



O discurso da antropofagia como estratégia de construção da identidade cultural brasileira

Weslei Roberto Cândido* e Nelci Alves Coelho Silvestre

¹Departamento de Teorias Linguísticas e Literárias, Universidade Estadual de Maringá, Av. Colombo, 5790, 87020-900, Maringá, Paraná, Brasil.

²Departamento de Letras Modernas, Universidade Estadual de Maringá, Maringá, Paraná, Brasil. *Autor para correspondência. E-mail: weslei79@gmail.com

RESUMO. Este artigo apresenta uma reflexão teórica a respeito do termo ‘deglutição’ utilizado por Oswald de Andrade no Manifesto Antropófago (1928). Nesse manifesto, recortamos o conceito de antropofagia, vocábulo que descreve a devoração do Outro no intuito de absorvê-lo, no afã de assimilar as características das estéticas estrangeiras, e que expressa o impacto dos processos colonizadores na formação da identidade brasileira. Partindo da crítica à civilização europeia (colonialista), Oswald de Andrade, nas entrelinhas de seu discurso sobre a antropofagia, dialoga com as atuais discussões acerca da dependência cultural dos países periféricos. Diante desses apontamentos, nosso propósito é traçar um percurso histórico das leituras e apropriações que o termo ‘deglutição’ sofreu ao longo destes 88 anos, na esteira de estudos de críticos consagrados como Candido, Schwarz e Santiago.

Palavras-chave: antropofagia; deglutição; identidade cultural.

The discourse of cannibalism as a strategy of building Brazilian cultural identity

ABSTRACT. This paper presents a theoretical discussion about the term ‘swallowing’ used by Oswald de Andrade in Manifesto Antropófago (1928). In this manifesto we cut the concept of cannibalism, a word that describes the devouring of the Other in order to absorb it, in his eagerness to assimilate the characteristics of foreign aesthetic, which expresses the impact of colonizing processes in the formation of Brazilian identity. Given the criticism towards the European civilization (colonialist), Oswald de Andrade dialogues, between the lines of his speech on anthropophagy, with current discussions of cultural dependency of peripheral countries. Given these notes, our purpose is to trace a historical background of the readings and appropriations that the term ‘swallowing’ has suffered over these 88 years in the researches of renowned critics such as Candido, Schwarz and Santiago.

Keywords: anthropophagy. swallowing; cultural identity.

Introduction

One of the most relevant contributions by Oswald de Andrade in Brazilian literature is cultural anthropophagy. In 1928 he launched the Anthropophagy Manifesto and the henceforth usage of the term anthropophagy within the Brazilian context. In the context of Oswald’s discourse, anthropophagy is a language process by which the colonizer’s word is devoured, digested and subverted. Within the Brazilian scenario, anthropophagic deglutination is a novel way of thinking since it may be a possible solution to the country’s cultural issues.

It must be underscored that anthropophagy in this context is a literary tool which contributes towards the acknowledgement of Otherness in so far as it foregrounds the devouring of the Other’s culture. It is the deglutination of European culture

and its (re)appropriation and subversion of the cultural tissue hallowed by elitist culture, inherited by Brazilians through colonization and assimilated without any criticism and adopted as a mandatory stance within the production of literature. Anthropophagy would be the solution for the renewal of the Arts since it would welcome a critical stance lacking in the literary production of the Romantics. In fact, the latter was the greatest representative of nationalist literature at the time the Manifesto was published. “Against the torch-carrying Indian. The Indian, son of Mary, godson of Catharine de’ Medici and son-in-law of Antonio de Mariz” (Andrade, 1975, p. 7). It is Oswald’s stance against the culture of the Romantics, mainly against the representation of the Indian depicted by Alencar in his novel *O guarani* (1996).

