

ANTONIO CANDIDO'S CRITICAL METHOD

Para Ismail Xavier, sem comprometé-lo.

The first version of this essay was given as a paper in May 1995 in a panel dedicated to the work of Antonio Candido. As I was writing it, it occurred to me that, in a strange kind of coincidence which might very well not be one, 1995 marked two minor but relevant events in the reception of Candido's work: it was the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Candido's first book, *O método crítico de Sílvio Romero* [*Sílvio Romero's Critical Method*] (The first preface is dated May 1945.);¹ and it saw the simultaneous appearance in the US and in France of a collection of his translated essays.² The 50 years delay of the circulation of Candido's work in major languages (the exception being the 1968 collection of his essays published in Spanish)³ begs a question. Compared to the reasonable reception Brazilian literature has had in the last thirty years (but meager compared to that of Spanish-American fiction), the mediocre attention Brazilian criticism has received abroad is certainly melancholic but revealing of the little concern Brazilians' own elaboration of themselves have elicited in the international context. The old connection between agriculture and culture comes to mind: fictional raw materials are extensively exported whereas manufactured critical commodities are not. Brazil remains a single crop producer of cultural materials. Which reminds me of what Candido wrote in the preface to the second edition of the *Formação da Literatura Brasileira* [*The Fashioning/Formation of*

¹ Candido, Antonio. *O método crítico de Sílvio Romero*. (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade

² Candido, Antonio. *On Literature and Society*. Translated by Howard Becker (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); *L'Endroit et l'Envers*. Translated by Jacques Thiérot (Paris: Edition Mettaillé/Unesco, 1995). Both collections present almost exactly the same selection of essays, made by Howard Becker. I should add as well that it was due to Howard Becker's efforts throughout the years, during which he translated Candido's essays for his own pleasure, that this (these) collection(s) of essays ever saw the light.

³ Candido, Antonio, *Introducción a la literatura de Brasil* (Caracas: Monte Avila Editores, 1968). The same collection of essays was reedited by Casa de las Américas in 1971.

Brazilian Literature]: "It is as if to say that we should export coffee, cocoa, or rubber, leaving the industry to those [countries] which originated it historically."⁴

The sentence is situated in the context of a defense of the production of a non-exoticist, that is, universal literature, as opposed to the general Romantic appeal for localisms, which in fact corresponded to "what the foreigners expected of Brazilian literature." Candido's statement should be understood in the framework of a polemical anti-nationalism, or in opposition to a superficial nationalism, for ever subordinated to the international desire for exoticist difference, thus limiting literary exports to, as it were, coffee, cocoa, and rubber, the three twentieth century single-crop Brazilian cycles. (We are definitely close to dependency theory's design for import substitution.) Exportable nationalist difference is equated with the demand for primal-matter. In this sense Romantic Indianism indifferently exported abroad and consumed in Brazil naturalized (that is, Europeanized) Indians. The paradox of the self-definition of Brazil, as it took place (around independence in the nineteenth century), lies in the fact that the claim for political and cultural emancipation is located in the context of a demand for authenticity which is in fact originated abroad (nature is European, the authentic is produced by anthropology). In other words, identity is irrevocably tied up with difference. Like the modernization/industrialization of the country, the complex definition of a Brazilian "originality," avoiding easy typifications (which simply supply a foreign demand), would take place in a slow process, which confounds itself with the project of cultural emancipation. By emancipation I mean the constitution of an organic national culture, not quite self-sufficient, but at least autonomous from the external pressures for exportable difference, on the one hand, and less vulnerable to external influences on the other, the two things consisting of the same phenomenon. (The import of difference (i.e. primal cultural matter) from a supposedly undifferentiated culture and the export of (manufactured) ideas to a privileged receiving market are the two sides of the coin.) Thus the demand for difference from a structured and differentiated (first world) literary market which

⁴ Candido, Antonio *Formação da Literatura Brasileira* (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia, 1975). p.18.

produces peripheral differences as supposedly undivided, undifferentiated originality is opposed here by Candido to the emergence of a literature differentiated in itself, that is, selfconsciously, and organically articulated within Western culture.

The formula requires a proviso: the movement of articulation within universal, Western culture should not be confused with a simple subordination to the international order. A simple assertion of self-sufficient difference does not suffice per se. Difference in relation to the differentiated dominant cultures corresponds to a flattened (naturalized, homogeneous) culture from within. Coextensive with this ready-made identity would be the ready acceptance of extraneous critical categories producing a structural discontinuity. Integration into the world, which is the condition for the constitution of identity, presupposes therefore the articulation of the world from within and from without the nation as selfconscious subject, as if the latter constituted a small pocket of interiority, an individuated internalization of the external system, immersed in the exterior field of international relations.

The major delay in the publication of Candido's essays is a symptom of the disregard of peripheral literatures as differentiated, complex structures on the part of major cultures. However, the appearance of his essays now and not earlier certainly points to a reconfiguration of the cultural market and the probable opening of new articulations between major and peripheral cultures. Candido's work should be read in light of these new possibilities. His work consists in a cohesive attempt to think through the condition of possibility of establishing emergent national subjectivities in the context of overpowering cultural domination as related to the colonial project. The point Candido makes about national identity construction is shrewd: Brazilian nationalism as practiced by Romanticism produced an exoticized image of the country, seen through the eyes of foreign travellers.⁵ Identity is determined from without, the national self

⁵ This ready-made National identity coming from the outside would determine for ever the mirror-image of Brazil. As Candido puts it: "Hence our persistent exoticism, which *stained* [eivou -my emphasis] our vision of ourselves until this day, making us see ourselves as did the foreigners, propiciating, in the letters, the exploration of the picturesque in the European sense, as if we were condemned to export tropical products also in the terrain of spiritual culture." (Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, loc.cit., p.17).

is cracked, perceiving itself as other through the internalized binoculars of the foreigner. Practicing Brazilian literature, thus helping in the process of independency means simply in this context *describing* local reality, which leads to a flattened mirror-image. This imported, ready-made identity is a recurrent symptom in Brazil and configures a form of cultural dependency. Clearly the development of a national literature requires much more than that. The possibility of self-determination presupposes the internal differentiation of the literary field in a *system*, which takes places with the constitution of a critical project, when literature becomes selfconscious. There are therefore two kinds of internalizations yielding two kinds of cleaved national subjects: either one is subjected to an "othering" which objectifies Brazil from without and through which Brazilians objectify themselves, but this does not truly yield an autonomous subject; or one does without the exoticist objectification completely, internalizing subject *and* object in a selfconscious subject, thus introducing a differentiation within which can alone *form* a subject. This internalization of the object (theme, type) defines the gesture of Brazilian literary history in its maturity (Machado de Assis), and coincides with the establishment of literary criticism.

The proposition is full of implications and is at the heart of the notion of national self-fashioning, of *formation* or *formação*, the "putting-in-form" of Brazil, that is, its configuration within the West, responding to a double mouvement: integration in the Western system and internalization of this system from within. The result would yield an autonomous national subject, delimited by a separating boundary, defined by internal properties and yet articulated with the outside. The nature of this process goes much beyond any concept of co-optation (of a peripheral culture by the Western civilization), since the outcome is an actual distinctive subject. The proposition inscribes itself in the long tradition of fashionings of Brazil, which begins with Joaquim Nabuco's *Minha Formação* [*The Fashioning of Myself*; 1900] followed, among other works, by Caio Prado Junior's *A Formação do Brasil Contemporâneo* [*The Fashioning of Contemporary Brazil*; 1942], and Candido's own *Formação* (1957).⁶ Arguably, all of these

⁶ The list is long and goes much beyond the books just mentioned. It is in fact symptomatic of the scope the question of *formation* takes in Brazil. A few other examples: the term *formação*

essays on Brazilian development follow the individual model of Nabuco's autobiographical *Bildungsroman*. They narrate the process of nation building from a genetic point of view, attempting to tackle the very same diagnosis: that of the "malformation" or of the "unformed" character of Brazil, the structurally "inorganic" (to use a term favored by Caio Prado), alienated, borrowed, fragmentary, nature of the Brazilian culture. Like in *Minha Formação* (the title is almost synonym of "my education"), the solution to the problem seems to be related to a modernizing, educational project, to the application of an organizing *form*. At the heart of the diagnosis, or in its origin, lies the transplanted nature of a European culture transported to America, as well as, I would add, the history of the "*supplantation*" of indian and African populations (ironically, but symptomatically, this issue has been neglected by these authors). As one can see, this genetic model is intimately connected with an organic "plant" metaphor (a European culture is "planted" on a different continent) which is woven throughout these texts.

As far as Candido goes this elicits three points: First, the concept of *system*, (that is, a differentiated symbolic ensemble, related to a stratification of society, and a requisite to the establishment of a continuity of literary production in Brazil), as well as the akin concept of *organicity*, depend upon the configuration of the socio-literary space as a finished process. The notion of *totality* which Candido inherits from functionalist anthropology, and an extremely productive tool in his literary readings, when applied to the constitution of Brazilian national literature looks at the historical process from the vantage point of the accomplished whole. This

appears in the full title of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande & Senzala* [*The Masters and Slaves*, 1933] (*Formação da Família Brasileira sob o Regime de Economia Patriarcal: The Fashioning of the Brazilian Family under the Regime of Patriarchal Economy*); Celso Furtado wrote two books entitled *Formação: Formação Econômica do Brasil* (1959) and *Formação Econômica da América Latina* (1969); Raymundo Faoro, tackling a different but related problem (that of the constitution of state bureaucracy) wrote *Os Donos do Poder (Formação do Patronato Político Brasileiro)* (1959). Even Sergio Buarque de Holanda's *Raízes do Brasil*, although it does not include the word *formação* in its title, follows exactly the same question of national development we are discussing here. For all this see the pertinent remarks by Arantes, Paulo and Schwarz, Roberto in: D'Incao, Maria Angela and Scarabôto, Eloísa Faria, eds. *Dentro do Texto, Dentro da Vida. Ensaios sobre Antonio Candido* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992), p.229, 230 and p.262, 263.

principle according to which Brazilian literary history is to be read, its *telos* --Machado de Assis-- is itself never historicized. It functions instead as a grid through which earlier moments in the process are considered incomplete or lacking. The historical process is basically perceived as a linear cumulative progression which leads to Machado. This understates the complexity of the process by establishing a model of *consciousness* and of so-called high art, which is intrinsic to the notion of *formation*. Brazilian literature thus *begins* with the act of selfconsciousness (with early versions of Machado).

Second, literature in Brazil is perceived as a continuation of the literature of the West, as a differentiation in the continuous line of Western civilization, where the local author sees himself as belonging to a tradition of great authors. This prescribes to Brazil a cultural identity which undermines the possibility of reconfiguring alternative subjectivities by excluding traditions which do not conform to the established form of European culture. This is the model according to which is forged the criteria to judge Brazilian literary history. The internalization of these models are certainly determinant of the way Brazilians construct Brazil but remain an unthought presupposition in Candido's own construction of the Brazilian canon. The program of ridding Brazil of mirror-images, of the kind of self-satisfied internalized exoticism which is until this day so pervasive, equivalent to Brazilian literary emancipation, is formulated by Machado's essay "*Instinto de nacionalidade*" [*Instinct of nationality*]. This essay, which comes at the end of the *formation*, single-handedly accomplishes Brazilian literary development. If one uses as a paradigm of a non-typical Brazilianness, Machado's assertion (in "*Instinto de nacionalidade*") that to be Brazilian is anything *but* being a "Indian," and if one takes as an example Machado's own "whitening" as constitutive of "Brazilianness" in its selfconscious form, there remains very little space for a non-assimilated, "non-whitened" subject left. Crassly translated this would give something like: if "othering" is a foreign import, we should get rid of the other. Obviously things are not as simple as that. The diagnosis of the exoticism implicit in "othering" is certainly crucial and anticipates much of the current debate on multiculturalism and post-colonialism. However, there is a specific model of subjectivity which is put forth here and which moulds a kind of

Brazilianness which is unwittingly exclusionary. Seen as a continuation of Western civilization, the hope of constituting a legitimate Brazilian literary subject will be forever limited to an attempt at *integrating* external subjectivities, which the (national) subject can only but mimic or ventriloquize. We are irrevocably back to the question of "othering," which reemerges as a symptom of the structural alienation of the Brazilian literary system, for ever a re-presentation of materials it excludes. Candido will reflect extensively on this question formulating a very refined concept of "mediation."

Third, the (temporary) ridding of "othering," the condition for the establishment of a Brazilian subject, so to speak, takes place in the internalization of the European system, as exemplified again by Machado's skilled mastery of European cultural parameters and incredible selfcontrol. The production of subjectivity is not without a disciplining of the self, a learning of culture, and of a technique, in what can be called "subjectification."⁷

These are the questions I want to pose to Candido's critical method.

