

The construction of the collective memory by literature: women in

America /

Construção da memória coletiva pela literatura: mulheres na

América

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ABSTRACT

In view of the official history, the greatest happenings concerning the discovery of the Newfoundlands and the migration movements were presented by the masculine figures. So, the traditional history did not consider, for example, the feminine point of view. There was, this way, an obliteration of the woman's presence, actions and feelings in relation to the facts around her. However, literature rises intending to propose new approaches of this past, presenting a subjective and decentralized discourse at the same time, just like fulfilling the gaps left by the central and official discourses. It is through memorialist discourse that many female characters acquire the chance to have their perspectives exposed and that may be offered to the official historiography new and creative alternatives to many of its happenings. The hybrid narratives of history and fiction can be presented throughout the traditional versions, deconstructive versions and mediation versions. So, the diegesis can offer their readers many versions of one same event and try to praise or oppose certain ones throughout literary art. In this regard, we aim to use historical novels that present memories to focus on our analysis. Consequently, in this line of study, this paper relies on the theoretical support of Halbwachs ([1968] 2003), Bernd (2013), Candau (2016) and Fleck (2017).

KEYWORDS: Memories; Female perspective; Historical Novel.

RESUMO

Perante a historiografia oficial, os grandes acontecimentos em relação aos descobrimentos de novas terras e os movimentos migratórios eram apresentados pelas figuras masculinas. Assim sendo, a história tradicional não considerava, por exemplo, o ponto de vista feminino. Dessa forma, houve um apagamento da presença, da atuação e dos sentimentos da mulher em relação aos fatos ao seu redor. Todavia, a literatura surge com o intuito de propor novas abordagens desse passado, apresentar um discurso subjetivo e descentralizado ao mesmo tempo, bem como preencher as lacunas deixadas por testemunhos centrais e oficiais. É por meio do discurso memorialístico que muitas personagens femininas obtêm a oportunidade de que sejam expostos seus prismas e que seja ofertada à historiografia oficial alternativas criativas e inovadoras para muitos de seus acontecimentos. As narrativas híbridas de história e ficção podem ser apresentadas pelas versões acríicas, críticas desconstrutivas e mediadoras. Assim, as diegeses romanescas podem ofertar ao seu leitor inúmeras versões de um mesmo evento e buscar enaltecere ou contestar determinados acontecimentos pela arte literária. Nesse sentido, tencionamos usar romances históricos que apresentam discursos memorialísticos para dar foco às nossas análises. Conseqüentemente, nessa linha de estudo, esse artigo conta com o suporte teórico de Halbwachs ([1968] 2003), Bernd (2013), Candau (2016) e Fleck (2017).

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Memória; Prisma feminino; Romance histórico.

1 Introduction

*“la savia de la historia
vivifica la literatura,
y viceversa,
la literatura es una fuente [...] para el conocimiento histórico.”
(MATA INDURAIN, 1995, p.14)*

The act of telling a story was, for a long time, only privilege of the white men who were the holders of power and spread along their journeys and conquests the euro phallocentric point of view

as an only model to be followed. Their achievements and their memories were taken into consideration concerning the discovery of Newfoundlands, colonization processes, migration movements, wars, among others. The female perspectives of these happenings were not accepted once the power of order and concepts considered right were disseminated by the masculine command. However, the points of view of the women could be different concerning the same events told through a male perspective, for the way they see an episode can have details and nuances not observed by the man.

The memory, which comes up in the thoughts of each person and through different ways, can be seen as remembered images about the past and it can be either individual or collective. The individual memory exists in a diversity of contexts, but it can also be shared by groups and this grants it a more truthful value since everyone can present their memories about specific events. Although the memories presented by the traditional historiography tried to corroborate with the power of the ruling class, the memories from the marginalized and excluded ones also had a lot to offer and, according to Pollak (1989, p. 4, our translation)¹, “when privileging the analysis of the excluded ones, the marginalized ones and the minorities, the oral history highlighted the importance of the subaltern recollections that, as a part of the minorities culture and dominated ones, impose themselves as ‘official memory’, in this case, national memory.” It is possible to observe that the subaltern memories, “rise in moments of crisis [and] in abrupt and exacerbated starts” (POLLAK, 1989, p. 4, our translation)².

