



Material culture, new corpographies of the feminine and narratives of dissent: Myra, by Maria Velho da Costa and Paula Rego: an intersemiotic dialogue

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HOMENAGEM A
IRENE RAMALHO SANTOS

THE EDGE OF ONE OF MANY CIRCLES

ISABEL CALDEIRA
GRAÇA CAPINHA
JACINTA MATOS
ORGANIZAÇÃO

**MATERIAL CULTURE, NEW CORPOGRAPHIES OF
THE FEMININE AND NARRATIVES OF DISSENT.
MYRA, BY MARIA VELHO DA COSTA
AND PAULA REGO – AN INTERSEMIOTIC
DIALOGUE**

Ana Gabriela Macedo

Resumo: Neste ensaio pretende-se fazer uma reflexão sobre o mais recente romance de Maria Velho da Costa, *Myra* (2008). Será confrontado, em diálogo intersemiótico com este romance, a poética visual da pintora Paula Rego e a sua representação de uma violência ideológica e assente em estereótipos de género. Argumentarei que existe uma profunda tensão entre o sublime e o abjeto que é partilhada por ambas as artistas e comum à obra de ambas.

Palavras-chave: Maria Velho da Costa; Paula Rego; Intersemiótico; violência de género; sublime.

Abstract: In this paper I will reflect on the latest novel published by the Portuguese writer Maria Velho da Costa, entitled *Myra* (2008). I will also approach, in this context, and in an intersemiotic dialogue with this work, the visual poetics of the artist Paula Rego and her representation of an

ideological and gender-based violence. I will argue that the paradoxical tension between the sublime and the abject that lies at the core of the work of both artists is disturbingly similar.

Keywords: Maria Velho da Costa; Paula Rego; Intersemiotic; gender violence; sublime.

I – *Myra*

“Ekatarina, Catarina, Kate. The name you give me is who I am”

Costa 2008: 177

The latest novel by Maria Velho da Costa, one of the celebrated “Three Marias”, co-author of *The New Portuguese Letters* (1972), which vehemently exposed before a country still suffering Salazar’s legacy of a social, political and patriarchal reality kept cautiously muted, is a narrative in many ways unsettling, representing a stern denunciation of a post-industrial world where the paradigms of identity, culture, gender and race intersect and pose questions to each other, and to us as readers, in an urgent and unequivocal way.

This is a novel that escapes genre categories or univocal epithets such as postmodern, postcolonial or postfeminist, since it does not fall easily into any of them, yet ambivalently embraces them all in a symbiotic way. Postindustrial would probably be the fittest description. We could say that the novel takes on the dimension of a powerful narrative allegory that deconstructs, in a dizzying sequence of visual and dramatic scenes, an aberrant everyday life of beings on the verge of identity, cultural and emotional collapse. It is a liminal narrative between the poetic, the visual and the filmic,

staging a permanent tension between word and silence, truth and masquerade, the uttered and the unutterable, fiction and reality, in sum, it features a long soliloquy of human pain.

The author calls the narrative a *novel*, which is a category that suits its genealogy of metaphorical travelogue (of an interior journey), but adventure story or romance would also be fit names. The foreignness of its Portuguese title, *Myra*, invokes the implicit estrangement and the watchful eye on the gender of the protagonist, signalling from the onset a central theme in the text. Gabriel Orlando or rather Rolando, and a dog named Rambo, or rather *Rambô* (read *Rimbaud*), together with Myra are the main characters of this inhospitable universe, forged with rawness and intrinsic violence, a portrait of a world too close to our skin to be ignored.¹

Myra crossed the disjointed rails towards the sea. Grass and gorse grew where Hottentots fig rot between the joints and beams and tracks blackened by dirty tides of crude oil. She ran against the wind, trying to skip the gravel edges and broken glass, jumping high to distract cold and misery. (9)²

Such is the narrative's abrupt Introit. Images follow one another in a blast, a profusion of *flashbes* that leave the reader's senses in a continuous state of alert. Evocations of distant worlds follow, faraway images, exotic and rare languages. "Anger", "fear", "distress" come as supreme references of a universe that confronts the reader in a

¹ Maria Irene Ramalho in an insightful analysis of this novel within the context of "sex, species and postcoloniality", proposes that the novel might be subtitled "Une Saison en Enfer", for all its reminiscences of the rimbaldian poetics and oneiric imaginary (Ramalho 2013: 51). I absolutely endorse this view and thus it seemed to me appropriate, within the context of this volume of homage to the professor and the critic, to offer my text as a further instance of dialogue with Maria Irene Ramalho's rigorous scholarship.

