FEMINISIT DISCOURSE IN ALBANIAN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: According to Foucault, "... dealing with the discourse on human sexuality cannot be done without understanding the power-knowledge-pleasure relationship. The longevity of power is proportional to its ability to hide the mechanisms it uses". The facts show that, in these three decades of upheavals and political changes, even political communication in Albania has known great changes, certainly with ups and downs, different tones and colors. Feminist discourse has tried to show that every woman, who is part of politics, can get out of those "frames" that have placed and labeled her and show herself in one way or another to prove that her own room for which Virginia Ulf spoke in 1928.

Methods: The discourse texts in this paper are analyzed using various concepts of contemporary criticism of (Critical) Discourse Analysis. which is a type of literary research that studies how abuse of social power, dominance and inequality are reproduced and resisted within the text in the social and political context.

Results: This paper, aims to examine and highlight the way in which this type of discourse, i.e. the feminist discourse, tries to establish balance in a rather difficult terrain, harsh and wild as is the political terrain related to other aspects such as power, rhetoric, dominance, etc.

Conclusions: The discourse approach of women in Albanian politics has a marked orientation in highlighting their values in decision-making and making rational politics. Women in Albanian political communication are still labeled simply as beautiful images, prejudging and leaving aside their professional aspect.

Keywords: Political Communication, Feminist Discourse, Power, Political Opponent, Rhetoric.

DISCURSO FEMINISTA NA COMUNICAÇÃO POLÍTICA ALBANESA

RESUMO

Objetivos: Según Foucault, "... a abordagem do discurso sobre a sexualidade humana não pode ser feita sem a compreensão do poder-conhecimento-aleita. A longevidade do poder é proporcional à sua capacidade de ocultar os mecanismos que utiliza”. Os factos mostram que, nestas três décadas de convulsões e mudanças políticas, até a comunicação política na Albânia conheceu grandes mudanças, certamente com altos e baixos, diferentes tons e cores. O discurso feminista tem tentado mostrar que toda mulher, que faz parte da política, pode sair destas "molduras" que a colocaram e rotularam e se mostrar de uma forma ou de outra para provar que seu próprio espaço pelo qual Virginia Ulf falou em 1928.

Métodos: Os textos discursivos deste artigo são analisados utilizando vários conceitos da crítica contemporânea da Análise (Crítica) do Discurso, que é um tipo de pesquisa literária que estuda como o abuso de poder social, a dominação e a desigualdade são desenvolvidos, reproduzidos e resistidos dentro do texto no contexto social e político.

Resultados: Este artigo pretende examinar e destacar a forma como este tipo de discurso, ou seja, o discurso feminista, tenta estabelecer equilíbrio num terreno bastante difícil, agreste e selvagem como é o terreno político relacionado com outros aspectos como o poder, retórica, domínio, etc.

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Conclusões: A abordagem discursiva das mulheres na política albanesa tem uma orientação marcante no destaque dos seus valores na tomada de decisões e na elaboração de políticas racionais. As mulheres na comunicação política albanesa ainda são rotuladas simplesmente como belas imagens, prejudigando e deixando de lado o seu aspecto profissional.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação Política, Discurso Feminista, Poder, Adversário Político, Retórica.

EL DISCURSO FEMINISTA EN LA COMUNICACIÓN POLÍTICA ALBANESA

RESUMEN

Objetivos: Segundo Foucault, "... a abordagem do discurso sobre a sexualidade humana não pode ser feita sem a comprenensão da relação poder-conhecimento-prazer. A longevidade do poder é proporcional à sua capacidade de ocultar os mecanismos que utiliza". Os factos mostram that, nestas três décadas de convulsões e mudanças políticas, até a comunicação política na Albânia conheceu grandes mudanças, certamente com altos e bajos, diferentes toneladas y núcleos. El discurso feminista tiene la intención de mostrar que toda mujer, que hace parte de la política, puede decir esas “molduras” que a colocar y rotular y mostrar de una forma o de otra para demostrar que su propio espacio es como Virginia Ulf Falou en 1928.

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Conclusiones: El abordaje discursivo de las mujeres en la política albanesa tiene una orientación marcante no destaque dos sus valores en la toma de decisiones y en la elaboración de políticas racionales. As mulheres na comunicação política albanesa ainda são rotuladas simplesmente como bellas imagens, prejudigando e deixando de lado o seu aspecto profissional.