In *Vira e mexe nacionalismo* (2007), Leyla Perrone-Moisés returns to the anthropophagy concept as a

literary strategy for the appropriation of European culture as a valid mechanism for the renewal of Latin American culture through an innovatory embodiment:

The special strength of a culture is precisely its capacity to assimilate without suffering any losses. The Brazilian modernist Oswald de Andrade defended a sort of critical and creative receptivity in his proposal for cultural anthropophagy, or rather, devouring metaphorically the foreign foregrounding so that we would be strong as the Tupinamba Indians became (literally) when they ate the first colonizers in Brazil (Perrone-Moisés, 2007, p. 24).

Oswald's proposal has a dialectic factor. European culture, the basis of Brazilian culture, is not discarded. The same principle of violence, equivalent to the colonizer's, occurs when the Other's culture is appropriated. It is actually cultural and anthropophagy is metaphoric. The anthropophagy ritual is exaggerated, or rather, the act is now dressed in religious and pagan traits for devouring the Other so that they may be assimilated.

Anthropophagy conceived by Oswald opens the doors to all kind of (re)appropriation, (re)utilization and subversion of European culture on the American continent. Clad in European heritage, Brazilian authors should endeavor to reinstate their own culture, abolish the old cultural, religious, literary inheritance by devouring it. The new literature will be based on this sort of cannibal feast. "Against memory, the source of habits. Personal experience is renewed" (Andrade, 1975, p. 7). Consequently, anthropophagy is a mechanism for the renewal of Brazilian culture. The keyword is change. Retaking the cannibals' stance is to (re)appropriate oneself of Brazilian origins in its combative stance against the colonial heritage.

For the last 88 years, the anthropophagy concept was re-discussed with important repercussions on Brazilian literary criticism through a dialogue mainly established between Antonio Candido, Roberto Schwarz and Silviano Santiago.

In his essay *Literatura e Subdesenvolvimento* (1989), Antonio Candido specifically made an in-depth study on the theme of cultural dependence from a sociological approach. In *Formação da Literatura Brasileira*, the author admits Brazilian cultural dependence as a determinant factor in Brazilian literature, tagged as 'a secondary branch'. Further, Schwarz (2009a) in his essay *Nacional por Subtração*, re-analyzes Oswald's ideas in the 1970s and underlines the importance of Anthropophagy as disruption and revolt, evidencing the country's cultural backwardness, but diagnoses several flaws.

Santiago also deals with anthropophagy in his essay *O entre-lugar do discurso latino-americano* (Santiago, 2000) representing the violence of the colonizing process. The author, however, rebuts and re-contextualizes the critique of influence and copy.

In *Antropofagia*, Heloísa Toller Gomes comments that

[...] the important novelty of Oswald de Andrade consists in transforming the concept of anthropophagy – in several of its known or presumable aspects: mystical-ritualistic, punitive, metaphysical, vindictory, nutrient – into a central metaphor by which one understands Brazil (Gomes, 2005, p. 47).

Through the above critiques, a re-analysis of the anthropophagy concept contributes towards the recovery of Brazilian literature, downgraded and second-ranked when compared to foreign literature. Current analysis discusses the term 'deglutination' restored by Oswald de Andrade and the appropriation of the term throughout all these years by the three literary critics Candido, Schwarz and Santiago.

The term 'anthropophagy'

The term 'anthropophagy' comes from the Greek and was transformed into 'cannibalism' in the 16th century by its transition from the European to the American milieu through the similarity between Karib → cannibal → Caliban (Greenblatt, 1996). The word denotes the act of eating human flesh, erroneously associated with the cannibalistic practice which consists in an animal eating another animal of the same species. In fact, the theme has always embarrassed Western people due to their shunning of tribal culture.

Anthropophagic rituals exist within the context of tribal culture so that the Indigenes would contact the gods. Anthropophagy is a type of ritualistic renewal, or rather, an act that, in cultural terms, occurs by devouring metaphorically primitive cultures. According to Benedito Nunes, the ritual derives from "[...] the *libido* as an organic and psychic link between man and earth" (Nunes, 1970, p. 33). The pleasure bond with the earth would make possible that cultured people remake their link with Brazil in its most primitive original state which leads them to devour the Other, the element foreign to their culture, without absorbing it in parts, but incorporating it in its spirituality.