² The translated extracts from *Myra* are by Helena Ruão, revised by myself.

process of *mise-en-abyme*, where the protagonist moves blindly, as if searching for an ultimate meaning of things³. A narrative imagery of a bleak expressionism, which gradually builds a scenario dominated by the most complete abjection:

Myra sat on the rope jetty that stung her buttocks, and began to cry in distress; once again she had run too far, she would never get home in time to dry before they came, at night, exhausted and dirty. She was going to be beaten again, out of their weariness and fear. Being the best at school wouldn't do her any good, she had to be the best in the world. (11)

Throughout the two hundred and twenty pages of the narrative this antinomy will always be present: *Myra* and *them*. *She*, hounded, fugitive, constantly on guard; *them*, nameless faces, shadows lurking menacingly, and becoming more real, more palpable at each second. “So much fear”, is a recurrent expression in the text.

Her hands and arms hurt from protecting her head from the last beating. She stayed in the dark until her eyes got used to the blades of light in the cracks of the boards. It smelled of brine and urine, musty, rotten fish, cordage and oil. (10-11)

Suddenly, in this icy scenario, we hear the howl of a dog.

The howling, the hoarse and rough bark of a dog, was the first thing that startled her. Then shouts, screams and laughter brought by the wind and sunny spells between rainfall and the near breaking of the waves. Myra hid behind a container, placing

³ Nuno Júdice in a review of the novel for *Colóquio Letras* (172 [Nov-December 2009]), underlines the construction of a “mythical universe” in the novel, while also alerting to the disquieting “infernalness” that characterizes it (252-253).

her swollen face against the tar, her eyes wide with terror, holding her breath as long as she could, her heart pounding. (11)

Myra and the dog, named Rambo, identify with each other from the very first moment - both hounded, both trapped between fear and attack. Myra approaches the animal on all fours, facing its pain with her own weariness, her own nameless pain. "We were made for each other, Rambo. Cunning and strength, cunning and strength", she will tell him later (14). She speaks to him kindly in her mother tongue, Russian, according to the narrator: "Let's go, Rambo, before they come", Myra repeated in genuine Portuguese. "Come, little brother", she calls, in Russian.

A new narrative cycle begins, so far in total introspective quietness, the protagonist sketched with sudden strokes before our eyes. However, a feeling remains that this book is not made of chapters, but of pictures, and filmic shots, a composition of scenes that build a puzzle of multiple possibilities. Actors parade, actions succeed, as a background to a composition that is being painted. Myra and Rambo, from now on always called *Rambô (Rimbaud)*, reappear together once more in a mute dialogue. And the girl whispers to *him*: "My life is not like others. I was forbidden to exist. I was robbed of what I could be" (55). "I am your twin now, Rambô". And again the need to escape, the feeling of not belonging, the urgency to part.

We have to go again, Rambô, to be on the road. On the streets, where they say is the home of dogs and others like them; of the homeless like us. You'll see, I'll tell you what it's like. (56)

And Myra leant her head against the dog's forehead which was larger than her face.

I shall never cry again. Not even for you. (57)

New shots, new scenes follow. Myra walks towards the south, inventing new names for herself and her dog, because “a name is a destiny” (33) as she soon realizes, thus becoming Sônia, Maria Flor or Kate, and Rambo or Rambô, César, Piloto or Ivan, depending on time and circumstances. The accounts continue intermittently and almost inconsequentially, as if they were part of a simple travelogue unravelling before the protagonist’s impassiveness, now a narrator in her own right, as primary viewer of the plot, plunged in an emotional void and absence of human sharing, except with the dog, which is to her more than an animal and perhaps better than any human being. “Why don’t humans lick themselves instead of talking so much?” Myra wonders (162). And further on she states: “Cruelty has reasons unknown to reason” (166).

Gabriel Rolando

Myra continues her journey, (that is to say her straying) as the text is constructed amongst echoes of voices more or less anonymous, unlikely wanderers who populate her solitude, and pieces of other texts, in a patchwork of scattered references emerging from the novel in italics, weaving a polyphony, which curiously does not bewilder the reader, rather situates him, helps him focus, and not lose sight of the young outcast and her dog, both in search of a name and a place of their own. “*Home*, she said like ET, *home*. Somewhere. We just don’t know where it is. Look there” (89).

