are thick with	
each other, my	
daughter, my	daughter,
my	girl; you
stand, staring	
with your knife's	
amputation: your	
hands bloody: it	
is your amputation—I	took it from my
mother: you	
take it from	
me—blood, my	daughter
love, my	daughter



life, my daughter. .
 Now go and play
 become your own mother
 and spin your own lovely thread.

The use of pronouns in the above passage on the paradox of continuity and separation in the mother-daughter bond suggests the woman's dual identity as daughter and mother. The poet uses the image of the thread to reinforce this theme on three levels: (1) as a metaphor for the physical bonds between mother and daughter at birth and later: "The thread is stained with blood »; (2) as a metaphor for the meanings her own daughter will create in life; and (3) in the epilogue, explain the meaning of the story told: the thread which connects all women. The repetition of "daughter" at the end of the first stanza of "The Thread" and at the beginning of the second has a rhetorical purpose: to mark the passage from the theme of continuity in the first strophe to the theme of separation in the second strophe and around the feelings of the mother when she sees how her daughter, the child, becomes the woman [4].

The key symbol of the second stanza, "amputation", refers not only to the physical cutting of the umbilical cord at the time of birth, but also to the psychological and emotional separation of the daughter from her mother. Villanueva associates her own mother with the idea of amputation, not continuity, suggesting that she associates the memory of her mother with the violence of separation. Rather, it connects to both the joy of continuity and the pain of separation. Her daughter now stands before her with her "knife amputation" as she once stood before her own mother with her "knife amputation".

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