Anthropophagy within the Latin American context is the freeing of oneself from the tag of inferiority and demonstrates that European culture undergoes a process of selective absorption: what

and when it is indispensable to renew Brazilian literature. In other words, one devours (metaphorically) only the ideas that revise the formative route of Brazilian culture through European eyes. The anthropophagic discourse becomes a tool as a reaction against the colonizer's supplanting strength which insists in deleting the culture of 'inferiorized' peoples.

Truly Oswald's anthropophagic proposal also passed through the same deglutination process within Latin American criticism. In fact, it acquired new aspects and politicized itself as a response instrument against oppressing culture. Oswald's original anthropophagy term, which was also a re-appropriation of the concept, expanded itself to re-readings that provided opportunities to analyze Latin American cultures through a counter-proposal which replaces the theory of Eurocentric literature that marginalizes the literary production of peripheral countries.

The terms 'anthropophagy' and 'anthropophagist' became popular in Brazil in 1928, when Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto Antropófago* was published. The great concern of the *Manifesto* is the discovery of our culture, still highly unknown, and a return to our origins. The underlying idea was that Latin Americans should free themselves from the Western system.

We would be extremely shallow if we merely stated that Anthropophagy in Oswald's term would be a sort of total freedom from the preceding culture. Oswald's proposal is much deeper than that: it foresees anthropophagy as the sole means to unite people on an equality basis while revealing the interdependence of humans.

Only Anthropophagy unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically. The sole law of the world. A masked expression. For all types of individuality, of all collectivity. Of all religions. Of all peace treaties. Tupi or not tupi. That is the question (Andrade, 1975, p. 7).

Human beings are devourers. It lies in their instinct to devour the Other, without any feeling. This characteristic makes people brothers from the social, economic and philosophical point of view. It is a law that humanity repeats, covertly. It goes beyond religion and is now being reinterpreted in a deliberately figurative way. It would provide Brazil with the opportunity to practice the symbolic devouring of European culture which is not a cultural heritage but belongs rather to the world. Further, Oswald states firmly: "Without us, Europe would not have had the Declaration of Human Rights" (Andrade, 1975, p. 7), or rather, people

really live within a system of cultural interdependence.

Oswald's anthropophagy establishes a clear relationship with the issues of pre-colonial Brazil where civilization experienced the cultural models imposed by Portuguese and European patriarchy. Brazilian Art imitates foreign cultural and behavioral patterns. Anthropophagic concept deals with the critical devouring stance of foreign culture and its adaptation to the Brazilian background. It is actually the allegory of cannibalism as one of reaction modes against cultural dependence, a revolt against the artistic and cultural canons inserted within the society of the period.

Actually anthropophagy expresses devouring, deglutination, digestion of our European cultural heritage as a possible solution for Brazilian cultural stalemates. The attitude denotes a denial of the established hierarchical patterns since the absorption of the foreigner occurs within the digestive process.

When the Brazilian critic proposes a 'selective deglutination', he places Brazilian literature on the same plane as European literature through a dialogic attitude. Deglutination is also a metaphor for the creative process of a literature that appropriates the culture of the Other, or rather, it does not delete it, but places it within a creative relationship with an already canonical literature through a deliberate lack of respect for its privileged laws and place, considered untouchable by Eurocentric literary critique

In fact, in his manifesto, Oswald reveals the features of a joyful rebelliousness exhibited by the first inhabitants of Brazil, and also in Brazilian literature. Carnival, the joyful celebration by all classes of people, was our first act of an untrue assimilation of European culture. In other words, it is an act of pretending in the wake of the imposition of a culture transplanted in Brazil:

We have never been catechized. We celebrated Carnival. The Indian donned the cape of an Imperial senator. Pretending to be Pitt. Or characterized as a man with good Portuguese traits, as in the works by Alencar (Andrade, 1975, p. 7).

