DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND LITERATURE UNDER POSTCOLONIAL EYES:

AN INSOLENT USE OF LANGUAGE

Master thesis

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Abstract

My research project seeks to combine postcolonial studies with a gender perspective in the field of development cooperation, employing literature and the use of subversive language in planning development cooperation projects for peripheral and *subaltern* countries. I do think that literature may teach us that the solid, pure and monolithic structure of the use of language in development cooperation's, is erroneous and incomprehensible, empty, hegemonic and discriminatory. In this regard, a new use of language could be the most effective connection between postcolonial and development cooperation studies. In this investigation, I propose restrictive borders are erased, through the analysis of *Água viva*, a literary text written by Clarice Lispector, which can be taken as an example of an innovative more inclusive use of words.

Resumen

Mi propuesta de investigación aspira a combinar los estudios postcoloniales con perspectiva de género de género con el ámbito de los estudios de la cooperación al desarrollo, usando la literatura y el uso de un lenguaje subversivo para planificar proyectos de cooperación internacional al desarrollo en países "periféricos" y "subalternos". En esta tentativa es central el hecho que la bibliografía muestra que la sólida y monolítica estructura del lenguaje de la cooperación al desarrollo es errónea e incomprensible, vacía, hegemónica y discriminatoria. Con relación a esto, un nuevo uso del lenguaje podría hacer más significativa la conexión entre los estudios postcoloniales y la cooperación al desarrollo. Por lo tanto, estoy proponiendo eliminar esos restrictivos márgenes a través del análisis de Água Viva, un texto literario escrito por Clarice Lispector, que puede ser tomado como ejemplo para generar un innovador uso de las palabras.

Acknowledgements

To my mother who, at sixty-four, has learnt to float in water

Index

Daniele – È tutta colpa del colonialismo.

Elvira – …

Daniele - *Il colonialismo, le colonie, quando eravamo noi a rompergli il cazzo, a questi, a spaccare il culo all'Africa, all'Asia, al mondo intero. Noi. Noi europei. Tutta colpa del colonialismo. Quei quattro-cinque secoli di pacchia.*

Elvira - E li dobbiamo scontare tutti adesso? Al bar mentre facciamo l'aperitivo?

Daniele – *E certo. È colpa nostra. Tutta nostra. Occidentali e colpevoli. Siamo tutti colpevoli. Colpa nostra. Questi, poveracci, ma che colpe hanno?, sono in fuga, vengono dalla fame, dalle guerre civili, tragedie, naufragi, viaggi nel deserto…*

Elvira - Cazzi loro.

Daniele - Non c'eravamo.

Elvira – Adesso che c'entriamo?

Daniele - *Ma sì che c'entra. C'entra. C'entra tutto. (Al pubblico) Noi siamo colonialisti? Lo siamo stati? Lo siamo ancora? (A Elvira) Oh, chi ci capisce niente!*

Elvira - Non sappiamo niente.

Daniele - Queste cose in Italia non le sa nessuno. Nemmeno noi.

Elvira – (Indicando il pubblico) Nemmeno loro.

(Frosini, Timpano, 2015)

The *italics* are mine

Introduction

Writing this text has allowed me to fully comprehend the depth and proximity I personally feel with *The Illiterate* by Agota Kristov (Kristov, 2004). Despite her perfect command of the French language, throughout her existence, the protagonist of this novel always feels insecure about her use of this language. After leaving Hungary the protagonist is forced to learn French; her life becomes a slow process of discovery and learning that infuses her in constant doubt; and a sensation of having to fluctuate between words from a foreign language that she will never completely recognise as her own.

The sense of insecurity behind writing, and this continual sensation of not being able to find the right word, has marked each step of the composition of this work. Strong uncertainty has impregnated the search for words from the beginning of the design process, gradually lessening towards the end. I have tried to measure the precise use of every word included in this text, avoiding banal mistakes that perpetuate stereotypes.

I consider it impossible to begin this introduction without referring to the epistemological rupture that the politics of location has generate in me. Adrienne Rich began an implacable unmasking of neutrality and the recent construction of the base of feminist methodology. The questioning of the concept of self, generates epistemological fractures that coincide with the undifferentiated use of a hegemonic us. For this, I have decided to include the politics of location by referring to some autobiographical elements, that reveal the origin of some of the knots explored in this investigation. I have referred to two different autobiographical moments relevant to my politics of location proposal: beginning with the reasons why I became interested in the feminist movements; and secondly, enquiring into the reasons behind my questioning of the general framework for cooperation for development -sphere in which I have worked for a considerable amount of time.

This investigation aims to reflect how postcolonial feminisms have provided answers to my doubts about the cooperation for development field; the most piercing of which is related to the fact that I do not consider it possible to universalize the concept of gender. Gender is a historically contextualised and localised concept; any attempt to universalise words such as patriarchy, for example, risk reproducing the normative system of epistemological violence. My experience in the world of cooperation for

development has lead me to assert that a gender perspective cannot be applied universally, nor can a patriarchal system be approached as an element beyond specific historical and geopolitical localisation.

I have tried to formulate adequate answers to the doubts that arose from my work in cooperation, to find these answers I decided two years ago to concentrate on continuing my education. Just the choice of area of study, formulated replies to some of my doubts. The decision to enroll in a Masters in Gender Studies has provided the answer to my reflections on cooperation for development. The framework of the *Masters of Women Studies and Gender GEMMA* has introduced me to postcolonial studies, where I have come across the approach through which to portray a non hegemonic vision of international cooperation. I have constantly doubted about the possibility of presenting cooperation for development without falling into another form of imposition of a unique universal model of growth. I still find it hard not to see cooperation for development as anything other than a form of coercive control, undertaken by some Western countries toward countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. I find it hard, but I attempt to explore alternatives that can be built within this sphere.

I have not intended to appropriate experiences in this investigation, nor depict stories through my eyes of women and men that I have encountered during the ten years of experience in cooperation for development; stories that do not belong to me. I consider that without knowing it I have followed Ochy Curiel´s words: stopping in the crevices of this sphere, in the fissures that impregnate the European Union's strategic and policy documents, and the type of cooperation for development undertaken by this international agency, to investigate voluntary mistakes that continue to be perpetrated by donor agencies. In my view, these documents perpetuate the violent fight of epistemological colonisation that organisms like the EU continue to conduct. I have not wanted to outline, nor include experiences, because I would consider this a reformulation of alterity, on the contrary, I have tried to investigate, from my privileged position, the violent and compulsive policy that reproduces the idea of universal development.

To thread the irresponsible or responsible for hegemonic policy, I have placed different texts at the centre of my investigation. The first two, *Orientalism* (Said, 1978) and *The Death of a discipline* (Spivak, 2003), are part of the framework of postcolonial literature, and have an ingenious capacity to combine literature and political analysis;

defining the lines that delimitate the frontiers of the two disciplines. The third text, *Água Viva* (Lispector, 1973), fundamental to this investigation, represents a fluid feminist approach that constructs responsible alternatives that constantly rupture any literary rule; centred on a protagonist that abandons her artistic form of expression in order to explore that of writing.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I select different authors that illustrate multiple epistemological postcolonial viewpoints, beginning with Said and Spivak. The closing of this chapter is connected to Said's depiction of the construction of the concept of alterity through hegemonic policy; a construction that is reproduced, in my view, in the founding pillars of development cooperation.

In the second chapter, I analyse central strategic texts of cooperation for development policy, including the European Union's Gender Strategy in Guinea Bissau.

In the third chapter, I construct a dialogue between texts that delve into the idea of interdisciplinarity, drawing from them the advantages of breaking the barriers that lie between the literary, political and social fields, as a means of assert literature's potential for changing worlds.

The creativity present in Lispector's *Água Viva* has been a source from which to draw suggestive learnings to be applied to development cooperation. In the fourth chapter, I illustrate some of the inspirational elements of this text, and explore the viability of applying them to internationaldevelopment.

In the concluding chapter, I depict literary suggestions -inferred from Lispector's work, which can be applied to break from the hegemonic discourse currently in place in cooperation for development.

In the epilogue I propose several figurations for creating a poetic dialogue between cooperation for development and literature. I do not fully agree with the rigorous use of the terms «conclusions» and «epilogue», but considering the absence of more appropriated terms, I have adapted and used this terminology. In my opinion, the conclusions are not the end of a research; they are the cornerstone for the next investigations.

The most daring step of this investigation has been to not encapsulate the methodology in an isolated chapter; I have thus tried to establish a constant conversation between method and discourse, which does not separate these two areas. I consider a conversation can stimulate more than the cold isolation of different parts of enquiry. The politics of location and close reading have conversed with the different positions that are present in the text.

I would like to stress that all translations in this investigation are mine. I have decided to present a personal interpretation of original works.

Finally, this research does not aim to tell stories, nor to appropriate experiences that do not belong to me. I wanted to be honest, to demonstrate the nuclei of powers that are reproduced; and portray some of the alternatives that draw from the idea of breaking barriers and interdisciplinarity, to see if it is possible to conceive, even if only for a moment, the idea of decolonising cooperation.

1. Development cooperation under postcolonial eyes
1.1 Bearing the brunt of a colonial past[1]

> I will speak these words in Europe, but I am having to search for them in United States of North America.
>
> (Rich, *Notes Towards a Politics of Location*, 1986, 210)

I write these words in Spain, although thanks to the privileges granted to me, I have had the possibility to search for them in Vietnam, East Timor, Brazil, Argentina, Nicaragua and Guinea Bissau. The possibility for crossing borders is evidence of my privileges as European citizen. During the last ten years, work has granted me the opportunity to cross many frontiers, travels that proved to be uncomplicated when taking into account the simple navigation of bureaucratic procedures. Only in two cases I needed a visa to cross frontiers: only in two cases of twenty-seven.

I am a white middle class European woman. I am a thirty-six-years-old, a bisexual Italian woman, currently residing in Spain. I am a privileged European migrant. I have an education. I was born in an industrial city and for nineteen years I lived there. I decided to study in Bologna and when I finished university I moved to Madrid, Spain. Before arriving to Madrid, I had never learnt the Spanish language, and for this reason I was not able to communicate for the first few months of my stay. I am a language autodidact and I speak Brazilian Portuguese, English, Spanish, and Tetum. Italian is my mother tongue. I speak the above mentioned languages with a characteristic Italian accent, and some people around me always remind me of my native country and imitate my strong intonation. Nobody emphasised my foreign accent when speaking Tetum in East Timor, bearing in mind that my race was the emblem of my dissimilar origin. These languages are part of my quotidian thinking and speaking, and are part of this research because I

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[1] With time and due to the privileges that have allowed me to choose to cross many borders, I have realised that my autobiographical position is completely impregnated by social class and race. At the time when I began to write down my personal position, I realised how I have confronted issues that belong to a white European middleclass woman. For this reason, I have chosen the title of this subchapter. My autobiographical positioning reflects all the privileges that I have had by belonging to a particular race, geopolitical area and class. The topics that have market my approach and love of feminisms belong to a white, Italian, bourgeoisie feminist; that cannot be denied. Exposing and clarifying this whilst moving forward, is an attempt to avoid exercising epistemological violence. Constantly reminding myself of the privileges, the legacy and responsibility of having those privileges, is my first personal step in this investigation.

have built a dialogue among several texts written in Spanish, English, Portuguese and Italian, and every idiom influences my language and thought.

I would like to complete my personal politics of location introducing some autobiographical notes.

In this respect, I would like to consider autobiography as a more or less deliberate, rhetorical construction of a self for public, not private purposes: the displayed self is a strategically fabricated performance, one which stages a useful identity, an identity which can be put to work, UTS the quality of that usefulness which determines the politics of autobiographical discourse. In other words, what is the identity being put forward for? (Ang, 2001, 4).

The importance of being honest and the urgency for stressing the immense incoherence that I have experienced in international cooperation and development; are my main intentions in choosing this topic of research. Before investigating the contrasts in the international and development arena, as well as my job sphere; I would like to emphasize the reasons for identifying myself as a feminist.

Interrogandosi sulla legittimità di poter parlare per l'altro/a, evidenzia il pericolo di non parlarne affatto, che a sua volta ribadirebbe il privilegio della propria posizione. Avere consapevolezza della propria posizione non solo critica ma anche autobiografica, diviene dunque punto essenziale, insieme all'analisi degli effetti concreti che il parlare per/dell'altro/a produce in un preciso contesto discorsivo e storico. (Monticelli, 2006, 116).[2]

Concerning my first personal reference to the politics of location, I have the commitment to introduce my proximity to the gender studies. At the age of seventeen, I carried out an abortion and this experience marked my body, my mind and my future. Although, I did not live this experience alone because my family was aware of my pregnancy. My mother was present and accompanied me for the surgical operation and my father was the anaesthesiologist responsible for my surgery. Physically my mother and my father were by my side but I did not have the opportunity to speak about my piercing pain with them. I could not speak with them about my destructive emotions and they prohibited to talk about the abortion to my brother, to my relatives, to my friends. The shame and silence were the only painkillers that I had. This passage of my life was crucial for me. My experience of abortion in a small, and provincial city of Italy was so traumatic due to the decision of my family to remove this pain from the cartography of

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[2] Questioning the legitimacy of speaking for the other, points out the danger of not talking at all, which would reiterate the privilege of one's position. To have awareness of one's own not only critical but also autobiographical position, thus becomes essential; together with the analysis of the concrete effects that speaking for the other or about the other produces in a precise discursive and historical context. (Monticelli, Rita, 2006, 116).

my life. After five years, I found in the feminists' theories a way to channel my desire to find some proper answers to all the doubts generated by the abortion, and its consequent mandatory silence. From that moment, feminisms entered my life and still prevail today. I discovered the feminist theories whilst coursing my undergraduate university course: I followed the subject *Women's History in Europe and United States*. My professor was Anna Rossi Doria and she introduced me to the person who proposed the importance of the Italian second wave feminism. For the first time, in an academic classroom of Bologna, I heard someone talk openly about abortion, and my internal silence was broken. I remember that the classroom was filled by the students' eagerness to learn about the Italian self-consciousness groups of the seventies. During this period, my dream was to experience the feelings inside an imaginary self-consciousness group, so I could share all my emotions and sentiments about the abortion. I had not participated in a self-consciousness group but after the subject *Women's History in Europe and United States* I built the strength to speak about the abortion to my brother. It was a traumatic dialogue charged with misunderstanding and shame, anguish and pain, but this dialogue represented the begin to relieve an infinite sorrow, provoked by a devastating sense of loneliness.

Bearing these words in mind, I would like to advance the description of my location and the ambiguous incoherence present between my current area of studies and my job. Ten years ago, after a summer internship in an Italian non-profit organization, I took the decision to study a *Master's Degree in International Development Cooperation and Project Management* in Madrid. This Master Degree gave me the opportunity to work in Spain, Vietnam, East Timor and Guinea Bissau. My work experience has focused on the are denominated gender and development[3]. For several years I was unaware of the profound meaning and uncomfortable burden of these words. I do however still remember dissenting and perplexing sentiments of hearing how NGO staff introduced to a fisherfolk

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[3] I consider it appropriate to include a brief definition of what is, from my perspective, cooperation for development, and the concept of gender and development; although I don't consider a full digression on this topic to be necessary. The concept of cooperation for development denotes a fundamentally economic approach that appears in the nineteen fifties, 20th century, based on different international actors that put in place measures for some countries of the South to use other countries as models to follow in the quest to reach higher economic development indexes. This concept of development has only recently begun to be questioned. In this text, I am using as synonimos development cooperation, cooperation for development, international cooperation, international cooperation field. On the other hand, the idea of gender and development is introduced as part of this developmental proposal, this approach considers that the introduction of new ideas about relations between men and women, can play a functional role in this universal development. During the following chapters I will analyse in detail the definition of cooperation for development, particularly taking into account the critical vision that is delineated around this concept.

community in East Timor, the differences between gender and sex. Whilst listening to their universalistic and empty definitions, two fundamental questions emerged within me: is it relevant to introduce Western white hegemonic theory inn East Timorese fisherfolk community? How can we escape the hegemonic trap of a white mainstreaming gender and development approach, and its universalistic pretentions? Through these two questions, I discovered that there was an uncomfortable contradiction between my education and my area of work. Hernández Castillo (2011) describes in accurate form her divergent experience regarding her politics of location, her studies, and her work in the area of gender and development:

Ubicadas en los Altos de Chiapas, en el corazón de la zona tzotzil-tzeltal del área maya, nunca consideramos el contexto cultural como un elemento que hubo que tener en cuenta en nuestra lucha contra la violencia. La exclusión y el silenciamiento involuntario de las experiencias específicas de las mujeres indígenas de nuestra organización tuvieron a la larga, como consecuencia, su ruptura con el proyecto colectivo. De igual manera, muchas de las usuarias indígenas de nuestro centro no encontraron en nuestros grupos de apoyo psicológico conducidos en español, ni en nuestras demandas legales antes las autoridades del Estado, la solución a los problemas de violencia que las habían hecho acercarse a nosotras en primera instancia[4]. (Hernández Castillo, 2011, 93).

These words are an eloquent and articulate way of describing the contradictions that emanate from the struggle between a universalistic answer to a local question. I have found in the theoretical ideas proposed by Hernández Castillo (2011) a space to enquire about the issues at hand. Two years ago, I began to study the *Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies GEMMA* in Bologna. I have to admit that women´s and gender studies have completely overthrown the previous solid theoretical basis laid out during my work in the gender and development sector. After nine years, the idea of starting another master's degree in women's and gender studies represents a more consistent form of enquiry; questioning, reconsidering and recomposing my previous reasons for working in international cooperation. My personal decision-making process and the successive attempts to improve my previous understanding of the gender approach, are the result of a constant personal negotiation between external and internal divergences. The *GEMMA* Master sparked my interest for postcolonial studies. My interest for this area of enquiry,

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[4] Located in the Altos of the Chiapas, in the heart of the tzotzil-tzeltal Maya area, we never considered the cultural context as an element to be taken into account in our fight against violence. The exclusion and involuntary silencing of the specific experiences of indigenous women in our organisation, resulted, in the long term, in them breaking away from the collective project. Similarly, many of the indigenous users of our centre, were unable to find in our psychological support groups -conducted in Spanish, nor in our legal demands to Government authorities, the solutions to the problems that had moved them to approach us in the first place. (Hernández Castillo, Rosalva, Aída, 2011, 93).

and more specifically for postcolonial feminisms, arises from overlapping images I have observed in different countries where I have worked; images which strongly suggest different forms of Western hegemonies in subaltern countries.