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1 INTRODUCTION

"It took me a while to speak up, and now that I have, I have no intention of being silent" says Madeleine Albright. Every day, all over the world, women are making a positive difference in their lives and the lives of people in their communities. Most of these women are disconnected from the rhetoric and theory of Western feminism; many are active in deeply patriarchal and socially restrictive societies; some may not describe themselves as feminists. However, these women are proving to themselves and the world that a powerful force for change can sometimes begin with a single courageous action. (Criado 2015). Based on this, we say that this is a paper on the experiences and different realities of women who are not silent,
who speak and are active in the formal political systems in Albania. The data and observations collected speak not only to creativity, innovation and independence on a personal scale, but also to a desire to change and improve systems of accountability and governance, beyond feminist discourse in politics. "This system may be limited to a hegemony of political parties; a Muslim-majority state; a hierarchical system according to gender and class, or a violent and patriarchal political culture". (Tadros. 2014).

It is like a rallying cry because it speaks of women trying to change the Albanian political system from within, because women are not limiting themselves to established party policies, but are driven by a sense of representing the interests of their constituencies - and they have succeeded in this result precisely through them: that is, the connections at the base.

"I raise my voice, not because I want to shout, but because I want those who don't have a voice to be heard. We can't succeed if no one listens to half of us" says Malala Yousafzai. While this is a general and sweeping statement, the overall drive for women entering politics has less to do with the pursuit of power and more to do with their desire to improve the well-being of their communities. Women may have entered politics through their professional work in the community or through levels of local government political participation. Because "... women will no longer be hidden. We will not continue to remain hidden figures. We have names ... It was a woman who gave us Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It was a woman who gave us Malcolm X. And according to the Bible, it was a woman who gave us Jesus. Never forget that" – says Janelle Monáe. Critical scholars also condemn any use of words, which hinders emancipation. For example, feminists argue that women as a group do not usually speak out loud because men control language. As a result, public discourse is full of war and sports metaphors, where the male domain dominates with their internal jargon.

2 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

"Language, better than anything else, often gives the light or the misery of a time" - says Ismail Kadare. Communication theories say that the discourse is not the message contained in the word, the semantic meaning of the statement, but the discourse has the visible side which is the statement or the text expressed in words, but it also has the invisible side which are the procedures used to control the discourse. From this we say that the analysis of discourse is the study of language in use. (Gee 2011).

Discourse is not just communication, but it structures reality and modifies it. Discourse is a social phenomenon because there is a dialectical relationship between it and society. Here,
communication processes are socially determined by a set of socio-economic, political and cultural ties. "Therefore, discourse analysis is a useful methodology for answering questions of a specific linguistic, as well as sociological, nature for both descriptive and critical purposes." (Johnstone, 2008). Discourse analysis deals with the language in use as a process, because discourse summarizes in itself the process of creation, both the text and its interpretation process. This being so, discourse is a social phenomenon, because it deals with the life of language in society. "This, because discourse is socially constitutive, as much as socially conditioning. It constitutes situations, objects of knowledge and social identities, as well as relationships between people and groups of people". (Fairclough, 1995).

Discourse serves as a tool to control knowledge or truth and is therefore presented as a tool for influence and power. Foucault emphasizes that ... the change in the rate of discourse does not presuppose the birth of "new ideas", a small intervention or creativity... it implies transformations in social practice, perhaps even in related practices (Foucault 1972). In any society, discourse is controlled, selected, organized and moved through certain procedures, the role of which is to regulate the influence of discourse, to prevent the harm that may come from it and to mitigate its material weight. However, more than power and control, in the paper we will have to deal with and explain other internal linguistic features combined with other extra-linguistic social factors. All of these interact to make discourse control knowledge and truth and thereby realize power over others. On the other hand: "Within any social context, there will be a certain number of related identities and possible affiliations, which can be classified in terms of importance and acceptability". (Sen. 2007).

In many ways, the feminist approach has become a paradigm in itself, when it is known that a good part of research focuses on social, political inequality and domination (Van Dijk 2007). According to Friedan, in the 1950s women returned to the home again, abandoning their jobs, creating a feminine myth about her role as housewife and mother, a myth which reduced her identity to a sexual and social passivity. (Friedan 1963). The gender data gap is not just about silence. These silences, these gaps, have consequences. They affect women's lives every day. The impact may be relatively small. Shivering in offices set to a male temperature norm, for example, or struggling to reach a high shelf set to a male height norm. Annoying, of course. Unfair, no doubt. (Criado 2019).