The anthropophagy concept determines the possibility of problematizing the colonial system and, at the same time, opening the way towards discussing the complex Brazilian identity. Therefore, the terms used by Oswald provide reflections with a cultural perspective and prod Brazilian literary criticism to formulate concepts on cultural dependence. The transition period between the 19th and the 20th century was decisive since literary nationalism was seeking arguments to

express a cultural identity regardless of the European models.

Oswald de Andrade's proposal in his *Manifesto Antropófago* (1975) tackled the cultural dependence issue within all the aspects of artistic production. Oswald criticized the romantic artificiality of the Indian; the pretension that Europeans catechized the Indigenes, giving us their religion; he deconstructed the problem of patriarchy by suggesting the 'Matriarchy of Pindorama', in an evident stance for the valorization of the feminine in Brazilian culture, totally discarding the patriarchal system in the country's organization:

Against social reality, cladded and oppressing, mentioned by Freud – a world without complexities, without madness, without any prostitution and without prisons, featuring the Matriarchy of Pindorama (Andrade, 1975, p. 7).

Candido, Schwarz and Santiago: Reflections on Anthropophagy

Antonio Candido provides a basic reflection on Brazilian literature. As a pioneer in the sociological perspective of Brazilian literary criticism, his works provide a hearty discussion between Brazilian and Latin American literatures and on the concept of the literary system and its relevance for the analysis of literary reception. The preface and the foreword to the *Formação da Literatura Brasileira* (1975) demonstrate the dependence relationship of Brazilian literature: "Our literature is a secondary branch of Portuguese literature; a second-rate literature in the garden of the Muses" (Candido, 1975, p. 9).

However, dependence commented on by Candido refers not merely to Portuguese literature but also to French literature from which the Portuguese one is derived. In other words, Brazilian literature is doubly colonized since Portugal was already an economic colony of Britain. In *Condição Pós-Colonial, Cultura Afro-Brasileira*, Gomes (2000) comments that Brazil had both a direct and an indirect colonizer: the former was Portugal; the latter was Britain. Following such reasoning, Brazil was doubly colonized due to the traditional historical bonds between Portugal and Britain. Our dependence on Portuguese literature and especially on Western culture is derived from the perception of the dialectic movement between universal and particular trends which combine in different forms: universalist trends dominate neoclassical concepts; particular trends dominate the romantic aesthetics. According to Candido, our literature is only independent after the Romantic period when it inserts itself within a system, even though it still

maintains links with foreign social factors. Contact with foreign literature is important so that the Brazilian reader does not fall into a village mentality.

Many years after, Leyla Perrone-Moisés resumes the same line of thought and defends the opening of Latin American literature to the foreigner as a way of freeing oneself from a senseless village mentality:

Our aim should not be the scorning of Europe, but to show the old continent what we have done differently with what it transmitted to us (Perrone-Moisés, 2007, p. 27).

Although an exaggerated village mentality should be avoided and admitting Portuguese affiliation at the very beginnings of the formation of Brazilian literature, Candido's nationalist sentiment makes him erect the structure of literary criticism hedged by premises based on his approach and theoretical presuppositions. The inaugural characteristic of his book reveals itself as the ideas on formation, system, value, function and tradition unfold. The above is due to the fact that Candido gives a systemic characteristic to literature in which the formation concept develops on a three-fold basis, namely, author, text, reader.

The existence of a set of literary products, more or less aware of their role, shaping the different types of public, without which the literary work dies, and a transmitting mechanism [...] linking one to the other (Candido, 1975, p. 23).

Foregrounded on a literary system comprising author, text and reading public, the literary system conceived by Candido presupposes the interaction of the three factors, coupled to the continuity process in the production of novels, short stories, plays, poems, which originated on the advent of Romanticism in Brazil. It seems that the formation of literature occurs in contrast to its origin (in this, case, Portuguese literature) and to other European literatures, while taking into account the several intersection modes. A serious problem emerges due to the exclusion of important literary contributions by Antônio Vieira and Gregório de Matos.