Intrinsic to this fact, the memories from the minorities, the marginalized people and the excluded ones perform a huge role: they can be complicit with the facts presented, but they can also fight battles in opposition to a solid story. Therefore, both the historical field and the literary field can be shaken by new testimonies because the stories presented by the traditional historiography and the literary canon can be read and comprehended by many ways. There can be a dismantlement, a critic and a subversion of the facts considered the only proper ones. The historical and literary uniqueness

¹ Ao privilegiar a análise dos excluídos, dos marginalizados e das minorias, a história oral ressaltou a importância de memórias subterrâneas que, como parte integrante das culturas minoritárias e dominadas, se opõem à ‘memória oficial’, no caso a memória nacional.

² Afloram em momentos de crise [e] em sobressaltos bruscos e exacerbados.

are obliged to share their fields and listen to the perspective of those who were forgotten. So, the readers are now contemplated not only with the rewritings of history but also of the literature.

In the distinctiveness of this research, the historical novel is responsible, mostly, to bring out the analysis of the events that were considered utterly important to the human community and are divided into three phases according to Fleck (2017):

- First phase: with uncritical modalities in which we place the classic historical novels of Walter Scott and the traditional novels. The classic ones had their development from 1814/1819 until the middle of the twentieth century and the traditional ones from 1826 up to today.
- Second phase: with the critical and deconstructionist modalities in which we delimit the New Latin American historical novels, whose production goes from 1949 until nowadays; and the historiographic metafiction which are available from post-modernity on.
- Third phase: the mediation modality, which emerged with the post-*boom* of Latin American literature and whose production goes from the end of 1970 up to today, is called mediation contemporary historical novel.

In this merger of areas – historical novel and memorialist discourse – the historical or fictitious female characters, relegated to an inferior condition, redefine the colonial imaginary, wars and migration processes through distinct and revealing remarks of a not much accessed background until the twentieth century, presenting twists to a predetermined order. This intertwining of official and ex-centric voices allows important moments to be reread by literary art.

2 Feminine memories: reshaping the Brazilian colonial period

The colonization process towards the New World, here the sixteenth century is contemplated, was narrated through the point of view of the achievers, or as Sharpe (1992) says, the *history seen from above*. The huge discoveries and transformations were presented to the world by male writing and considered the only, right and worthy ones. Many perspectives about the Native inhabitants and their habits were distorted and spread in a low-grade manner. For example, the native women were

not seen as *decent*³ women for a matrimonial union, because they did not have *white* skin, were not *Christian* and had liberal sexual contact with men at any instant; and in accordance with Freyre ([1993] 2006), the European settlers who arrived in Brazil were struck by the *luxury* of these Natives, although they took advantage of this situation to satiate their desires.

It was based on this distorted impression of the Native woman, in which the Europeans judged them inferior, that was made necessary to implement White Christian women to the *New World*. Given the traditional historiography, many migration programs that relocated women considered *decent* to unite in matrimony to become obedient wives and bear children, whose goal was to separate the white Christian men from the Native women.

Portugal, for example, put into practice the migration program called *Órfãs-del-Rei*, or orphans of the queen as it also became known, during the sixteenth century. According to Ramos (2007), the country sent to Brazil, at that moment a colony in development, around sixty young women, between the ages of fourteen and thirty years old, to fulfill the necessities of the white men from a lower Portuguese cast that lived there. In a more detailed explanation, Almeida (2003) explains that many of them lived in orphanages where they received some education related to home care and how to behave in front of the society at that time; they belonged to virtuous and well-established families, and they were under the protection of Queen Catherine. Besides that, the author mentions that to be accepted into these orphanages, some characteristics were considered: they needed to be orphans of father and mother from a legitimate marriage; to have a good physical condition, not being blind or crippled; to offer the pleasures of the youth and to bear white children for the consolidation of the country in development.