"The fact that gender identity is performative, in summary, means that the acts/actions, gestures and desires that are said to be expressive of an internalized gender are nothing more than fabrications manufactured and supported by signs and other discourse tools". (Butler, 1999). Gender performance means that gender is constructed through a stylized repetition of
acts... and in this way gender is more of a social convention than a literal identity. (Butler 1999). What makes feminist discourse the focus of this paper lies in the fact that political communication always displays elements of power and ideology. “These different forms of linguistic analyzes of discourse also allowed for the first time the specification of clear relationships between the grammatical structures of a text on the one hand and other discourse structures, e.g., narrative structures, on the other”. (Van Dijk, 1988).

Given that discourse is not only a function but also a structure, the latter has to do with the formation of words and their organization in larger linguistic (discourse) units such as syntagm, phrase, sentence, text and context and in addition to all these also in the use of popular phrases and expressions. "From the perspective of constructivism, reality is created through communication and applied practice. Therefore, discourse theory serves to examine the discursive creation of the understanding of the material world; but discourse is not only a structured set of constructed meanings, but also as a process of constructing meanings". (Tomič, 2011).

3 METHODOLOGY

This paper refers to the use of language to build female identity in Albanian political communication through the discourse they use or even when others talk about them. Critical feminist theory seeks to raise awareness of the importance and unique nature of women in politics, focusing on how discourse has been used to highlight them and to show that, "men are in a more comfortable position of power than women". (Lakoff, 1987). Since it is a study on feminist discourse in Albanian politics, in this perspective, that is, on political communication, we have formulated this hypothesis: "Feminist discourse in Albanian political communication as a request to legitimize women's power and decision-making in Albanian politics".

In order to answer all the questions and hypotheses presented above, as well as seeing that this study is more of a theoretical matter, it is thought that all this work will be carried out based on qualitative, theoretical, analytical, etc. methods. The discourse texts in this paper are analyzed using various concepts of contemporary criticism of Critical Discourse Analysis. Critical Analysis of Literature is a type of literary research that studies how abuse of social power, dominance and inequality are developed, reproduced and resisted within the text in the social and political context. (Van Dijk 2011). (The critical analysis of discourse refers to a series of approaches that are closely related to what belongs to its founders such as Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun Van Dijk, Theo Van Leeuwen, James Paul Gee, etc.) or even...
formalist criticism, structuralist criticism, sociolinguistic approach (The methodology used derives from an academic model which is defined and explained, and which is mainly based on Teun Van Dijk's model known as the socio-cognitive approach with a focus consisting of elements of discourse, perception and society that serve as a tool for creating the phenomena of social reality.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

"Women have their place wherever decisions are made, not to be an exception". points out Ruth Bader Ginsburg. If we refer to the main movements, we say that after the first wave of feminism, where women had more idyllic demands for their social role such as the right to vote or participate in politics, in the second wave they moved to a more practical level, focusing on ways how the woman appeared in the public space, which identities society produced and supported more and how these forms influenced the preservation of the image that society had built for women. Feminism in Critical Analysis of Literature is clearly political, emancipatory, committed to raising awareness and producing social changes through a critique of literature (Lazar 2005); (Philips & Jorgensen 2006) as well as against gender ideologies or assumptions that contribute to and reproduce this power inequality between groups (Lazar 2005).

While there is no direct differentiation to be made as to how this might be different for the privileged space men have to enter politics, it is understood that those women who decide to enter politics, speak up and have a voice representing their constituencies, they do so out of a desire to champion. a special cause by building their identity, because according to Judith Butler (1999) identity is a continuous construction. Stories suggest that women's level of political power in negotiations is directly related to their constituency's base of support. Likewise, 'History has shown us that men have had all the concrete powers in their hands... they have judged it useful to keep women in a state of dependence... and thus she was formed as the Other'. (Beauvoir 2002). "What became very clear in order to win an election continues to be primarily that of service delivery" (Tadros 2014).