Suddenly, text and protagonist abruptly stop, expectantly. And a new character emerges:

A dark-skinned boy. . . Neither black nor white. His profile and hands are brown-skinned, he holds a notebook, an open book lies on the floor beside him. . . Even sitting on the thin blanket,

he is tall, slender and graceful and of astounding beauty. Nearby, standing like a docile and vibrant stallion, is a white Land Rover, tall and large, more of a sorrel horse. (90)

He evokes a character from a fairy tale, or rather, an anti-fairy tale, as the reader immediately senses. Now Myra renames herself Kate and calls Rambo, Ivan. The young dark-skinned boy calls himself Gabriel, “Roland for friends”, he adds (93). Yet Myra senses his pain and whispers to her dog: “Another one marked, like you” (*ibidem*). A period of relaxation and grace follows, and we read that “Myra was *aux anges*” (99). From the start, the young boy warns her: “Do not ask me too many questions, and I’ll do the same, so we don’t have to lie to each other” (99). Time “was happening”, as said in the text, and Myra “was knowing, but little” (105). Yet, states of grace cannot last forever, just like fairy tales do not last forever; body and sex are always present, but desire is never consummated. In this sort of expectant limbo, consciousness of race emerges as a new and meaningful coordinate – the dialogue in the text is frequently in Creole, untranslated and untranslatable, as a language of the heart. The remaining characters on stage, let’s call them so, are clearly dislocated from a different geography, as if the “real” world was just a scenario instead of reality itself, for “race is nobody’s destiny”, as we later read in the text (183). Myra wants to trust him, she feels tempted to say her whole truth (whatever it may be, all or none), but she still doesn’t know “with real certainty”, as she puts it, “if Gabriel Rolando could be *it*, or yet another southern passage. *Di passagi*, as they say in their language” (118).

However, Rambo, or rather Rambô, the dog, is the most attentive and reliable focus of the narrative; it is he who lets us foresee the flow and abrupt unwinding of the story: “but what could be worse than what it already was?” he thinks (162). There comes the moment

when Gabriel Rolando finally undresses before Myra, offering her eyes the horror of his sexual mutilation. A crime stifled, Rolando tells her, a brutal execution with race as motivation. And he tells her: “Kate, Kate, this was the price I had to pay to understand that the Holocaust isn’t over, it never ends, from Sudan to Bangladesh, to Kosovo, the world’s horror, like larvae in living flesh, it never ends, never” (168).

Sublime and abject embrace each other. However, as the “outcast, nameless, and homeless” Myra there and then discovers, “love has more organs than expected” (168-9). And finally the fairy tale climax occurs, as the consummation of a timeless time, or the awakening of Sleeping Beauty’s palace, in a section the narrator ironically names “Indian Summer”, a reference to the exoticism of the protagonists.

“Is love but a memory, Orlando? I think it’s an assemblage of memories one cannot lose”, as we read later on (186). Nevertheless, Myra still does not reveal her name, fearful yet, skeptical of the plenty. And she confides to her dog. “I’ve lost *strength and cunning*, but I won hope. You’ll see. It may be the East” (*ibidem*).

The time of disillusionment

“So the time of disillusionment has come”, announces the narrator (177). The house was to be sold, and Myra and Rolando, now Orlando (in yet another striking evocation), set off.

But it all starts over again, like in some grim Hollywood movie scene, they are victims of a violent assault and kidnapping. Orlando lies on the road riddled with bullets; Myra and the dog are taken by the gang in a stolen car. Almost *pulp fiction*, one would say, if it weren’t for the signals of the preceding narrative and the accumulated tragic evidence. “Despair is quiet”, offers the narrator.