1.2 The multiple geopolitical cartographies of otherness

Monticelli's (2006) capacity to connect and create a constructive dialogue among a multitude of stimulating texts is very inspiring. She has the talent for creating discussions among several areas; forming a complex reality based on several interdependent visions. Similarly, I would like to propose a dialogue among various perspectives in postcolonial thought, taking into consideration some geopolitical perspectives from Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, and Africa. I have selected several postcolonial sensitivities from different geographical spaces, taking into consideration the translocal[5] perspectives and literary contributions[6].

The strategy of merging politics and literature was used by Said (Said, 1978). At the same time, Spivak (Spivak, 2003) depicts the literary sphere and the interdisciplinarity as a tool for reconstituting an innovative epistemological order[7].

Marx and Gramsci are constantly referred to in the texts *Orientalism* (Said, 1978) and *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (Spivak, 1988). Recurring sentences shared by both above mentioned texts, allude to Marx's proposition «They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented»[8]. The possibility of speaking and the impossibility of generating a

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[5] I consider Colin Macfarlane's (2009) use of the concept of translocal to be a very interesting proposal, which he also applies to the idea of *assemblages.* In this investigation, I use the concept of translocal in relation to that delineated by this author in the afore mentioned article.

[6] For the elaboration of this investigation I have decided to begin with readings by the two figures that, during these two years of study, I have considered to be the references in relation to postcolonial studies: Said and Spivak. I consider they both use literature in wide, very appropriate and versatile sense, allowing the literary sphere to break barriers. My opinion is that they both use texts that demonstrate how literature contributes to the construction of a hegemonic and counter hegemonic order. The literary texts analysed by Said and Spivak find, in my view, new lives through interpretations and analysis that do not adhere only to a literary perspective; they go beyond bounds, reaching a more political disciplinary scope, and nourishing it. With this claim I am not saying that all literature contains political value, what I want to convey is that, in my opinion, the selection proposed by both authors contains an interpretation of strong value, that has repercussions in other sectors.

[7] To begin this investigation, I have employed as a model Said and Spivak's approach, of using a selection of literary works to construct their analytical proposals. For this reason, I have considered it interesting to begin with the revision of both authors, to then move between literary texts and essays of the field of postcolonial epistemology. I begun by analysing the two texts, and then tried to apply the same analytical strategy to the literature and essays that I have selected.

[8] Marx, Karl, The Eighteen Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, New York, Social Labour Party, 2003, p. 106. (1867)

space for listening, are central patterns that characterise the epistemological critics of both authors.

Orientalism[9] is both a cultural and political phenomenon, a mechanism of control and power produced by the Occident to shape an imposed silence on the Orient: «Once we begin to think of Orientalism as a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient, we will encounter few surprises». (Said, 1978, 95).

Through a persistent investigation Said (1978) stresses the powerful alibi generated by the Occident to exercise a form of coercive control over the Orient. Said (1978) conceives an examination of the most important European Orientalism theorists responsible for initiating the idea of orientalism: Ernest Renan and Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the orientalists were responsible for explaining the Oriental mentalities, cultures, ideas, feelings, behaviours and bodies to European citizens. They were the experts in practising the exercises of observation, appropriation, interpretation, and representation generated by the Orient exclusion. The interpretation of the Orient became object of reinterpretation and reconstruction. In such processes, generated by English and French writers, experts and colonialist bureaucrats, the Orient was a site for investigating the self-knowledge of Occident and its own identity. The ultimate representation of the Orient was an empty picture, reproducing a dyadic vision that contained hegemonic colonial powers and subaltern subjects. «Orientals were rarely seen or looked at; they were seen through, analysed not as citizens, or even people, but as problems to be solved or confined or-as the colonial powers openly coveted their territory-taken over». (Said, 1978, 207).

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[9] I do not presume to present the East and the West as two unique, monolithic, coherent and homogeneous blocks. In this proposal, I have applied Said´s use of the two terms and always considered the Said's necessary premise: to be conscious of the fact that the East and the West are rich geographical realities, and that they cannot be reconstructed or redefined as two contra posed homogeneous geopolitical blocks. For this reason, Said claims to use the terms Orientalism and Occidentalism, in reference to concrete countries. He decides to deepen his investigation about the history of colonial England and France, focusing particularly on the role played by both countries in Egypt (p. 17-18). Despite using the two terms previously cited, from the beginning of his work, Said clearly states which countries he is primarily referring to. On the other hand, it is also important to highlight that greater and constant precision throughout the book *Orientalism*, would have made the piece richer, allowing the reader to taste in precise detail all the aspects present in the text. Undoubtedly, in my opinion, concepts such as Orientalism and Occidentalism currently need much clarification and geopolitical definition, to avoid returning to superficial binary proposals that do not allow to delve into a profound epistemological postcolonial approach. For this investigation, I propose the use of the terms Orientalism and Occidentalism, respecting the definition that each author proposes, and applying a use of these terms that refer to more concrete geopolitical realities.

In my view, such perilous assumptions aim for the transformation of localised hegemonic epistemology into an ontological reality. By posing a penetrating critic to hegemonic power, Said (1978) examines how literature and geography have contributed to build this very structure. The «poetic and the technologies of scientific language» are spaces for the process of appropriation and control, used by the Occident to colonise the Orient: «So, space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here». (Said, 1978, 64).

The description of Orient proposed by the European orientalists was based on the use of limited strategic categories for representing Orient as a terrorizing spectre. The association of the Orient with otherness is a mere apparatus for legitimising hegemonic power, thus creating and reinforcing the division between us and them. Before presenting another postcolonial perspective, I would like to stress a crucial epistemological point introduced by Said (1978): throughout his essay he uses an infinitive number of French and English writers who contributed to the representation of Orient as Other. Said recognises the power of literature.

I would like to imagine the essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988) as a way to introduce a gender perspective to the postcolonial horizon. I focus on the last part of it as it provides a gender approach to subaltern identities, which is lacking in Said's (1978) text. Firstly, Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri and her suicide story are object to an Indian woman's interpretation, and not that of a European expert about Orientalism. In my view, the remarkable element in this text is the idea of epistemic violence. I consider that we cannot analyse all symbolic and social practices with the same structures that Occident applies. The existing hegemonic Western categories cannot explain or try to capture the peripherical groups. Moreover, the Occidental categories appear, represent and embody a hegemonic epistemic violence -such as that depicted by Said (1978). The efforts to capture the significance of suicide represent classic examples of violence: in the previous part of this essay, Spivak (1988) introduces the description of *sati* suicide in India. Spivak's accurate study of *sati* practice is a tentative to create a correlation with Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri's suicide. Bhuvaneswari speaks, her body speaks, and her hanging menstruating body speaks, finding a new form for expressing herself. I was fascinated with the capacity of this text to provide the complex interpretation of a suicide. «In this regard, Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri's suicide is a unemphatic, ad hoc, subaltern rewriting of

the social text of sati-suicide as much as the hegemonic account of the blazing, fighting, familial Durga». (Spivak, 1988, 213).

Complexity could be a category for interpreting subaltern subjects which welcome subaltern identities. In the case of *Can the Subaltern Speak?* as well as that of *Orientalism*, literary criticism is an instrument for unifying different disciplines, such as the legal framework, history and anthropology.

As previously mentioned, I intend to provide a planetary vision about postcolonial theories, for this reason I introduce several points of view originating in Latin America and Caribbean, and Africa; taking into consideration the importance of literary perspectives for building a coherent critique of Western hegemonic discursive colonisation[10].

Bearing in mind the Latin America and Caribbean contributions to postcolonial studies, I would like to particularly stress two articles written by Liliana Suárez Navaz and Hernández Castillo (2011). The first article provides a general framework to understand the postcolonial influences and debates in Latin America and the Caribbean. This essay, written by Suárez Navaz (2011), focuses on the effects produced by both imperialism and colonialism in development of cultural identities. In addition, thanks to Mignolo's contribution (2006) this essay depicts the contradictions and debates surrounding the term postcolonial in Latin America and the Caribbean. The second one (Hernandez Castillo, 2011) is a sublime exemplum of the application of the politics of location and autobiographical reconstruction of a fluid identity.

Both essays underline the Anzaldúa's (1987) ability for presenting a complex narrative based on a collection of ideas. For both authors, Anzaldúa bridges the gap between literature and politics, through the investigation of coexisting multifaceted identities.

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[10] In all the selections that I have proposed, related to different geopolitical areas, I have decided to alternate essays with what would be more properly defined as literary texts. The selections of this text have been complex, in particular because in the quest to generate a genealogical proposal between different authors, I have tried to generate a complete panoramic, that in my view, propose figurations of women with great transformative value. For this reason, I have chosen, for example, Josefina Báez and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie; both these authors offer literary protagonists that form and present interior and exterior worlds that are in flux, and nourished by each other. I find it very interesting to see that both authors present peculiar uses of language: one celebrates the signifier, moulding a language that appears to be constantly appealing to the world of rap music, whilst the second author portrays a use of language that changes as the protagonist's grows; also acting as a medium that indicates the passage between different geopolitical and cultural realities that mark the protagonist.

From my personal point of view, she can represent a rich example of translocal literal strategy for combining personal and politics within the same discourse. I would like to note the importance of Gloria Anzaldúa interesting interpretation of another writer; crucial to this research: Clarice Lispector. The rebellion towards a pure concept of static identities finds in Anzaldúa (1988) a reference of extreme importance; in her literary work, it is possible to find dense constructions of nuances where nomadism and cultural interferences produce a stunning literary example. Bearing in mind the idea of mestiza, Anzaldúa's (1988) imaginative power is used to generate multiple transformations condensed into alternative proposals of enormous inspired impact. An example of this inspiring power introduced by Anzaldúa is the blooming of the dominicanyork idea, a literary image presented and depicted by Báez (2011). Thanks to her, it is possible to extend the geopolitical horizon to the Caribbean, introducing a new geopolitical actor. In Báez's (2011) most famous literary work the protagonist is endowed with incredible energy and irresistible vitality. The protagonist of this text holds herself in a remarkable position where gender, space, language, sexuality, class, race and age are an opportunity to express her contradictions and nuances. In this text, the protagonist's vitality is expressed to through a day to day use of language. Through protagonists' speeches the orality gains importance in this text, given its capacity to depict constant change. One of the initial reflections proposed in this text, is the conception of names as a locus where nomadic identities and translocal ideas are crucial. People's first names become a fundamental element for the constructions of identities'. A name could be in some cases, as found it in *Levente no. Yolayorkdominicanyork*, a powerful element; capable of representing both identity and the translocal concept. From a postcolonial epistemological construction, the centrality of first names is an element that has been the object of analysis by different authors, as Spillers (1987) and Báez (2011), for example[11]. In Spiller (1987) name changing during slavery was one of the greatest acts of usurpation, violence and destruction, perpetrated by racist colonising populations. The devaluation of identities

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[11] I have considered it of particular interest to propose this reflection about Spillers' use of first names as a synonym of the tentative appropriation of identities; as politics of annihilation taken to its most extreme, horrid and lethal consequences. In the case of the second author, the name becomes a means to political positioning that defies imposed heteronormativity through the use of peoples first names. This heteronormativity is defied by Báez, whom presents names as tools for political positioning, defying the concept of class, race and ethnicity. From the usurpation of first names to the appropriation of them as a tool to denounce epistemological colonisation. The two authors allow the introduction of this reflection. Another interesting consideration in relation to the will to annihilate identities, perpetrated by political imperialist, can be found in Rhys's magnificent novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, where the name of the protagonist is completely changed by her partner. Due to a process of appropriation, Antoinette Mason is transformed into Bertha Mason.

carried out by the slave owners until the 19th century, constitutes the inspiring incipit of her text. In this case the alteration of the first name is a crime. On the other hand, Báez (2011) manages to transform identities analysing the imaginative power of some Caribbean names. The women of this novel have imagined names and they symbolise translocal identities:

Quizás se llama Jahaira, Jessica, Yesenia, Jennifer, Isha, Aisha, Ashley, Michelle, Chantelle, Tiffany, Stephanie, Melody, Nicole, Destiny, Ambar, Katiuska, Ninoska, Veruska. O Yaneris, Yuleidys, Yubelkis, Orlidy, Isawil, Marnel. Phoebe, Chloe or Zoe. Uno de esos nombres de las niñas de la migración[12]. (Báez, Josefina, 2011, 43).

The translocal, the union and permanence in ones' name person of two geopolitical realities, namely, Santo Domingo and New York, coexist in the creative names of the daughters of immigration. The use of every fantasy first name, can be an articulated strategy for applying the translocal.

 A good example of translocal strategies, is presented in Blackwell's[13] (2011) article about the Chicano feminism from 1968 to 1973. Blackwell depicts the strategies used by the newspaper *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc* as providing political meaning to women's daily lives; introducing a women's genealogy and creating a women's counter public power. The politic utilised by the newspaper *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc* was a systematic reprinting of the most remarkable articles written by Chicana feminists across various universities. This newspaper combines poetic essays and political articles, breaking from the separation between different disciplines. Additionally, it could be accessed by women that belonged to different economic social stratums. Simultaneously, the newspaper *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc* disturbed the monolithic idea of the Chicano movement, driving a reflection about women's subaltern position inside the organisation. The newspaper *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc* was only one example from the abundant number Chicano women's magazines at the time, including *Regeneración*, *Encuentro Femenil*, *La Comadre*, *Fuego de Aztlán*, *Imagens de la Chicana*, *Hembra*, *Tejidos*, *La Cosecha*, *Hojas poéticas*, *La Luz*,

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[12] Maybe it's called Jahaira, Jessica, Yesenia, Jennifer, Isha, Aisha, Ashley, Michelle, Chantelle, Tiffany, Stephanie, Melody, Nicole, Destiny, Ambar, Katiuska, Ninoska, Veruska. The Yaneris, Yuleidys, Yubelkis, Orlidy, Isawil, Marnel. Phoebe, Chloe or Zoe. One of those names of the girls of the migration. (Báez, 2011, 43).

[13] I consider the inclusion of Blackwell's text extremely interesting, as it allows me to widen the analysis to the journalistic genre, transcending the mere use of essays and literary works. I consider this openness a practical method to illustrate the will to break down barriers between different disciplines.

Nuestro, *El Caracol*, and *El Grito*. «Esta genealogía ha facilitado el naciente canon contra hegemónico o alternativo de la historiografía chicana que recupera textos de las chicanas en el movimiento que habían sido ignorados en su mayor parte»[14]. (Blackwell, 2011, 358-359).

The construction of a translocal genealogy and elaboration of a new counterhegemonic canon resides, in this case, in the printed words written for a magazine designed by and for women. The article written by Blackwell (2011) is an intelligent witness of the gender dispute inside the Chicano movement during the seventies. The topic of the use of writing as a form of resistance is a common thread in postcolonial area, especially in the case of *Hijas de Cuauhtémoc*.

To further explore this idea, I need to refer to another author: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2013)[15]. In the novel *Americanah* this author uses words as a means to reduce the pain caused by a sexual rape of Ifemelu, the main character of her novel. I consider writing to be a tool for stressing a muted pain, an agonising situation where the hegemonic power is attempting to delete unconventional agencies. Writing could become a medium for displaying an internal force silenced by power and hegemonic epistemology. The use of voice is fundamental, such as printed and hidden words. After sexual abuse, Ifemelu chooses silence, loneliness and self-exclusion from her previous world, Nigeria, and her present world, the United States. Her only instrument for communication with the world becomes her personal blog where she introduces critical themes about gender, class and race. Writing in a blog starts to be a sort of collective and individual therapy for reducing the pain and forging agency; to generate knowledge around the idea of race:

Dear non-American black, when you make the choice to come to America, you became black. Stop arguing. Stop saying I'm Jamaican or I'm Ghanaian. America doesn't care. So, what if you weren't black in your country? You are in America now. We all have our moments of initiation into the Society of Former Negro. Mine was in a class of undergrad when I was asked to give the black perspective, only I had no idea what it was. (Adichie, Chimamanda, Ngozi, 2013, 220).

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[14] This genealogy has facilitated the emergin canon against hegemonic, alternative Chicano movement's historiography that recovers texts written by the chicanas that had been ignored. (Blackwell, 2011, 358-359).

[15] To finish this limited cartography of critical and literary proposals, I consider it interesting to include new artistic fields, such as, for example, sculpture. This continuous openness and inclusion of plural artistic fields is in consonance with what the majority of the proposed authors have developed: the will to defy disciplinary limits.

Written words are a form of art employed to resist and survive. I am completely honest when I say that the apex of sensitivity lives inside the text *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* by Walker. In it she depicts alternative forms for expressing creativity: the cultivation of colourful plants by her mother. The formation of a garden could be a silent and structural way to forge a form of resistance:

I noted that it is only when my mother is working in her flowers that she is radiant, almost to the point of being invisible, except the Creator: hand and eye. She is involved in work her soul must have. Ordering the Universe in the image of her own conception of Beauty. (Walker, Alice, 1984, 241).

Consequently, I think that it is interesting to analyse alternative sources and modalities to express creativity. Walker (1984) proposes a magic and fascinating artistic production: the art of planting flowers, while Oyewùmí (2011) focuses on the majestic artistic production promoted by Yorùbá society. Walker (1984) uses her mother's beautiful garden creation, to trouble Woolf's universal woman's category. Oyewùmí (2011) employs the Yorùbá culture in order to attack a gender universalistic construction. In this sense, Oyewùmí (2011) criticises the idea of genderism applied to the African culture, - especially to Yorùbá, by analysing the artistic production made with metal and clay. In her article, she argues that it is epistemologically incorrect to speak about gender in Yorùbá culture, taking into consideration the Occidental white sexist and genderist glances that are saturated by colonial intent. In that sense, her critiques are an appropriate answer to various hegemonic and racist assumptions aimed at devaluating African cultural and African women's cultural production. In her article, she wants to deny several epistemological assumptions: the first one is that the African cultural productions are not a form of art, because they belong to art craft. The second one, the demystification proposed by Oyewùmí (2011), is that women's typical artistic productions are made with cray and men's typical artistic productions are made with metal; placing the women's artistic production in second place.

Both Berns and I are concerned about male dominance in the interpretation of African art, which has resulted in denying women mastery and authorship of important works, while at the same time downgrading their artistic production to the level of craft. (Oyewùmí, 2011, 228).