Within the context of comparative literature, Tania Franco Carvalho Carvalhal followed the footsteps of the Peruvian critic Antonio Cornejo Polar (Polar & Valdés, 2000) and formulated the issue of Brazilian cultural dependence in terms of 'one's own' and 'the other's', in a clear reformulation of Candido's 'the universal' and 'the local', the result of a literature in constant strain for producing an original literature and, at the same time, keeping in line with the centuries-old European tradition.

Discussions on cultural dependence are once again the center of concern on the literature produced in Latin America, or rather, the manner one is freed from the European heritage so much admired by the first Romantic writers in Brazil. Brazilian literature lies within this labyrinth between 'one's own' and 'the other's'. In fact, the latter has been a constant embarrassment, due to cultural dependence, to several writers who tried to proclaim their freedom, as Oswald's *Manifesto Antropófago* proposing the deglutination of the Other, depleting him of all creative force, so that the new would be born on Brazilian soil. Tania Franco comments the interpenetrations of 'one's own' and 'the other's':

One may perceive that the opposition between 'one's own' and 'the other's' is relativized when it lies within the intrinsic perspective of literary production where the absorption of the other participates in the construction of one's own. Therefore, the methodological distinction that polarizes the two factors should not hinder the awareness of the other's interpenetration in one's own or of that which is imitated in the text, which is the result of such inspiration (Carvalho, 2003, p. 138).

The author discusses appropriation and (re)appropriation processes of European culture in Brazilian culture and the consequences of such symbolic transitions for both cultures. In what proportion one bears the other's interpenetrations? Will the appropriation of the other concede the national characteristics to Brazilian literature it so much desired? Does Oswald's practice on the selective deglutination of the Other not lie beneath the possession process? Although the formulations are provided in other terms, such as the 'interpenetration of the other in one's own', the slow and progressive devouring of the Other occurs as if the national stance reveals its combative characteristic to acquire its own literature beneath the ruminations of much cultural coming and going.

In *Da razão antropofágica: diálogo e diferença na cultura brasileira*, Haroldo de Campos (1992) suggests the history of Brazilian literature that would include authors that rebelled against the canonic models, such as Antônio Vieira, author of *Os Sermões* (2008) and Gregório de Matos (2010), the baroque author, who was the first to concretize the 'anthropophagic condition'. Campos's approach on the dependence of Brazilian culture takes into account the dialogue between cultures from which a new product may emerge. When the importance of universal interdependence among peoples is highlighted, coupled to the above-mentioned dialogic relationship, the critic rejects Candido's classification as underdeveloped literature.

A statement of a type of historiography occurs throughout Haroldo de Campos's discussions. It takes into consideration the mechanisms of literary and cultural production, coupled to notions of dialogue and difference that pervade Brazilian literature. According to the critic, these concepts are informed by Oswald's anthropophagy and were anticipated by the poet Gregório de Matos.

Campos targets the critic Antonio Candido. When Candido foregrounded his concept of literature as a system, he puts at the rear the writers that did not contribute towards the system, such as Matos and Vieira. Campos considers faulty the project of the composition of national literature. The critic's disruption stance is clear and shuns Candido's convictions. In fact, he proposes a discourse that establishes a new basis for the concept of a literary tradition.

The issues related to Brazilian cultural dependence, to cosmopolitanism and to the dialectics between the universal and the particular were influential on Brazilian literary criticism and established a dialogue with Roberto Schwarz. Schwarz's *Nacional por Subtração* continues discussing Candido's ideas and demonstrates a malaise in the wake of the artificial and copied characteristics of Brazilian culture. However, when the author discusses renouncing the idea of the copy and the destruction of the idea of imitation, he concludes that the contradictions of Brazilian society are not produced by imitation but are the result of the capitalist system. Consequently, our artificial civilization is the result of social structures.