And Myra, rapidly oblivious of her ephemeral happiness, as if it had never really belonged to her, predicts the worse and therefore resists, armored in silence, her best weapon. On arrival in the city of Porto, the young girl is delivered to a den of prostitution and human trafficking. The last section of the narrative is perhaps the most poignant, showing Myra torn between the loss of her beloved and the terror of losing her dog Rambo, immune to the pain her own body will be subjected to. Myra, who learns in one night there can be greater pains than her own, in all possible abjection. It is Myra who, in all her cunning and smooth words, manages to persuade the brothel's dame, a woman with a "kind heart", to let Rambo sleep one last night with his mistress "as a farewell gift". And so it was indeed, a staged farewell:

Myra told Rambo, "Let's see if we don't fall on anyone". The dog says terrified, "Do we have to?" Myra says, "Yes, we do". (...) She died as an artist, in a Russian way, and a dog with her, doomed anyway. She sat on the windowsill, her back to the window, and called the dog to sit on the chair. Rambo came and sat. He realized that there was nothing more to understand. Grab me well, he said, so I hit the ground first with my spine before you do. (. . .) Myra held him in her arms, and plunged backwards, as a diver would from a boat. Rambo struggled in her arms during the fall, but they were already wings. (220-1)

This was "Myra's last living thought", states the narrator. The rhetorical violence this text sets in motion from the first pages is never indiscriminate, it has clear targets, it crosses continents, bursts over several limits – gender, race, tongues and languages. Each character a double of himself or herself, having as name an erasure, and as identity a blank silence, an unpronounced sex, an unassumed race. Between silence and speech, love and lovelessness,

it is Rambo/*Rimbaud* who gets it right. Orlando and Myra will remain improbable beings, deletions of silence, endlessly searching for an *East* of their own.

II – Violence and abjection in Paula Rego

The artist Paula Rego was born in Lisbon, in 1935, and grew up in Portugal during Salazar's dictatorship. She left the country in the 1950s to study Fine Arts at the Slade School of Art and pursued an artistic career in England. In 1990 she was nominated the first Associate Artist at the National Gallery in London. She continued her career as an independent artist with great international success, winning an ever growing public, as well as a large critical acclaim, due to her original and daring *oeuvre*. Her aesthetics is marked by a strong narrative drive, a revisitation of legends, myths, fairy tales and folk traditions, as well as canonical texts of both Portuguese and English literatures. Issues of gender politics and feminism, as well as globally ideological and political controversies are topical in her work, which never ceases to shock and provoke fertile debate. Since September 2009 the artist has a museum dedicated to her work, aptly called *A Casa das Histórias (House of Stories)*, located in Cascais, Lisbon, near her family home.

1. The “anti-fairy tales” of Paula Rego

The series *Nursery Rhymes* was Rego's first solo exhibition held at the Marlborough Fine Art Gallery in London, in 1989.⁴ These

⁴ The illustrated *Nursery Rhymes* were translated into Portuguese by the poet Adília Lopes, as *Rimas de Berço*, (2001).

illustrations represent a crucial moment in the artist's career and define a method based on theatricality, parody and grotesque inversion, a consistent satirical impulse directed to a universal, homological and misogynist order, which the artist never ceased to disturb through the many pictorial visions and revisitations she has been creating. In fact, since her early 1960s collages, critical of Salazar's dictatorship and the colonial war in Africa, to *The Human Cargo* in 2007, (on the traffic of women), the series on *Female Genital Mutilation* exhibited for the first time in Lisbon in 2008 and the *Oratory* (first exhibited at the Foundling Museum, London, 2010), Rego has been unfolding and staging before the viewer's eyes a consistent vision of an anti-fairy tale world. The recent history of Portugal has always had a glaring presence in Rego's work. Salazar's dictatorship, the military power and the horrors of the colonial war in Africa entrenched in a sacrosanct ideology based on fear, silence and guilt kept haunting her, as her paintings and collages of the 60s testify (i.e., "Salazar vomiting the Homeland", 1960; "Hurray for the Ding-Dong", 1960; "Order has been established", 1961; "Always at your Excellency's Service" 1961).⁵ They constitute another form of anti-fairy tale which she bluntly expresses through her composition technique at the time, the collage, for which she conjured an "instrumental anger", as she claimed:

When I was making these *collages*, I would draw the images and then cut them in pieces with the scissors, and that process

⁵ Vide Ruth Rosengarten's article "Verdades Domésticas: o trabalho de Paula Rego" in *Paula Rego* (1997). Rosengarten developed this major issue in Rego's work in her book, *Love and Authority in the Work of Paula Rego. Narrating the Family Romance* (2010).

of cutting, scratching, hurting. . . it's as if I was plucking off the eyes of a Salazar's picture, or the Archbishop of Lisbon!⁶