The third one is the negation of the idea of the possibility to apply gender categories to every culture. For this author, gender categories are not positive, universal and valid for every culture, including the Yorùbá. In fact, gender as category of analysis is not universal and nor timeless.

More specifically, I am concerned not only about sexism, but also genderism—the idea that gender categories are operational in the organization, production, and appreciation of Yorùbá art historically. In traditional Yorùbá society, there is no universal category for females, which you can label «women of the community». (Oyewùmí, 2011, 228).

In the first part of this subchapter I have introduced the idea of otherness applying it to the Orient and the gendered subaltern identity, through the work of Said and Spivak. In the second part I have presented some constructive alternatives for challenging the boundaries of the category of subaltern identities, from Latin America and Caribbean, and Africa. My main idea is that the coalescence of disciplines, gives nuances to a monolithic idea of identity and category established by colonial power. Only the simultaneous use of different disciplines defies the construction of Western hegemonic power, which, as I have emphasised before, uses multiple spaces for colonising others.

1.3 International development cooperation as a mechanism for legitimising and reinforcing the idea of otherness

To understand the scope and ideological construction of international development cooperation, it is important to create a link with the postcolonial period: there is a connection between the dissolution of colonial empires and the origin of international development cooperation. In my view, Rahnema's (2005) description convergences of different actors involved in postcolonial societies, is enlightening. This author illustrates the relationship between these three colonial historical figures, with divergent interests and power: the leader of anticolonial movements, the local population belonging to previous colonised countries, and former masters. Development theory was produced as a strategy to improve the economic life of the local population belonging to former colonised countries. International development cooperation is an integral part of this system. Bearing in mind the above mentioned words, the international development cooperation retains the characteristics of a form of Orientalism.

It is possible to extract from Said's *Orientalism* four main foundational causes behind «modern Orientalism», which are closely related to the Western compulsive desire of reinforcing its hegemonic position.

The four elements I have described (expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy and classification) are the currents in eighteenth century thought on whose presence the specific intellectual and institutional structures of modern Orientalism depend. Without them Orientalism, as we shall see presently, could not have occurred. (Said, 1978, 120).

I would like to examine how these four categories are mirrored in the guiding principles of international development. For analytic purposes, I will take into consideration the most important documents of the development cooperation policy; in particular those related to the introduction of a gender approach in Guinea Bissau. Firstly, I would like to concentrate on *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 – 2020*, the main European global text which provides general guidelines on gender and development. Secondly, I will focus on the source of reference for gender and development in Guinea Bissau: *Relatório Sobre a Situação dos Direitos Humanos na Guiné-Bissau 2013-2015*. For conducting this analysis, I would like to use close reading methods, bearing in mind the Spivak's definition and use of this strategy, as proposed by *The Death of a Discipline* (2003).

I would like to close this first chapter by illustrating another of Said's great contributions; fundamental to this investigation. I consider that Said demonstrates that the construction of Orientalism is an interdisciplinary process. For this reason, he establishes that Orientalism -the construction of otherness- is part of the legitimisation of the political hegemonic subject that exercises colonial policy in different spheres, and is born from different areas, which collaborate to produce and reproduce violence towards subaltern realities. In the final part of his work Said portrays how interdisciplinarity is the only measure able to deconstruct a hegemonic project, conceived through the dialogue between the different areas of thought and knowledge. If the construction of alterity is born through the sum of different disciplines, only the convergence between different cognitive fields allows the deconstruction of alterity.

2. The European Union's development cooperation policy in Guinea-Bissau

2.1 The European Union development cooperation policies: A monolithic and empty use of the Gender and Development approach, revealed through close reading

> Equality between men and women is at the core of values of the European Union (EU) and enshrined in its legal and political framework. The EU is at the forefront of the protection and fulfilment of girls' and women's rights and vigorously promotes them in its external relations.

> (European Union, *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 – 2020,* 2016, 2).

I consider it relevant to clarify the reasons that have determined my decision to base this investigation on the case study of Guinea Bissau, one of the countries where I have worked. From the moment, I began to work in the area of cooperation for development in Bafatá, a region in Guinea Bissau, I was compelled to consider different aspects that had never before been manifested so clearly. In this country, I collaborated with a women's organisation dedicated to the production of fabrics painted by women from the Soninkee ethnic group, specialised in painting techniques. Through these development projects, financed by the European Union, this women's association, which is called *Associação de Mulheres de Ponte Nova* has been able to construct a centre dedicated to painting fabrics. My work with this association has raised various doubts: Can a Spanish association's organisational structure serve as a model to the association in Guinea Bissau? Could the idea of women's empowerment be universally applied? Can a project that focuses exclusively on the idea of economic development be successful? Furthermore, there are two particular questions that have posed a constant problem, and for which I cannot find an answer: Is it right to see elements that belong to the culture of different ethnic groups, as aspects that impede the productivity of an organisation? For example: when at the time of someone's death in the community, his or her whole neighbourhood participates in a celebration that halts the production of fabrics for three days? Is it ideal to see and judge this event as a negative factor that hinders the inception and development of a project, I believe that an act of solidarity and construction of relational fabrics are worth analysing beyond the concept of production. Finally, can the absence of the sustainability of a project due to the low level of participation be analysed as a means of resistance against a model of economic hegemonic development? Never has work awakened in me so many doubts, and I thank all women in the *Associação de Mulheres de Ponte Nova* (AMPN) for driving me to deeply question the idea of

cooperation for development; their critical perspective has allowed me to deconstruct my certainties. To delve into my doubts and try to channel my concerns, I have decided to analyse two relevant texts that establish gender policy in development cooperation in Guinea Bissau.

Having delimited my personal localisation, using also autobiographical elements to present it, I consider it fundamental to offer more facets of what constitutes another pillar of the methodology used to undergo this investigation, namely close reading. Through this means of analysis, it is my intention to examine two texts: one related to the application of the idea of gender and development established by the European Union on a general level, and secondly a text that establishes some fundamental guidelines in the sphere of international development in Guinea Bissau-where the concept of gender and development is also used.

Before analysing those two texts, I would however like to propose a definition of close reading as a general depiction of the use I will make of this concept. First, I consider it relevant to mention the analysis undertaken in the text *Feminist perspectives on close reading*, in which the two authors, Lukić y Sánchez Espinosa (2011), carry out a reconstruction of the different designations of the term feminist close reading. This text presents distinctive interpretations and uses of the concept of close reading in the feminist sphere; highlighting it as a fundamental methodology for postcolonial investigation and, finally, depicting the different uses of this methodology through the close reading of Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Applying different uses of feminist close reading to this text, gives way to multiple interpretations of the three fundamental protagonists, namely: Jane Eyre, Bertha Mason and Helen Burns. I consider this approach fundamentally relevant, in particular, because has been my fountain of inspiration, given that her skilfulness and capacity to break barriers, to refer to Spivak's interpretation of Jane Eyre. Lukić y Sánchez Espinosa define this interpretation as a «clear political message» (Lukić y Sánchez Espinosa, 2011, p. 114). According to these two authors, Spivak's interpretation has the merit of having delved into a deep postcolonial interpretation, building a dense dialogue between Bertha Mason, proposed in *Jane Eyre,* and Antoinette Mason, in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Spivak (1985) is capable to introduce, from the beginning of the text, her interpretation of *Jane Eyre*, demonstrating the magnitude of the political charge that the text by Brontë cultivates:

It should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English. The role of literature in the production of cultural representation should not be ignored. These two obvious "facts" continue to be disregarded in the reading of nineteenth-century British literature. This itself attests to the continuing success of the imperialistic project, displaced and dispersed into more modern forms.
If these «facts» were remembered, not only in the study of British literatures of European colonizing cultures of the great age of imperialism, we would produce a narrative, in literary history, of the «worlding» of what is now called «The Third World». To consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted, and curricularized in English translation fosters the emergence of «The Third World» as a signifier that allows us to forget that «worlding» even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline. (Spivak, 1985, 243).

Through the methodology of close reading, Spivak analyses the use of the transformation of the people's names as a method of vilifying them. The transformations that are applied to the protagonist of *Wide Sargasso Sea,* who is also one of the protagonists of Jane Eyre, is another form of discursive colonisation that permeates imperialist policy, present, as Spivak demonstrates, in the English literary canon.

Throughout my investigation, I have followed Lukić and Sánchez's interpretation applied to Spivak's concept of close reading as a method of feminist and postcolonial epistemological construction. This form of analysis allows for new interpretations of relevant or canonical texts. Attentive reading, establishes a dialogue between texts that lay down the foundation for the normative hegemonic Western discourse, and texts of colonised realities that defy the canon through audacious readings that support the rupture of disciplinary limits.

Before beginning the formulation of this research, I did not know that one of the most remarkable articles, written by Spivak (2006) on the concept of close reading, was related to the analysis of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In it she analyses the affirmation contained in this declaration: the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish universal declaration of human rights is identical. Through the depiction of the differences between law and rights, and the dissection of *Toward a New Beginning: A Foundational Report for Revitalizing First Nation Inuit and Métis Cultures* and Samuel Huntington's *Deconstructing America*; Spivak shows how language is a medium that

depends on the historical construction produced and promoted by the State. Bearing in mind the centrality of translation as a means to overcome interference in the interpretation of language, close reading becomes a fundamental element when introducing the concept of originality; «original is the name of relation to a language when another language is in view» (Spivak, 2006, 1609). To dissect the language used by the European Union for a pivotal strategic plan to promote gender approach, namely, *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 - 2020*[16], I use Spivak's methodological approach of close reading, to try to dismantle the concept of universal gender equality.

Before beginning an in-depth analysis of the cited text, I would like to go over the latest strategic documents that have established gender guidelines in the European Union's cooperation for development policy; taking into account that, according to the content of the three examined documents, the European Union only began to develop a greater interest toward the promotion of the gender perspective in 2007. To elaborate this analysis, I have considered concepts that, in my view, can indicate how the gender perspective has been elaborated and applied by the European Union in recent years. The elements employed for this analysis do not, however, pretend to be exhaustive nor absolute, given that they represent only one possible analytical itinerary. Finally, it is pertinent to begin the analysis of the current European Union's *Gender Action Plan,* using the following comparative table that represents the main framework that guides decisions on gender issues also in Guinea Bissau.

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[16] According to the European Union's projects manager in Guinea Bissau this text is the reference that has been used by different delegations to apply the gender approach in development for the different projects. According to the projects manager, in some countries, the European Union delegations have developed their own gender policy, however this is not the case in Guinea Bissau, where, until 2016, no specific strategic lines for the inclusion of gender in development projects had been established. I will refer to this information in more detail in chapter 2.2.

Three Gender Action Plans promoted by European Union from 2006:

Title of European Gender Plan	Date	Key Words	Approaches	Objectives	Themes	Framework
Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020	2016-2020	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Rights Economic empowerment	1. Focus on a rights-based approach to development and on transformative areas with clear results for girls and women; 2. Ensure dedicated leadership73 on gender equality across Commission services and the EEAS including by developing incentives and disincentives at all levels; 3. Engage more effectively across Commission services and the EEAS in implementing EU gender equality objectives for policy coherence; 4. Improve the quality of partnership, coordination and dialogue at all level (international, national, local); 5. Adopt a clear results-driven approach that sets high standards for reporting, evaluation and accountability mechanisms, and promotes evidence-based decision making; 6. Closely monitor external relations' resource and budget allocations to gender.	• Ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity • Promoting the economic and social rights / empowerment of girls and women • Strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation • Shifting the Commission services' and the EEAS' institutional culture to more effectively deliver on EU commitments.	Physical and psychological integrity; economic and social rights; voice and participation.	EU Human Rights Action Plan; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Title of European Gender Plan	Date	Key Words	Approaches	Objectives	Themes	Framework
EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015	2010-2015	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Gender mainstreaming	1. Political and policy dialogue on gender equality (placing gender equality as a systematic topic on the agenda of policy and political dialogue with partner countries); 2. Gender mainstreaming (designing policy in all areas: economic, health, education, environment, infrastructure, trade, science and research, agriculture, peace and security etc. – to address the specific concerns, needs and constraints of women and men); and 3. Specific actions (to catalyse or give added impetus to reduce gender inequality).	• Strengthen the lead role of the EU in promoting gender equality in development; • Build in-house capacity on gender equality issues in development; • Place gender equality issues systematically on the agenda of political and development policy dialogue with partner countries; • Ensure gender is mainstreamed in EU-funded projects and EU-funded general budget support and sector support programmes (sector-wide approaches) use gender-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive performance indicators where relevant; • Prioritise in-country civil society participation, capacity building and advocacy on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE); • Improve EU monitoring, accountability and transparency on allocation of funds for gender equality in development; • Strengthen EU support to partner countries in their efforts to achieve MDG 3 and MDG 5; • Strengthen EU support to partner countries in combating gender-based violence in all its manifestations, as well as discrimination against women and girls; •Support partner countries in fully implementing UN Security Council Resolutions (SCRs) 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889, including through the development of national action plans and policies on women, peace and security.	No specific themes found.	UN Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Platform for Action; the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; Accra Agenda for Action; EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security; Cairo Programme of Action; and Lisbon Treaty.
A Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men 2006-2010	2006-2010	Gender Equality	No approaches found.	• Enforcement of EU legislation in acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries; • Promotion of gender equality in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), external and development policies.	No specific themes found.	Millennium Development Declaration; Beijing Platform for Action; European Consensus on development; and EU Strategy for Africa.

Before I begin the analysis of the document *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 – 2020,* I would like to briefly consider some aspects that may help to understand the main differences between the three documents. The document *A Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men 2006-2010* is the first action plan elaborated by the European Union for the promotion of equality between men and women. This a document that outlines the application of the gender perspective in countries that are part of the European Union, and countries where the European Union was implementing development cooperation policy. This first document is rather limited to undergo a complete comparative analysis; however, I consider relevant to introduce it because it represents a first approach to the introduction of gender policy. The comparative study of the other two more recent documents is very interesting, in particular because I consider that the *Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015* can present some positive elements that disappear completely in the *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 – 2020* document; elements such as: the importance of allowing space for qualitative analysis, the constant reference to a broader theoretical framework, and the centrality given to the dialogue in the political arena for the attainment of some of the objectives. Massive limitations are common to the three documents, such as the constant omission of the definition of terms that are never problematized; as for example empowerment, or the universalisation of the category of woman, excluding all consideration of alternative analytical axis.

At this point I consider it interesting to widen the analysis of the document *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 – 2020,* through a more detailed and in-depth analysis.

Since its introduction, the European Union text assumes hegemonic and arrogant nuances, even more acute seen in the title of the text which refers to the possibility for women and girls to transform their lives through the external relations promoted by the European Union. It is difficult to find a title as arrogant as the one proposed by a text that established the framework of for gender policy in the European Union. Mohanty (1988) shows the self-legitimising policies presented by some texts edited by Zed Press;

moreover, she reveals the deep meaning of the words used by some Zed Press authors criticised, as well as Perdita Huston's work.

Bearing in mind the negative examples proposed by Mohanty, the text *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 - 2020*, present the European Union's self-legitimising policies, as less ambitious and determining. The idea of Europe is built «in developing, enlargement, neighbourhood countries, including in fragile, conflict and emergency situation» (European Union, 2016). The concept analysed by Mohanty, the idea of Third World Women is transforming and sophisticated; in fact, it becomes a larger and blurred sentence, able to condense several situations. It seems that the European Union does not need to define itself, perhaps because its definition could be too complex; much more fragmented than it may seem at a first glance. To purpose fully avoid complex definitions, the strategy used is to define itself through alterity, building a solid idea of Otherness: Europe is not fragile, it is not in a critical situation or emergency geopolitical structure. For this reason, the European Union is legitimised and legitimises itself to be the gender equality policies guarantor. A pretentious universalistic tone permeates every single page of the European Union's strategic plan: in this text women and girls work as well as a pure, persistent and monolithic category, away from any geopolitical or historical connotations.

Since the third world woman cannot save herself from the forces that oppress her, the development expert must save her. Because the third world woman is irrational, ignorant and uneducated, it is not only unnecessary for development expert to consult her about the process of development, it would be a mistake to do so. (Wood, 2003, 431).

There is a common thread throughout the whole document; a discursive strategy that is based on a dichotomous reading and presentation of reality, or rather, of two realities. In each chapter of this Gender Action Plan there is the undesirable presentation of the women's situation in development countries; a presentation that is based on mere quantitative data. The second discursive element introduced in it, is the reaffirmation of the fact that the European Union is deeply involved in the elimination of all types of violence against women, as well as focusing on the limited access to productive resources of survivors of rape or sexual abuses.

This document is split into three parts: the first one focuses on girls and women's physical and psychological integrity; the second one speaks about economic and social

rights and empowerment for girls and women, and the last one, about strengthening girls and women's position in the political arena. This last part introduces the idea of promoting girls and women's voices. Despite this division, the underlying economic stance behind these policies seems to be of pivotal importance when compared to the political, social, civil and cultural aspects of the document. Bearing in mind this assumption, economic data reveals the limited funds destined by the European Union for these objectives obliterating any real support of the process of girls and women's participation. Economic power has the function of justifying European Union intervention. The legitimacy of hegemonic power is constant throughout the document, and this power is built through the concept of the extension of influences, arrogant self-legitimisation, and geopolitical categorisation. This shocking act of vindicating the European Union's role, is exacerbated by the lack of reference to any national strategic documents. The strategy quotes only European Union plans, politics, reports, and investigations.

For conducting this critique of the European Union 's *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment*, I would like to introduce Ferguson's (2002) ability to ironise about one of the pillars of the neoliberal idea, around which the concept of international development cooperation is built: the idea of industriousness. The constant idea of industriousness is a remarkable synonymous of one of the European Union pillars: efficiency. This idea becomes important for legitimising work in multiple gender and cooperation declarations.