1. Historical background: The university

When asked to define the project of his generation in 1944 Antonio Candido did not hesitate to say: we are "critics, critics and more critics".⁸ In the same document, in answer to a questionnaire passed around to a number of his contemporaries, Candido says that the goal of

⁷ Throughout this paper I shall use this Foucauldian concept freely, slightly displacing it. In Foucault "subjectification" describes the disciplinary or moral practices which construct the individual. Social sciences, for example, have subjects as objects. Subjects are thus objectified, in "games of truth" which constitute subjects, in relation to with the subject acts, moves, conceives himself. "Modes of subjectification" are the ensemble of practices and rules (of techniques) which define subjectivity in a given point. For a good summary of Foucault's whole project, see the short note he wrote himself, under the pseudonym of Maurice Florence (M.F.) for a French *Dictionary of Philosophers* published in 1984 and reprinted in: Foucault, Michel, *Dits et écrits* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), IV, p.631-636.

⁸ Neme, Mário, org. *Plataforma da Nova Geração* (Porto Alegre: Ed. Globo, 1945), p.34. For all this I am following: Mota, Carlos Guilherme, *Ideologia da Cultura Brasileira (1933-1974)* (São Paulo: Ática, 1980), p.84-136.

critique is: "to fight against all forms of reactionary thinking."⁹ As a critic (whose main task is to separate and distinguish), his generation was thus radically distancing itself from the dominant gesture which defined previous generations: the affirmation of the order of things, defending and enlarging the dowry of concepts and practices inherited from the past. It basically ceased to be identified with the Brazilian hegemonic cultural project. Problematizing the very concept of "generation," itself in need of differentiation, and situating himself in the specific space of a polemic within the left, he proposes a political project: to track down conservatism in all its forms, from the most overt (fascism was in the order of the day) to the most insidious (which he names: idealism, cultural sociology (i.e. Gilberto Freyre), solipsistic literature (i.e. the so-called "generation of 45")). At the same time, confronted with the burning question of the time, political engagement, it is clear to him that no political party would provide the answer or the act of "going down to the streets, shouting for direct action." No, "each one with their arms," he writes, "ours is this: to clarify thinking and put order in the ideas."

Such a program seems not to jive with the previous prescription of tracking down conservatism. They refer however to the same thing: to fight conservatism is the objective of critique, clarification is the method. A few things strike me here: first, Candido's affiliation with a certain *Aufklärung*. This would give, for example, a deeper meaning to the precedent given to the concept of "critique," in the tradition opened by Kant or Marx. You might suspect the reference to two major German thinkers, in connection with whom the Brazilian comes out enobled. But it strikes me that, for both of them, as for Candido, the purpose of critique is to render explicit, to bring to light the hidden assumptions which regulate our life and our way of thinking, to define and to delimit the conditions of a specific problem, in Candido's case, that of the literary object. This attitude supposes, on the other hand, a distinct detachment, a distancing which should not be confused with indifference or apoliticism, but rather which reframes the question of politics or ethics, locating the intellectual practice in teaching. Thus the question:

⁹ Neme, Mário, loc.cit., p.37.

what practice corresponds to critique? First, defining and localizing conservatism, separating the progressive from the reactionary, suspecting what is acceptable and received; second, waging the struggle within the space of ideas (in the pedagogical practice), which does not imply a disconnection from activism, but simply a differentiation of the two spaces;¹⁰ and third, this would lead to the invention of a new space, something which does not yet exist, which has, in its horizon, the project of radical democracy. Thus the specific literary object is reconnected with a political project which determines the invention of a new practice and a new political subject.

In order to tackle this question of practice we need to turn to the answer Paulo Emílio Salles, Candido's friend, gave to the same questionnaire. "My generation," he writes, coincides with the "disappearance of a formal Brazil," This disappearance is linked to the significant limitation of the role of culture (and of intellectuals) in the reality of the social process. In relation to the determination of the country's fate "my generation," he writes, "cannot but seem a detail." All things considered, it is a fact that, squeezed between labor and the upper classes, the Brazilian intellectual-- firmly grounded in the middle classes (and this means a major break)-- actually has little ability to intervene in the social process. The absence of deep interest and support for the scientific project on the part of significant sectors of Brazilian society has traditionally been responsible for the considerable fragility of the institutions of knowledge in Brazil.¹¹ In the larger scope of things, this is related to the meagerness of civil society in Brazil, for ever subordinated to individual personalist advances, lacking a structural autonomy. Candido's generation, on the other hand, is the first one formed by a Brazilian university, the University of São Paulo, founded by the French mission in 1935, attesting to the production of an anonymous public space.

¹⁰ Hence Candido's consistent commitment to socialism, and his role in the foundation of both the Socialist party in the fifties and of PT in 1978.

¹¹ Schwartzman, Simon. *Formação da Comunidade Científica no Brasil*. (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional/FINEP, 1979), p.80,81.

The limitation of the role of intellectuals to that of a "detail," apart from being realistic, presupposes an increased stratification of Brazilian society. Thus the function of critic (as opposed to the "man of letters," to the "poets," ironically referring here, among other things, to the modernists of 1922). This "formal Brazil" is the Brazil of generalities, non-specific, defined by its often overt aristocratism, its view of culture as a compensation for social disfunctionality, and representative of the fundamentally non-democratic state of Brazilian politics. To this, Candido's group would oppose an eminently specific model of intellectual, suspicious of any generational "mission," politically progressive, in short, a critic. Whereas the "formal" intellectual would speak as an owner, obtaining legitimacy from property, and speaking as the country's universal subject, from Candido's generation on there appears a new kind of intellectual who ceases to be legitimated by ownership, who speaks from the vantage point of a technical, scientific competence, and who locates itself in the university.

Candido's group gathered around the magazine *Clima* which was published on and off between 1941 and 1944. *Clima* can be said to be the first truly surprising result of the University of São Paulo. Mário de Andrade, with his usual historical accuracy, opening the first issue of the magazine did not fail to notice in the new generation of *paulistas* their greater "technical consciousness."¹² Their profile was more "serious" than the eminently bohemian one of the modernist generation. Which would cost them the nickname of "chato-boys" [*boring, annoying boys*] on the part of Oswald de Andrade.¹³

¹² Mário de Andrade, "Elegia de Abril" (1941), reprinted in *Aspectos da Literatura Brasileira* (São Paulo: Martins, 1974), p.186.

¹³ The anecdote is told by Candido. Invited to participate in the eighth issue of *Clima*, Oswald wrote a little note: "Your generation reads since it is three years old. At twenty it has Spengler in the intestines. And it loses such things!" (Candido, Antonio, "Digressão Sentimental sobre Oswald de Andrade" in Oswald de Andrade, *Serafim Ponte Grande* [São Paulo: Global, 1985], p.180, 181.) Much like Oswald de Andrade's characterization, Mário de Andrade starts his article on the new generation by saying that his generation, as opposed to the present one, still practiced "the tradition of wild hair [*cabeleira*]," i.e. it did not have the circumspect seriousness, the intellectual pose of the young boys ("Elegia de Abril," loc.cit., p.185). Further along, in the same article, he argues that the boys "don't have anything funny, they are really stuck up, and already look for

More serious, less apt to pleasure, possessing a technique, that is, learned students, one notices with them the specialization of scientific disciplines. It suffices to look at the different departments of which *Clima* was composed: Paulo Emílio Salles (film), Lourival Gomes Machado (fine arts), Décio de Almeida Prado (theater), Antonio Branco Lefèvre (music), Antonio Candido (literature) Marcelo Damy de Souza Sanca (sciences), Roberto Pinto de Souza (economics and law).¹⁴ The autonomization of different fields, linked to the establishment of institutional research, and locating intellectual work within the academy means from the outset a reconfiguration of the space of reflection. A more differentiated society, with a strata of intellectuals from middle-class extraction, formed at a Brazilian university, marks the differentiation of disciplines. Working from the specific delimitation of their fields, these were not "formal" intellectuals, rather they were involved in a determined practice, situating themselves in dialogue with multiple international traditions and posing the fundamental question of Brazilian culture.

At the core of the essentially enlightened project of the generation of *Clima* lies therefore a program of differentiation intimately connected with the nature of critique: the need to separate and differentiate the specific territories of knowledge and culture against the indifferenciation which traditionally characterized the Brazilian cultural system. At the level of literary criticism the shift meant a change in the space of its practice: while criticism previously took place in the newspaper in the form of the famous *rodapés* or newspaper columns, the specialized critic would preferably write books, and teach.¹⁵ Criticism as a non-specialized impressionistic practice corresponds to the model of the "man of letters," the *letrado*, extensively discussed by Angel Rama in *La Ciudad Letrada* as the syncretic combination of lawyer (the

their pleasure in study and in the discussion of human problems and not...in pleasure" ("Elegia de Abril," loc.cit., p.192).

¹⁴ Candido, Antonio, testimony, in: Cavalcante, Maria Neuma Barreto. Master thesis *Clima, contribuição para o estudo do modernismo*. USP., p.169.

¹⁵ Sussekind, Flora, *Recortes* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ, 1993) p.13.

bacharéu), politician and bureaucrat.¹⁶ The constitution of literary criticism as a specific field which is consolidated in the fifties, and has in Candido its paradigmatic figure, implies a shift in the criteria of validation of criticism and of a reconfiguration of the limits of the critical territory.¹⁷

However, instruction and learning consist in a fundamentally ambiguous "gift." Essentially the University was a luxurious ornament the Brazilian oligarchy paid itself. The University accomplished, in a sense, with a hundred years delay, the first (never completed) project for the establishment of an university in Brazil, drawn by José Bonifácio in 1821, at the request of the Portuguese emperor, D. João VI. Forced to move do Brazil at the beginning of the nineteenth century because of the Napoleonic wars, the Portuguese king brought to the tropics in his luggage a belated European *enlightenment*.¹⁸ Aside from any direct class attribution (which would simply connect the academic project to an oligarchic project) the implantation of institutional reasearch is unseparable from and instrumental to the project of the disciplining of Brazilian society.¹⁹ The configuration of objective learning *of* disciplines and *through* disciplining brings with it an important supplementary benefit, along with the mastery of specialized knowledge: the *formation* of a local subjectivity. Subjection is not without subjectification, to speak with Foucault; subjectivity is formed through the adoption of selfdisciplining techniques. In this regard it is striking to read what Gilda de Mello e Souza writes about Jean Maugüe, the professor from the French mission whom the students of USP favored the most (more than Lévi-Strauss or even Roger Bastide whose contributions to

¹⁶ Rama, Angel, *La ciudad letrada* (Hanover, N.H.: Ediciones del Norte, 1984).

¹⁷ Julio Ramos describes the same process addressing the issue of autonomization in connection with *periodismo*. See: Ramos, Julio. *Desencuentros da la Modernidad en América Latina* (México, DF: Tierra Firme, 1989), p.82-111.

¹⁸ Schwartzman, Simon, loc.cit., p.50. See also, about the so-called "Brazilian *Aufklärung*", Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, loc.cit., p.238-243.

¹⁹ In a similar vein John Beverly analyses the disciplinary application of literary studies an instrument of colonization in Latin America. See: Beverly, John. *Against Literature*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), chapter 2, p.25-46.

Brazilian as well as international thinking were in fact much greater). Maugüe was a professor of philosophy at USP from 1935 until 1944. Gilda de Mello e Souza however writes that he was not "only a professor--he was a way of walking and of talking, which some of us imitated fondly to perfection."²⁰ The amusing parody of the master, often exaggerating to the point of caricature traits and gestures, stresses at the same time a learning which is not strictly disciplinary, but which consists in an even deeper form of discipline, which has to do with a way of being, of looking at things. Maugüe despised formal learning and what struck her, as well as her companions, was his ability to produce knowledge just about from anything. He was able to "tear out philosophy from the event, from daily life, from the newspaper news."²¹ True learning does not take place in the classroom, it is a way of seeing things and interpreting them. From the point of view of the dependent intellectual, learning the objects of knowledge is secondary since it perpetuates the subordination to an extrenous source of knowledge. What really matters is the *production* of a genuine subjectivity, outside disciplinary guidelines, in life. Thus what is being mimicked here, much more than the comical way of walking or talking is the way of conceiving reality, is the ability to *read* reality. "It was with Jean Maugüe that, in 1940, at the occasion of the great exhibit of French painting, we *learned to see* a painting, [my emphasis]" she writes. Disciplining takes a much more insidious form than we are at first ready to accept. It is the learning of a grid through which one *sees* things. The actual result of discipline is not only the production of objects of knowledge, but of the subject itself, who has internalized a system of thought, who has been "formed."

When commenting on the foundation of USP, Antonio Candido pointed out its intrinsic connection to the bourgeoisie. However, he argued, it was through this bourgeois dream, still linked to the prestigious desire of having a public education, that his generation was able to

²⁰ Souza, Gilda de Mello, *Exercícios de Leitura* (São Paulo:Duas Cidades, 1980), p.10.

²¹ Idem., p.11.

appropriate the tools to become the most cohesive project of the left in Brazil until this day.²² In many ways, the building of a highly modern institution (based on the French and Italian model) in 1935 firmly "planted" scientific discourse in Brazil, and dutifully served the state which financed it and to which were sent its most talented sons and daughters. This corresponds to the argument of the co-optation of the bourgeois institution (according to which it is who pays who determines, in the end, the sense of a project). At the same time, the bourgeois program for the University, at least in part, failed. The radical culture which could exist in Brazil at the time (I am paraphrasing Candido here) emerged from a constitutively conservative plan as an autonomization of that plan, differentiating itself from the program's original design, as the latter generated oppositions to itself.²³ Candido's bid for the autonomization from class determinism, and for the relative autonomy of the aesthetic field is succinctly summarized here. The question remains, though, as the very construction "generates oppositions to itself" implies as to the degree of this autonomization. If one replaces the preposition "to" with "within," it becomes clear the problematic separation from the one who generates the opposition. The negative translation of such hypothesis could be formulated in a conundrum: if the opposition to the program is programmed by the program itself there is no possibility of a true exteriority to the program. The dictatorial circularity of the self-reflexive matrix leaves no true way out. But Candido's grasp of

²² For all that follows, see "Feitos da Burguesia," in *Teresina etc.* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1980), p.95-106..