One of the factors that trigger Schwarz's critique may consist in re-discussing Oswald's ideas. The critic underscores the importance of Anthropophagy as disruptiveness and rebelliousness, since it contributes towards an interpretation of our backwardness within world culture:

Instead of astonishment, Oswald suggests an irreverent cultural stance, without any feeling of inferiority, metaphorized by the deglutination of the Other: it's a copy, but renewing copy (Schwarz, 2009a, p. 121).

Consequently, Schwarz seems to say that European ideas should be anthropophagically digested for the celebration of local factors and thus the reuse of themes, styles, composition principles and esthetic proposals elaborated in Europe is possible by changing the model's initial data.

The copy is not untrue if treated pragmatically, from the aesthetic and political point of view, or rather, when freed from the mythological requirement of creation from nothing (Schwarz, 2009b, p. 136).

The critic's attitude reveals the incorporation of the discourse of the Other in Brazil since Western culture, or rather, the external factor is transformed into the internal one, a datum on which Brazilian literature is constituted, in an attempt to re-signify Western discourse (the Other's). Schwarz's dialectical critique shows how external factors, or rather, the social and economic system, occur in the text, different from those in European literature. It is the act of deglutination since a new cultural meaning has been given to the imported mold.

Cevasco (2008) shows that Roberto Schwarz has given an important contribution to the development of cultural studies in Brazil. In fact, the idea of the 'national by subtraction' is a defining theme for Brazilian culture since it unties the duality knot between the national and the foreigner in the debate on Brazilian culture.

On the other hand, Silviano Santiago, has a different version to Schwarz's concept of ornamentality and artificiality. In *Apesar de dependente, universal* (Santiago, 1982), the critic states that Latin American literature is put on a lower plane because of temporal and quality factors. The temporal factor refers to Brazilian cultural backwardness when compared to the European, whereas the quality factor boils down to the lack of originality in the dominated culture. However, when the critic takes into consideration French deconstructivism, particularly Derrida's, he attributes strength and power to the so-called colonized or influenced texts, and thus, dependence by anthropophagy comes to the fore. Through anthropophagy, literature may be transformed, reordered and de-articulated from the dominant culture.

In fact, European literary works imitate or repeat several aspects found in European literature. They are factors that denote lack of originality and the cultural backwardness of the country. However, Campos states that European cultural values may be transformed and adapted to local and temporal needs through transculturation or the deconstruction of foreign culture.

According to Campos, anthropophagy recovers Brazilian literature from downgrading due to emphasis on transculturation. The term refers to the appropriation of original European texts by Brazilian writers so that they may build their own representation modes. Literature becomes a cognitive universe considered hybrid, absorbed by European culture:

[...] Influence pure and simple would not exist; neither influencing agents nor mixed ones. The two

cultures involved in the process would be transformed by clashes between them (Ribeiro, 2008, p. 2).

Hybridity involves the fusion of two cultures: the European and the Brazilian cultures, or rather, the mixture of the original and the copy. According to Bhabha (1991), a condition and a process are implied in the concept. The condition of colonial discourse in its enunciation occurs by the colonial authority in situations implying political clashes between unequal powers. It is actually a process of cultural negotiation since the conflicts that emerge through the new one are negotiated.

Bhabha describes hybridity as a threat to cultural and colonial authority due to the unforeseenability and the subversion of the origin concept or pure identity of the dominant authority. Through such a concept, Bhabha transgresses dominant discourse and requires the acknowledgement of difference. He insists on in-between places, interstitial places for the production of meanings. Similarly, Silviano Santiago (2000) in *O entre-lugar no discurso latino-americano* considers such spaces as sites in which assimilation, learning and reaction occur, or rather, the false obedience of Brazilian cultural product. Consequently, the author underscores the anthropophagic process as a contact space with other cultures.

The anthropophagic scene proposed by Silviano displaces and deconstructs colonial practices and values. Deglutination is the critical devouring of foreign culture: the digestive process includes the absorption of the foreigner, or rather, Brazilian originality, in the birth of a new literature hallmarked by hybridism and transculturality.