If politics is fundamentally about working through different spheres of influence, then the different spaces that women occupy constitute the full complexity of these spheres, women in politics must relate to the home, to the public, to the formal to the informal, and to the party the most non-partisan. Camila Paglia, researcher of feminism, asserts that the civilization called "Western culture" is nothing but a multitude of social manifestations in literature, art, politics and religious institutions of the man's fear of the male forces that oscillate in the female vagina,
fear of from which originates his forced effort to raise his male organ on a pedestal" (Paglia 1990). If many women in politics only recognize the formal aspects of their political involvement, perhaps there is a growing awareness that their informal leadership and influence has been unfairly ignored or undervalued and that these components of their political leverage are career-critical. Their political. Judith Butler, in her book Gender Trouble (1990), asserts that gender is performative in the sense that it is what a person does and not what he is. (Butler 1990).

Interestingly, while the quota system has been a way to increase the number of women in politics, and it has succeeded (the Albanian government has more women (12) than men (4), it is also a system that has served to further entrenching existing power inequalities in society. In filling political positions to meet quota requirements what often happens is that women in these positions are often representative of other male members. Teun Van Dijk defines dominance as "... exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups, an exercise that results in social inequality, including political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality" (Van Dijk, 1988).

There are some clear situations where women occupy the seats in name only, but in reality have very limited or no decision-making power. Criticism of the quota system seems to be accumulating, even though this is an important first step in the distribution of mandates in parliament for women. The lowest levels of politics have the most dynamic representation of women's leadership, which decreases as levels of engagement increase at national levels.

Lazar argues that gender-focused literary studies adopt a critical feminist approach to gender relations, motivated by the need to change the existing conditions of these relations (Lazar 2005). While male resistance to women's political presence and priorities remains strong, a good number of family women enter the political arena with a supportive social network, including immediate family, spouses, and children. In fact, in some cases, the family is a main asset for women who enter politics (Tadros. 2014).

4.1 FEMINIST DISCOURSE AS A COUNTER TO SEXISM IN POLITICS

"When a man gives an opinion, he is a man. When a woman gives an opinion, she is a whore". says Bette Davis. Undoubtedly, dominance is practiced and reproduced only through language. Women who enter politics enter a male domain, and they do so while maintaining their self-perception of their roles in society and what they are capable of doing. "Women provide emotional, spiritual and well-being support to thousands of families". (Tadros. 2014)
and they consider these as 'weaker' roles driven by 'nature', and in doing so perpetuate the gender hierarchy, movement and male leadership position in politics. "No woman should be told that she cannot make decisions about her own body. When women's rights are attacked, we must fight back", says Kamala Harris.

Prime Minister Rama is often considered a feminist but... "A feminist is anyone who accepts the full equality and humanity of women and men", says Gloria Steinem. "Shout, shout, shout ohoho" were Rama's words during an activity of the Socialist Party. In the pun between her name and the meaning of Italian words, Rama was saying: Scream, scream ohoho! Refering Grida Duma. (https://lapsi.al/2021/03/10).

For her part, Grida Duma would express herself in a more refined way. "8 years of failures. 8 years since Albania remained in the country with Edi Rama. Nobody can lie to the Albanians anymore, that those who could not achieve anything for 8 years, will do it for another 4. Well, today we all saw a man in a panic who had only one offer: cursing, cursing, cursing. Sad, but for him. We will bring change on April 25. The change that Albanians are waiting for. We will bring Albania that after April 25 starts, develops, moves, progresses. An Albania where everyone wins and the Albanians win", she said.

**Figure 1**
*Rama insults the democratic deputy Grida Duma*

Source. https://anabelmagazine.com/11 MARCH 2021

To continue again with the politician Grida Duma, where in a television program, the debate between the former deputy and the analyst Frrok Çupi, who described Duma as a beautiful girl, degrades into sexist insults, while she did not spare her answer. Excerpts from the debate:
Frrok Çupi: O Grida, are you with me? Yes, you are my little word.
Grida Duma: I will come back to you differently
Frrok Çupi: You are very charming and you should say charming things about Europe. Say what you have to say in Parliament.
Grida Duma: We haven’t become Europeans for tens of years, because the most important relationship is with the woman.
Frrok Çupi: Yes, I don’t have a wife. Do you insult the man at home? No offense to the husband either. But when did I insult him? Rama is raising women a lot.
Grida Duma: Since when women participate in politics. When you stop a scandal to be caught as it is, then you are the end of the horse to listen. You’re done. You can’t compare with anyone. Do you know why to save and scum like your job?
Frrok Çupi: Take the scum home.
Grida Duma: Every time you feel bad, insult yourself personally. You have been spitting for years. Speak respectfully. There is only one way, I don’t come back personally because I don’t fall to your level. The point is, you’re suffocating this place. He thinks that by insulting me, he slows down the pace of the country.
Frrok Çupi: What do you say?
Grida Duma: You have dirt in your history that I won’t tell here. You get paid to do this shit to insult a woman. O category of scum. You have this praise. I know how many people I know like you. Leave it, you can’t stand it. You deserve nothing. You should even apologize.
A way will be found, otherwise another way will be found...
Frrok Çupi: Are you going to rest or not? I have no business with women, I came for Europe.