In this merger of areas among history, historical novel and memorialist discourse, the author Ana Miranda, in her book *Desmundo* (MIRANDA, 1996), portrays one of these orphans of the queen and promotes the woman's visibility as the producer of an innovating discourse. The main character is Oribela de Mendo Curvo and she narrates not only her arrival to the *New World* but also the six other orphans' arrival. In this way, the Brazilian colonization history and the placement of the orphans

³ In this regard, Hilde Krueger, quoted by Karttunen (1997, p. 297), comments on the Mexican natives, and we believe this comment is also valid for the other natives of the American continent at the time, which "for these young Indian women, so animal-like in their approach to sex, the idea of chastity or virginity had no meaning at all." (KARTTUNEN 1997, p. 297, our translation).

are told in the first person by a woman, which reinforces that such happenings are not exposed by a masculine point of view. The narrative focus is presented by an *ex-centric* character and it highlights the perspective of the *history seen from below* (SHARPE, 1992).

Desmundo (1996), a mediation contemporary historical novel (FLECK, 2017), carries a critical rereading of the Brazilian colonial past. It does not exalt the vision presented by the traditional settler and does not distort its history, but it rereads the version presented by the traditional historiography in a critical manner and questions the acts of the settlers, such as the ones presented by the representatives of the Catholic Church. The protagonist herself, Oribela, questions the integrity of the Portuguese men, Christians of such good behavior, about the treatment they received: “Said the Old Woman. Wait. You will gain much more. I don’t know if she said that as irony, wanting to say whips and punishments; or if she meant ornaments.” (MIRANDA, 1996, p. 68, our translation)⁴. Such passage emphasizes the consciousness of the character in knowing that her life would be of submission and mistreatment by her spouse, with whom she would spend the next decades of her life.

In addition to this moment, Oribela condemns the illegal relationships of the settlers and priests – who should be at the service of the Church and the Christians –, but who also coupled with the black women of the land, the native women. “Those who were the concubines of the Christians and priests, that when they got tired of them they would be sold to the neighbors who desired them and, so, this way, a female was turned into merchandise.” (MIRANDA, 1996, p. 70, our translation)⁵. It not only specifies the fact that they had sexual relations with these women but that they also made objects of them that could be discarded whenever they had the intention.

According to Halbwachs ([1968] 2003, p. 29, our translation)⁶, “we rely on testimonies to reinforce or to weaken and, also, to complete what we know of an event about which we already have some information, although many circumstances about it remain obscure to us.” So, the remarks of the orphan portrayed as Oribela brings to life moments that maybe would not have been

⁴ Disse a Velha. Que esperem. Ainda haverão de muito ganhar. Não sei se falou de ironia, querendo dizer açoite e castigo; ou se falava de adorno.

⁵ Aquelas eram amancebadas de cristãos e de padres, que quando delas se cansavam as vendiam aos vizinhos que as desejavam e assim se faziam mercas de fêmeas.

⁶ Recorremos a testemunhos para reforçar ou enfraquecer e também para completar o que sabemos de um evento sobre o qual já temos alguma informação, embora muitas circunstâncias a ele relativas permaneçam obscuras para nós.

exposed if they had been reported by men, holders of the power, once they mentioned facts based upon their points of view, that is, considered the only correct ones. Consequently, the fictional book, for its aesthetic freedom, allows that veiled speeches of so many centuries to arise and signal their places and redefinitions of the past.

The fact that a woman rarely had the chance of exposing her ideas during the colonial period makes us understand that for her it was set the private space, while the men had the right to the public space. So, when the literature presents a female perspective narrative, her discourse is of huge value for it can reveal ignored situations and refresh the literary tradition.

The critical fictional rereading of this past, elaborated by the character Oribela is done linearly and therefore gives continuation to the happenings of the diegesis: the arrival of the orphans, the first impressions of the new place and of the native inhabitants, the marriage to Francisco de Albuquerque, the submission to the husband, the attempt of running away and returning to Portugal, the birth of her child and the abandonment by her husband Francisco, a character extracted from history. The term *extracted from history* was initially proposed by Trouche (2006, p. 44, our translation)⁷ and refers to a “group of narratives that engage into a dialogue with history, as a way of producing knowledge and disobeying intervention [...]”. Such term is also used to refer to the characters that make part of the official history spread.

Although the most recent historical novels share a much more simple vocabulary with more straightforward sentences, other times, to allow a stream in this contingent of memories, they “use a much more archaic language to create verisimilitude with the narrative” (FLECK, 2017, p. 111, our translation)⁸. Even though the character Oribela uses linearity in her discourse, we pay close attention to the fact that it is not a modern speech, but one from the sixteenth century, time in which the narrative takes place, and that offers more credibility to her remarks, as we can see in this excerpt: “Said to wish the best for the marriages of the orphans of Queen Catherine, issued an edict,

⁷ Conjunto de narrativas que encetam o diálogo com a história, como forma de produção de saber e como intervenção transgressora [...].