In *Caliban*, Roberto Fernández Retamar (2005) rereads Shakespeare in *The Tempest* and proposes the reinterpretation of *Caliban* as the symbol of Latin American resistance. The essay *Caliban ante la antropofagia* compares his arguments with the Brazilian anthropophagic movement.

En lo que a mi cuenta, a sabiendas de la existencia de la antropofagia ritual en muchos pueblos, la cual sobrevive sutilizada en ciertas ceremonias modernas, me proponía exculpar Caliban/canibal de la indiscriminada acusación de antropofagia tantas veces hecha sin suficiente fundamento, con la sola finalidad de subrayar su presunto carácter bestial y la inevitabilidad de exterminarlo o civilizarlo (Retamar, 2005, p. 148).

The ideas of the Cuban author in fact comply to several proposals in Oswald's anthropophagy. If the anthropophagic origin in Brazil is the symbol of devouring of the first bishop (European) by Indians

(Americans) from Bahia, the fact boils down to resistance to Europeans. The name *Caliban*, the title of Retamar's book (2004), in his reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (2013), is sharply a term of resistance.

Retamar illustrates the term when he revisits Candido's essay published in 1971. The critic insists that there was a devouring of European values incorporated to Brazilian reality. The values had to be destroyed, very much like what the cannibal Indians did to their enemies so that they would embody their power within their own bodies (Retamar, 2005). The term 'devour' employed by Candido is not synonymous to 'destroy'. Devouring the enemy means the extraction of his strength, or rather, the absorption of his culture and the assimilation of his identity.

Darcy Ribeiro's *Utopia Selvagem* (1982), quoted in *Caliban ante la antropofagia*, shows another type of resistance. It is a rereading/rewriting of *The Tempest* by Shakespeare (2013) featuring the anthropophagic process in which the Latin American reader/writer recreates the meaning of the text by parody. A new text ensues to subvert the original and traditional text. The disruption of the original text is emblematic within the resistance process. In fact, literature produced in Latin America is meaningful when analyzed through the anthropophagic aspect which triggers the deconstruction of hegemonic discourse.

Latin American's greatest contribution for Western culture is the problematization of the concepts of unity and purity: the two concepts become blurred; they lose their frightening weight, their mark of cultural superiority [...] (Santiago, 2000, p. 16).

Moreover, Latin American literary discourse is formed by a mixture of local and foreign discourse and should be understood as a heterogeneous discourse. Santiago even remarks that it would be impossible to understand Latin American literature as a discourse unbound to texts coming from European cultural tradition.

The Latin American intellectual may reread the literary tradition through anthropophagic eyes, from the point of view of 'selective deglutination' of poetic signs which, on the American continent, are pervaded by undeletable years and years of colonization. The right is given to poets, novelists and essayists to question the European's haughty view, by using and abusing the Eurocentric canon to disrupt its hermetic pretense of texts that would never be rewritten.

Retamar's statements on Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto* echo the need for a political and social

commitment by Brazilian and Latin American writers. They are both united through anthropophagy in their belief in a united and decolonized Latin America.

Maria Elisa Cevalco's thought, similar to the concepts dealt with above, may be added:

[...] the politic issue is the watershed that differentiates cultural studies, or rather, their sharp impulse to link social reality and difference in cultural practice (Cevalco, 2008, p. 174).

Final considerations

Current study has shown that the term anthropophagy was highly relevant for critical dialogue on Brazilian cultural dependence. The importance attributed to issues on cultural identity increased significantly by the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century due to literary nationalism that attempted to express cultural identity regardless of current European models.

Consequently, in its effort to formulate concepts on cultural dependence, Brazilian literary criticism proposed a search for our cultural identity. Antonio Candido and his organic metaphor of Brazilian literature as a 'secondary branch' of the Portuguese literature, insisted that Romanticism was the watershed of the entire Brazilian literary system.