²³ I am paraphrasing Candido's response to Maria Rita Galvão's Master's dissertation on Brazilian cinema. Candido was trying to nuance the student's thesis that Vera Cruz (the Hollywood-style, São Paulo based, film producer from the forties and fifties) could be understood solely in relation to its bourgeois origin. Against a purely "ideological" criticism, he defends the relative autonomization of the product from its class origins. The full quote goes: "This is said to suggest the need to nuance ideological analysis, in order to understand that, both in the case of the University of São Paulo as well as that of Vera Cruz, what was the expression of bourgeois culture was also the expression of culture, without qualifications. It was the culture that could be, and which generated at the flank its own contestation; which gave rise to antagonisms to itself." (my translation) Candido, "Feitos da Burguesia," loc.cit., p.103. For a summary of Maria Rita Galvão's argument see her article "Vera Cruz: A Brazilian Hollywood," in Johnson, Randall and Stam, Robert, eds. *Brazilian Cinema* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982).

the issue goes deeper than that. The differentiation from the oligarchic plans for the institution takes place not in the constitution of a no doubt more restricted leftist thinking, but in the configuration of what he names "a radical middle class thinking,"²⁴ a progressive stratum which would comprehend works of "medium tonality," drawing a general "liberal" strain, an average progressive field, which is far from being revolutionay, but which is not oligarchic either. For example, many of the USP professors supported the military coup in 1964, but USP was the only university in São Paulo which did not publish a manifesto in support of the coup. They did not publish one because the university constituted a space in which such a statement would not be acceptable. The university constituted a space of its own, autonomous from the individual opinions of each of their members.²⁵

Candido critiques the notion of cooptation but he does not address the constitutive aspect of knowledge as discipline. The appropriation of the bourgeois project by a radical generation is only one dimension of a deeper appropriation which is at the heart of the constitution of subjectivity per se. In the process of learning the lessons of the French professors in residence at the University, it is the internalization of a system of thinking which is at stake, producing autonomous intellectuals "integrated" into the lineage of the West. They were organic, that is, they were implanted in the territory, but they also were organically part of the civilization which they had internalized. I do not want to be misunderstood here: I am in no way trying to deny the "advantages" of instruction and promote some kind of absolute exteriority to the systems of learning. Rather, what I want to show is that the Brazilian intellectual system is constructed in this process of enlightened internalization and integration. *Formed* in the tradition which these intellectuals are after all continuing, the critique of domination or of cooptation does not account for the fact that it is in this very process that they are constituted as subjects, and that they can only speak from that point of view.

²⁴ Ibid., p.104.

²⁵ Ibid., p.105-106.

The dialectics of outside and inside is a crucial nexus in Candido's work. It is my contention that his whole work repeats this same movement, to the point that if one were to attempt to describe his "critical method" this would be the place to start. The schema is quite simple: autonomy, that is, the delimitation of an interiority, is constituted through the internalization of exteriority intersecting with the movement of expansion of those external forces. Through this schema I want to be able to read the constitution of the Brazilian national subjectivity in its translation in literature as the ambivalent operation of expansion of Western culture and individuation, that is, autonomization, through the subsumption of local cultures. In a nutshell, this configures the whole of Candido's project, and provides the diagram of his reading of the Brazilian literary system: the radical differentiation of an intrinsically hegemonic, conservative, colonial culture, configuring the inner space of a national system which seeks for articulations with Brazilian society, but with which the contact is often tenuous, the socius often remaining inaccessible, external to the intellectual project. The articulation of this system presupposes, on the one hand, a betrayal of its own origin in a becoming-progressive of the conservative lineage, mobilizing opposing, contradictory forces which are fundamentally repressed by the oligarchic state.²⁶ And on the other, the folding inside of colonial relations in a movement of individuation, that is, of production of individuality as internalization of external relations of power and knowledge. Domination is thus both continued (expanded) and contradicted (resisted), as the intellectual seeks for something which he or she is not: the *real* Brazil. What is at stake here is a reflection on Brazilian culture as representation, looking for its intersections with both the colonial project and the "residual" cultures.²⁷ In the institution and development of USP one has then all the elements: a state project which aligned the local middle class in a conservative program; the importation of a French (European) progressive line of

²⁶ In the language of the forties, this was translated in the untranslatable verb: "desemburguesarse" (to *debourgeoisify* oneself).

²⁷ For the concept of residual see: Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature* . (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 121-127.

thinking; and the constitution of a radical Brazilian thinking betraying the original project, producing a contradiction from within, and mobilizing the heterogeneous practices which Brazilian culture constitutively excludes. The question remaining though as to what extent such an exclusion is perpetuated or not, that is, to what extent the differentiation from within is able to truly separate itself from itself, ceasing to be a system of representation and becoming something else. The legitimacy of a radical project of research lies on the bid for this differentiation.

2. Candido's critical method: outside in

Candido's greatest contribution to Brazilian thinking is the constitution of literary criticism as an autonomous field of knowledge, with its own separate and delimited object. This mobilizes a double movement of: first, the differentiation of the field, the definition of criticism's specific object as different from others, a movement which is profoundly "enlightened" (in the sense of the *Aufklärung*) in inspiration; and, second, the "integration" or "incorporation" of the exteriority reconfigured as an internal border or limit of the object of research (the articulation between text and the *real* of social processes). Applied to the study of Brazilian literature, or to its *fashioning* (*formação*) an occupation to which Candido dedicated a great part of his efforts, the two movements are different moments of the same progression and describe the way the subject of Brazilian literature (or Brazilian literature as subject) constitutes itself by extension and incorporation of what it is not, differentiating itself as it absorbs the heterogeneous, incorporating its opposite and becoming other as it becomes itself, and constituting itself as it continues this path. The structuring of *form* (as in *formation*) describes then the expansion of representation. As such Candido is a dialectician through and through, consistently thinking through the concept of "mediation," as the articulation between representation and the real, dwelling extensively in the limit-zone which borders representation and constitutes its external boundary.

In the project of literary *fashioning* this critical movement reconstructs a continuity in Brazilian literature, locating its linear dynamism and displacing the original dynamic center

from Europe to Brazil, or from the coastal elite to the people of the interior, in the popular-national synthesis of the forties (a simple projection of international hegemony to within the country itself).²⁸ As an autonomous subject, Brazilian literature is formed in the double movement of differentiating itself from Portugal, continuing the lineage of Portuguese literature, and of integrating extraneous peoples, the “residual” or subaltern cultures, which it reflects, incorporating them, at the same time as excluding them, homogenizing the heterogeneous, as multiple contents subsumed within a unified (but differentiated) form. A reflection on the nature of this moving, porous limit, a border which delimits from within what it excludes from without, becoming Brazil as it differentiates itself from Portugal, continuing Portugal in what is Brazil, becoming people as it excludes the people, as it speaks *for* subaltern cultures--is a fruitful approach to Candido’s criticism.

Let us follow the development of the theme of differentiation in his work. It is precisely in the direction of the “differentiation” of the aesthetic that he begins to formulate his method in the dissertation of 1945 on *Silvio Romero’s Critical Method*. Silvio Romero, he argued, basically lacked a properly aesthetic concept of criticism, adopting instead extraliterary, extraneous factors--the racial and sociological determinism--as criterion to explain literature. (Silvio Romero was a racist.) It is thus against the imperialism of the external factor as an interpretative value, the social and the racial elevated to the role of causes, their “devouring tendency,” that Candido insistently opposed the “specificity of the literary phenomenon,”²⁹ a

²⁸ The “novels of the north,” as Candido calls the neorealism of the thirties (Jorge Amado, José Lins do Rego), is hailed by him in the outset of his career as a critic as a radical departure from the elite-identified, Europeanized literature that had been practiced previously in Brazil. For the first time the reality of the interior was thematized by literature, not simply as exoticist material but as a true expressive form. For the first time one saw in Brazil a novel *about* the people. Now this corresponds to the populist movement of “integration” of the people by literature, or of expansion of the boundaries of representation, but scarcely reaching the real of social forces, which remain inredeemably excluded and exterior to literary mimesis. See: Candido, Antonio. *Brigada Ligeira* (São Paulo: Editora Martins, 1945), p.44 .

²⁹ *O Método Crítico* , loc.cit., p.102.

criticism which would be based “upon [its] internal resources.”³⁰ One recognizes already the famous paradox from *Literatura e Sociedade* [*Literature and Society*], located at the heart of Candido’s critical method: “the external becomes internal and criticism ceases to be sociological, and becomes just criticism,”³¹ which locates the social in the material substance of literature. This saturation of the literary with what borders it, incorporating inside what is outside, is therefore balanced by the opposing drive of differentiation, of multiplying distinctions where before there were none.

Thus in the same *Literatura e Sociedade* Candido diagnosed the absolutism of the literary in Brazilian essay-writing, the “omnivorous” character of literature, which gave birth to the “mixed genre of the essay,” “constructed in the confluence of history and economy.”³² Needless to say, this undifferentiation is connected to the *letrado* , to the figure of the “know it all” humanist intellectual. On the one hand Brazil’s most talented men were fiction writers and, on the other, specific sciences such as sociology were shaped in a literary form. The best examples of this omnivorous literature, that is, the literature which takes over the total field of culture, is the essay-writing of the thirties--the paradigmatic examples being Gilberto Freyre’s *Casa Grande e Senzala* [*The Masters and the Slaves*] and *Sobrados e Mucambos* [*Mansions and Shanties*], Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda’s *Raízes do Brasil* [*Roots of Brazil*].³³ These essays would witness to this peculiar imbrication between science and literature, observation and imagination, utilizing a free form of expression, akin to literary exploration, to treat specific sociological, political, and economic subjects. This confusion of boundaries ends in the fifties.

³⁰ idem, p.110.

³¹ Candido, Antonio. *On Literature and Society*. Trans. Howard Becker, loc.cit., p.145.

³² Candido, Antonio, *Literatura e Sociedade* . (São Paulo: Editora nacional, 1980), p.130.

³³ To this list we could add as well, even though Candido does not mention it, Euclides da Cunha’s *Os Sertões* [*Rebellion in the Backlands*]. The kind of essay-writing Candido is tackling here is not unrelated from the *formação* essays. Some of the essays named above are also *fashioning* essays. The latter however are strictly defined by the "genetic" structure. The *formação* essays seem to lean more towards a specialization of their object, whereas the "mixed genre of the essay" is situated in the confluence of several spaces of knowledge.

Basically, Alencar or Domingos Olímpio, for example, were, in the nineteenth century, both, at once, the Gilberto Freyre and the José Lins do Rego, the sociologist and the fiction writer, of their time. This differentiation is again the result of a double movement and in it one recognizes the dialectical matrix of Candido's thinking: literature ceases to be privileged, the literary becomes a field among others as literature simultaneously "turns upon itself" ("specifying itself",³⁴ or becoming determinate, in Hegelian language). This process of folding or bending upon itself, of self-reflection or self-consciousness, is the result of an internal conflict within omnivorous literature. It is attacked, on the one hand, from the outside by social sciences, and by the literary from the inside as a specific field, on the other. The multiplication of objects of knowledge produces an internal conflict within literature. It is the result of a crisis coming from within and without.

These then are the two poles in the middle of which Candido's criticism will move: an imperialism of the deterministic external factor, represented by Sílvio Romero, Brazil's first systematic literary critic; and the omnivorous literature, the literature which occupies all the cultural space. In one case the external (sociological, racial) factor ends up devouring the literary, and on the other the literary devours the external (sociological science). Both are cases of excessive privilege, of one of the fields of competence exceeding its own specific mandate and overstepping its determinate boundaries. To these two extreme positions Candido opposes the specificity of the aesthetic field, a field with a limited mandate, but which in the case of Brazil is not so limited, because the literary is invested with the function of national construction.

The posing of the purity of the aesthetic field should not, at the same time, Candido argues, be confused with structuralism's closed formal universe where the autonomous text is completely cut off from any context. In this case the problem would not be as much one of boundaries or jurisdiction as much as a denial of the articulation of boundaries per se, whereby the text would be constituted as an authorial enclosure. By refusing literature its peculiar

³⁴ Candido, Antonio, *Literatura e Sociedade*, p.131.

location (its positionality, to use contemporary jargon), it would be neglecting to treat the crucial and complex limit which differentiates text from what borders it. The purity of aesthetics should not mean the substantialization of form. Structuralism should however be understood against the excesses of deterministic criticism (i.e. Silvio Romero). Structuralism is important because it provides analytical tools for the study of literary texts, the “conception of the work as an organism,”³⁵ that is, as an internally differentiated organization. But this internal differentiation should not eliminate the work's articulation in the social field. In fact the organicity of the work can renew the possibilities of determinism by multiplying and varying the factors, locating them in the structure.