⁸ Valem-se de uma linguagem mais arcaica para criar verossimilhança com a narrativa.

that the grooms hurried to present themselves, men of great honor, heart filled with pride for the self-determination of their actions [...]” (MIRANDA, 1996, p. 51, our translation)⁹.

Halbwachs (2003, p. 39, our translation)¹⁰ states that “it is not enough to reconstruct piece by piece the image of an event in the past to obtain a memory. It is needed that this reconstruction works from the details or common notions that are present in our spirit and also in others [...]”. Employing this thought, we connect to the concept of intertextuality available in *Desmundo* (1996), for Oribela remembers the genital area of the women that were presented in the discovery letter of Brazil: “Walking among them, three or four women, very young and gentle, with their hair very black and very long, loose to their backs, and their private parts so prominent, so neat and so clean of their hair that they had no shame at all when we looked at them.” (CAMINHA, 2001, p. 29, our translation)¹¹. She transfers this historical information to literature, creating intertextuality by saying “I couldn’t stop looking at her private parts from above and from below” (MIRANDA, 1996, p. 39, our translation)¹². Such fact is presented so that her memory makes sense inside the literary text, thus generating more authenticity and verisimilitude for the literature.

Besides the recollections of the protagonist Oribela, there is also a diversity of testimonies from other orphans who depict their experiences in the colony and that can be seen as Bakhtinian writing features: dialogism, polyphony and parody. In accordance with Fleck (2017, p.111, our translation)¹³, “such procedures are equally essential in the constitution of new historical novels [...] in detriment of other writing features more strongly deconstructionist, such as the case of carnivalization, irony, multiple voices and exacerbated anachronism.” Due to this, we resort to the passage in which dialogism – a concept that shows how the elements of the narrative structure find

⁹ Disse querer o melhor para as bodas das órfãs de dona Catarina, mandou baterem édito, que os noivos se apressassem a se apresentar, homens de muita honra, coração tomado em alteza pelo alvidro de seus feitos [...].

¹⁰ Não basta reconstituir pedaço a pedaço a imagem de um acontecimento passado para obter uma lembrança. É preciso que esta reconstrução funcione a partir de dados ou de noções comuns que estejam em nosso espírito e também dos outros [...].

¹¹ Ali andavam entre eles três ou quatro moças, bem moças e bem gentis, com os cabelos muito pretos e compridos pelas espáduas, e suas vergonhas tão altas, tão cerradinhas e tão limpas das cabeleiras que, de as muito bem olharmos, não tínhamos nenhuma vergonha.

¹² Não pude deixar de olhar as vergonhas em cima, como embaixo.

¹³ Tais procedimentos são igualmente essenciais na constituição dos novos romances históricos [...] em detrimento de outros recursos escriturais mais fortemente desconstrucionistas, como é o caso da carnavalização, da ironia, do multiperspectivismo e das anacronias exacerbadas.

themselves in opposition as a counterbalance (BAKHTIN, 2010) – is highlighted between the characters Francisco de Albuquerque, Oribela’s husband, and his wife:

I was no deer to be hunt and dragged on the trails, I was not one of those marbled cats, neither a native animal nor public woman, he should have the respect for the matrimony [...]. He pretended he did not listen, the screams clattered through the hills, I was dragged. At home, he tied me to the feet of the bed with a rope [...]. (MIRANDA, 1996, p. 113, our translation)¹⁴

Although in emotional distress since she was feeling anguished and alone at the end of the world – the *desmundo* –, Oribela had tried to run away from her husband and return to Portugal without his permission, when he finds his wife, he treats her like an animal, dragging her behind his horse and, according to the society of that time, which qualified the man to have all the power over the woman, he finds himself correct in his attitude. But she believed that he had no right of comparing her to an animal and that the matrimony, formalized by the Church, should be responsible for her safety and because of this union she should be respected.