Words spoken by Mr. Cupi like: Are you with me? You’re my little girl, you’re cute and you should say cute things, I don’t have a wife, what do you say? I have no business with women. it is clearly noticed that they are used in a somewhat sexist and offensive connotation, where the irony with which he tries to make fun of Mrs. Duma. On the other hand, her discourse is full of words and phrases which, rather than answering, are ironic with the same language but perhaps in a more refined way, a style that also characterizes her.
Even the leader of the Democratic Party (DP) Sali Berisha often insults and insults the opponents and especially the women of the opposition, mentioning the unethical language he used from the floor of the parliament towards the minister Elisa Spiropali: "Salary workers have no money, this man gave him 500 million lek tender to the boy's cook, like the job of the Salariot who gave Elki to the brother of this minister of Spirobuchi". something for which he received disciplinary measures, but this is not the only case. However, the minister herself did not leave it without responding to him "You are ashamed as a man, as a grandfather, as a politician, you started with the second Skanderbeg and ended as the last Sali". In the lecture of Mrs. Spiropali, the enumeration: You are ashamed as a man, as a grandfather, as a politician comes and rises in the form of a climax starting from the strong weight of irony with which it returns to former Prime Minister Berisha.
The same offensive rhetoric was used by Mr. Ilir Meta both during the time when he was president of the Republic, and now as the leader of one of the opposition parties. It should be noted that recently the language used by him is even more insulting, vulgar, threatening and lower than before. Thus, Ilir Meta has spoken harshly about Lindita Nikolla, who gathered the heads of parliamentary groups for the file of the Authority for Information of Files on State Security and did not contact the former president at any time. "I have not had any communication. Do these people have personality or not? But until that Parliament chicken comes out and tells the Albanians we will find out I.M. what do you expect from the one with an average of 5 points? Remember when the students took it out? They also broke this long one, but Lulushi sabotaged them", said Meta.

**Figure 4**
*Former president Ilir Meta insults the Speaker of the Parliament Mrs. Lindita Nikolla*

If we analyze these statements of the former President of Albania, Mr. Ilir Meta, we notice that he uses an insulting language towards the Speaker of the Parliament, using ironic and vulgar labels and words (chicken comparison) that tend to affect her personality. It seems like Mr. Meta makes these statements because there are no convincing arguments to oppose the decision that the power of the task allows her. And in fact, it is this tone and this insulting language that has often characterized the former President in recent times, where he has not even spared the female gender (in this case Mrs. Nikolla).

**5 CONCLUSIONS**

In response to societal resistance, women must be particularly resilient to commit themselves vocally and figuratively to life in politics, from gaining a foothold to making the political system work. Political communication in Albania continues to be harsh and rude and
even more so for women in politics. The discourse approach of women in Albanian politics has a marked orientation in highlighting their values in decision-making and making rational politics. Women in Albanian political communication are still labeled simply as beautiful images, prejudging and leaving aside their professional aspect.

Although the stories come from the realities of women in challenging national political climates, the observations and drivers are common to Albanian women in politics as everywhere around the world, in developed economies, or in developing countries.

Based on all this, we can conclude in summary that:

1. The Albanian political discourse is dominated by masculinist features which still continue to see women in politics, rather as an image than as a bearer of social and political values;
2. The Albanian political terrain, no matter how moderate it seems, still has labels that distinguish the intellectual, professional and managerial capacities of women in politics;
3. Women in Albanian politics have shown that they are equally capable in organizational, managerial and political positions, regardless of the harsh terrain where they operate and develop their political activity.

REFERENCES