This concept of the work as an internally differentiated structure has a social counterpart (and here Candido's reading of the British Anthropologists of the thirties (people such as Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown and Evans-Pritchard) has certainly left an imprint). Let us unfold the false parallelism: the organic work is marked by internal articulations of the social. A properly intrinsic criticism will not fail to locate in the configuration of the work the articulation of the social. Likewise society as a whole differentiates itself in a number of functions including literature and should be understood as a movement of differentiation. In an Indian tribe as read by Malinowski, for example, one witnesses the undifferentiation of the artistic sphere, as it begins to detach itself from magic and technique.³⁶ When the artistic function distinguishes itself, becoming an autonomous field among others, the socius becomes an ensemble of different, intimately articulated functions, that is, a system or a structure. Such a functionalist reading of the social space understood as an immanent field of relations, if radicalized (something I am not sure Candido has done), could lead to a continuity between work and socius, where differential traits would traverse the work and the social.

Let us step back for a second and try to understand the way this proposition displaces and fundamentally renovates the connection between sociology and literature. The social will only

³⁵ Candido, Antonio, *On Literature and Society*, loc.cit., p.151.

³⁶ Candido, Antonio, *Literatura e Sociedade*, loc.cit., p.28.

interest the literary as long as it is filtrated by an aesthetic concept, in such a way that the former will be verifiable within the actual configuration of form. Otherwise, if extraneous to the literary *fashioning*, localized in the socius and not in the text, it would pertain to sociology and not to literature. At the same time, the literary is located within the social field understood as a system of relations. Within this system literature has its specific position, corresponding to a proper function. There is no parallelism here between the two fields, the literary and the social, but there is articulation between the two, of one in the other. The internal organicity of the work is related to its external organicity within the social field. A fold within the immanent field of the socius, the literary is organized in the same fashion. Or to speak in Luckasian terms: society and history captured within the form, and society and history as form. But once the distinction between the two different fields is established, one sees that there *is* a parallelism of a more profound nature. Literature is a totality articulated with an outside (if such a thing as an outside to a totality can be imagined), and likewise, sociology is conceived as a totality hinged to literature.

3. The concept of system

The differentiation of the literary and the constitution of its specific space seems therefore to be the crucial question posed by Candido's criticism. The significant advance presented by the *Formação da Literatura Brasileira* is to be seen in the configuration of the process of systematization of literary history leading to the constitution of the Brazilian literary canon, that is, the corpus of representative works.³⁷ Candido defines the notion of "literary system" in the first chapter of the theoretical section which initiates the *Formação*. It constitutes the conceptual matrix, the organizational principle of the whole process, its ontology, if you will, put in place of Sílvio Romero's extraneous causes, but as an internal, literary criterion. A whole movement of economy of theory is in place here if one compares the *Formação* with previous

³⁷ Again, this does not imply the isolation of the literary from other aspects of culture. To the contrary, the notion of *differentiation* of the literary space supposes the integration of literature in a complex articulation of social practices within an organic system.

similar canons, especially Sílvia Romero's 1888 *História da Literatura Brasileira* [*History of Brazilian Literature*] with its long theoretical section occupying the first volume of the four volume work. The internalization of the cause in the work, the localization of the social in its internal articulation, determines a reduction of the theoretical apparatus. The historical dynamism which moves the process of construction of the literary canon, the criterion of validation which arms it, should work from within, and with strategic but minimal recourse to biographical and sociological facts.

What defines the "system" is the existence of a group of literary works connected by a common denominator which consists in the existence of an ensemble of producers, consumers and transmitters of the literary artifact or, as he will later on summarize: in the "inextricable relation...between work, author and public."³⁸ Again, the process of formation is described as a movement of differentiation: different works and producers generate a system of interpretation of "different aspects of reality"³⁹ which is selfconscious. The simple existence of different works-producers does not configure a system. Most important is the existence of a public, which determines the differentiation of the space into producers and consumers of literature. A system would be configured only when a community or a public exists, determining the common ground upon which literature take places. (What is at stake here is something like a civil society, analogous to the requisite of works of "medium tonality" in the constitution of USP: a common space which is independent from individuals, which determines the existence of a field grounding cultural artifacts.) Prior to the constitution of this common space, literature is defined by its scattered or dispersed character. They are "literary manifestations" which lack the organic linking element, the "common denominator." Literature would only have become organic in Brazil in the eighteenth century with the constitution of the literary academies, and especially with the Neoclassicism of Minas. Thus the much debated exclusion of Gregório de Mattos, who would have only existed in the "local" level of Bahia and would have not actually "existed,"

³⁸ Candido, Antonio. *Literatura e Sociedade*, loc.cit., p.38.

³⁹ Candido, Antonio. *Formação*, loc.cit., p.24.

literarily speaking, until Romanticism, when editions of his work were made available to the general public.

It is well-known, in this context, Haroldo de Campos' criticism of this "kidnapping" of the Brazilian baroque.⁴⁰ Candido's point, however, is not to say that Gregório was not the major poet he was. He never denied his aesthetic quality. He fundamentally denied his literary existence in an organized, differentiated community. The point is tricky but essential if one wants to understand Candido's ontology. The differentiated community, the *system* acts here as a normative criterion for the definition of the literary field, and like any criterion, some elements are excluded, left out, non-integrated. A literary work only exists configured within a system of relations. Outside it might exist physically (Gregório or Anchieta obviously actually existed, produced, and were read), but it would not have existed *organically* in a common ground, in a network of relations. What I called earlier the genetic or differentiating principle consists in this notion of publicness, commonality or systematicity. What is external (Gregório or, I would add, all forms which do not correspond to the high culture model) needs to be incorporated into the network of a system in order to acquire *reality*, not objective reality, but reality within the system. It is this genetic principle, the principle of the evolution of the Brazilian literary formation, its intrinsic dynamism--the collective aspect of the literary artifact--which determines the continuity of the literary process. Imported from anthropology, the notions of organicity, systematicity, structure, or totality (which are not synonyms but refer to a similar idea) fall short in understanding the constitution of Brazilian literature.⁴¹ The *system* is the requisite for literary

⁴⁰ Campos, Haroldo. *O Sequestro do Barroco na Formação da Literatura Brasileira: o caso Gregório de Mattos*. (Salvador: Fundação Casa de Jorge Amado, 1989).

⁴¹ About his debt towards anthropology see Candido's interview "Os vários mundos de um humanista." (In: *Ciência Hoje* 16, no. 91 (June, 1993)). Howard Becker quotes in his introduction to *Literature and Society* the passage which interests us: "The anthropological idea of culture, implying the ideas of totality and organicity, influenced my way of analyzing literary works....one cannot, for example, do a comparative literary analysis by taking (let's say) the function of money in Machado de Assis, in Dostoyevsky, and in Balzac, and making a comparison pure and simple. It is necessary to consider the work of Machado as a whole to see

existence, outside the system one is *not*. It consists quite simply in Candido's formula for the *subject* of Brazilian literature, the key for the *self-fashioning*, the civilizational *form* in its pure form. One sees the movement from description to prescription implicit in this application of the point-of-view of anthropology to the history of Brazilian literature: this is how it works in so-called "primitive" societies, and this is how Brazilian society/literature *should* work. If it does not, one is out. A methodological (technical) criterion is also a powerful tool of exclusion.

Candido defines in the following way the related notion of continuity:

When the writers' activities of a given period integrates itself in such a system, another decisive element takes place: the formation of a literary continuity, a kind of transmission of the torch in a relay race, which assures in time the movement of the ensemble, defining the lineaments of the whole.(my translation)⁴²

This transmission, configured as a continuous teleological line, is what he calls a "tradition." Notice the subtle displacement of synchronicity into diachronicity ; the way the integration of the works in a contemporary ensemble (the integrated community of selfconscious producers-works-public) simultaneously and subreptitiously determines the variation in time, in the continuity of a tradition conceived linearly, as the relay race metaphor translates.

The systematic unity of different works integrated in a historical process constitutes the antidote to the structural fragmentariness (the malformation) of Brazilian culture, intimately linked to its alienated origin: an European culture transplanted to the Americas and based upon the exclusionary genocide of the native habitants of the land and on the slavery of Africans. To find a genetic principle, a conductor line which guides the process consists then in a requisite for the determination of the fate of the national formation of the hegemonic literature. The problem of lack of internal cohesion in Brazilian letters had been diagnosed by Candido's critical predecessors, Sílvia Romero and José Veríssimo. Sílvia Romero stated, for instance:

how money functions in it. It will certainly function differently than in Dostoyevsky and Balzac, seen as totalities in which it is inserted..." In Candido, Antonio, loc.cit., p.xiii.

⁴² Candido, Antonio, *Formação* , loc.cit., p.24.

In the history of Brazilian spiritual development there is a lacuna to be considered: the lack of serialization of ideas, the absence of a genetics. In other terms: an author does not proceed from the other; a system is not the consequence of any that preceded it.⁴³

Now in "Literature and Underdevelopment" Antonio Candido shows that an important moment for Latin American Literature towards overcoming dependency from first world sources is the "capacity to produce works of the first order, influenced by previous national examples."⁴⁴ He names this, "a bit mechanically," "internal causality." This consists in a system of internal derivation where an internal process is established, basically transferring the literary source to within the nation. Works and authors can then refer to external sources, but only secondarily, the engine having been established internally. The example he gives is illustrating: Brazilian modernism of the twenties is to a great extent derived from European avant-garde. But already the next generation is derived directly from modernism. Thus, for example, João Cabral de Melo Neto, was influenced by Carlos Drummond de Andrade, from the preceding generation, even though Paul Valéry and the Spanish poets came into the formula as well. Foreign sources can and should be part of the synthesis (this is not a hard-core nationalism), but the main point of reference has to be internal.

Protectionism against overbearing foreign models prescribes the establishment of "internal causality," as a condition for hegemonic national production. The inner reality of the country needs to be protected against the overdetermination of the foreign imports. The history of literature is a linear progression, a succession of representative authors in synchronic and diachronic continuity, forming a systematic serial sequence. (Readers of Candido have often referred his notion of "system" as a serial key of progression to T.S.Eliot's of "tradition," according to which each new author reconfigures the whole series, rewriting history so to

⁴³ Quoted by: Arantes, Paulo Eduardo, 'Providências de um crítico literário na periferia do capitalismo,' in *Dentro do Texto, Dentro da Vida* . (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992) , p.231.

⁴⁴ Candido, Antonio , "Literature and Underdevelopment," in *On Literature and Society* , loc.cit., p.131.

45 speak. It is in light of this that one understands Machado's place in the *Formação*, as a cypher for reading the whole process from the point of view of its accomplishment .) Such a schema which fashions development as an evolutionary process (hence the "mechanic" proviso) is completely unable to account for "lateral" connections, i.e. connections which are not configured within the evolutionary line it prescribes to development. By establishing the priority of a law of affiliation (an internal affiliation which mimicks the dependent affiliation to European models, simply transferring it within) Candido dismisses, for example, the possibility of "connecting" with other Latin American, or with African authors, etc. By situating itself strictly at the level of national construction, and programming the solution to the "problem" it diagnoses in the structuration of a hegemonic literary system, it fails to account for the repetition of the staging of colonial powers within the nation, in relation to its own "interior." The genealogical development (a descriptive as well as a normative concept) retains with remarkable faithfulness a two-way street colonial structure (of import/export), which undermines the constitution of more complex networks. By determining the constitution of a continuity in the literary system it overlooks the intrinsic discontinuity of any historical process, based upon interruptions or radical cuts.

Temporal serialization echoes as well societal serialization. A continuity in tradition mirrors a continuity within a given community. The key to both is the process of differentiation. In this respect it is striking to see how Candido's account of the beginnings of Brazilian literature echoes his summary of Malinowski in *Literatura e Sociedade*. As we saw earlier, when he describes the formation of the literary academies in the end of the eighteenth century, it is clear that the determining factor for him is the constitution of a collective medium, an ensemble of conscious producers and consumers of culture. The academies constitute, in a manner of speaking, an "autopublic in a country without publics."⁴⁶ Consciousness is what establishes the unity of the group as such and prepares the movement of differentiation in process here. At first a

⁴⁵ Eliot, T.S., "Tradition and the individual talent," in *Selected Prose* (London: Peregrine Books, 1963).

⁴⁶ Candido, Antonio. *Formação* , loc.cit., p.79.

specific group of writers did not exist. They were assimilated in the generic groups of elite leaders, administrators and professionals. Through the constitution of the academies, however, a group begins to differentiate itself and produces the recognizable syncretic figure of the *letrado*. (Subsequently the *letrado* himself is separated into several functions, as we have seen.) Likewise, in "archaic societies," the artist is not distinguished from the craftsman. This is what one can deduce for example from Malinowski's account of the Melanesian canoe builder (in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*). The canoe is made by a specialist helped by his relatives (the apprentices); throughout the whole process from the cutting of the tree until the release into the sea, the craftsman utters incantations, of which the "poetic tenure is very accentuated."⁴⁷ In this case therefore one is witnessing to a "really indissoluble union" between technique, magic and poetry. Once the artistic function is distinguished the tendency is for artists to gather in groupal formations (*confrarias*, much like the Brazilian academies). It is through these "cohesive and differentiated groups" that art/artisanship acts on society.⁴⁸ This collective necessity can be seen both in primitive as well as historical societies, and is decisive for oral cultures (due to the importance of keeping a tradition), as well as for Greece or for the Western Middle Ages. The collectivity--we already know the configuration of this evolutionary process--is subsequently differentiated. It is this "totality" (originated in anthropology) which will be projected upon Brazilian literary formation.