I consider the dialogue between complementary methodologies a challenge that can formulate alternative forms of epistemological construction; where the dialogue between methodological juxtaposed tools can sharpen a dense investigation. For this reason, I would like to propose an investigation elaborated by Smyth (2010), able to combine a critique of the language of development and cooperation, and the politics of location. Through her experience Smyth denounces both phenomena in the cooperation sphere: firstly, the abuse of the use of certain words, and secondly, the total absence of fundamental words. In this sense, I think it would also be appropriate to rescue the Spivak's (2006) idea of malapropism, used by this author in the text above mentioned. Smyth reaches, in a few strokes, the deepest and most painful abuse promoted by the use of language in the cooperation arena. She reprobates, for example, the manipulation of the term mainstreaming, usually presented as an intrinsic and universal truth. At the same time, she condemns the overwhelming silence around the word feminisms. Indeed, the word feminisms moves away from the calm and accepted horizons of human rights and evokes deeper and longer struggles. Smyth has the sagacity to denounce the absence of the concept of class: this absolute and strident weakness declares the hidden desire not to use the concept of intersectionality. In my opinion, the most important criticism that the author develops is related to the concept of empowerment. After having made a quick excursus about the changing meaning and adoption of the word in development cooperation, Smyth emphasises the fact that the concept of empowerment has now been transformed into an aim; when the idea of empowerment was previously related to the idea of process, hence as a means to an end not a mere end in itself. I would like to stress that the only idea presented by Smyth that I cannot share, is the idea that the solution for founding a new meaning of these worn out words, is carried out by one of the most famous NGO, Oxfam.

All these critical terms constitute the pivotal words in the European Union's *Gender Equality and Women 's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016 - 2020*: the buzzword empowerment is part of the title; the idea of mainstreaming is the root applied for every consequent notion, and feminism is completely absent from it.

2.2 Contextualising EU policies in Guinea Bissau through close reading

A luta pelos direitos das mulheres é frequentemente apresentada como uma luta entre tradição e modernidades. Em muitas partes do mundo forças religiosas, tribais e tradicionais ditam que as mulheres devem ocupar-se somente da esfera privada -a casa e a maternidade- e que os homens devem ocupar a esfera pública onde podem controlar e formatar, o cenário econômico, político e social de suas comunidades. Mas o avanço dos direitos humanos das mulheres não é um ato de equilíbrio entre as esferas públicas e privadas, ou entre tradição e modernidade. Ganhos em direitos das mulheres não devem ser equacionados com perdas na tradição. A tradição, ou até mesma a cultura, não é uma força estática que irá quebrar-se se os ventos soprarem com muita força a favor dos direitos das mulheres[17].

(Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos, *Relatório Sobre a Situação dos Direitos Humanos na Guiné Bissau 2013-2015,* 2016, p. 54-55).

As I have mentioned before, the decision to focalise on Guinea Bissau, was dictated by my personal experience working for a Guinean NGO funded by the European Union. When I met the European Union project manager in Bissau, I got the feeling that the gender perspective was a marginal and emerging theme. Moreover, it was not included in list of development priorities for European Union policy in Guinea Bissau's development. I must be honest with myself and should reluctantly accept that this list of priorities makes me doubt about the scope of the EU's work. At the start of the meeting my question was straightforward: What are the documents that the European Union uses to introduce the gender perspective in development projects in Guinea Bissau? The answer to this question was equally clear. For European Union projects, there is no strategic document, nor guide able to guarantee the inclusion of a gender approach in Guinea-Bissau. To design and implement development projects, the European Union adopts global and universal indicators formulated by the World Bank. During the meeting, the European Union project manager commented that a committee had been set up in December 2016 to select the most appropriate indicators proposed by the World Bank to measure the inclusion of the gender approach in international development cooperation projects in Guinea Bissau. At the same time, the projects manager provided the text of reference used by European Union in Guinea Bissau to depict women's current

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[17] The struggle for women's rights is often presented as a struggle between tradition and modernity. In many parts of the world, religious, tribal, and traditional forces dictate that women should be relegated to the private sphere - home and motherhood; and that men should occupy the public sphere where they can control and shape their own economic, political and social development, and the development of their communities. However, the advancement of women's human rights is not a balancing act between public and private spheres, or between tradition and modernity. Women's attainment of rights should not be equated with losses in tradition. Tradition, or even culture is not a static force that will break if the winds blow too hard in favour of women's rights. (Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos, Relatório Sobre a Situação dos Direitos Humanos na Guiné Bissau 2013-2015, 2016, p. 54-55).

situation. It is interesting to stress that the European Union headquarters in Cabo Verde elaborated a specific Gender Action Plan, bearing in mind the global European Gender Action Plan. Although I am quite sceptic about this kind of adaptation, it does denote a minimum level of interest. From my personal perspective, the quote at the beginning of this paragraph is the most opaque and questionable part of *Relatório Sobre a Situação dos Direitos Humanos na Guiné Bissau 2013-2015;* the gender approach reference text proposed by European Union in Guinea Bissau. In this report, there is a specific chapter about women's rights (*Direitos das Mulheres*), but there is not a reference to an introduction of a gender approach. It means that there is an erroneous overlapping of the gender and women's focus, proposed by the European Union program's manager. This chapter about women's rights is split into three parts: violence against women, sexual violence and women's participation in decision making processes. Women are presented as a homogenous category, as victims or an excluded category: the word violence is associated to the word women. Guinean women as a homogenous subject are suffering violence.

Returning to the initial quoted text; it is interesting to analyse the use of the concept of women and culture. Culture is depicted as something that can change in order to promote women's rights. Once again, there is a complete separation between the category of women and the idea of culture: these two spheres are analysed from a dichotomous perspective (Bhavnani, 2003). Also, the implicit concept is that women should be saved from their own culture, and this dichotomy renders invisible the active interrelations between women and the cultural field. Moreover, this text does not propose a specific definition or references to some cultural aspect: the cultural sphere is not a monolithic dimension. To develop these critiques, it is interesting to take into consideration that development and culture are completely excluded in a text, which uses an exclusive women's category. I personally believe that this form of approach is rather reductionist, even erroneous: the hegemonic contradiction between culture and development does not belong to a myopic vision; rather to a hegemonic will and absolute plan for imposing a unique model of development. Bearing in mind the preceding chapter, the hegemonic idea of development in international cooperation continues to perpetuate four fundamental axes, identified by Said, that have characterised the policy for building the idea of Orientalism. Characteristics such as expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy and classification, that belong to the idea of Orientalism, are still founding some

of the development cooperation policy. Mbakogu (2004) emphasises how colonisers have denied the existence of strong and rich cultures in Africa. In this article, it is possible to see that during the colonisation periods, the colonists have imposed two simultaneous forms of cultural violence: the denial and obliteration of the existence of extraordinary African cultures; and the imposition for adopting the colonialist culture. Despite some of the conclusions proposed by Mbakogu, I consider the synthesis offered by this article to understand all the nuances related to the idea of cultural disintegration in Africa, perpetrated by European colonists, is remarkable. Bearing in mind the Mbakogu article, I disagree on the absence of greater geopolitical precision in when talking about the African continent; moreover, I dissent from the idea of UNESCO as a medium for re-evaluating culture in the development sphere. I would like to stress that the text that I proposed at the beginning of this subchapter is proof of the previous affirmation.

In *Orientalism* Said clearly states that his study will focus especially on analysing the colonialist policies perpetrated by England and France, referring briefly to United States' colonisation policy. Despite all this, in the introduction, Said makes a short mention of Holland, Portugal, Spain, Germany and Italy's colonial policy (Said, 1978, 17). Said does not speak about the atrocities carried out by the Italian State in its colonies, however I find it relevant to provide an example of how destructive and lethal Italian colonisation was in Eritrea. This case can provide a more concrete example of Mbakugo's idea of African cultural disintegration. Italian colonisation aimed to annihilate Eritrean culture, restricting the existence of humanistic studies (Negash, 2005). To facilitate the subjugation of the colonised population, the Italian government, especially during Fascism, fomented only professional schools. The massive introduction of vocational schools was a strategic way to relegate to second place, all artistic and humanistic studies.

Does the presentation of a dichotomy between culture and development belong to a modern colonialist discursive that perpetuates, in different ways, the cultural elimination of most African states? Is it possible to construct a strategic document in the field of international cooperation or cooperation projects, without assuming responsibilities linked to the historical legacy of colonisation?

I constantly think about Braidotti's words (2004): every European citizen should accept the historical responsibility of the act of colonisation. I believe that this first step

of recognition for past and present responsibilities elaborated by European citizens is the basis for the creation of new horizons inside the international development sphere.

Text that begins this subchapter presents culture as something dynamic; it is however impossible to find a definition or reference of culture as an element capable of playing a leading role in the construction of women's agency in Guinea Bissau. Moreover, the absence of a clear and comprehensive definition of culture is an inexcusable weakness. I would like to emphasise that from my perspective, it is completely erroneous to propose the same categories again and again -including that of public sphere and private sphere, without previous an analysis that establishes if these categories are applicable to the reality of Guinea Bissau. What does culture mean take into consideration the geopolitical reality of Guinea Bissau? Does it make any sense to talk about public and private spheres as a prism to establish men and women's differences? Is it possible to present Guinean cultural aspects without presenting any reference to all the ethnicities that coexist in this country?

In relation to these questions, it seems interesting to present an alternative that, in defiance of academic production, may become a reference through which to analyse how the concept of culture can be relevant when linked to a defined geopolitical reality. The report *Relatório Sobre a Situação dos Direitos Humanos na Guiné Bissau 2013-2015*, especially the above mention paragraph, proposes an absolutistic homogenization of women, without considering the cultural, class and ethnicity lenses of differences in Guinea Bissau. Despite starting from a specific location in Guinea Bissau, the text forges a dangerous and uncritically universal proposal, related to the concept of Third World Woman: «In the context of development theory and practice, first world women appear as academic specialist, gender and development practitioner at international agencies and NGO's». (Wood, 2003, 430-431).

I would like once again to emphasise through this quotation the centrality of Mohanty's assumption; the persistence of Said's four axis and the perseverance of the themes proposed by Spivak in the text *Can the subaltern speak?* as evidence of the discursive violence present in development cooperation. In fact, all these influences are coexisting in the idea of a Third World Woman, an idea which transformed into a tool to legitimise

the first world women expertise. It is completely redundant to stress the absurd arrogance of the word «expert»[18].

Can a cooperation for development program that doesn't consider, nor explain how a donor agency applies concepts of expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy and classification, be successful, honest and solidary? Is it right to avoid making explicit, in any strategy of development cooperation, the vested economic interests that the European Union has in any particular geopolitical area? Why don´t people that formulate and lay out the different strategic documents, that serve as fundamental guidelines for cooperation for development, never apply politics of location? Doesn't the constant exclusion of women's and feminist movements in the EU's development strategy in countries such as Guinea Bissau constitute a compulsive and deliberate omission that impedes the adequate implementation of development projects? Doesn't the invariable use of hegemonic language that legitimises the countries that promote cooperation, and undermines subaltern realities, constitute a source of representation rooted for too long in the strategic policy of the European Union?

Based on my experience and investigation in the area, I consider these questions to be of great relevance. I have not yet acquired sufficient knowledge in this field to elaborate responses consistent with these considerations; however, there are researchers that are developing and consolidating plausible alternatives.

I consider that all the authors cited throughout this investigation, put into place different alternatives, from which to devise non-hegemonic choices that, for example, contain a critical focus of the current dominant vision of cooperation for development.

I would like to mention by name some of the persons that have proposed alternatives that, could be considered by the cooperation for development sphere, in order to create strategic documents with a gender focus from a postcolonial vision. To begin, I would like to consider the wonderful work, undergone by Mies (1982) in the sphere of cooperation for development. Through her investigation, carried out directly whilst living with women in a village in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, studied the impact that globalisation has in the process of production that women undergo in the domestic sphere.

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[18] In this case I consider interesting to see how the document *Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015* (p.7) defines the absence of experts in the area of gender as a very significant weakness, that prevents the inclusion of gender policies in the projects.

Maria Mies' (1982) investigation has been constructed with extreme sensibility and, in my view, constitutes an example of a scholar positioning herself at the beginning of her research, establishing the objectives of her investigation and sharing everyday life with these women. Her great honesty is materialised particularly in the pages of the text where she describes the everyday activity she takes part in with the Indian women. Isn't it desirable that all cooperation for development policy, that contain the central nodes of international cooperation projects, be based on profound knowledge and every day cohabitation with different realities? Isn't it appropriate that the strategic plans that establish the guidelines for the European Union's cooperation for development work in Guinea Bissau, should be devised by Guinean people?

Finally, I would like to cite an article by Vieitez Cerdeño (2001) that, in my opinion, has the capacity to provide a quick excursus about different women's and feminist movements in Africa, demonstrating the importance of these movements in Mozambique, in current social transformations. Through a historical reconstruction Vieitez Cerdeño manages to recuperate and frame women's and feminist movements, connecting them with the history of different political currents in a plurality of countries in Africa. Isn't it appropriate that the strategic plans that establish the European Union's cooperation for development policy guidelines, draw from social movements and national strategic documents?

The most critical question is this: Isn't it fundamental that strategic plans, as well as the European Union cooperation for development projects begins with Europe assuming responsibility for centuries of colonisation, and the perpetuation of current discursive colonisation? In my view, the European Union's assumption of responsibility is the only base from which cooperation and solidarity can be built.

3: Interdisciplinarity as a means to foster solidarity

3.1 Going beyond boundaries

> Without the support of the humanities, Area Studies can still only transgress frontiers, in the name of crossing borders; and, without a transformed Area Studies, Comparative Literature remains imprisoned within the borders it will not cross. Area Studies have resources but also built-in, restricted, but real interdisciplinarity.
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> (Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 2003, 22).

As presented in the introduction, the cardinal text for the first chapter of this investigation paper is Spivak´s *Death of a Discipline* (2003)[19]; a text also covered in previous chapters, in particular in the first chapter of this essay. My personal introduction to Spivak's text has been gradual and continuous during a period of two years, throughout this time the relation between this work and the content of the *Máster en Estudios de Género y las Mujeres GEMMA*[20] has been constant; influencing the analysis of every area of the course. The multiple connections that arise from the attentive reading of this text have led to a continual dialogue between different areas of study, ranging from *Historia de las Mujeres en Occidente*[21] to *Gender, Development and Africa.* These dialectics and the continuous linguistic sediments that influence my way of thinking, have shaped the idea of interdisciplinarity as a source of knowledge; founded on the concepts of insolence and transgression of compartmented limits.

For this investigation, I have decided to use the following terms: rupture of disciplinary barriers and interdisciplinarity. The first term refers to a text's capacity not only to adhere to one field of action: the text *Orientalism*, for example, goes beyond specific disciplines, by converging literary texts with works that are more political in nature. The author uses this method to construct the nucleus of his theory, hence, that the construction of alterity, related in this case to the concept of Orientalism, is not a phenomenon innocently established by the West. The work presented in *Death of a Discipline* is interdisciplinary because it proposes a convergence of literary texts and social investigation, where literature becomes part of a political project that could play a pioneering role in other disciplines, such as the construction of world Comparative

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[19] As portrayed in footnote 6, the selection of Said and Spivak has been determined by the fact that I consider them both to be references of the post-colonial perspective. The election of *Death of a Discipline* has been dictated by the fact that I considered this to be the deepest of Spivak's works. Out of all Spivak's texts that I have read, that also contains interesting alternatives to build new interdisciplinary horizons. At the same time, I consider this to be the text where the concept of close reading is best articulated, given the non-conventional works that are analysed and compared to illustrate it.

[20] Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies GEMMA.

[21] Women's History in Occident.

Literature. According to Spivak, global Comparative Literature would involve different actors, not only from the academic sphere, but also from the formal and non-formal education spheres -this approach puts into practice the concept of interdisciplinarity and active convergence between two or more realities which question and learn from each other.

I learnt to appreciate the new horizons that can be reached through an interdisciplinary approach, during the semester I had the opportunity to enrol in a doctorate course at the Universidad Federal de Salvador de Bahía, organised by the *Núcleo de Estudos Interdisciplinares das Mulders, Genera y Feminismos*[22]. Before this experience in 2014, my definition of interdisciplinarity referred to a completely abstract concept, practically chimerical in nature. In Brazil, I learnt about the importance of breaking boundaries, the centrality of the politics of location, the simultaneity of oppressions and the fight against it, the virtuous experience of contamination between different cognitive areas, and the possible dialogue between the centre and the peripheries, through European and Latin American epistemological discourse. After this tangible, profound and compelling experience, the encounter with the text *Death of a Discipline*, the following year, in the *Máster de Estudios de las Mujeres y Género*[23]; offered a revolutionary theoretical framework to the concept of interdisciplinarity; enriching my previously nuanced experience of this area of thought. Furthermore Spivak´s text has allowed me to cross frontiers; to consider the existence of new horizons of thought related to development cooperation, and return to the use of literature as a means of going beyond boundaries.

I have hesitated until this point to present my academic background, thus unveiling and defining my personal politics of location. I consider it appropriate to place it in the present chapter, in order to articulate the transition between the second chapter associated to political analysis, and the third and fourth chapters, closely related to a literary approach. My interest in literature drew me to study a Modern Literature undergraduate degree in Bologna.

To try to again weave the dialogue between the different chapters of the present text, giving the document fluidity between methodology and theory, it is relevant to highlight an appreciation of the first chapter of the text *Death of a discipline*, called *Crossing*

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[22] Women, Gender and Feminisms' studies.
[23] Please refer to footnote number 21.

Borders, that makes the paradigms articulated by Spivak even more interesting. In my view Spivak´s work appears to draw from many of the conclusions proposed by Said in *Orientalism*, in fact, the author herself refers to the influential weight Said´s legacy has in her work (Spivak, 2003, 105). Despite the process of theoretical construction emerging from the legacy of the author of *Orientalism*, Spivak's theoretical foundations distance the two epistemological approaches. The articulation and categorisation of interdisciplinarity presented by Spivak (2003) are not present in Said´s *Orientalism*. Unlike Said's, Spivak´s text is based on a well-structured historical and cultural framework, that defines three spheres of study: Area Studies, Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature. Based on the articulation and analysis of categories, Spivak presents global Comparative Literature as a means to revendicate national languages of the South and languages of indigenous populations. According to my interpretation, Spivak´s proposal to eliminate epistemological violence perpetuated by the central West, offers two simultaneous positions: the opening of European Comparative Literature to include literature of the South, and the use of interdisciplinarity to surpass frontiers.

Taking into account the three categories proposed by Spivak, Area Studies represents a field that arose to consolidate the United States hegemony during the Cold War. As mentioned previously, Comparative Studies and Comparative Literature, emerged in the 20th century, when intellectuals were driven out of Europe by totalitarian regimes. Cultural and postcolonial studies have arisen from the increase of immigration after the passing of the 1965 *Immigration Act* in the United States, an Act that led to a vast increase of population in Africa, Latin America and, particularly in Asia.