The representation of violence is a constant in Rego's work, as a "useful and subversive" strategy, as she declares, rather than a mere rhetorical masquerade. Be it the political violence of her pictures from the 60s as mentioned above, or the psychological violence of her representations of the family (particularly strong in the pictures from the 80s (i.e., *The Maids*, 1987; *The Policeman's Daughter*, 1987; *The Family*, 1988); or the subversion of traditional fairy tales and nursery rhymes, as mirror images of the violence perpetrated against women and children, a theme she poignantly reverted to in her Female Genital Mutilation series, Rego's visual rhetoric exposes a hidden world of secret lies and veiled truths as an "ideological and strategic territory"⁷ which she claims is her own territory in art.⁸

However, strategic violence is but one edge of Rego's aesthetics, humour grants it a double-edged quality. Satirical humour is pervasive in Rego's visual rhetoric, as a deadly weapon to "disarm the pompous and insincere, leaving the genuinely serious unaffected" (Willing 1988: 7), as the painter Victor Willing, Rego's late husband,

⁶ Paula Rego in interview with Ana Gabriela Macedo (19 May 1999), published in Macedo, Ana Gabriela, *Paula Rego e o Poder da Visão. "A minha pintura é como uma história interior"* (2010), 29-35. My translation.

⁷ Griselda Pollock's expression in "Vision, Voice and Power: Feminist Art History and Marxism" (1982: 5).

⁸ As Paula Rego wrote in the text for an exhibition in São Paulo in 1985: "My favourite subjects are the games originated by power, domination and hierarchies. They make me always feel like setting everything upside-down and reversing the established order of things" (*apud* Alexandre Pomar, "Se a Palavra fosse visual. Pintura de Histórias" in *Tabacaria. Revista de Poesia e Artes Plásticas* 2, Lisbon (Winter 1996): 19-23. (My translation). The critic Maria Manuel Lisboa has acutely called attention to this issue in her excellent book, *Paula Rego's Map of Memory. National and Sexual Politics* (2003). "So too, Paula Rego's paintings and pastels render alien previously familiar ways of looking at the world, violate barriers and turn the world upside down, thereby transforming History into stories, and vice-versa" (Lisboa 2003, 196).

has it. The *Nursery Rhymes* illustrations are a perfect instance of that quality of humour, given the dialogical forces they conjure, their inquisitive nature and liminality, as they tread on the ambivalent ground of fear, instinct, eroticism and seduction.

In reality, to demystify and desacralize are the main targets of Rego's visual narratives, which constitute the core of her transgressive rhetoric, frequently incorporating carnivalesque and perverse imagery.

2. The series *Cargo* (2007) and *Female Genital Mutilation* (2008)

Human Cargo, presented in April 2008 at the Marlborough Chelsea Gallery in New York, and the series of drawings on Female Genital Mutilation, exhibited for the first time in Lisbon at *Centro de Arte Moderna Manuel de Brito*⁹ are extreme examples of Rego's anti-fairy tale aesthetics. They evidence the painter's ambivalent lure of abjection and the grotesque, while they take up the thread of social commitment and vehement protest previously expressed by the series *Untitled* (1998) on clandestine abortion. The six etchings and aquatint compositions with significant titles – “Stiched and Bound”, “Lullaby”, “Circumcision”, “Mother Loves You”, “Night Bride” and “Escape” – exhibit the duality of terror, impotence and compassion, while loudly crying out against the silencing of violence daily perpetrated on women and children in a world muted before their suffering.¹⁰

⁹ Exhibition held between October 2008 and January 2009, estimated to have been seen by 35.000 visitors.

¹⁰ It is estimated that the number of women worldwide who have suffered genital mutilation is now between 100 and 140 million.

3. *Oratory*

The composition (installation) “Oratório” gave its name to the exhibition inaugurated in July 2011 at Rego’s *Casa das Histórias* in Lisbon. The piece faced the visitor’s centre stage in the main room of the Gallery, as an exuberant Introit - at the same time disquieting and moving - to the whole series of images, prints and paintings to follow in the remaining rooms of the *House*. Space played here a crucial role. The majestic size of this closet-oratory, about 3 meters high, standing solo in the large room, faced the viewer with its panels wide open like any other sacred triptych unveiling its mysteries, only these are profane mysteries – exposing victimized women and children, uncovering private scenes of violence and making them openly public.