4. The organic metaphor

The constitution of a literary canon, the telos of the *Formação*, is inscribed in the process of political emancipation from a nineteenth century Romantic perspective, that is, from the perspective of the configuration of independent nation-states as a "major narrative of emancipation" to use Lyotard's terminology.⁴⁹ The "history of Brazilians in their desire to have a

⁴⁷ Candido, Antonio. *Literatura e Sociedade*, loc.cit., p.28.

⁴⁸ Idem., p.29.

⁴⁹ Lyotard, Jean-François. *La condition potmoderne*. (Paris: Ed de Minuit, 1979), p.54-62.

literature," paraphrasing Julien Benda.⁵⁰ But what does the expression “desire to have a literature” mean? “Desire,” that is, the movement towards appropriating oneself, towards becoming oneself in the *conscious* appropriation of what one is not. In “Literatura de dois gumes” [“Double-edged Literature”] Candido writes:

For the historian, the most interesting aspect of the literature in the countries of America is the adaptation of the European aesthetic and intellectual patterns to the physical and social conditions of the New World, through the process of colonization, of which it is an episode.(my translation)⁵¹

The process of construction of a national literature should be seen therefore as a movement of *implantation* of Western culture in America, and as such is undistinguishable from a fundamentally conservative project. The history of *supplantation* of Indigenous population and Africans is the background, or rather the ground upon which the emancipated nation-state is constructed and points to its radical “bad consciousness,” its structurally ideological configuration, its imprisonment within exclusionary representation.

The “forming” of the nation is not without its own protectionism, a requisite for the constitution of an internal space which differentiates itself from an outside. Interestingly, in the first preface to the *Formação*, it is precisely a question of “walking out” of a national culture.

There are literatures which a man does not need to leave in order to receive culture and enrich the sensibility; there are others which can only occupy a part of the readers’s life, at the cost of irredemeably restraining his horizon. Thus, we can imagine a French, an Italian, an Englishman, a German, even a Russian and a Spanish, who only know the authors of his own land, and, nevertheless, find in them enough to elaborate a vision of things, experiencing the highest literary emotions.

If this is unthinkable in the case of Portugal, what is to be said of a Brazilian? Our literature is the secondary branch of the Portuguese one, in turn a shrub of the second order in the garden of the muses...(my translation)⁵²

⁵⁰ *Formação*, p.25.

⁵¹ Candido, Antonio. *Educação pela Noite* (São Paulo: Ática, 1989), p.164.

⁵² *Formação*, loc.cit., p.9.

In our days this assessment will certainly appear defeatist, attesting to a clear internalization of colonial cultural parameters. It is questionable, for example, that a French, or an Italian (notice that already the Russian and the Spanish form a second rank category) would have a complete existential experience, literary or otherwise, were they to be confined to reading only their own national literatures. They would be as "provincial" as the Brazilian described by Candido, who would have read only Brazilian literature. On the other hand, this assessment marks the resolute internationalism of Candido's approach; it is what makes Brazilian literature essentially a comparative literature, in his own words.⁵³ But this intrinsic dependency on other literatures, he argues, is what makes Brazilians so disinterested in their own literature. Of a weaker, inferior, eminently derivative quality, why read Brazilian literature? *Formação* is aimed as an antidote to this neglect. This is what the book proposes to do. Strategically this responds to a renewed interest for "Brazilian things," (equivalent to: 'let's stop just reading European or American books'), not a simple valorization of their inner, intrinsic quality--that would be pure nationalism--but reshaped and regrounded on a clear systematization of Western literature, of which Brazil would be a part, a "branch" in the "trunk" of the genealogical tree of the West, to continue using the organic metaphor which prevails in here.

Let us briefly follow this organic metaphor. Neoclassic enlightenment is said to "*plant* once and for all Western literature in Brazil" (my emphasis) in the eighteenth century.⁵⁴ The metaphor of the tree, in a peculiar return of the primal matter in what is in fact a defense of the universality of civilization, is conditioned by a theoretical parameter which needs to be accounted for. Neoclassicism and not Romanticism would have "planted" the West in Brazil. Romanticism is in fact more alienating, since the request for localism is prescribed by the foreign gaze (we have seen this system earlier). It is, against all expectations, in the discipline of enlightened literary parameters that "local color" would finally transpire, in Alvarenga or Basílio

⁵³ "More than forty years ago I said that 'To study Brazilian literature is to study comparative literature.'" Candido, Antonio. *Recortes* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993), p.211.

⁵⁴ *Formação*, loc.cit., p.17.

da Gama. (Notice that locality emerges as an interstitial "tone," a residual *color* in the enlightened, "whitened" form.) The organic metaphor, repeatedly inscribed by Candido in this passage, pointing to the root of the whole question of "formation," of genetic origination, describes the integration of Brazilian culture in the "tree," so to speak, of Western letters. Brazilian difference would only be interesting as far as it is articulated systematically, that is, universality, organically, in the body of Western cultures. This involves a complex dialectics of outside/inside: Brazil's articulation of difference only makes sense as an autonomous entity (given an interiority), if it is articulated in the body of the West.

Candido probably found the tree metaphor in José Veríssimo in a famous 1899 article entitled significantly "What does our literature lack." Here the metaphor is seen in its whole nineteenth century "biological," deterministic splendour:

I consider, therefore, Brazilian literature as an offshoot [*ramo*] of the Portuguese, to which sometimes it returns due to the indefectible law of atavism [*sic*], as we have seen in the imitation of Portuguese literary movements, or, even better, in the preoccupation, nowadays almost general among our writers, of writing in a pure Portuguese, according to the classical models of the mother-literature. This offshoot, on which were grafted other elements, is already distinguished from the main trunk because of some characteristics of its own, but not in such a way that at the first glance one does not notice that it is the same tree, only modified by the transplantation to other climates. It is possible that new grafts and the prolonged influence of the environment will slowly differentiate it more, but while the language be the same, it will always be like what happens in botanical families, a variety of the species. (my translation)⁵⁵

The West is seen here as a great genealogical tree, an unified organism (the trunk), differentiated in an ensemble of cultures (languages), hierarchically grouped in families, as variations of the same totality (the species), progressing according to a *teleology*. Needless to say, this point of view is indebted to nineteenth century biologism (the notion of atavistic programming), historicism and classificatory project.⁵⁶ The "arborization" of cultural history

⁵⁵ Veríssimo, José, "O que falta à nossa literatura," in Barbosa, João Alexandre, ed. *José Veríssimo, Teoria, crítica e história literária* (São Paulo:EDUSP, 1978), p.63-64.

⁵⁶ An example of such a concept of culture is Otto Maria Carpeaux's *História da Literatura Ocidental [History of Western Literature]*, published between 1959 and 1966. Written in eight volumes by this Austrian immigrant who moved to Brazil in 1939 who was extremely influential for Candido's generation, this monumental work is profoundly indebted to nineteenth century

seen as a linear sequence of grafts and bifurcations (where the ramifications bear the same genetic imprint as the "mother"-cultures but in a lesser, less accomplished form (the grafts)), presupposes a model of origination and sequential decay. Canonical examples of such historiography in the twentieth century are Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* and Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History*.⁵⁷ Placed in a temporal sequence where each element is positioned in relation to the whole as organs located inside an organism, each organ would be both different and the same in relation to each other, each one's specificity and original contribution to civilization seen in the frame of the general common (genetic) background of their belonging to the West.⁵⁸ The dialectics of identity and difference is overdetermined by the identity principle, whereby specific differences are absorbed in the expansionist (bio-)logic of sameness. Defined by an identity of origin, by a lineage of which the beginning is located in Europe, or more precisely in Greece, the farther one is removed from the origin the more one lacks, the less integral one is. As such the specificity of Brazilian culture can only be found as a derivation of the Western civilization, "the civilization to which we belong."⁵⁹ Brazilian culture is thus a bifurcation, an offshoot grafted at the flank of the already meager Portuguese trunk.

historicism. There Western literatures are hierarchized according to a specific judgement of value: the great European literatures, such as the Greek, Roman, Italian, Spanish, French, English, Russian and German; followed by the other more modest branches, the Scandinavian, the Portuguese and Polish literatures; to which is added the Provençal and Catalan literatures, extremely important in the Middle-Ages, followed by "the American branches of some of those European literatures: the North-American, the Spanish-American and the Brazilian" (quoted by Candido, Antonio, "Dialética Apaixonada" in *Recortes* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993), p.92. Obviously Candido is not Carpeaux, but a similar mechanism is in place in both of them.

⁵⁷ Incidentally the two are quoted by Otto Maria Carpeaux in the Preface to his *Uma Nova História da Música* [A New History of Music], in order to justify the fact that he limits himself to European music in his history of music. "The author of the present book is convinced that music, as we understand it, is a phenomenon specific to the Western civilization." Carpeaux, Otto Maria. *Uma Nova História da Música*. Rio de Janeiro: Edições de Ouro, second edition).

⁵⁸ See about the concept of organism, the passages on Cuvier in: Foucault, Michel. *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), p.275-292.

⁵⁹ Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, Loc.cit., p.17.

The organizing unity of the differential process which comprises Brazilian culture as a continuation of the (Portuguese) Western tradition is thus not without its own colonial overtones, which Candido inherits from tradition. The main consequence of the internalization of the colonial process is the pervasive feeling of "lack" in relation to European national canons (as in "What does our literature lack"), anthologically registered by Sergio Buarque de Holanda, in his assertion of feeling "exiled [*desterrado*] in [Brazilian] land."⁶⁰ Constructed in the specular identification with the wholesome, integral figure of European nations (the totality of the whole organism projected upon the totalities of "mother"-cultures), Brazilian identity will always be lacking, precariously adapted to a reality which remains foreign to the European model *implanted* by colonization. Nationalism is subtly mixed with self-hatred. Candido puts it aptly: "...these ambivalences which make our patriotism a kind of self-contempt, a nostalgia of the matrix-countries and a confused adoration of the hand that punishes and exploits."⁶¹

The reemergence of the organic metaphor, detached from its overtly biological origin in the nineteenth century, in Candido's claim for the "organicity" of the literary system targets the superficiality of the Brazilian national construction, the intrinsic fragmentariness of Paulo Emílio's "formal Brazil." Against "formality," the "malformation" of Brazilian culture, the recurrent atavistic mimicry of Portuguese models mentioned by Veríssimo, Candido proposes a *forming*, a *fashioning* of culture, its organic establishment, its relevance to *thereal* Brazil against the frivolousness of a borrowed and essentially dependent colonial culture. At the same time, the

⁶⁰ The whole quote goes: "The attempt to implant the European culture in an extensive territory, endowed with natural conditions which are, if not adverse, at least largely foreign to its millenary tradition, is, in the origin of Brazilian societies, the dominant factor and the richest in consequences. Bringing from distant countries our forms of conviviality, our institutions, our ideas, and priding in maintaining all this in an environment which is often unfavorable and hostile, we are until this date exiled in our land. We can construct excellent works, enrich our humanity with new and unforeseeable aspects, elevate to perfection the type of civilization which we represent: what is certain is that all the fruits of our work or of our laziness seems to participate from an evolutionary system proper of another climate and another landscape." (my translation) Holanda, Sérgio Buarque de. *Raízes do Brasil*. (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1982), p. 3.

⁶¹ Candido, Antonio. *O Discurso e a Cidade* (São Paulo: Duas Cidades, 1993), p.143.

internalization *by* and *in* the "system" of the West, "grafted" on the trunk of civilization, prescribes that the local "plants" have to be retranslated into the language of the hegemonic culture. Gender or ethnic marks become interstitial, residual articulations (Candido's local *color*), in such a way that there ceases to be a possibility for the constitution of different kinds of subjectivities.

The construction of an organic unity based on the model of hegemonic European cultures is therefore at the core of the desire for a "systematization" of Brazilian literature drawn in the *Formação*. At the theoretical level, however, the idea of "system" means a significant advance. It implies the debunking of a simplistic privilege of the local as a response to an external stimulus; it makes impossible a regressive, facile nationalism based solely on the valorization of the national as a *petitio principii*. Thus a nation cannot be seen outside the "totality" of relations which determines and modifies its reality, which structures it, and through which it is expressed. To see the body of cultures as an ensemble of connections precludes then the simple postulation of a "special" (one would say nowadays, "essential") reality of the local. Brazilian reality is by definition filtered through representation, and representation is a system which encompasses Brazil, but which is not reduced to it. At the same time, the autonomization of the nation as an ensemble of connections, itself articulated with the tradition of civilization, precludes the external existence of localisms: Gregório does not exist, there are no women writers in *Formação*, Machado is read as a "white" writer, it is never a question of indian populations, only of "indians," pre-Cabralian traditions are not included. Even the question of the existence or not of such manifestations is for ever a priori subordinated to the internal logic of the method (given such and such conditions, it is true, who would deny it, that such manifestations do not exist). The condition of the possibility of an "outside"--whose existence is not completely determined, desired, constructed by the Western system--reemerges at this juncture as a pressing issue.