According to Spivak, Eurocentric Comparative Studies has been exhausted and the end of this Eurocentric project is echoed in the very title of her essay. Despite this prophetic and powerful claim, there are means to overcome this loss; means that allow us to reconsider the possibility of returning to the idea of an interdisciplinary epistemological construction, where literature assumes a leading role. The fusion between Comparative Studies and Area Studies follow this line of through. The construction of these new gnoseological spheres, contemplates the need to rely on new figures, that know how to combine different functions, managing to integrate the exercise of teaching with theory, introducing activists, for example, that are employed as teachers. Personally, I find many similarities between the concept of a global vision present in Spivak´s Comparative Literature approach, and Mohanty´s (2011) third typology of pedagogical proposals; forged to face the unification of the gender studies curriculum in the United States. Out

of the three pedagogical proposals, Mohanty supports a model that she names *Feminist Solidarity* or *Comparative Feminist Studies Model*. In my opinion, the similarities between Spivak and Mohanty's works lie in deeply meditated and proactive epistemological theory, capable of weaving dialogues between experience of the: feminist, anti-globalisation movements, and academia. In these essays Spivak and Mohanty have proposed an innovative construction of Comparative Studies, and the possibility of developing the history of a comparative feminist movement. These two ambitious projects, arise from the idea of solidarity. In the previously cited article, Mohanty digresses to present a consistent critique of Area Studies, determined essentially by the hegemonic role the United States has played in this field. Mohanty´s pedagogy appears to extend to, and converge with that expressed by Spivak: both lines of enquiry propose the simultaneous and contemporary presence of the local and the global; in order to allow for the relations of mutuality, co-responsibility, and common interests; that find their origin in the same concept of feminist solidarity. Constant consideration of the politics of location, allows analysis of the points of contact between different situations; the synchronous experience between two or more realities, can in turn be revealed through comparative analysis. In my opinion, an interesting element to explore is how Mohanty's proposal coincides with the idea of intersectionality. Her focus doesn't only consider the axis of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, age and geographical location; it also takes into account the construction of the idea of solidarity. I consider this methodology a profound proposal, although complex in practice, that can be employed in cooperation for development, for example. Unfortunately, as I have highlighted in the previous chapter, the hegemony dictated by donor agencies continues to be central to the theoretical production in the cooperation for development sphere. As I will explore in the last chapter, this hegemonic power can, however, be fractured by the imaginative power of literature.

Two further elements, central to Spivak's thesis, are essential to the development of this task: the importance of close reading as a tool for methodological rigor and overcoming the complexities that arise from literature being relegated to a second position, behind social sciences -an area that I will explore in the following chapter. Literature is a fundamental tool to defy disciplinary and disciplinarian boundaries[24]. As portrayed by

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[24] Not all literature, has the capacity to break barriers. Following Monticelli's (2006) claims, the type of literature, in my view, can break barriers, is that which generates figures and figurations that go beyond established horizons, proposing new visions through poetic words.

this author, literature is an element capable of consolidating the imagination; making it tangible. Based on this affirmation, literature can be understood as a means to cross borders, defining cognitive spaces that take into account and become part of the concept of disciplinary convergences. The virtuosity that characterises the field of literature, related to the power of the imagination, is overwhelming; its capacity to permeate and reach innovative creative horizons, dismantles any pre-established framework. To analyse the value of *téléiopoièsis*[25], Spivak analyses four highly complex texts, because, she argues, only complexity can drive critiques and problematisations, generate new movements.

Finally, I would like to delve into the concept of global Comparative Literature, which represents the constructive part of Spivak's text -her ground-breaking epistemological proposal; also bearing in mind Mohanty's methodological approach -referred to previously.

Global Comparative Literature is a means to overcome Eurocentrism. In the first chapter of this investigation I have referred to some literary declinations, including the idea of translocal in the literary field. These examples can become alternative proposals that converge to assemble the idea of global Comparative Literature. Following concepts put forward by Spivak, these approaches can provide some renewed world yearnings, and aspirations, that pretend to reach a constellation that encompasses a global view. Every one of the texts I have referred to in this paper, has the capacity to break down barriers, converging literary aspects with nuanced political declarations. To consolidate in this tentative world revelation[26] of global Comparative Literature, some connections between Rich y Spivak should be considered. Personally, I consider of great relevance to again cite the moment at which Rich (1986) recalls that when she was young. She and a friend used to love to write down her home address as:

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[25] The idea of *téléiopoièsis* refers to the capacity to explore new realities through the use of the imagination. This concept, used by Spivak (2003), has been elaborated by Derrida (1994), too: in her work, Spivak employs this concept to illustrate the ability of a specific type of literature to generate new and parallel worlds. For a more detailed definition of this term please consult Derrida (1994; 1996).

[26] From my first reading of Rich's (1986) text, I have been drawn to some details present in the text, that may not particularly be striking at first; however, the idea of including reference to the hemisphere world, solar system and universe when writing in an address, appears to me to be both an act of localisation, as well as a great capacity to visualise and imagine beyond known and explored concepts. I definitely consider it to be, one of the greatest ways to cross frontiers, with knowledge of the place from which one is communicating. I have associated this capacity to break barriers, with the necessary premise included in the first chapter, *Crossing Borders* of the text *Death of a Discipline*.

Adrienne Rich
14 Edgevale Road
Baltimore, Maryland
The United States of America
The Continent of North America
The Western Hemisphere
The Earth
The Solar System
The Universe.

Since my first reading of this extract, I have contemplated the potentially highly evocative poetic content, as well as the effective visual and rapid portrayal of the importance of localisation contained in the simple transcription of an address -the writing of an address can contain great *teleopoietic* value. Another extract of this same text offers a magnificent illustration of what is a global vision, words that Jacques Derrida expresses both in a similar and different way, «across the curve of the Earth»: this quote and the enunciation of an address that reaches space, the earth and universe; allow me to conceive a world vision, where constellations of translocal realities break barriers and shape projects that can reach global realities. In my opinion, in the last chapter of the text *Death of a Discipline*, the words of Rich return with an overpowering strength; an example of this is Spivak's reference to the location where she has written the words of her essay, namely, Hong Kong; after a flight that allowed her to visualize in a certain way, the planetary line that crosses different frontiers. I consider that numerous analogies exist between Spivak's previous step and the incipit that Rich uses in *Notes Towards a Politics of Location* (1986).

3.2 Building alternative dislocations through Spivak´s, Lispector´s, Woolf's readings of three texts

> Lies will flow from my lips, but there may perhaps be some truth mixed up with them; it is for you to seek out this truth and to decide whether any part of it is worth keeping. If not, you will of course throw the whole of it into the waste paper basket and forget all about it.
>
> (Woolf, *A Room of One's Own,* 1929, 5)

The references a literary work appeals to can be both explicit and implicit, conscious or unconscious; reaching through this rigid and cold dichotomy an infinite series of possibilities, declinations, and nuances. The references to previous or contemporary inspiring works can be hidden in parts of the texts or clearly manifested; in

the majority of cases their revelation depends on the interpretative sensitivity of the person that establishes a dialogue with the text. To capture the voluntary and involuntary similarities in two literary works, requires a lot of time and extreme dedication, reflection and patience, and, in my case, meditation and attentive reading. Diligent reading of the text allows new interpretations to arise, that, share communalities with an image. Literary analysis allows simultaneous observation of every part of the text and its entirety; a process that can be compared to the observation of a jellyfish.

Jellyfish in Portuguese is called «Água-viva».

To look at a literary work with an attentive eye, and see the body of the text, its moving frontiers, its entire profile, its forms in motion, all the elements that live inside the reader, elements that are transformed and that, in my view, emulate the act of visualising a jellyfish, that, through its living, changeable, fluid and elastic form permits the appreciation of every one of its parts, as well as its body as a whole. Despite transparency allowing the contemplation of every magical part, something always remains hidden from view, characterised by the mystery that resides in the densities that assume different colours to those of the rest of the body. I have read in meticulous detail, the text *Death of a Discipline*. I can assimilate it as I do the form of a jellyfish; I can visualise every part, its entire profile and in many cases, even the exact the words used in each passage. Despite being able to visualise its body, and its transparent and clear parts, I am unable to access a dark area that always remains hidden, dense, and secret. The hegemony of rational thought and asphyxiating necessity for clarity in the formulation of a literary piece, has nothing to do with the metaphoric proposal that I here present. This metaphoric representation does not portray Spivak's (2003) work as something clean, immediate and clear; this image intends to capture my perception of the slow gradual process of encountering this essay. After many readings, I can visualise its different parts and its whole, without denying that impenetrable dense and profound areas of the text, remain.

The text *Água Viva*, written by Clarice Lispector (1973) constitutes the third pillar to this investigation.

Even today I evaluate the selection of Clarice Lispector's text, *Água Viva,* as something quite daring, and at the same time, inevitable. This text represents the most insolent of her work: through the concept of solidarity, the writer, the book´s protagonist and the reader, become confidants. This complex relationship is established from the

beginning of the text, based on a dense exchange of words, images and thoughts that develop a story, building secrets and revelations. As a reader, I have surrendered this work as never before, the unveiling of the protagonist is so deep and radical and her capacity to disarm, through her confessions, so absolute that the reader succumbs to her in solidarity with the protagonist. The most profound reasoning behind my selection of Clarice Lispector's work, is that it is rooted in a profound attempt to construct solidarity between strangers, and I evaluate that this feeling is what generates reflection, awareness and possibilities of change. Personally, I believe that solidarity has driven my will to question elements in the world of cooperation that unsettled me, allowing me to move on to the next phase -being this investigation one of the results. This new phase is guided by the will to transform something with which I do not conform, despite being a complex change of great magnitude. Given all these reasons, I have chosen *Água Viva* as the work from which to approach this change. After having clarified the reasons behind this selection -only one of infinitive possibilities, I would like to analyse ulterior elements presented in the text *Death of a Discipline,* prior to connecting them to Clarice Lispector's work.

To be able, after numerous readings, to visualize the text *Death of a Discipline* through the jellyfish metaphor, has allowed me to establish parallels with other fundamental texts, especially with a type of writing to which Spivak herself dedicates a broad part of her analysis. In my view, a series of analogies exist between the texts *A Room of One's Own* and *Death of a Discipline*[27]. My personal theory is that Virginia Woolf's work is also a constant structural reference for Spivak's work, a source that she has reinterpreted and given meaning to; overcoming the mere and simple interpretations that reduce the understanding of Woolf's text to the importance of having a room of one's own, and the definition of the androgynous figure. My claim goes beyond that definition; my perception is that Spivak's text establishes a dialogue with Woolf's work, introducing

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[27] Virginia Woolf together with Jacques Derrida, are the two elements capable of unifying all the different theories proposed by Spivak in the text, *Death of a Discipline*. I consider that Woolf and Derrida are the authors Spivak uses as an example to demonstrate a type of literature that has the capacity to break barriers and build new horizons. Spivak´s work constantly acknowledges Woolf´s contribution, the similitude between the two works, as I intend to demonstrate, are far denser than may initially appear. Virginia Woolf constitutes the thread between the three chapters of the work analysed by Spivak, a reference constantly used to reach the formulation of the idea of global Comparative Literature. Spivak uses the different images illustrated by Woolf to delineate the concept of community, through the introduction of the analysis of the relation between Chloe and Olivia, for example; or the reference to Mary Beton; symbol of the creative capacity of literature to introduce political issues. These references are, in some cases, explicit, however other references exist between *A Room for One's Own* and *Death of a Discipline* that I consider should be made explicit.

it to a new historical framework, redefining and displacing its frontiers through a mature formulation of the postcolonial perspective.

Both texts are based on the content of university lectures, shaped into essays with strong political value. Both, in my view, contemplate performative contradictions. The title of the first text evokes a private space, however through numerous references we discover that it is directed at a group of women in the academic sphere; at the same time, the title of the second text evokes the eclipse of a discipline, presenting, however, in the development of the body of the text, alternative proposals of new areas of interdisciplinary study that convey a proposal for global Comparative Literary. Spivak's strategy contrasts a trace of the title of the essay with the theoretical proposal presented in the body of the text; which can be defined as an oxymoron. At the same time, I consider that the idea of «performative contradiction» (Spivak, 2003, 40) can be applied to this fruitful disjunctive; an idea that Spivak herself uses in the second chapter of *Death of a Discipline*. In relation the text that draws from a series of lectures given by Spivak in the University of Columbia; I would like to highlight a question that has returned to me constantly during the past months: Can one of Spivak's works, which offer viable alternatives able to oppose the European epistemological hegemony, contain a title that announces the death of a discipline? The reply to this question is a positive one. The irony present in this contradiction has the rhetorical form of an oxymoron, integrated in the opposition between the title of the work and its first chapter, *Crossing Borders*, where the idea of death of Comparative Literature can give life to new foundational horizons that defy the separations that exist between Area Studies and Comparative Literature. Overcoming these barriers presents a model for the refoundation of a discipline; however, if it fails to overcome the restrictions that are suffocating it, it could be close to extinction.

As previously argued, the two essays contain similar elements, such as: an academic audience, the fact that in both cases they are produced for university lectures, and that they both play with a sharp use of the oxymoron rhetoric, or «performative contradiction». Other common elements exist between the two texts, that allow me to discern Spivak's constant reference to Woolf in her work, as, for example, the considerations present in both essays of the possibility of constructing communities, and how women can be introduced into those communities. The answers to these proposals, however, differ. On one hand, we encounter the introduction of the figure of Shakespeare's sister, Judith Shakespeare, a poetic, inspiring, superb literary construction;

on the other hand, the analysis of a passage in the text *Season of Migration to the North*, a masterful example of close reading under the frame of «teleopoietic displacement»[28] (Spivak, 2003, 30). In both cases the introduction of women in a community, such as a democratic community, appears to be an extremely arduous process; taking into account the idea that of logofratroncentric[29] rhetoric presented by Derrida and Irigaray. Delving deeper into this point, another common element exists in both texts: the use of a literary essay to present social and political themes, that include the idea of community construction and how women can be introduced into this community, or what this introduction entails. At the same time approaching the impossibility of entering a community, taking into account the strong intrinsic limitations of a democratic system that is constructed using a language that has excluded women in the West since its foundation. The strategy used by both authors is undoubtedly the same: to use suggestions that may result extravagant in the literary field, to open the literary sphere, and apply literature´s power of imagination to construct, through the displacement of feasible alternative social and political imaginaries. Finally, I would like to analyse a concept presented by Spivak, that in my view, can also be applied to Woolf´s text: that of «open-plan fieldwork» (Spivak, 2003, 36). Spivak's definition is of great interest, as it permits the formulation of an issue related to the educational field. In my view, in both texts, the correct question is asked: How is it possible to combine thought, with the experience of everyday life, in the practice of living? It is possible that the beauty of both texts resides in this question, and the in complexity of its reply. Answers are articulate and complex; I do, however, find it interesting not to doubt them. For the purpose of the task at hand, it is more relevant to highlight how both texts contain the same inquisitiveness that arises from the fragmentation generated by experiencing different situations, and some

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[28] For a comprehensive definition of this concept refer to Spivak, 2003, p. 57-58. The concept of displacement is rich: it indicates a movement from a known reality to another, through a series of ties and similarities. This movement from a known reference to one less known, favours interesting reflection that would not occur without the abandonment of the more familiar reality. This concept introduces other interesting ideas: the first, forged by Freud (1919) is an idea that perturbs, and the other by Fortunati (2004), refers to the possible margins of experience.

[29] This idea refers to a rather complex concept, conveyed by Derrida (1994), that contemplates how can women be part of a community based on a use of language centred on men; that creates communities and relationships where men are central. The main question put forth, is how women can enter relations based on language and communities forged by men. I am perfectly conscious of the fact that my explanations trivialise and simplify these concepts; concepts that given present space limitations, I cannot explore to a furthermore satisfactory extent. Either way, it is always appropriate to return to the source to understand the complexity of these concepts. To have greater knowledge of this idea it is also pertinent to return to Irigaray's (1989) readings.

contrasting aspects. My interpretation of the concept «open-plan fieldwork», as defined by Spivak, has been very prolific, especially because it has allowed me to break disciplinary barriers. For this reason, I will return to this idea in following chapters.

3.3 Reclaiming the possibility of global Comparative Literature

The thread throughout the writing of this piece, and the documents cited in it, is the intention to weave a dialogue between literary texts that offer consistent political value; in this sense, all references have been selected to construct this dialectical structure. Simultaneously I have intended to increase the range of presented texts, with pieces written by less know authors, that have not been included in academic studies curricula, as is the example of Josefina Báez (2011). This search for texts has aided the revitalisation of two ideas that are categorically present in Spivak's text (2003): the capacity of literature to propose an intuitive picture of the (im)possible social and political future, and the possibilities this picture offers for the construction of the idea of a world reality. The first idea allows the construction of responsible global Comparative Literature, introduced in political and social spheres; defiant literature that leaves room for the possibility of learning from teachers, for example, from schools in West Bengal. This ability to reformulate thought and learn from its foundations, is an essential element in the frame of current investigations, and partly coincides with the activism that takes place under the anti-globalisation movements of which both Spivak (2003) and Mohanty (2011) are part of. The introduction of literature as a proposal to cross and conceive new limits, coincide perfectly with my vision.

The inclusion of new limits focuses on the study of postcolonial works that offer the capacity to delocalise visions and deconstruct the colonialist narrative of Western hegemonic states. The idea of comparative world literature offers exactly these possibilities, defying the margins of Comparative Literature established by European hegemonic power; from this comparative world literature, it is possible to draw literary and political pictures, able to construct new political horizons.

The complexity of Spivak's theory resides in the jellyfish's densities, which I have referred to metaphorically in the process of visualisation of the analysed text.

At the beginning of *Death of a Discipline* and at its end it is possible to encounter, in my view, two central ideas. At the beginning of *Death of a Discipline* Spivak takes an

evaluation of literature, she threads its virtues, stating that literature forges solid epistemological development, which must not be devalued when compared to the epistemology produced by social and political sciences. The final proposal is a constant and structured critique of the concept of identity, a concept widely used in Political and Social Studies. The critique of the politics of identity can be a tool that global Comparative Literature contributes to, denoting ideas of monolithic purity.