Dona Bernardinha, another character in *Desmundo* (MIRANDA, 1996), finds herself discredited from her honored condition of being an orphan of the queen, when her husband starts selling her body so that other men in the colony can make use of it, as it is pointed out by the protagonist: “Her bastard husband served his wife to others in exchange of money, a long line was formed in front of his house and her screams were heard, from the men some laughs, some of them gave a coin for that, others a piece of anything [...]” (MIRANDA, 1996, p. 151, our translation)¹⁵. Relegated to the condition of a sexual object that can be used as others wish and at any moment, we focus on the idea that polyphony – “multiple voices available inside the limits of the book” (BAKHTIN, 2010, p. 39, our translation)¹⁶ – is present.

First, because it shows that the ideology belonging to the male class of taking possession of the wife, imposing misogynist standards and doing whatever wished to the wife, as mentioned by

¹⁴ Que não era veado a ser caçado e arrastado nas trilhas, não era aqueles gatos jaspeados, bicho nem natural nem mulher pública, devia ele o respeito do matrimônio [...]. Fazia ele que não escutava, os gritos retiniam pela serra, eu arrastada. Em casa amarrou com a corda me prendendo aos pés do catre [...].

¹⁵ O perro do esposo dela fazia servir sua mulher por dinheiro, que se fez uma espera na frente da vivenda e dela se ouviam gritos, deles os risos, uns davam por isso uma moeda, outros um pedaço de uma qualquer coisa [...].

¹⁶ Uma multiplicidade de vozes plenas nos limites de uma obra.

Araújo (2011, p. 46, our translation)¹⁷, “the man was superior, and so, it was up to him to exercise his authority.” Second, because it is exposed the fact that the woman could not position herself and express her suffering and opinions. Third, because it is observed that the Church did not intervene in the married life of its Catholic loyal believers and, with that, we stress that it was complicit to the husband’s attitude. The male power stands out and shows that the domestication of the woman, whether it was a wife, daughter or nun, was based on an area that was reserved for the men because they were transferred from the Church submission to their husband’s submission, but always in the hands of the men. All of these are different discourses that show an agreement among themselves and at the same time shock themselves because they reveal different perspectives, but they all lead to female obedience.

This is only one of the stories from the orphans of the queen that was transported from the historiography into fiction in which the author had the opportunity to reshape their status, for, according to Halbwachs,

[...] the history is not the entire past and it is not everything that lasts from the past either. Or, so to speak, beside a written history there is always a history alive, which perpetuates itself or renews itself through time, in which we can find again a huge number of these old trends that disappeared only in appearance. (HALBWACHS, 2003, p. 86, our translation)¹⁸

When Oribela, the protagonist in *Desmundo* (MIRANDA, 1996), rewrites the story of the orphans of the queen, she can revive characters that were of great importance for the Brazilian colonization and, by doing so, she does not allow their experiences to fall into oblivion.

Therefore, through a contemporary narrative, which outlines the areas of memory and contemporary historical novel of mediation, the character Oribela, in *Desmundo* (MIRANDA, 1996) presents herself as the main character in her own story, and narrates her perspective on the way she was inserted in the *New World*. She contradicts the remarks presented by the traditional

¹⁷ O homem era superior, e portanto, cabia e ele exercer autoridade.

¹⁸ [...] a história não é todo o passado e também não é tudo o que resta do passado. Ou, por assim dizer, ao lado de uma história escrita há uma história viva, que se perpetua ou se renova através do tempo, na qual se pode encontrar novamente um grande número dessas correntes antigas que desapareceram apenas em aparência.

historiography and succeeds, from this reconstruction work of herself, in presenting women that tend to redefine their subaltern condition by means of critical rereadings.

Pollak also (1989, p. 13, our translation)¹⁹ expresses that life histories “must be considered as instruments of identity reconstruction, and not only factual accounts.” Consequently, when memorialist, literary and historical fields become united, there is a rupture in the boundaries in which a reconstruction of individuals, times and habits become exposed. It is the memories of this protagonist recreated by fiction which makes part of the *Órfãs-del-Rei*, that they become trustworthy insofar as we have an idea that these accounts could have been part of a group whose history had an immense impact in the Brazilian collective field: it was women who built some of the Brazilian families considered traditional and official.