Haroldo de Campos opposes Candido and underscores the concept of anthropophagy as described in Oswald's *Manifesto*. Anthropophagy gives the national stance a dialogical and dialectical relationship with the universal one, since Anthropophagy successfully illustrates our colonial inheritance.

Schwarz's criticism is very close to the arguments proposed by Candido, although the former adds the Marxist perspective to the sociological stance. When he pinpoints foreign ideas, he admits subordination since the copy condition is, in his opinion, the characteristic of our literature.

Silviano Santiago's ideas converge with those by Haroldo de Campos, since he believes that cultural dependence may be reverted through the dialogical movement of difference. Taking anthropophagy as a working concept, the two critics place national literature on an equal standing with foreign literature through transculturation and deconstruction of such terms as the national, copy and simulacrum (Souza, 2002).

According to Santiago, discussions on the first text by the second will indicate the direction inscribed on the matrix. The creating author goes beyond the point of convergence by learning the technique of the Other, called source or influence in

traditional terminology. This kind of reading will shatter the malaise imprinted by the imitative characteristic of dependence.

In his eagerness to overcome such malaise, Oswald de Andrade through his *Anthropophagy Manifesto*, searches for national identity. Gomes (2005) highlights that Oswald's anthropophagy comprises the devouring of our cultural heritage. In the process, our pre-established cultural standards would be denied so that the constitutive factors of our cultural formation could be valorized. Anthropophagy would demonstrate the paradoxes of our social and cultural formation.

The same author states that, according to Oswald, the idea of anthropophagy is a metaphor through which one may understand Brazil and the process of its cultural formation. After almost one hundred years, critical devouring conceived by Oswald's anthropophagy indicates a more equal dialogue with European culture. Difference, therefore, is an effective route so that cultural dependence would be problematized and disregarded so that Brazilian literature and culture would shed completely the idea of inferiority and dependence.

In fact, Oswald's contribution for Brazilian literary criticism should be a pattern to be adopted. Oswald's *Manifesto* has occupied the interests of international and Brazilian academic community since it tackles issues related to cultural dependence and other themes involving cultural and post-colonial studies. Acknowledgement of cultural dependence in our colonized society may be the road for the constitution of the originality of Brazilian literature.

Brazilian literature may solely discuss its originality when it emerges from the 'in-between' space, where the deglutination process involves one's own and the other's. Anthropophagy become the place for the enunciation in which the new is born: neither European nor Indian, but Latin American ready to transform readable into 're-readable' texts, when it appropriates itself of the culture of the Other without the malaise of cultural dependence.

Through the above discussion, we insist on the meaning of the term deglutination as absorption and cultural assimilation. The Eurocentric model is not denied. What is denied is unthoughtful, robot-like reproduction. Copying will continue but in a conscious way, at the assimilation level. Living within 'in-between' space (being Brazilian) consists in being an individual comprising the qualities of the Brazilian Indigene and those of the European colonizer.

Brazilian literature is the result of cultural condensation, free from stereotypes; it is not concerned on the issue of being original or a copy. Anyway, the originality of Brazilian literature lies in the dialogue between cultures.

Rereading the above-mentioned critics and their discussions on Oswald's anthropophagy for the possible interpretation of Brazil shows the distance from a true independence of ideas. The malaise of colonization and of cultural dependence still hovers on Brazilian literary production. It seems absurd that after almost a century, Oswald's statement that "Our Independence has still to be declared [...]" (1975, p. 7) echoes as a warning for the need to rethink Brazilian cultural production from the enunciation aspect, free from the foreigner's gaze, but through the Carnavalesque point of view of those who were never colonized and resisted the colonial cultural impositions through the sly smile of the carnivalization of habits: "We sent away the [Portuguese] dynasty and we should expulse the Bragantine spirit [...]" (Andrade, 1975, p. 7). It is the true role of Brazilian literary criticism that desires to understand the country through the literary phenomenon: expelling the European spirit which frequently leaves its clues in Brazilian literary criticism.

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