The possibility of constructing new conceptualisations, the constant search for disruption, the creation of a global vision, to create literary works that contribute ground-breaking readings and the search for constant complexity, are tools that place world Comparative Literature in a very privileged position in the quest for epistemological construction; extended also to political and social spheres.

4: Multiple strategies for epistemic divergence: *Água Viva* by Clarice Lispector

4.1 A fluid conversation between words and colours

Moi, je suis très sensible à cette ressource et quand je sens qu'elle déferle devant moi- puisque le phénomène de l'écriture est de déferlement précédant, l'auteur suit, et de plus je suis convaincue que celui qui écrit, si je peux dire, c'est le livre lui-même; lorsque je la vois se manifester, au moment, où je suis le scribe (je dis toujours d'ailleurs que je suis le scribe, j'ai ce métier de scribe qui note ce que le livre est en train de produire)je ne m'oppose pas, au contraire, au trouble, donc à tout ce qui fait déraper et qui fait que l'acte de création dans la littérature- je ne sépare pas la philosophie de la littérature en disant cela- enfin disons l'écriture, est producteur d'incertitudes[30].

(Hélène Cixous, *Langue à Venir*, 2004, 81).

My encounter with Clarice Lispector was during a peculiar time in my life; as previously mentioned, I was living in Salvador de Bahía, where I witnessed the materialisation of my vision of interdisciplinarity, and the rupture of some epistemological concepts fundamental to Western academics; specifically, the academic spheres that I know -the Spanish and Italian. The proposal of writing texts where the methodology is not something disconnected from the body of the text, but rather something integrated in every chapter; is linked to my experience in Brazil. At that moment in my live, vertigo constantly permeated my skin and marked my prudent steps in a reality full of emotions caused by my complete lack of knowledge and preparation in all areas; in particular considering my interpersonal relationships in the academic sphere at this time[31]. The sensation was that of continuously slipping into something deep and unknown, determined by a constant excess of learning, and at the same time characterised by continual ruptures with tangible understandings of alterity; unable to assimilate so many new and suggestive notions. In this environment, I came across, Clarice Lispector's work for the first time. *A Hora da Estrela*, *A Paixão de G. H.* and finally *Água Viva*; this was the order in which I read Clarice Lispector´s work, and I consider the encounter of

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[30] I am very sensitive to this resource and when I feel it is unleashed in front of me -since the phenomenon of writing is a preceding surge, the author follows, and I am increasingly convinced about the fact that who writes, if I may say so, is the book itself; when I see this manifested, that is, at the time when I become the scribe (incidentally, I always say that I am the scribe who takes down what the book is producing) I am not opposed, quite the opposite, to vagueness, nor to everything that makes one drift, transforming the act of creation in literature -I do not separate philosophy from literature when saying this- let's just say writing, is the producer of uncertainty. Hélène Cixous, Langue à Venir, 2004, 81.

[31] As previously mentioned, I had the opportunity to enrol for six months in the doctorate in Salvador de Bahía of *Núcleo de Estudos Interdisciplinares das Mulheres, Gênero y Feminismos* of the Universidad Federal de Salvador de Bahía (UFBA). This opportunity meant my return to the academic world after 8 years away from it, and this return made me feel that I was not prepared to deal with colleagues, that had not, at any point, ceased to have contact with university. I definitely didn't feel prepared to confront such an enormous challenge.

her texts in this order, to foster a constant process of maturation. The order of readings has allowed me to move from the concept of alterity[32] -where the protagonists internalises alterity, towards rupturing the limits of alterity; finally reaching the sublimation of the destruction of the monolinguist concept of the protagonist and the other; so ethereal and present through its silence. This is what I have encountered in every one of the three works I here mention. In this chapter, I will focus on the analysis of *Água Viva* using feminist close reading. When reading this novel, a form of solidarity is established between the writer, the main character and the reader; developing a form of empathy that has become the thread and main influence of this investigation.

In this chapter I present different elements of the novel: dislocation and perturbation, rupture of disciplinary limits and interdisciplinarity, the break from binary systems, the fluidity and the elasticity of identity, the insolent use of language, and the concept of secrecy. All these elements are combined in order to create inspiring figurations in *Água Viva*.

At the same time, I build a dialogue among several novels which depict parallelisms between the process of writing and the process of painting.

Returning to the concept of how my personal situation has influenced the reading of this literary text; it is important to delve into my personal delocalisation in Brazil, and the fluidity of the words used in *Água Viva*. I don't want this affirmation to be an act of appropriation, nor identification; rather I would like it to further complement understanding of how localisation has had enormous influences in the interpretation of the work. After this first contact with Lispector, I have continued to approach the work without, in a way, being conscious of its authority, nor the analysis that the work has generated. In fact, only after attentive reading of the literary works included in the bibliography of this investigation have I realised their explicit reference to Clarice

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[32] Following what Mohanty (1988) suggests, I use the concept of alterity as a form used to legitimise the subject that talks, and that, based on the perpetration of epistemological violence, delineates the 'other', using characteristics that in fact legitimise even more his/her hegemonic role. Based on this concept, the works by Clarice Lispector, in my opinion, deconstruct alterity, through the constant questioning of the novel's subjects; removing the boundaries, barriers and delimitation between two bodies. This deconstruction reaches its height in the novel *Água Viva,* when the protagonist, uses words to break from her own identity and that of the person with whom she is talking to; the word is transformed, fused.

Lispector -they openly naming her. This is the case in the works of Spivak (2003), Cixous (2004) and Báez (2011).

The concept of dislocation, constructed in the previous chapter[33] as an alternative analytical strategy, is an extremely `cunning´ concept. Dislocation allows the exploration of the concept of perturbation analysed by Spivak (2003). The idea of dislocation permeates in every page of *Água Viva* (1973), determined by the fact that the protagonist of the work abandons her habitual pictorial use of language to enter the sphere of linguistic communication; articulated through the written words. The idea of dislocation is the constant backdrop for the protagonist of this literary work, however another concept also emerges in this novel; that of interdisciplinarity[34]. In my opinion, the text suggests a fusion between pictorial communication and communication through the written word; colours find their definition and meaning in words weaved through poetical lines; where prose and poetry are fused. The horizons of Lispector´s work are the meditated and constant dislocation of communicative instruments, and the rupture of disciplinary limits. The combination of these instruments produces an extremely subversive effect, which is behind the analysis of the concept of alterity and the denotation of the binary system, the annihilation of the idea of style and the abolition of the idea of norm.

Quando vieres a me ler perguntarás por que não me restrinjo à pintura e às minhas exposições, já que escrevo tosco e sem ordem. É que agora sinto necessidade de palavras - e é novo para mim o que escrevo porque minha verdadeira palavra foi até agora intocada. A palavra é a minha quarta dimensão[35]. (Lispector, 1973, 2).

I would like to analyse this part by delving into the meaning behind these words. This passage of the text marks a declared transition where the protagonist introduces through painting, a new alternative form of expression that consolidates the use of writing; defined by the protagonist as course and deprived of order. As illustrated by Cixous (1990), Lispector was perfectly conscious of the destructive power of work that constantly defies the idea of Law: her work does not contain the narration of a story, there isn't a conclusion of events.

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[33] Please refer to footnote number 28.

[34] In order to understand the differences between breaking borders and the idea of interdisciplinarity, it is important to refer to the thirs chapter of the present thesis. In my view, in *Água Viva* I can use the term of interdisciplinarity because painting and writing merge and are mutually descriptive.

[35] When you come to read me - since I write rough and without order, you will ask why I do not restrict myself to painting, and my exhibitions. Now I need words - and it is new to me what I write because my true word has hitherto been untouched. The word is my fourth dimension. (Lispector, 1973, 2).

The use of disordered words in this sense, is of crucial importance, as it refers to the absence of Law and respect of the norms in the novel (Cixous 1990, p 15). Lispector's quote cited above, the protagonists sense of urgency to write emerges, which is something novel to her. Her need for words in is something innovative; considering she has never revealed true words. Words represent the fourth dimension, words symbolise time, words become a sort of painting. This paragraph appears to close the initial introduction of the book, after this the protagonists introduces the description of a painting -later on, I will provide details of the second part of the sentence. I will closely analyse the use of interdisciplinarity and the concept of movement, given their inspiring effect on the creative discovery of new unexplored territories. Firstly, the idea of movement permeates the first sentence: «Quando vieres a me ler perguntarás por que»: someone will come to read the protagonist and will ask her the reason behind something. The dimension of the action of approach, to tentatively construct knowledge of alterity, dominates the first part; that approach is produced through movement that is transformed into the next action - how it is produced, isn't revealed. I don't know if the question will be oral or in writing, but that same question entails the introduction of a new action; that which creates a tentative connection between the protagonist and the intangible, ethereal and close presence.

The second part of the first phrase, extends this idea of movement, of dislocation, it represents the broadening of the epistemological field, a declaration of experimental travel towards the unknown, and perturbation: «não me restrinjo à pictures e às minhas exposições». The protagonist decides to limit her painting and her exhibitions; I consider the use of the possessive pronoun «minhas exposições» quite fascinating, due to its basic value in the construction of the concept of alterity, marking limits between the two subjects; needed for the defence of their personal construction. The second part of the quote is an anthem to the beauty of words and the necessity of their use -words are untouchable, new and truthful. This second sentence is a prolific declaration of absolute love, a communicative medium still intact for the protagonist. Through its use, the flux of time is determined; time is dissected in the first two pages of *Água Viva*.

I see this quote as a definite declaration of love for cognitive and interpretative realms that enter a dialogue as a result of the protagonist´s capacity to move between two completely different disciplines. No discipline is prioritised, they complement each other;

no discipline dies, they are both revitalised through to dislocations and movements that perturb.

My encounter with the protagonist of *Água Viva* has brought about my own dislocation; reading Clarice Lispector's text, led me to reencounter a novel I read and loved during my undergraduate university studies: *Artemisia,* by the Italian author Banti (1947). *Água Viva* and *Artemisia* are two texts that, in my view, talk to each other; that share strong similarities, especially due to the dense dialogue that is built between authors, protagonists and readers. The construction of solidarity intertwines the stories of the three figures in both novels. To read *Água Viva* made me return and explore *Artemisia*, delving into all the similitudes that exist between the texts -parallelisms are drawn to recuperate all the aspects of this dislocation. The reading of a text about an artist that talks about herself and her paintings to an ethereal presence, contains similarities with a work I had previously read; that is part of my cultural palimpsest. In both texts, there is a consistent dialogue between words and colours.

I consider it relevant to construct parallelisms and create a dialogue between Lispector and Banti; in particular considering the two painters are protagonists of the literary works, and face the use of writing -not a medium they are accustomed to use. Bearing in mind the fascinating world of painting in literature, I would like to introduce comparative analysis to provide a more comprehensive perspective and definition. In *Artemisia* words and colours are split between two different protagonists: a female painter from the 17th century, and a female writer from the contemporary world. In this literary text, the dialogue between words and colours is established when Artemisia decides to communicate to her brother through several letters; although she is never able to write them. Artemisia cannot master the use of writing. In *Artemisia,* we find two different protagonists who manage two different artistic creations, and two parallel and non-converging communication forms. On the other hand, in *Água Viva* words and colours converge to elaborate a non-hegemonic use of language -the painter and writer are the same person. When the protagonist in *Água Viva* proposes comparative analysis between words and colours, she stresses the fact that colours are not completely pre-existing while words are means for hunting concepts. This metaphor is repeated several times in the novel.

Apart from the similarities that I may have discovered between the two protagonists, I believe that what generated a sense of dislocation when reading *Água Viva* was to see the differences that exist between the two protagonist painters when they face the exercise of writing. Although the protagonist of *Água Viva* initially faces the process with trepidation, her confidence eventually grows; whilst Artemisia is fearful of writing to her dear brother. Reading how the protagonist of *Água Viva* builds the courage to write, provoked in me a feeling of sanity; this intrepid being reminds me of Artemisia's lack of audacity of writing. Dislocation in this case was generated through contrast.

I here forth present some further characteristics that I think deserve to be underlined in Clarice Lispector's work. The methodological strategy used to construct the monologue is detached from the use of binaries, the protagonist of *Água Viva* often affirms an idea about her consciousness, and later decides to sustain exactly the reverse point of view. This methodology negates the idea of a monolithic identity; the fragmentation of the ego is the consequence and prolific result: «Eu não sou promíscua. Sou caleidoscópica»[36]. Regarding the collapse of binaries, the incessant use of contradiction and hermetic sentences could be related to the necessity of not being instrumentalised (Kolodny, 1989). This constitutive strategy of contradiction becomes a tool for introducing another element: the fluidity and the elasticity of identity. In my view, both are the results of the strategy of contradiction. To legitimise the fragmented ego, is key to introduce fluidity and elasticity as the only ways to maintain the unity of body and consciousness. This concept of fluidity of life and identity is illustrated in *Água Viva* using the water and jellyfish metaphor. Finally, after *A paixão segundo G.H.*, *Água Viva* tentatively defies the borders between human and non-human, through the concept of «it» (Cixous, 1990, 14). It is the impersonal essence, the non- gendered identity which flows through our state of existence. This impersonal essence is at the same time human and non-human and it permeates the human and non-human, destroying the categorisation of fictitious identities.

4.2 The fluidity within *Água Viva*

Each of us is here now because in one way or another we share a commitment to language and to power the language, and to reclaiming of that language which has been made to work against us. In this transformation of silence into language and action, it is vitally necessary for each of

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[36] I am not promiscuous. I am kaleidoscopic. (Lispector, 1973, 2).

us to establish or examine her function in that transformation and to recognize her role as vital within that transformation.

(Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 1984, 43).

In this essay, I have referred to different works that arose from previous oral presentations -originally composed as university lectures. To continue this thread, I would like to present a piece that emerges from an interview by Segarra to Derrida and Cixous (2004); an interview that becomes a particularly deep and intimate conversation; making it impossible to separate the content from the words of friendship that connect the two interviewees. This text was born in a seminar imparted in Barcelona, and it has allowed me to see the profound interconnections between Cixous and Lispector and Cixous constant methodological study of Lispector's literary works. I have also discovered in this text an element that has astonished me. Prior to reading this work I considered that Said (1978) had constructed the genealogy of alterity; however, after investigating this idea, I have come to realise that the text *Le Deuxième Sexe* by de Beauvoir (1949) precedes Said's formulation; Beauvoir's text theorises about the construction of alterity of women, functional to the legitimisation of the power of men.

The text *Água Viva* breaks completely with normativity both in the linguistic and structural sphere; it presents constant fragmented declarations written by the novel's protagonist. The text denotes and exasperating sense of vital strength, which is included through fragments that intertwine specific sensations that are portrayed through painting and writing; describing the paintings through words and depicting writing characters as if they were strokes of a paint.

Hoje acabei a tela de que te falei: linhas redondas que se interpenetram em traços finos e negros, e tu, que tens o hábito de querer saber por quê - e porque não me interessa, a causa é matéria de passado - perguntarás por que os traços negros e finos? É por causa do mesmo segredo que me faz escrever agora como se fosse a ti, escrevo redondo, enovelado e tépido, mas ás vezes frígido como os instantes frescos, água do riacho que treme sempre por si mesma. O que pintei nessa tela é passível de ser fraseado em palavras? Tanto quanto possa ser implícita a palavra muda no som musical. [37] (Lispector, 1973, 3).

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[37] Today I finished the painting which I spoke about: round lines that interpenetrate other black and fine lines; and you, who have the habit of wondering why -I do not care about the reason why, because it is a matter of the past, you will ask why the black and fine lines? It is due to the same secret that makes me write now as if it were to you, I write round, wrinkled and warm, however sometimes I write frigid like fresh moments, water from the stream that always shakes itself. Is what I painted on this capable of being phrased into words? As far as can be implied that the mute word isn't a musical sound. (Lispector, 1973, 3).

The sentence again begins with a clear reference to the fourth dimension: time. What follows is the protagonist's describing the painting to the interlocutor; a painting she has previously referred to. She speaks to this intangible presence, using direct speech; a discourse where only the protagonist intervenes, a monologue that is articulated also through questions that dislocate the first and the third person -the receiver of the words. What is generated afterwards is the overlapping of lines of painting and writing. At first, the painted lines are subtle and black, and provoke the curiosity of the intangible presence, who questions the reason behind them. The text refers to lines of writing that appear to be completely fluid, and through metonymy, can symbolise the protagonists writing. The orthographic lines, are presented as rounded, new, trepid and sometimes cold. Before continuing with the analysis, I would like to contemplate the relation with the word «enovelado», which in Portuguese means new, as well as tangled. The line of the written word allows for contemplation of the use of metonymy: the writing is presented as confusing. Again, we encounter the concepts of coarseness and lack of order; two concepts that denote that the construction of a literary piece needs to follow certain rules. I would like to introduce a subsequent reflection related to the idea of fluidity that has an interesting role and constitutes a central element in all parts of the text. Beginning in its title, fluidity is a characteristic that permeates this work. Fluidity here refers to live water, moving towards the strokes of a painting, until it reaches the written lines: quickly the flow of these three elements is perceived as vital energy that bewilders and provokes shudders of pleasure and humour. Fluidity permeates water, painting and writing. Given the absolute absence of norms, it appears as if the text flows, as it were able to write itself, especially due to the absence of history, norms, and a distinct protagonist.

The protagonist of this text, as presented by Cixous (1990), is the object; everything in this novel is an object. The subject doesn't exist, only an infinitive presence of objects that have beauty and vital drive, that are wildly accumulated as eternal dance in a space without limits, full of people. Bearing in mind Cixous's analysis (1990; 1991), verbs, at the same time, are transformed into names and exercise, in an even more pronounced way, the capacity to transmit movement, a movement without ending, with no purpose beyond expression and violent configuration. Cixous's study of this work, portrays all these elements: the lack of laws, the defiance of norms and the constant presence of the fragmented sentence. All this is reproduced once more through the idea of constant fluidity, evident from the beginning of the literary work. Live water, water

that runs through, water that moves, water with no pre-established limits, water that is the texts metaphor and metonymy. Words flow in this constant river, in this conformation of a text that is written apart from the protagonist´s actions; it is a voice that flows, a voice that is written through the same text.