Portugal is traditionally a deeply religious, catholic country. An oratory, as described by Helena de Freitas (curator of the exhibition and at the time director of the *House of Stories*), is a familiar object of devotion, often to be found in the homes of traditional families, which performs “a dual religious and domestic function and establishes a closer and more direct relationship between the home and the divine. Saints are the most commonly found figures, as small sculptures placed on these intimate altars, meant to protect the families”.¹¹ At the very heart of the profane triptych, the three dimensional models created by the artist as proto-sculptures create a grotesque universe of extreme despondency, in a direct evocation of the topic proposed to the artist by the London Foundling Museum (previously, the Foundling Hospital, an 18th century institution that took under its care abandoned children). This exhibition, prior to the Lisbon one, took place in London between February and April 2010 and Rego’s

¹¹ Helena de Freitas, from the catalogue of the exhibition, dated July 2011 (un-numbered).

work created a dialogue with two young British artists also exhibiting there, Tracey Emin and Mat Collishaw. The sacrificial leitmotif of “Oratory” is clearly recognizable in Rego’s previous work as stemming from other sources of inspiration, predominantly literary narratives of the British and the Portuguese literary canon, from Dickens and Brontë, to Camilo Castelo Branco and Eça de Queiroz, two of Rego’s favourite Portuguese realist writers. Moreover, the scenes staged issue from Rego’s own “interior theatre”,¹² revisitations of her recurrent themes and obsessions, where spectral images from her earlier compositions, such as “Jane Eyre”, “Father Amaro” or “Maria Moisés”, representing rape, infanticide or child abuse, reappear time and time again, as phantasmagorias in a performative display, standing for human cruelty, hypocrisy and ultimate abjection.

On the backstage of this profane “Oratory”, still in the same main room of the *House of Stories*, a subsequent series of images are unveiled before the viewer, singular episodes of a dramatization previously announced, as brief thematic soliloquies. Each image stages a singular horror - the human predator in all its figurations, from direct horror to passive complicity and agonistic fear.

We proceed to another room, but the open shutters of the “Oratory” do not close on us, their unveiled mysteries lurk in every corner, assume new proportions and new shapes that are successively conjured by the artist. As if the bleak visions of the “Oratory” were successively revisited and reenacted in a palimpsestic narrative, other images and other narratives are brought centre stage - plates from the “Untitled” series on clandestine abortion, “The Life of Mary”,

¹² “Painting is practical but it’s magical as well. Being in this studio *is like being inside my own theatre*” (qtd. John McEwen), “Paula Rego in conversation with John McEwen”, catalogue *Paula Rego*, Serpentine Gallery (15 Out – 20 Nov. 1988), 41-48, (48). V. as well John McEwen. “*Letter from London. Paula Rego.*” *Colóquio Artes* 50 (September 1981): 58-59 (58). In this early review of Rego’s work, McEwen stresses the vitality of Rego’s art, its theatrical quality “with much humour and not a trace of whimsy. . . No sides are taken, no conclusions drawn” (59).

“Father Amaro”, engravings and prints from the series on Virtues and Vice – “Love”, “Mercy”, “Disdain”, “Shame”, “Envy”, “Sloth”. These and many other images follow each other in the rooms of the *House*, as if issuing out of their own accord from the nightmarish vision of the “Oratory”, as its legal dwellers.

Paula Rego is indeed an artist who does not fear the call of politics and social commitment, neither does she fear “unfashionable” epithets like feminist or political. She never avoids direct confrontation with the powers that be. Hers is a liminal and disquieting aesthetics of the sublime and the abject, directly engaged in the representation and analysis of bodies in their “material variety” (Grosz 1995: 31), while constantly questioning the limits of representation and transgressing stereotypes and essentialisms.

The articulation of Myra’s silences in Maria Velho da Costa’s novel of the same name finds a powerful echo in Rego’s vibrant aesthetics; the novelist’s representation of a bleak postindustrial world, inhuman and dissonant, resonates with the glaring power of Rego’s chromatic palette. Artist and writer share a strategic rhetoric of violence, but also the empowerment of women and the complicity of a defiant “common language”.

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Fig I , “Baa, baa, black sheep”, from *Nursery Rhymes* (1989)



Fig II, "Salazar vomiting the homeland" – (1960)



Fig III, "Oratory" (2011)



Fig IV, "Stitched and Bound", from Female Genital Mutilation – (2008)