All *fashionings* of Brazil consist in the reformulation of this same structure. Nabuco paved the way, describing the inner feeling the Brazilian Euro-centric intellectual has of not belonging in Brazil, of being radically divided between a culturally bare fatherland and a cultural

depth which the fatherland so radically lacks. The dialectics of the universal and the particular, of which the synthesis is the *form* of Brazilian literature, according to Candido,⁶² finds in Nabuco a very developed statement. The compromise between the Francophile's identification with the European culture (Nabuco claims, for example, that his style in Portuguese is a simple translation of his writing in French)⁶³ and his love for his country, between "feeling" (Brazil) and "thinking" (Europe), between reality (Brazil) and aesthetics/imagination (Europe), leads, in a quintessentially *Bildungsroman* fashion, to a "giving up" of aspirations and a reshaping of everything within the limited confines of the local. Candido utters the very same "giving up" in the beginning of the *Formação*, when he states the "engaged" character of Brazilian literature, intrinsically involved in the process of national construction, which prescribes that one should "renounce imagination," the flights of fantasy which define universal literature.⁶⁴ It is this consciousness of the obligation of producing the nation literarily that would determine the Brazilian literature's character as representation (the faithfulness to documentary or sentimental reality), and constituted its dependent position of previous, external objects. (Imagination as a productive faculty would be rare, installing the possibility of a literature which is *independent* also in the sense of non-dependent from preestablished objects, that is, a productive and not a reproductive literature.)

All of the *formation* accounts unfold a genetic structure where history is seen as an intrinsic consequence of the origin, attesting to a debt towards an organic model. As I said earlier they all consist of a diagnosis of the "unformed" character of Brazil. They all start invariably with a chapter on the "origins" or the "foundations" of the problem, proceeding to unfold its subsequent history as a manifestation of the issues which were there from inception. In Candido's as well as in Caio Prado's *Formação* the chapter on the "origins" is replaced by a

⁶² Candido, Antonio *Formação*. Loc. cit., p.23.

⁶³ "...[I]ndeed I reveal no secret by saying that insensibly my sentence is a free translation, and that nothing would be easier than translating it back to French, from which it proceeds." Nabuco, Joaquim. *Minha Formação* (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro/Editora Tecnoprint), p.54.

⁶⁴ Candido, Antonio. *Formação*, loc. cit., p.27.

methodological chapter, stating the interpretive grid which will be used in the book which follows. (This replacement is not without its consequences, and I will get to this in a moment.) Each of the accounts of the *formation* contains, apart from the diagnosis of a problem, the outline of a future solution, a kind of vanishing point of the account, which the accounts promise, but which is necessarily located outside the perimeter of the narrative. In several points, and for different reasons, however, Gilberto Freyre's *The Masters and Slaves* (whose full title includes the word *formation*) and Candido's *Formação* are exceptions. For Freyre the vanishing point is located in the past (and not in the future), since for him the diagnosis of the problem is the deterioration of the original model, when the ethnic "plasticity" of Portuguese colonization disappears. His model is, therefore, regressive, nostalgic (a prototype of the "conservative revolution" of which one has many other examples in Latin America). He defends a return to and a generalization of the original paradisiacal state of the insulary sugar-mill society. Together perhaps with Sérgio Buarque de Holanda's *Raízes do Brasil* (but in a different way), he establishes a supposed cultural value (the congeniality, the flexibility of the Portuguese colonization) which compensates for a socio-political "problem" (slavery). Candido is the only one who does not propose a solution to the problem: he considers the problem solved in the second half of nineteenth century (with Machado). And he does not see in this "solution" a redeeming value for the endemic social problems which continue to be Brazil's at the time and since. In other words, he does not (like Gilberto Freyre) constitute the aesthetic as an autotelic field, an option which intrinsically endorses Brazil's hegemonic classes.⁶⁵ This critical distance (linked also with the distance in time which separates Candido from the object of his book), is at the heart of Candido's concept of critique, as it poses an articulated autonomy between *socius* and the aesthetic.

⁶⁵ In this respect see: Yudice, George, "Postmodernity and Transnational Capitalism," in: Yudice, Franco, Flores, eds. *On Edge. The Crisis of Contemporary Latin American Culture* (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1992), p.11.

All of these books therefore are constructed in relation to two polarities: the origin and the end. The origin programs a linear development serially repeated in the history to come. The telos of the development organizes from its virtual position in the whole series. In Candido's and in Caio Prado's *Formação*, the first chapter announces the notion of "system" which will regulate their specific readings of Brazilian development. Like for Candido, the notion of "system" has for Caio Prado the sense of deconstructing a non-integrated, impressionistic criticism, establishing the history of Brazil in the general context of a universal process. Thus his *Fashioning of Contemporary Brazil* (1942), a land mark in the development of Marxist thinking in Brazil, reads Brazilian economic history in the general context of colonialism. Brazil is not an isolated phenomenon. It is instead constructed by colonization and has a meaning in the framework of an international system (the "system of colonization") determined by the expansion of capitalism. This organizational principle functions very much like the "origin" in the other *fashioning* narratives. It consists in a genetic principle of evolution which programs development, not to a strictly organic form, but according to an arbitrary (conventional, technical, civilizatory) interpretive schema. Thus Caio Prado starts his book by formulating the "sense of colonization":

Seen from a distance, every people has, in its evolution, a certain "sense." The latter is noticeable not in the details of its history, but in the ensemble of essential factors and events which constitute a large period of time. Whoever observes that ensemble...will not fail to perceive that it is *formed* of an uninterrupted master line [*linha mestra e ininterrupta*] of events which succeed in a rigorous order, and it is always directed in a determinate orientation. (my translation and emphasis)⁶⁶

The conceptual matrix of the book, therefore, deducing from the process a "sense," a direction, is a retrospective overview, a view of the ensemble which sees the process from the perspective of its accomplishment. The orderly succession of events is regulated by the master line which contains its law of formation, its genetic principle. In the linear evolution which will follow there is in fact no evolution but simply an unfolding of the very same "sense," which

⁶⁶ Prado Junior, Caio. *Formação do Brasil Contemporâneo* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1953), p.13.

recurs in every single of its segments, repeating in each unit the overall orientation of the line, and linked to Caio Prado's so-called economism.⁶⁷ For Candido, the notion of "system" (that is, the "uninterrupted continuity of works and authors,"⁶⁸ the selfconscious ensemble author-work-public) acts as a similar category in the description of the development of Brazilian literature. It repeats the civilizatory mission of colonization by projecting over the historical process the model of colonization. The conventional beginning of Brazilian literature,⁶⁹ locating a historical origin of which the necessity and the nature is simply derived from the method's own internal logic, is completely unable to envisage literary forms which do not conform to the model which it stipulated. Excluded are not only Gregório, but all the "others" of colonization. The subject of national literature which is "conscious of integrating a process of literary formation"⁷⁰ consists in this cover-up.

Basically, the systematization of Western cultures according to a plane of organization which determines a sequence of filliations or originations annuls the possibility of an exteriority to representation. An outside, a residue to representation becomes a limit to be absorbed, internalized, properly enlightened (lit up) by the power of meaning. The process here involves a double incorporation: of the European model (the Other, the form of lack) and of the Brazilian people (the "other") in the conservative continuous line originated in the colonial enterprise. The

⁶⁷ In connection with this it is striking to see what Fernando Novais writes about Caio Prado Junior's *Formação do Brasil Contemporâneo*. According to Novais there is a structural relationship between this "category" (the "sense of the colonization") and the composition of the book. The category "explains the several segments" of the book, giving them meaning. Each segment enriches and confirms the foundational notion. Each segment repeats the utterance of the interpretive "key" at the end. There seems to be no true development, since one can practically read the segments in any sequence. See Novais, Fernando. "Caio Prado Junior na historiografia brasileira. In: Moraes, R., and other. Eds. *Inteligência Brasileira* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1986).

⁶⁸ Candido, Antonio. *Formação*, loc.cit., p.25.

⁶⁹ "Because a beginning is necessary, I took as a point of departure the Academies of Seletos and of Renascidos and the first works by Cláudio Manuel da Costa, rounding up, to make it easy, the date of 1750, in fact, purely conventinal." Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, loc.cit., p.25.

⁷⁰ Idem.

end result of the speculative internalization of the Other, the integration within the international signifying order, is the feeling of lack in relation to the European model, seen as plenitude, as an accomplished process, of which Brazil would be a truncated version. The expansionist logic of representation "others" the mass of multiple peoples constitutive of Brazil, attempting irresistibly to legitimate itself by the consistent ventriloquizing of the subaltern, a structural characteristic of Brazilian culture.

Speculative readings of Brazilian culture seem thus unable to separate themselves from the intrinsic colonialism involved in the internalization of the European model which is one piece with the integration in the system, and the "othering" of so-called social reality, i.e. residual cultures, excluding them while ostensibly attempting to include them, "integrating" them as heterogenous materials to be homogenized by the elite intellectual. Thus the canonical phrase by Paulo Emílio Salles: "[w]e are neither Europeans nor North Americans. Lacking an original culture, nothing is foreign to us, because everything is. The painful construction of ourselves develops itself in the rarefied dialectics of not being and being someone else [*outro*]."⁷¹ Or Candido's translation of the phrase: "...the Brazilian can not stop spending his life hanging on the West and he has to try not to live hanging on the West. He has to try to make his own culture, but the culture he can make is a culture hung on the West..."⁷² Brazilians fall short in relation to the wholesome model cultures, North America and Europe. We are limited to the status of dependent, subordinate beings, "hanging on" major cultures. Yet this lack of originality which produces significant malaise, has its own supplementary benefit: the inability to claim to any originality means that everything is, in a sense, Brazilian because nothing, strictly speaking, is. The lack of proper Brazilianness creates the possibility of a general, non-substantial (figurative) Brazilianness, Brazilianness transformed then into the state of an all-encompassing virtual

⁷¹ Salles, Paulo Emílio. "Cinema: A trajectory within Underdevelopment," in: Johnson, Randal and Stam, Robert. *Brazilian Cinema* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982).

⁷² Candido, Antonio, intervention in a debate on Paulo Emílio Salles, in *Filme Cultura*, 35/36, 1980, p.4,9. Quoted by Arantes, Paulo. *Sentimento da Dialética* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1992), p.15,16.

nationality, whereby nationality is almost a synonym to foreignness, sameness to otherness.⁷³ This would account for the resolute internationalism of Brazilian's most accomplished cultural models, be it Machado de Assis or Bossa Nova, of which the theory is formulated in Oswald de Andrade's "cannibalism," that is, the intelligent appropriation of foreign materials integrated selectively within the national subject in a composite figure.

This point of view is a strategy to deal with colonial cultural domination, which takes into account the overpowering grasp of dominant cultures over peripheral ones. But it is marked by an insidious prejudice, in that it adopts the colonial view of itself, by seeing itself as "other" in relation to itself (because it is "other" in relation to Europe). This corresponds to the aspect of internalization which I have been describing here. This system of "othering" repeats itself internally, in a diabolical multiplication, when the national subject "others" subaltern cultures, speaking for them (re-presenting them) while ostensibly annihilating them. Thus in Paulo Emílio's schema, the Brazilian dialectics is formulated as an option between non-being and being other, where "being other" corresponds to the position of being "othered" by major cultures, and "not being" to the reality of Brazil, that is, everything that is excluded by literary or political representation. All the multiple, alienated subjectivities are thus consistently alienated from national subjectivity. This is then the double alienation which marks the Brazilian (the Latin-American) intellectual. Spoken by European discourse, in relation to which he is different, his only plea for legitimacy is to speak for the other in relation to itself, the residual subjects of the nation, following a demand for otherness coming from abroad, which he alienates by becoming himself, while intimately feeling that he is not that either.

⁷³ Lacoue-Labarthe's translation of Diderot's "paradox on the comedian" presents striking resemblances with this theorization of Brazilian culture. "The paradox utters a *law of impropriety*, which is the law of mimesis: only the 'man without qualities,' the being without specificity, the subject without subject (absent to itself, distracted from itself, deprived of itself) is able to present or produce in general." [my translation] (Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe. *L'imitation des modernes* (Paris: Galilé, 1986), p.27.

Since Paulo Emílio formulated his maxim a significant movement of generalization of the state of non-substantial subjectivity has taken place. Empty, constructed subjectivities are a symptom of modernity (or post-modernity, whichever you wish). Since then non-substantiality has been transformed into our common share, in the general state of humanity, be it in peripheral or in major countries, in a sort of becoming-peripheral of the major cultures. In a sense, we *all* became fakers. While recent theory has taken upon itself the task of critiquing the idea of originality or authenticity, deconstructing the claim for any privileged origination which is intrinsic to the colonial project, the fact remains that this corresponds to the specific condition of the Brazilian or the Latin-American intellectual.

5. Machado

Formação outlines the process of the construction of the canon which takes place from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, and covers two literary movements: Neoclassicism and Romanticism. Machado de Assis is the telos of the process, the point in which the system is finally concluded, when the literary gesture reaches its maturity in selfconsciousness. The last chapter of the *Formação*, entitled "Literary consciousness," is dedicated to the foundation of criticism during the Romantic era, and the subchapter before the last is entitled "The formation of the literary canon." Emancipation is realized in self-reflection, as literature is able to reflect upon itself and propose a project for the autonomization of Brazilian culture, formulating its own theory, of which the canon is an important part.