Repetitions and enumerations also construct a real challenge to syntactic norms, becoming part of the fluidity and the continuous fragmentation of the text. The constant repetition of the verb to say, to question, to respond; allows to engage, to leave and reengage with the dialogue between different written voices that are moulded and interrogated, without offering structured answers. In this text, things, elements, objects exist with a beauty that generates ecstasy, and admiration that is filled with vitality that flows. The text follows itself, and by doing this a treasure is created. Lispector can generate events, without producing a story, she is simply able to do it using structure and language in a revolutionary way. The absence of a solid story in *Água Viva* is combined with small events that take place in the text, such as the narration of a dream, the reflection on the name of flowers, the protagonist entering and leaving the scene, questions by this wonderful ethereal protagonist, the fascinating description of colours of a painting: all small events that flow like water, full of life, and arise when the reader, lost in this text, opens up allowing him/her to fall in love with its depictions. In *Água Viva* stories are written, but none are consolidated. The structure of this text is completely flexible, far from static: starting with the title, fluidity permeates words, structure, the identity of the protagonist. The use of language in the text is another element that deserves special attention: words present in the text are very refined, present a texture of silk, allowing themselves to flow between pages in a light and fresh manner. This capacity to build something both dynamic and elegant is due, in particular, to four elements: the innovating approximation of words that form unusual binomials, the description of simple concepts through ground breaking creative associations, the creation of new words -non-existent in the Portuguese vocabulary, and the recovery of unusual and forgotten words.

This capacity to forge events through fluidity of using language in a revolutionary way by use of these four linguistic strategies, make of *Água Viva* an exemplary text to explore all the lexical opportunities excluded from the reduced vocabulary of a hegemonic language. In my opinion, this text arises from a deep act of rebellion towards a canonical and hegemonic use of language, that has a vulgar propensity to be vile,

reducing its amplitude through buzzwords, and introduction of exclusionary technicalities. *Água Viva* is an act of love and rebelliousness.

4.3 Figurations that can inspire

> A ella le gustaba inventar palabras y desmontar las que oía por primera vez, hacer combinaciones con las piezas resultantes, separar y poner juntas las que se repetían. Las palabras un poco más largas eran como vestidos con corpiño, chaleco y falda, y se le podía poner el chaleco de una a la falda de otra con el mismo corpiño, o al revés, que fuera la falda lo que cambiase. Alternando la «f» y la «g», por ejemplo, salían diferentes modalidades de paz, de muerte, de santidad, y de testimonio: pacificar y apaciguar, mortificar y amortiguar, santificar y santiguar, testificar y atestiguar; era un juego bastante divertido para hacerlo con diccionario. Algunos corpiños como «filos» que quería decir amistad, y «logos», que quería decir palabra, abrigaban mucho y permitían variaciones muy interesantes. Ella un día los puso juntos y resultó un personaje francamente seductor: el filólogo, o amigo de las palabras. Lo dibujó en un cuaderno tal y como lo imaginaba, con gafas color malva, un sombrero puntiagudo y en la mano un cazamariposas grande por donde entraban frases en espiral a las que pintó alas. Luego vino a saber que la palabra «filólogo» ya existía, que no la había inventado ella. [38]

(Martín Gaite, *Nubosidad variable*, 1992, 119).

I consider words to be something you can taste with different senses, to find modalities that allow all my sensorial capacities to construct a relationship with words is something that fascinates me. The form through which I write is influenced by my senses. I write to transmit the quality of words through dense, very thick, writing on a page. I type using the same violence I write with: words deserve to be perceived completely. It is my way of expressing love for writing I perceive through short-sighted eyes.

In the previous subchapter I have constructed parallelisms between two scenes, one belongs to *Artemisia* and the other to *Água Viva*. In these scenes the main characters, two painters, have to face the unusual exercise of writing. I would like to introduce another work that speaks of the possible similarities that exist between the creative act of

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[38] She liked to invent words and disassemble the ones she heard for the first time, to make combinations with the resulting pieces, to separate and put together those that were repeated. The words that were a little longer were like dresses with bodice, waistcoat and skirt, the vest of one of them could be combined with the skirt of another with the same bodice, or the other way around -the skirt was swapped. Alternating the "f" and the "g", for example, different modalities of peace, death, holiness, and witness emerged: to pacify and appease, to mortify and absorb, to sanctify and to make the sign of the cross, to testify and to prove; it was a pretty fun game to play with a dictionary. Some corsets such as "phil", which meant friendship, and "logos", which meant a word, were very warm and very interesting. One day she put them together, and a rather seductive character appeared: the philologist, or friend of words. She drew it in a notebook just as she imagined it, with mauve glasses, a pointed hat, and a large butterfly net in his hand, where phrases entered in spirals to which she drew ownings. She later then came to realise that the word "philologist" already existed, that she had not invented it. (Carmen Martín Gaite, Nubosidad variable, 1992, 119).

writing and the creative act of painting; a work I discovered this year, within the framework of GEMMA, that has taught me the incredible ability to write or paint relationships between people, and especially among women. I chose the novel *Nubosidad Variable* because it is a work that captivates through a complex structure of human relations that are slowly uncovered, built between numerous people. The relations that become more relevant in the novel are those characterised by strong solidarity: specially between two friends, and between a mother and her daughter. It is possible that a dense and constant parallelism exists between writing and painting emerges again through the words of Martín Gaite: the preceding step, turns from the depiction of new words to the transformation of sentences that are painted with wings. The capacity to fully explore this figure is incredible as it can fully explain words capacity to construct worlds, to give body to objects, to generate actions and movement. In the preceding subchapter, I analysed the similarities between the act of painting and writing: the passage in *Nubosidad Variable* adds new aspects to the description of creative acts, that present many analogies; in fact, in this part, one of the protagonists illustrates words by assembling them and finally drawing them as if they were dresses. The final phase of the creative act consists in painting words, after having assembled and dissembled them, tasting them to the core. I consider extremely interesting to create this parallelism; to increase the proposed range of similarities that exist between complementary creative acts, that merge, broadening synergies.

Again, this fantastic epistemological parallelism connects writing and painting as if they were two complementary disciplines, bound to each other by the possibility to create recourses in another magnificent novel. This similitude between two complementary fields entails some tangible differences, and to portray them I use the words from *Água Viva*.

Ao escrever não posso fabricar como na pintura, quando fabrico artesanalmente uma cor. Mas estou tentando escrever-te com o corpo todo, enviando uma seta que se finca no ponto tenro e nevrálgico da palavra. Meu corpo incógnito te diz: dinossauros, ictiossauros e plessiossauros... Não pinto idéias, pinto o mais inatingível "para sempre". Ou "para nunca", é o mesmo. Antes de mais nada, pinto pintura. E antes de mais nada te escrevo dura escritura. Quero como poder pegar com a mão a palavra. A palavra é objeto?[39] (Lispector, 1973, 4).

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[39] When I write, I cannot produce as when I paint; when I craft a colour. But I am trying to write to you with my whole body, sending an arrow that is planted in the tender and neuralgic point of the word. My body concealed, tells you: dinosaurs, ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs… I do not paint ideas, I paint the most unattainable "forever". Or "for never", it is the same thing. First, I paint. And first of all, I write to you in

Painting generates nuances that can be absolutely unique, personal and magical. This is what allows the creation of colour, crafting mixtures never before explored. Initially it may appear that this virtue does not apply to words. An approach that may overcome this limitation, is a form of writing where the study of the etymology of words can signify a new discovery and revitalisation of the symbol; a renewed investigation. The proposal of generating new meanings is based on the idea of complexity. One can decide to escape simple words, monotonous repetition, impoverished linguistics, and immediate and rapid comprehension. The taste for words is found in the infinite ocean they represent, in its infinite nuances, in their interminable extension, in their constant recovery, just when they appeared to be lost. I think that the meaning of the use of the words «dinossauros, ictiossauros e plessiossauros», is to generate perturbation[40], movement, because words of remote genealogical eras are evoked, and the nucleus of the words appear to pulsate in older and persistent words. Spivak (2003) examines Freud's concept of perturbation analysed in two works: the first is *Season of Migration to the North*, by Tayeb Salih and the second *Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirth*, whose author is Mahasweta Devi. I am particularly interested in the second reading, because in this case Spivak's analysis of the concept of perturbation is derived from the idea of a dinosaur painted in a crevice, precisely the Pterodactyl. In the case of *Água Viva* the idea of perturbation is also intimately connected with the revocation of old words, suggestive and vigorous past images, that do not belong to quotidian linguistic use. The idea of perturbation is the concept that moves, that generates bridges.

I would like to introduce another work that finds its answer in *Água Viva*, thanks to its enormous linguistic valence. From my point of view, several references can be drawn in relation to *Divine Women*, a text written by Irigaray (1993). In the third chapter, I have spoken of the concept of language as logofratroncentric; a concept that reiterates the fact that the current use of language, as portrayed by Irigaray (1985) and Derrida (2004), is the product of a misogynist epistemological system, a product of a heterosexual system, related to the white heterosexual, middle aged, bourgeois, male supremacy; where language is undoubtedly the expression of violence and dominance. In *Divine Women* Irigaray stresses the most remarkable epistemological violence suffered by

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hard writing. I want to be able to touch the word with my hand. Is the word an object? (Clarice Lispector, 1973, 4).

[40] Please refer to footnote number 21.

women: the impossibility that they experience to be reflected in the imagine of God. God is the verb. God is a man. Women are excluded from this order.

Taking into consideration the monopoly over the concept of language and God exercised by men, Lispector designed a subversive idea:

Como o Deus não tem nome vou dar a Ele o nome de Simptar. Não pertence a língua nenhuma. Eu me dou o nome de Amptala. Que eu saiba não existe tal nome. Talvez em língua anterior ao sânscrito, língua it. Ouço o tique-taque do relógio: apresso-me então. O tique-taque é it.[41] (Lispector, 1973, 31).

In order to redesign two new subjectivities -the divine and woman's subjectivity, Lispector proposes a new name for God and a new name for herself. Simptar is the novel name for designating the power, the God, and the logos. Amptala is the name for describing the woman, the writer and the painter. Amptala is the answer to Irigaray's *Divine Women,* and the research for a woman as God. Amptala in the proposal for new horizons and a source of inspiration for women because she represents the possibility for creating a new language, a language created by women. Amptala is the new word created by Lispector in order to design a woman as God.

It is very difficult to leave behind the lethal marks that currently impregnate this language, however, strategies and forms of resistance do exist that I consider necessary to break from this oppressive chain. Lispector proposes a series of strategies to abandon the hegemonic use of language. She portrays and stages the convergence between two areas of artistic production, that complement each other, finding in each of them potential modalities to express what cannot be expressed; common ways of expression, nuances that belong to one and not the other, that allow the construction of more complex and inclusive worlds. Interdisciplinarity overcomes limitations, breaking barriers and beginning new trajectories that create fissures in current frontiers. Dislocation is presented as a means of immense value to this process: the concept of perturbations, for example, allows for this movement; the improbable association -complex that allows to go beyond known, explored and consumed spaces; to generate new complex expressive paths, because the secret of revitalisation lies also in the concept of complexity. I consider that another strategy used in *Água Viva* is the use of new poetic figurations that can

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[41] As God has no name I will give Him the name of Simptar. It does not belong to any language. I give myself the name of Amptala. To my knowledge there is no such name. Maybe in pre-Sanskrit language, it language. I hear the ticking of the clock: I hurry then. The tick is it. (Lispector, 1973, 31).

inspire, generate reflections, paintings and words, move senses, all senses: the idea of a painter that leaves her paint brushes to write, exploring unknown communicative possibilities, has high symbolic, poetic value, and is extremely suggestive. The protagonist of this work portrays new associations of words, leaving behind associations that have been consumed, heard, and crushed by time and abuse; a subsequent strategy that attempts to leave behind logofratroncentric language. The absence of norm, of a historical framework, are synonyms of rejection of the Law, glorified by the presence frontiers that are free from syntax (Cixous, 1991). The use of words in this work affects all senses. They detonate all literary borders and spread with strength towards the fields of political and social sciences. Why not apply the leanings from this text to development cooperation, in particular to the use of language in development cooperation?

4.4 The arduous task of colonising a secret

Following the image of the jellyfish I present in the previous chapter, I would like to propose another ilustration, something completely different that does not refer to anything concrete. To describe this picture, I will refer to the initial image of the film *The Summer of Sangailé*, which begins and ends with the image of a plane that performs intrepid acrobatics in the sky, leaving behind fragmented spiral like trails that appear and fall in the immense amplitude of the sky, apparently without a redesigned pattern; without shape nor order. These trails seem to be dictated only by the personal decisions of the woman that is flying the plane. There does not appear to exist any a design behind the planes acrobatics; that leave behind these wonderful dense, white and vaporous trails. Those present, witness the event, fascinated, unable to breathe normally, unable to predict the magnitude of the next loop. The secret behind the next move is the key that in this case generates bewilderment. The secret of the loops in the sky drawn by the plane, prevents the public from colonising with their look upon the next loop in the sky. There is a secret: the pilot flying the plane follows a trajectory that only she and one other person, know, the public cannot access this secret, pre-established, the public isn't able to understand the outcome that is behind the next dangerous manoeuvre. The films first and last scenes depict how valuable the concept of secrecy is, as a means of resisting colonisation: secrets always appears to resist any attempt to be subdued; to be categorised by alterity. Secrets are words, facts, they had life and relive in silence, and despite all this

they exist and cannot be colonised, because they belong to silence. Mystery is a secret's literary elegance.

During my second year at GEMMA I participated in María Sánchez López's class, during which she presented an interesting journey centred in the concept of secrecy as a form of resistance; a form of resistance that hasn't been much explored in comparison to others such as, for example, silence. During the exposition of her investigation I was enlightened by this concept, particularly with its centrality in the text *Água Viva*. I consider the possibility of applying the concept of secrecy as a form a resistance to the work *Água Viva,* to be a further key for its interpretation, able to give new flavour to this work -a perspective I hadn't yet examined. This prompted a fundamental question: can *Água Viva* be interpreted as a confession, a secret that the protagonist whispers to this intangible and close presence, that she addresses constantly with the pronoun *you*? Can *Água Viva* be an absolute secret, behind which a truth hides; that resides in the interpretation of each reader?

The word secret is very significant to Clarice Lispector´s work, so much so that in *Água Viva* it even becomes a fully meaningful sentence, as portrayed by Cixous (1990).

Opacity and secrets are central figures in Lispector's rhetoric. The themes of silence and secret build the idea of community, and the idea of community in *Água Viva* is an immanent community where the social group is shaped by two characters: the protagonist and the recipient of her words.

Agua Viva is a constant declaration of love for free, incoherent and variable expressions, shaped by colours, forms, animals, flowers and words. From my perspective one thread maintains coherence among all these things created by words; this thread is a secret.

The concept of secrecy, is quite captivating. Secret is a word originated from the Latin secernĕre. Secernĕre means to separate. I would like to stress three definitions of the word secret: secret is something that a person decided to keep hidden within himself or herself and does not reveal to anyone. Moreover, the meaning of this word: secret is news that is revealed to others or is learned by others in a confidential way (or even randomly). Due to its very nature, you are obliged to keep silent, given the desire of the person concerned, or by express agreement. Finally, I would like to refer to the last

connotation of secret: method, particular system (and generally not known by others or known by very few others) that a person has to achieve certain goals. A secret is related to something hidden and to the idea of power. A secret is knowledge and for that reason a secret can create a power relation between the person who holds the knowledge and the person who does not. When it is present, a secret creates an unstable and unequal balance of power. Secret marks borders and silence preserves its frontiers.

Taking into consideration the etymology of this word, I have read again *Água Viva* and I discovered an infinite number of nuances and references to the idea of secrecy: A secret is the reason to write; a secret is sacred; the pure mornings keep secrets; the unidentified recipient knows the protagonists secret; some feelings contain a mysterious secret; the name of the protagonist is a secret; secrets are tools for living and surviving; a secret is something that the protagonist wants to remove; the mirror keeps the secret; the mortality of life is in a certain way a type of secret, and the only way to keep this secret is mutism. These are all the references to the idea of secret in *Água Viva*.

I had a fascinating revelation about the possibility to interpret *Água Viva* as a constant and vivid secret. Suddenly a profound question was revealed: Could I interpret *Água Viva* as a wonderful secret among the protagonist, and the reader? The protagonist decides to use writing to communicate, relegating colours, her habitual way to communicate as painter. Despite her will to confess something of relevance from an epistemological point of view, on every occasion, the protagonist of the novel decides to keep silent. The secret is a constant ghost inside the novel. In *Água Viva* the protagonist can speak and at the same time keeps silent about something. A silence that exists despite the words.

I think that colonising a secret is as an arduous and practically impossible task; lack of knowledge makes it impossible to access distinct possibilities of colonisation. To be described, alterity needs the gaze so often referred to by Derrida and Cixous (2004). Without a gaze that penetrates and touches, it is difficult to have pretensions of appropriation of alterity, for these reasons, I consider that is its harder to exercise epistemological violence when something is strongly related to mystery.

Conclusions

Following the trajectory of previous chapters, where I point to different visions by authors of postcolonial works, I analyse documents that frame by the European Union's cooperation for development policy in Guinea Bissau. I explain the vital concept of breaking down barriers through interdisciplinary discourse, and limitLispector's A*gua Viva's* poetic and valuable approach, that may be applied to non-literary disciplines. In these conclusions, I would like to suggest some reflection on how much Lispector's work can contribute to the field of cooperation for development, forging new complimentary horizons between disciplines that can converge to give way to new approaches[42]. The possibilities that this author outlines in the literary field, that can be analysed and transferred to the cooperation for development sphere, are numerous. I consider that exploring these possibilities could be the object of future investigation, as there are numerous possible research routes to follow. An example of this could be to redesign application forms for European Union cooperation for development calls for proposals, directed at Non-Governmental Organisations; devising a counter-proposal able to break the hegemony of the current grants system, that reward economic projects based on the current developmental logic[43]. This is just one of many possibilities that can be explored.

The objectives of this investigation have differed. I have presented the postcolonial approach and some feminist postcolonial texts as complementary to the cooperation for development sphere; escaping binary systems and drawing common lines between these two epistemological spheres. Furthermore, an ulterior objective has been to illustrate persistent forms of epistemological violence in the European Union´s cooperation for development strategic policy documents for Guinea Bissau. Finally, I have selected a literary work, and argued how it could positively influence a restructuration of cooperation for development through the interdisciplinary conception

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[42] Despite having included personal contributions to the text throughout this investigation, in the present chapter I elaborate more structured reflections, in order to create a circular connection between the different chapters -returning, in particular, to the first chapter; and offer greater consistence to the decisions and enunciations included in this text. At the same time, I have also considered it relevant to not include alternatives exclusively in the conclusions, considering that they deserve to be addressed throughout this investigation.