The last two paragraphs of the whole book deal with the 1873 essay "*Instinto de Nacionalidade*" ["*Instinct of nationality*"] by Machado de Assis.⁷⁴ This is the furthest edge of the circle constructed by the *fashioning*, its internal border, already preparing what is outside:

⁷⁴ After quoting a passage from Machado's essay "Instint of nationality" Candido writes: "[These words] are appropriate, therefore, to close this book, where it was attempted precisely to describe the rprocess through which Brazilians became conscious of their spitirual and social existence through literature..." Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, II, loc.cit., p.368.

Machado's novels of the last period. The program for Brazilian literature, its "systematization" is therefore literally formulated by Machado. We know what this famous essay proposed: in order to be Brazilian one was not required to write about "Indians" or describe exotic landscape. (Brazilian Romantic nationalism was largely descriptive, since just to describe nature was to be faithful to local reality, to be patriotic.) Brazilians had to stop being picturesque, sentimental, documentarist. Brazilianness needed to become an "instinct," something internal, an "intimate feeling," independent from any determinate Brazilian object.⁷⁵ Machado's assertion foreshadows Borges' famous one, that the "truly native can frequently do without local color." Borges supports his statement on Gibbon: in the *Koran* there are no camels. More than that, the very *absence* of camels is *the* proof that the book is indeed authentic, because, for Mohammed as an arab, the camels were part of the reality, and did not need to be distinguished.⁷⁶ The exchange of "indians" for camels as exoticist indexes makes perfect sense in the context of a critique of authenticity: they are both exportable goods, produced specifically for export but consumed as well in the internal cultural market.

"Brazilianness" in the earlier sense, as prescribed by Ferdinand Denis' emancipatory, Romantic program, still corresponded to a mirror-image of Brazil as seen by foreigners.⁷⁷ Such

⁷⁵ Assis, Machado de. "Instinto de nacionalidade" in Candido, Antonio and Castello, J. Aderaldo, *Presença da Literatura Brasileira. Do Romantismo ao Simbolismo* (São Paulo: DIFEL, 1976), p.113.

⁷⁶ Borges, Jorge Luis. "El escritor Argentino y la tradición," In: *Prosa Completa* (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1979), vol.1, p.221.

⁷⁷ The paradox implicit in this protocol is more than evident, and constitutes the matrix of all the subsequent theoretical "images" of Brazil, as Candido so aptly discovered: the concept of the nation, in the origin of the nationalistic imperative of representing "reality" is itself originated abroad. The "reality" represented by early writers corresponds to a picturesque representation of difference as seen by European eyes--since Europeans lack nature, and for them Brazil is what they are not (nature)--and adopted as their own view of reality by the "natives." The claim of a national literature in Brazil is forever submitted to this model: the native, object of the self-representation of Brazilians themselves, their identity, is a national exotic stereotype, othered by the European eye. This selfsame Brazilian identity is nothing but the representation of itself as other, an identity marked from the start by difference. The French travellers who came to Rio in 1820 had lost nature. In Schiller's terms (in *On the Naive and Sentimental Poetry*) they were sentimental, and looked for the native in Brazil. But the Brazilians who started writing about

is. as we have seen, the paradox of the Brazilian literary system; the matrix of which constitutes what Candido named “double fidelity.” By “double fidelity” he meant the repetition of a fashion originated in Europe at the local level; that way, while the image was originated abroad, in the replication something of the *real* Brazil would start to appear in the intervals of representation (the local *color*).⁷⁸ Double fidelity is the diagnosis of the essential discontinuity of Brazilian literature, the index of its malformation. Nothing would ever be learned, every generation would start afresh every time, the latest copy originated overseas would always take precedence over local reality. With this kind of predicament no true reflection could ever take place, because there is no organicity, no continuity in the process. With Machado something entirely different take place: he is able to learn from his predecessors, accumulate their experience. Literary history is therefore either a scattered fragmentary sequence of copies (of which "double fidelity" is the diagram), or a linear progression, in which case one would finally have a system. In short, one needs to establish a continuity, a true serialization of literary works.

An example of "double fidelity": Cláudio Manuel da Costa's pastoral poetry is certainly copied from Anacreonte and from closer Portuguese models, the recurrent representation of nature is stereotypical; and yet, at the same time, one perceives in Claudio something like an “imagination of stone” which cannot be explained by the models. Something of the materiality of

their own reality, they, the natives, who had supposedly never lost nature, needed only to "describe" realistically local nature. They were not sentimental. The strategy put in place here is precisely to "hide" difference, and create the *myth* that in Brazil, reality was already identical to itself, i.e. that Brazil *was* nature. In Schiller's terms this would mean that Brazil was naive, in opposition to Europe, which would be *sentimental* ("They therefore will either be nature or they will look for lost nature." [Schiller, Friedrich, *On the Naive and Sentimental in Literature*, Translated by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1981, p.35]) What is differential is the mission of mimetically registering identity. This mimesis constitutes the civilizatory mission of aesthetically founding the nation.

⁷⁸ "Thus the double fidelity of our novelists--attentive on the one hand to local reality, on the other to the French or Portuguese fashion. Torn fidelity, as such, difficult, which could have undermined the constitution of a true literary continuity among us, because each author and each generation tended to begin again the experiment on their own account, under the unflux of the last novelty from oversea..." (Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, II, loc.cit. 117.)

the hills of his native Mariana would have been transposed to the substance of his poetry.⁷⁹
Difference is produced in repetition, localism is subtly articulated in the fold of the copy.

Likewise, the two main representations of the subaltern, the shepherd and the Indian, which define respectively Neoclassicism and Romanticism, would duplicate an European type, simply transposing it to Brazil. And yet something of Brazil would transpire in the local notations, in the descriptions, in a certain poetic rhythm. "Double fidelity" is the diagram, the genetic formula which is at the heart of the progression of literary history as a dependent configuration. It describes quite well the drama of emancipation, where the copy of imported literary models is superposed to the "realistic" account, mimicry to mimesis, where even the most specifically local is to be found abroad in a book, in a quintessential Latin-American, that is, Borgesian, that is Quijotic (Menardian), drama. The reality which literature represents can only be suspected in the hinge of representation.

However, something that Candido does not say is that "double fidelity" is the formula of the formation of Brazilian literature as a hegemonic representation based upon the aesthetization of the subaltern. The subaltern is re-presented in the literary form which we see in its moment of expansion, integrating the residual as fictional material, as a double of the European type. The naturalized indian originated in Europe (in Ferdinand Denis, in Chateaubriand) superposed to the absent Brazilian indian populations, the Greek shepherd covering the absent miner or rancher. The subaltern is barely suspected under the surface of the text. Is there an outside here? Does the literary fabric point to what it is not, to the *real* Brazil, or is the real just a fold of the text? would ask Borges. In any case, "double fidelity" registers the structure of the indecision between imitation and mimesis.

This situation changes with Machado. His critique of Indianism, writes Candido, repeats the act of Brazilian political independence from Portugal, and outlines the map of Brazilian literary independence as a vast project which was just at its beginning but of which the closure is

⁷⁹ Candido compares Cláudio to those *caipiras* who "try to disguise the marks of [their] origin by accentuating the traits learned in the city." Candido, Antonio, *Formação*, loc.cit., p.88-106.

suspected and indicated by Machado. The critical gesture, mapping out the territory of the literature to come, constitutes the maturity of the process of formation, the end of the trajectory whereby Brazilians became self-conscious. As such, it meant a radical “surpassing” of Alencar, or of the generation Macedo, Alencar, Antonio de Almeida. In Machado one witnesses to the end of the discontinuous trajectory of scattered appropriation of Brazil by Brazilians, as an image determined abroad, which takes place between Neoclassicism and Romanticism.

The fact that the “realization” of this process, Machado’s fictional work, is excluded from the book constitutes only one of the felicitous findings of the *Formação*, the inside already placed outside, following the general genetic structure of *fashionings*. Machado’s novel would “accomplish” the systematization of Brazilian literature. Machado is integrated in the line of Romantic novelists, surpassing Alencar, radicalizing the movement of emancipation indicated in Indianism, by transforming the national “type” into consciousness and sublimating it, so to speak. There is nothing “objectively” Brazilian in Machado’s novel, no “double fidelity.” Since, in this sense to be Brazilian is to see oneself through the foreigner’s eyes, to internalize this representation of oneself as other. There is a whole world, maybe an ocean, between the *real* indian populations and the object of Indianism as well as its subject of enunciation. Brazilian literary independence consists in this independence of the national “type” through a multiplication of detached figures (Machado would draw indifferently from Swift, Sterne, the Bible) all consciously integrated in the continuity of Romantic fiction, which he inherits but improves.⁸⁰ That is, through an internalization of all objects, transformed into a system, the novel is conceived as a multiple, self-conscious work. What is Brazilian in these novels (where there is not much of Brazil thematically speaking) is the articulation of all these different objects, an “instinct,” an internal feeling. In the Machadian novel, echoing the program he established himself in “Instinct of nationality,” one has the novel as selfconscious subject. The speculative

⁸⁰ Idem., II, p.118.

schema of the work as selfproductive subject formulated in early (Jena) German Romanticism finds in him a first class example.⁸¹

But this is not without an extremely high cost. Machados' verdict about indian populations is drastic:

It is certain that the Brazilian civilization [sic] is not linked to the indian element, nor received from it any influx.⁸²

There is a double assassination taking place here. It is true that Indianism was not about *real* indian populations, in this sense Machado is right: there is hardly anything Brazilian in the Romantic indian. But to decree that "indians" have no place in Brazil is to deny their existence, repeating the original genocide (or ethnocide, to speak with Clastres), upon which the Americas are founded. To think about the indian population's "contribution" to the Brazilian culture (like when Gilberto Freyre talks about a "Black contribution") is not much better either. The internalization of Brazilianness, i.e. the conversion of the "theme," "subject" (*assunto*) or "type" into an "intimate feeling," corresponds to the final annihilation of the subaltern, subsumed by the form of formation, as material. It is certainly not a chance the fact that such a statement of quintessential (subjective, non-objective) Brazilianness comes from a "whitened" mixed man. The internalization of Brazilianness coincides with the internalization of the protocols of Western civilization and of class convention. It generates the figure of tremendous selfcontrol which was Machado's, as one can read in Lúcia Miguel Pereira's biography.⁸³ The selfconscious subject is a white(ned) subject, subjectified through the disciplined learning of becoming European and cultured.

I am in no way denying Machado's merits. I am simply pointing out the implications of his project. Candido's critical project of incorporating the external cause (in opposition to and

⁸¹ For the notion of the selfproductive work of art, see: Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, Jean-Luc. *L'absolu Littéraire* (Paris: Seuil, 1978).

⁸² Assis, Machado de, "Instinto de nacionalidade," loc.cit., p.113.

⁸³ Pereira, Lúcia Miguel. *Machado de Assis*. (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1955).

surpassing Silvio Romero's determinism by an internal difference), repeats, in the critical field, the same gesture accomplished by Machado's novel. We thus see that Machado's importance for Brazilian literature goes much beyond the accomplishments of his work. It is as a telos (a model of the finished process) projected back upon the process as a whole and programming the criticism and the literature to come that his work should be understood. We are yet to see what was left out.

6. The schema

"Dialectics of malandroism"⁸⁴ does for contemporary literary criticism what "Instinct of nationality" did for nineteenth century Brazil.⁸⁵ In this essay, a reading of Manuel Antônio de Almeida's novel *Memórias de um Sargento de Milícias* [*Memoirs of a Militia Sergeant*],⁸⁶ one has perhaps the best example of Candido's method. The main problem he attempts to solve and address here (and arguably throughout his whole career), is that of "mediation," that is, the relationship between representation and reality, the secret formula of mimesis, attesting to a true imaginary productivity. The essay consists of a brilliant contribution to the theory of realism. His target is the concept of mimesis as a direct photographic reproduction or as dependency on models (a simple realist faithfulness to a preexisting model). The question is exactly the same as in the internalization of the "external object" of Romanticism, or in the internal articulation of the aesthetics with the social. Just by looking at the external shape of the essay one discovers the same structure of dialectical differentiation we have been describing all along. Candido proceeds methodically. In the first three chapters he reviews the history of the novel's reception, exposing

⁸⁴ Candido, Antonio. "Dialectics of Malandroism," in *On Literature and Society*, Trans. Becker, loc.cit., p.79-103.

⁸⁵ Roberto Schwarz points out the affiliation in his essay on Candido's essay "Pressupostos, salvo engano, de 'Dialética da malandragem,'" in: *Esboço de Figura. Homenagem a Antonio Candido* (São Paulo: Duas Cidades, 1979), footnote 4, p.153.

⁸⁶ Almeida, Manuel Antônio. *Memoirs of a Militia Sergeant*. Translated by Barrett, Linton L. (Washington D.C: Pan American Union, 1959).

three different attempts at accounting for the novel's effectiveness, and in each case he proves the insufficiency of the arguments presented. According to each hypothesis, which Candido treats one at a time, the novel would directly bear on: 1) a foreign literary model, the Spanish Golden Age picaresque novel; or, 2) the archetypal universal substratum of the trickster; or, 3) it would be a direct representation of the Rio de Janeiro of D. João VI's time. The three hypotheses would have in common the fact that they do not grasp *Memórias*' originality. Against each argument Candido opposes irrefutable points. Let us briefly summarize them. The novel is not a picaresque because: 1) it is narrated in the third person and not in the first like the Spanish picaresque; 2) the protagonist does not learn from his misfortunes; at the level of the novel he is the same as he was in the beginning (contrary to the picaresque); and 3) the novel does not encompass a multiple panorama, like the picaresque did of Spanish society as a whole; it is set on a small slice of Rio de Janeiro: the downtown area.

We see how the argumentation proceeds by bifurcation. One argument generates three counter-arguments and configures an arboreous structure.

Folklore does not provide the solution either. The folkloric type, the universal trickster, is stylized by Manuel Antônio. Again, no direct affiliation can be established. The data is transformed by a process of generalization. He obtains the generality of the type through stylization. Its source, the novel's "material" is--according to Manuel Antônio, and we have no reason to doubt him--the reports of an old police officer. The process of "generalization," of the subsumption of facts and people to categorical paradigms has a local (as opposed to the foreign or folkloric) model: the art of political caricature, contemporary to the novel, to which no doubt Antônio de Almeida had access. It is in the political satires of the Regency period that one can find the model of "dissolution of the individual in the category."⁸⁷

Finally, *Memórias* is not simply a reflection of the Rio de Janeiro of the beginning of nineteenth century because, as a document, it covers a very limited scope of reality. Spatially, it

⁸⁷ Candido, Antonio. "Dialectics" loc.cit., p.85.

restricts itself to downtown Rio, and socially, it deals almost exclusively with "free people of modest position,"⁸⁸ excluding both the slaves and the sphere of power and wealth. As a document therefore the novel has a very reduced value since it basically excludes the main actors in Brazilian society of the time, the labor force and the ruling classes. Real documentary data is indeed present in the novel, but this is precisely not what interests criticism in it. Data is submitted to a "formalization or structural reduction"⁸⁹ whereby it is transformed in an integral element of the structure and does not exist as an independent element. The novel is less successful when its documentary character is not integrated in the structure as a constitutive element. When successfully formalized the real is incorporated in the fictional structure and disappears as a document.

You see how the theme of internalization of objective, isolated elements functions here. The target is, if I am not mistaken, a Lukacsian theory of realism which would not take into account the process of "formalization" of reality data. In the next two chapters Candido will proceed to develop his own theory of mimesis, pointing to an "aesthetic formalization of social circumstances."⁹⁰ No direct transparent reproduction of reality here. The novel *is* representative, though, in two ways: it represents social reality and it is representative of the Brazilian society, because it registers in depth the social structure, captured by the novel and which consists in a kind of "skeleton" of the novel. This "skeleton" is the dialectics of order and disorder, the mechanism of Brazilian society which the book manages to capture and encode.

The dialectics of order and disorder registers the schema of *both* Brazilian society and the text. Of what does it consist? In the novel the characters are distributed in two spheres, that of the law abiding citizens and that of delinquency, order and disorder. Leonardo, the main protagonist, is pulled by both poles, which are represented in the book as perfectly equivalent,

⁸⁸ Ibid., p.86.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p.87.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.89.

thus attesting to a complete "absence of moral judgement,"⁹¹ and a total disregard for the criterion of good and evil. He moves between the two poles in a dynamic which is like a "seesaw of the two poles,"⁹² in a "capricious balancing"⁹³ in a world which seems almost devoid of hierarchies. Even the prototype of order, the representative of the law, Major Vidigal, ends up corrupted, a hybrid of order and disorder, in a symbolic representation of the final subversion of values.

Now this is the structure of the book. But *also* of the urban Brazil of the time: the structure is an encrypted figuration of the society of free men in nineteenth century Brazil. It just happens that in a society where most of the labor was done by African slaves, themselves controlled by the spheres of power, the rest of the population, comprised largely of free people, simply did not work at all, or hardly. This is a society in which "only a few people worked and the others abandoned themselves to idleness, reaping the surplus of parasitism, of contrivance, of munificence, of fortune, or of petty theft."⁹⁴ Avoiding both the stratum of power and the stratum of labor, the novel concentrates strictly on the middle stratum of the free man. The ballet-like dance between order and disorder captures therefore the "rhythm" of this specific sector's life, forever moving between the two poles, in a space of "anomie," suspended from morality. This will lead Candido to formulate the provocative hypothesis of a "world without guilt," which would express the Brazilian *difference*, in relation, for example, to the heavily moralizing American society, of which Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* is representative, and to which he opposes the *Memórias*. No simple *difference* here, as there was for Brazilian Romanticism, but a difference which is articulatory, hidden, encoded in the schema. But just like with Romanticism, there is a generalization of a specific character (the "free men" in a society based on slavery) into the national "type" (the *malandro*). A procedure which is strictly ideological, whereby a

⁹¹ Ibid., p.91.

⁹² Ibid., p.90.

⁹³ Ibid., p.95.

⁹⁴ Idem.

fundamentally problematic society can be compensated by an aesthetic solution, which hides the root of the "world without guilt." And yet, Candido had here, with the category of a hidden form of reality, the possibility to bypass the problem of the aesthetization of difference, by posing an unrepresentable, non-national difference, the form of the particular social group of "free men" in nineteenth century Rio.

The feeling of reality in the novel--this is the main problem Candido is tackling--does not have to do with the "representation of a particular concrete data." The novel feels real because it is "constructed according to the general rhythm of society," because the structure which governs society is the same one that governs the text. It is in the intuition of the schema of the society of free men in nineteenth century Rio--which is not simply given in reality, but is hidden--and the ability to encode it in the novel that the novelist's accomplishment resides. Social reality has to be truly reinvented by the author, thus the use of imagination as a productive faculty, the *Einbildungskraft*. of German Romanticism, that is, the faculty of formalization, whereby reality is produced in form. Let it be clear: the schema is the law of construction of both society and text, it "gives consistency as much to the specific data of the real as to the specific data of the fictional world." This diagram is the "hidden" (unrepresentable) rule, the "principle of generality" of mediation, which is present in the two "series": world and fiction.⁹⁵

"Dialectics of Malandroism" is exemplary of what Candido calls "structural reduction," that is, the process of construction of the world in the text, in such a way that the text constitutes

⁹⁵ Candido is here extremely close to the German Romantic's notion of *Darstellung* or of the Kantian schematism, the mediating principle between the category and appearances. The schema is a product of the imagination and consists in the rule according to which an object is subsumed under a concept, it is the procedure, the method of obtaining figures in space. Looking at Candido's diagram, the "mediating principle," the dialectics of order and disorder is located in between the real society of Rio and the fictionalized society of *Memórias*. Like Candido's "structural principle" (p.89), the schema of transcendental imagination, is homogeneous to both levels of representation and concept, it is the principle of generalization which connects one with the other. If one changes category for social reality, and appearance for fictional reality, one has exactly the same problem. Like Kant's schema, Candido's mediation is "generally hidden." See: Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Pure Reason*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965). Trans. Norman Kemp Smith, p.180-187.

an autonomous entity, "ruled by its own laws," as distinguished from the real.⁹⁶ The "structural reduction" consists in the delimitation of the schema, the law of configuration of mimesis. You will recognize here the question of the autonomization of the work, which prescribes the distinction of the aesthetic field articulated with the socius. You will recognize as well the principle according to which external sociological data becomes internal to the text, "folding inside (the "turning upon itself") whereby the social is rearticulated from within the differentiated space of the work. There is no reflection of the real here. Candido is vehemently opposed to any straight "realist" protocol. The dialectics of order and disorder is the very articulation between the two spheres, the juncture or hinge which organizes both of them, the external border of representation.

Like "double fidelity" (the schema of Brazilian literature in its dependent stage), it is a question here of the coincidence of two levels: the level of representation (the European model in the case of "double fidelity") and of reality (mimesis of the local). Except that here the local form captures the local reality by encoding their law of formation, and not the formula of alienation. There is a point of contact between the two levels as well in the two perfectly equivalent hemispheres of order and disorder in *Memórias*, which seem to mirror each other in a world deprived of moral standards, in the middle of which circulate the protagonists.

All of these traits point to the same figure: the hidden diagram, the rhythmic, unrepresentable secret which governs mimesis. We can spot the same method in all of the most accomplished examples of his "structural reduction," which are found in his last collection of essays published in Portuguese *O Discurso e a Cidade* [*Discourse and the City*]. Thus, in Zola's *L'Assommoir* the *real* coagulates in symbols, in objects which have fictional functionality, "which are not only part of an environment, but also a constitutive element of the narrative sequence."⁹⁷ Integrated in the narrative these objects are given intense symbolic reality, the "data

⁹⁶ Candido, Antonio. *O Discurso e a Cidade*, loc. cit., p.9.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p.76.

is sufficient in itself, from the fictional point of view, but homologous to the reality of the world." There is an homology between fiction and socius, but the symbol has an autonomous reality in the text. At the same time the privilege of objects in Zola's fiction is pertinent socially because it refers to the objectification of life in the condition of social misery of late nineteenth century capitalism where the novel is set. "Poor people," writes Candido, "are closer to the elementary levels of subsistence."

In Giovanni Verga's *I Malavoglia* the circular reality of an enclosed rural world centered around the preservation of tradition is encapsulated in proverbs. It is in the structural presence of proverbs which recur in the novel that one finds the point of "convergence"⁹⁸ between the textual and the real series. Or, in Aluísio de Azevedo's *O Cortiço*, a naturalist novel modelled after Zola's *L'Assommoir*, one finds a distinguishing allegorical element of Brazil, absent in the French model. The Brazilian *difference* registered in the novel, has to do with an allegorization of nature and of the spatial configurations which are unimaginable in Zola. The point of juncture between the linguistic and the social series is the allegorization of a Brazilian nature. A nature which bears, since Romanticism, the properties of Brazilianness, returns here, in a different context, with fictional functionality.

In all of these examples the coherence of Candido's method is striking. Working in three different fields: politics, national *fashioning* and textual analysis, one finds a perfect homology between the three different forms of practice. In all of the three series it is a question of working at the limit which defines the inner and the outer border of the given field. In the field of politics it is a question of tracking down conservatism within the field of ideas as a teacher involved in the constitution of a specific intellectual class, while waging a parallel struggle as an activist, watching out for possible connections with emergent social struggles. In the field of Brazilian literary formation, it is a question of constituting national literature in its systematic articulation within the international order, the Western tradition or the overbearing colonial modellization.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.108.

And finally in the field of literary studies it is a question of delimiting the field of textuality as an autonomous territory but in its articulation with the socius. In every series one finds the same attempt at establishing an autonomous field, ruled by its own internal laws, configured according to its own specific organization. In each of them he locates himself at the very limit which distinguishes the field from what borders it, at the juncture where the field is ready to become something else, in a dialectics of outside and inside as I have showed here. The "structural reduction," as he calls his method, the "diagram" (or the "schema," as I call it) is the formulation of this very limit space. It is the principle of formalization through which one field is converted into another, the "form" of difference, the touchstone of imagination. Each of these fields are conceived as totalities complete in themselves while limited by an outside which they seem to mirror. The text is a totality but it is articulated within the social totality in a sort of Spinozian parallelism. National formation is a totality integrated in the "trunk" of Western civilization (and this defines the project of Brazilian literature) while Brazilian literature attempts to find the law of its own complex (interior) originality. Likewise, critical practice is connected to a specific form of activism within the university, but articulated with a large political struggle which takes place both inside and outside the academic field.

The title of a collection of essays recently published on Candido, *Inside the Text, Inside Life* aptly captured the parallelism at work in Candido's method. It describes quite accurately the two-fold structure of a world without outside, where one is always inside something, always connected with something in a system of differential relations, and where the outside is always folded inwards. At the same time, if radicalized, such a statement is reversible: a world without outside means that everything is outside, and that the world has no inside. The reversibility of the two series could be a good proposition from which to start rethinking Candido from a contemporary perspective. The focus then would be displaced to the category of differential form put forth by Candido, in what would become then a program of "links," "connections," or "articulations."

It is clear that his structural matrix can still be very productive for criticism. The persistent location of what I called the law of differentiation (which is at the same time the principle of generalization of form), the search for the juncture between one field and the other (the form of difference, the hidden code which distinguishes), has, I believe, great possibilities for a criticism involved in the project of establishing new subjectivities. In order for this to happen, it would have to be, however, radically modified. To begin with, the critical horizon has to be extricated from the requisite of national (State) representation, and reconfigured so as to formulate the possibility of a radical localism. The fact that form is contingent to formation, to a process of subjectification points to the intrinsic construction of subjectivity. But it points as well to the possibility of new patterns of subjectivity, to new collectivities, and not anymore to the servicing of the colonial project and its production of local nationalities. Likewise, the genetic category of totality would have to be liberated from the notion of a Western lineage and relocated at the strict level of the local; it would be understood then simply as a generalization of the local, whereby totality (the form of difference, the system of relations) is internalized without being reprojected as representation, and where local collectivities could have access to generalizing form but without *being* formed. All in all, Candido's program of peripheric national formation could indicate the way towards a science of the particular, a useful tool for minority literatures. Whether such a conversion is feasible or not remains to be seen.

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