[43] The first outline of this investigation was related to the construction of a counterproposal of the application form for the illustration of cooperation projects. With time, this idea has been transformed: personally, I consider it impossible to begin with the proposal of a different application form, without defining a framework from which to propose new approaches.

of different spheres of knowledge. The methods I have employed have been those of politics of localisation and close reading; according to the different acceptations that I have included throughout this investigation. I have drawn these paths to portray that the chosen literary work selected as an element of rupture and refoundation of cooperation for development., *Água Viva*, can be a good example from which to rethink this sphere through: the clarification of the protagonist's localisation, the non-hegemonic use of pronouns, the meticulous search of words and their responsible and non-conventional use, interdisciplinarity and the sentiment rooted in care and responsibility toward the world. My personal conclusion is that a certain type of poetic literature, strongly inspired by feminism, produced in non-hegemonic realities, can refound disciplines that have been exhausted, such as that of international cooperation for development. The gaps that remain are enormous, in fact I have suggested other possible areas of investigation that can be of great value in this pursuit: I have not defined an alternative strategic document for cooperation for development, I have not explored all possible applications of the feminist postcolonial perspective to this sphere, I have not spoken of specific projects in Guinea Bissau financed by the European Union -differentiating between the different lines of funding, I haven't fully developed the relation between all the theoretical works included in this investigation, nor have I always followed the need to be coherent and non-fragmented. The vacuums and incongruities that I leave behind are plenty.

In *Água Viva* Lispector can depict theoretical cores that have preceded some of the feminist ideas included in this investigation. It is impossible to not find the work of Rich, Irigaray, Spivak, Cixous, Derrida, Braidotti, Mohanty, and Said, in the pages of *Água Viva:* the pages of this text introduce theories that are explored in depth by the afore mentioned authors. If adapted to the cooperation for development field, Lispector's pioneering approaches could pose a profound transformation of this sphere. According to my reading, Lispector has shaped ideas in the literary realm, that have not yet been applied to cooperation for development, and that, in my opinion, can open new doors and unexplored horizons for this realm.

Bearing in mind the importance of a postcolonial approach, Lispector's humbling experience, solidarity, insolent selection of words, interdisciplinarity and politics of location, presents an alternative strategy for refounding the cooperation for developments sphere.

Firstly, I consider the powerful humility of the protagonist depicted through her use of I, and the politics of localisation with an autobiographic approach, gradually defined and positioned throughout the work, to be revolutionary: «E se eu digo "eu" é porque não ouso dizer "tu" ou "nós" ou "uma pessoa". Sou obrigada à humildade de me personalizar me apequenando mas sou o és-tu[44]». (Lispector, 1973, 13). Humility is the element that drives the protagonist of *Água Viva* to write in first person; she doesn't have the audacity to write in the name of someone else, using the pronouns you, us or a hypothetical third person. The protagonist only writes in her name, defending herself as a fluid identity throughout the work. This careful use of the first person, refers to the importance of not employing broad concepts, such as the pronoun us, evoking Rich's (1986), Spivak's (1988) y Mohanty's work (1988). These authors are evoked through the importance given to localisation; the care with which the word us[45] must be employed to avoid hegemonic appropriations; the use of solidarity as a constant element in the construction of global feminist theory and feminist curricula where different positions can confer, confront each other, deconstruct and reengage to reach new and inclusive positions, through profound analysis of the concept of power -according to that depicted by Mohanty (2003), referred to in the third chapter of this investigation. The constant self-definition and positioning of the protagonist in *Água Viva* appears to be the live construction of a fluid identity perceived as a palimpsest. The technique through which the protagonist of this work defines herself, uses successive adjectives, names, images, metaphors and scenes that construct such a dense, rich and profound sense of identity that impregnates the whole book. In this sense, my proposal is that political texts of reference in cooperation for development, should also emanate from an idea of localisation, where people that elaborate them take into account the importance of positioning themselves. I don't think it is possible to omit positioning, especially in the development cooperation sphere, being honesty the first step in the construction of alternatives, as well as an element that permeates the politics of localisation.

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[44] And if I say "I", it's because I do not dare say "you" or "we" or "a person." I am obliged to the humility of personalizing myself by alienating myself but I am the "are-you". (Lispector, 1973, 13).

[45] The Spanish feminine pronoun us *Nosotras* excludes the masculine gender, versus the masculine us, *Nosotros*, that does not exclude the feminine gender. Thus, *nosotras* is generally only used for an all-female group while *nosotros* is used for both a mixed group and an all-male group. The use of the feminine plural pronoun defies the established hegemonic use of masculine us, used to refer to both men and women.

An ulterior element that should be highlighted is Lispector's profound awareness of her use of words; their selection, away from any fix or pre-established construction. In my view, this great ability arises from the idea that presents words as objects:

Não pinto ideias, pinto o mais inatingível "para sempre". Ou "para nunca", é o mesmo. Antes de mais nada, pinto pintura. E antes de mais nada te escrevo dura escritura. Quero como poder pegar com a mão a palavra. A palavra é objeto? [46] (Lispector, 1973, 12).

Words are also matter:

Quero a experiência de uma falta de construção. Embora este meu texto seja todo atravessado de ponta a ponta por um frágil fio condutor- qual? O do mergulho na matéria da palavra? O da paixão? Fio luxurioso, sopro que aquece o decorrer das sílabas. A vida mal e mal me escapa embora me venha certeza de que a vida é outra e tem estilo oculto[47]. (Lispector, 1973, 27).

According to the words of the protagonist of *Água Viva,* vocabulary and passion are the central thread of a text that does not present a classical narrative structure. This novel, according to the protagonist's words, can be considered as «um flash de instantes que nunca termina[48]» (Lispector, 1973, 67). Words and the exploration of the guts of words, is the constant perfume that I breathe when reading this text. To swim in the infinite sea of vocabulary, diving deep until you can touch it, giving it body, is the sensation I have felt when reading and rereading *Água Viva.* The passion the protagonist refers to is, in my view, a passion towards words, and the taste of words that are rigorously searched for, read attentively, and pronounced with care. This sensual desire that words generate runs between repeated syllables, and are formed and decomposed-according to that presented by Lispector (1973) and Martin Gaite (1996). Words generate matter; words are matter, they are plasma that is assembled to become different ideas and shapes; complex forms that can escape. Words are objects and matters that can flee:

Estou preste a morrer-me e constituir novas composições. Estou me exprimindo muito mal as palavras certas me escapam. Minha forma interna é finamente depurada e, no entanto, o meu conjunto com o mundo tem a crueza nua dos sonhos livres e de grandes realidades[49]. (Lispector, 1973, 41).

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[46] I do not paint ideas, I paint the most intangible "forever". Or "never", it is the same. First, I paint painting. And first of all, I write you hard writing. I want to be able to take the word with my hand. Is the word an object? (Lispector, 1973, 12).

[47] I want to experience a lack of construction. Although this text is all pierced, from beginning to end, by a fragile connecting thread - which? To plunge into the matter of the word? The one of passion? A lustrous thread, a breath that heats the syllables. Bad life and nastiness escapes me although I am certain that life is different and has a hidden style. (Lispector, 1973, 27).

[48] A flash of instants that never end. (Lispector, 1973, 67).

[49] I am almost dead and I am close to constructing new forms of compositions. I'm expressing myself very badly, the right words escape me. My inner form is finely purified, and yet, when I combine it with the world it has the bare crudeness of free dreams and great realities. (Lispector, 1973, 41).

The three previous citations portray the importance given, and attention paid, by Lispector, to the selection of words; a selection completely removed from precipitated and conventional choices. The continuous search for rare and appropriate words, is a constant element in *Água Viva,* that could be drawn from. I consider that a similarly meticulous exploration of the most appropriate words should be introduced to cooperation for development: as argued in the second chapter of this investigation, a conscientious search for vocabulary away from buzzwords and technicalities currently in use, that are negatively saturating the horizon, voiding it from any profound meaning. It is possible, to learn from Lispector, and introduce the investigation of words that arises from personal perspectives, to both strategic documents and project designs. People who write a text should be constantly conscious of the fact that words are objects and matter that can produce geopolitical realities charged with significance: the vocabulary used can reflect and reproduce hegemonic ideas that portray alterity and the construction of Other. The understanding of the danger that the use of inadequate words entails, is a vital concept, that needs to be constantly present. A fundamental effort should be made to not conform with a reconstruction of alterity, presenting a new approach to be construed from the first person; based on localised knowledge that results from humility and recognition of privilege; presenting alternatives that search for an appropriate use of words that reflects geopolitical realities. The care and even fear that the protagonist of *Água Viva* shows towards words, should be a compass that directs international cooperation:

É tão curioso ter substituído as tintas por esta coisa estranha que é a palavra. Palavras – movo-me com cuidado entre elas que podem se tornar ameaçadoras: posso ter a liberdade de te escrever o seguinte: "peregrinos, mercadores e pastores guiavam suas caravanas rumo a Tibet e os caminhos eram difíceis e primitivos. Com esta frase fez uma cena nascer, como num flash fotográfico[50]. (Lispector, 1973, 23).

Following those of the protagonist that speaks in first person, words can also carry with them salvation: «Tenho que falar porque falar salva»[51]. Based of learnings from this text, I like to think that words, or rather, a different use of words in cooperation for development, could save this sphere. Words are tools that can be used to outline changes

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[50] It is so curious to have replaced the paints with this strange thing that is the word. Words - I move with care among them as they can become a threat: I can have the freedom to write to you the following: "pilgrims, merchants and shepherds guided their caravans towards Tibet and the roads were difficult and primitive. With this phrase, a scene was born, like a photographic flash. (Lispector, 1973, 23).
[51] I should speak because to speak saves. (Lispector, 1973, 23).

in the theoretical and political framework, and construct new horizons away from the colonising hegemonic discourse of a developmental system.

A further point which I would like to reflect on is the concept of interdisciplinarity present in the work; a concept that is explored in depth in the previous chapter. To express herself the protagonist of *Água Viva* can use simultaneous forms that complement each other, namely: painting and writing. Writing, in some instances, talks about paint, and paint of writing. The protagonist uses also photography and above all, music, to present a constant description of instances that are the real protagonists of the novel. Music becomes the art form the protagonist gives more space to: associated, in some parts of the text, to the most pronounced use of poetical license of this novel.

Quero na música e no que te escrevo e no que pinto, quero traços geométricos que se cruzam no ar e formam uma desarmonia que eu entendo. É puro it. Meu ser se embebe todo e levemente se embriaga. Isto que estou te escrevendo é muito importante. E eu trabalho quando durmo: porque é então que me movo no mistério.[52] (Lispector, 1973, 46)

Music is associated to moments of maximum freedom; according to the voice that narrates these instance, music is above the idea of the state of grace and of freedom of the imagination. Music is air composed by wonder (Lispector, 1973, 91). It is this capacity to connect different art forms, mixing them together, and it is where my proposal for cooperation for development arises from. Strategic political documents that established the guidelines for the correct implementation of cooperation for development projects, cannot solely adhered to the economic field, nor can it be analysed exclusively under the concept of human rights. In my opinion, a good strategic document must be able to generate dialogue between different epistemological spheres, thus taking into consideration fundamental aspects that characterise a very complex situation, as can be a countries political and historical reality. Economic, geopolitical and social descriptions cannot exclusively dictate which tools a particular donor should prioritise. As argued in the second chapter: recuperating the cultural sphere becomes critically important; not conceiving it as a traditional element that impedes development, or that limits the scope of action of women, for example. The most appropriate focus, is that which places culture

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[52] I want music in what I write and in what I paint, I want geometric strokes that are intertwined in the air and form a disharmony that I understand. And purify it. My being absorbs everything and becoming lightly inebriated me drunk. What I am writing to you is very important. And I work when I sleep: because that's when I move into mystery.

as an integral part of reality, allowing for the complexity that characterises a complete geopolitical description.

Finally, another valuable concept present in the work *Água Viva* that should permeate any cooperation for development document, is the idea of empathy towards the world; a constant objective to be taken into account and from which all developmental discourse should originate. This concept is repeated so profusely in some parts of the text, that is saturates its descriptive lines (Lispector, 1973, 42-43). To take care of the world is a fundamental act, full of responsibility, that must be carried out day to day, and derived from knowledge, attention, and commitment:

Se tomar conta do mundo dá muito trabalho? Sim. Por exemplo: obriga-me a me lembrar do rosto inexpressivo e por isso assustador da mulher que vi na rua. Com os olhos tomo conta da miséria dos que vivem encosta acima.[53] (Lispector, 1973, 42).

The idea of taking care of the world is manifested through the different actions carried out towards people, animals, plants, natural elements and landscapes. The protagonist is dedicated to this constant act, through imperceptible actions and patience. When transferred to cooperation for development, I consider that this idea contains a strong burden of responsibility.

It would be wonderful to find political texts in cooperation for development that are able to include positioning and interdisciplinarity through the use of appropriate and non-colonising words; to portray an idea of the profound care, and responsibility that each person has toward their surroundings; a fragile plasma that needs to be loved and cultivated.

As mentioned earlier, in these conclusions I want to close a path that began as a series of names that have presented interesting proposals related to the postcolonial perspective. In the first chapter I have proposed, names that construct knowledge in the spheres of literature, social and political sciences. This dialogue between different fields; that breaks down barriers between disciplines and interdisciplinarity, can benefit development cooperation. Following what I suggest in the previous chapter, the creative

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[53] Does taking care of the world entail a lot work? Yes, it does. For example, it forces me to remember the expressionless and therefore frightening face of the woman I saw on the street. With my eyes, I see the misery of those who live uphill. (Lispector, 1973, 42).

proposals that permeate some literary works, such as, *Água Viva,* can regenerate the field of development cooperation.

My proposal is to rethink the sphere of international cooperation; this field of political action and epistemological production should become an object of strong critique from within. I do not intend to be entirely negative, however my considerations can often be absolutely radical, putting into question the advantage, existence and persistence of cooperation for development.

My experience in this field began ten years ago, and I have witnessed few examples of the integration of a postcolonial perspective in this field; quite the opposite. I consider extremely important to incorporate a profound critique in the cooperation for development field, thus questioning and re-establishing initial premises and objectives, before it continues to invest copious amounts of money in different geopolitical areas.

In my opinion, cooperation for development must be completely disassociated from the four premises established by Said (Said, 1978) namely: expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy and classification. Although, development cooperation has elaborated upon and refined these concepts; they continue to permeate political choices, strategies and criteria, that, for example, those that the European Union applies in selecting priority countries for project implementation.

Epilogue

This string of *Água Viva* composed by interconnected molecules, with no definite, pre-established, nor clear route. To follow this string of *Água Viva* has, however, been a delightful experience.

The string of *Água Viva* that composes my investigation, contains stones, jellyfish and constellations that search for small fountains of water to reflect their vanity at night. I have navigated in this small breath of water, and have felt, seen, touched and tasted, stones and jelly fish; and at night, I have seen constellations reflected in this stream.

The water that has marked the pages of each chapter has been different, but the reflection of the constellations on this small night river, has been constant. I get lost in thought and can visualise the constellations as an assemblage of disciplines, able to form a luminous ensemble full of energetic knots. During the whole investigation, I have used words to try to reproduce the dialogues between different disciplines, and heterogeneous epistemological spheres; the search to shape the constellations of disciplines is constant. These constellations, are reflected, when dark, in the stream of *Água Viva,* through magical interconnections, that heighten its potential to such a profound level that have transfigured its own former ways.

The small breath of water that has been this investigation, has tried to reflect on different disciplines, conceived as different constellations, portraying how connecting them can increase their authority and legitimacy. The waves of each constellation generate immense streams of energy when intertwined with the power of other constellations.

The different energetic streams have conversed between chapters; each one focused on just one sphere, however contemporarily trying to converse and embrace other hemispheres of knowledge. The stream of water has witnessed this complex dialogue.

The voices of the constellations have been strong, fragmented, sensual, insecure, persuasive, broken, emotive, contradictory, certain, and inclusive; making it impossible not to follow them on this path of *Água Viva.*

Literature, in my hypothesis, can permeate cooperation for development as a veil of water, in fact, that veil of water can make cooperation for development brighter, more luminous, of greater coherence; as a veil can generally make a stone brighter, more

luminous and bigger. I personally consider a stone caressed by water to be more triumphant in its beauty, in comparison to a stone that is deprived from this fluid caress. Every stone in the stream represents a star, and the breath of water that delicately wraps everything.

I have not wanted to close with the questions that have been the backbone of the second chapter. Nor have I wanted to close this investigation with the classic conclusions I have included in the preceding chapter, where I offer examples of how literature, and the postcolonial focus can refound cooperation for development. My conclusions pretend to be something different, a short text that can place together all the figurations that I have delineated throughout this investigation. I like to think of conclusions as a dance of images that want to bid their farewells after allowing themselves to flow through the many pages of this text.

Maybe the style of this investigation is completely personal and opinionated; trying to ensemble two soles that live within me: one attached to literature, and one attached to cooperation for development. Although finally this construction, this assembly presented in the form of an investigation, rich in images and figurations, has been the most coherent and sensitive design, through which, for the first time in my life, I have been able to put together the fragments of research conducted between lines. What I have tried to do is to visualise two spheres of knowledge as constellations, and after, imagine the waves they can both produce when their energies combine. The creation and selection of this stream, has been the medium through which to illustrate these gravitational waves.

Maybe this investigation has only been one of the possible narratives generated by my politics of location. Maybe it has only been the first consistent attempt to process, through literature, a new act of responsibility for all the mistakes I made in the countries where I worked due to absolute ignorance. Maybe these chapters are my first opportunity to admit that my previous good-natured innocence, disrupted magnificent emotional sceneries; contaminating my lack of self-awareness. Hegemonic goodness creates aversion and destructs. Maybe these words have only been the easiest means to invent a *mea culpa* during weeks of dense reflection. Either way these words are simply a tardy *mea culpa.*

I continue to search following that stream, searching for words, visualising the jelly fish that are all the texts that I have read, reflecting constellations and dialogues between them.

Now, after so many words-matter, words-object, words-beauty, I choose silence to listen to beautiful rivers with their abundant water; rivers born on lands where the hegemony that has been suffered for centuries, has forged poetic resistance, that now tells stories that whisper plenitude and imminence of a different non-colonised reality.

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