3 A representation of America's warriors: Anita Garibaldi (1821 – 1849) – a Brazilian independent heroine

Latin America, from the 1940s on, started a literary movement that, influenced by Hispanic-American modernism, reconfigures its narrative, in such a way that it does not corroborate European molds anymore, but appropriates itself in a style that defines its cultural independence. An innovation of this period consists of the writing of historical novels which does not relate to Walter Scott's (1771 – 1832) production. This rupture with the canon features a great deal of the novelistic narrative from the second half of the twentieth century.

Given the theme addressed by this research, it is inevitable that literature, history and memory come together, leading the approach to this subject from different angles of representation. Thus, the analysis lies in a Latin-American character from her heroine status. Ana Maria de Jesus Ribeiro (1821 – 1849), Anita Garibaldi, a historic personality who was widely fictionalized, is a suitable example of how history and memory are used by literature from tangled speeches, which intertwine and weave so many others, contributing, this way, to the redefinition of the historical past.

¹⁹ Devem ser consideradas como instrumentos de reconstrução da identidade, e não apenas como relatos factuais.

Briefly speaking, Ana Maria de Jesus Ribeiro (1821 – 1849) becomes part of the official historiography as the wife of the warrior Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807 – 1882), who followed him for ten years in battles in Brazil, Uruguay and Italy. Her image turns out to be recognized and valued in Brazil and from the twentieth century on, once, back then the current and strong paternalist system ruled the mentions related to this historical character due to her actuation in a male context mainly.

The story of Anita and Giuseppe has instigated historians and novelists who notice a singular aspect in this relationship: the fact that Anita has been present in the public and social context in a period which this presence was a male priority. The marital separation, the participation in battles and the fact of leaving her country to accompany Giuseppe led Anita to be a distinct and respected personality in her birthplace, and also in other countries within the American continent, with literary representations of this character in different places of the continent, besides Italian recognition.

When it comes to her importance throughout the years, we can highlight two moments in which the representation of this historical personality stands out in national context. Firstly, in 1939, in Laguna – Santa Catarina. The city where Anita was born would celebrate the centenary of the Catarinense republic, also known as Juliana republic, instituted in Laguna in July 24th, 1839, and, as a way of drawing attention to the government for possible neglect towards the port activities of the place – configuring a moment of crisis for the city –, Anita was used as a heroine from Laguna.

Another occasion in which this personality is focused occurs in 1999, along with the celebrations of the fifth centenary of the discovery of Brazil, with the remembrance of the 150 years of Anita Garibaldi's death. Thus, biographic works and also historic novels are released in the Brazilian context with the view of promoting an update on this Brazilian personality.

Concerning the novelistic production, we focus our attention on the work *A Guerrilheira* (1979) by João Felício dos Santos, with the intent of analyzing in this writing, aspects that highlight this redirect of the literary prose from the twentieth century on, among them: to critically redefine past registers, especially those about the character for historical extraction Ana Maria de Jesus Ribeiro, and to make use of the collective memory instituted on Brazilian imaginary to recompose the existence and importance of this personality. Given this perspective, it is important to highlight some observations that Halbwachs (2003) exposes about the relation between history and memory:

History is the compilation of facts which occupied a great place in the memory of men. However, read in books, taught and learned in schools, the past happenings are selected, compared and classified according to needs or rules which were not imposed to the circles of men who, for a long time, were its live repository. (HALBWACHS, 2003, p. 100, our translation)²⁰

Understanding that memory and history are distinct areas of knowledge, even though they have the same source, which is the past, we comprehend that the process of redefining past concepts goes through those two aspects, rethinking them critically. Thus, Anita Garibaldi, in the narrative of João Felício dos Santos, is not one whose image is the one disseminated by official historiography, always seen in the company of Giuseppe Garibaldi, but, rather, an idealistic, dreamy and critical-tempered personality, who does not accept many of the realities in which she is inserted and does not hesitate to criticize social issues. According to Ribeiro (2011), “the protagonist of *A Guerrilheira* is totally averse to domestic chores and struggles with deeds and words to gain the freedom to frequent the male universe.” (RIBEIRO, 2011, p. 20, our translation)²¹

Broadly speaking, the work tells the story of Anita Garibaldi from the age of 16 (1837) until she and Giuseppe's departed from Brazilian territory (1842). The novel is divided into two parts: “*The land*”²² and “*The war*”²³. The sequence of actions is presented by an extradiegetic narrator and, thus, we have unlimited access to all aspects of the narrative.

In this way, the first part - “The land” - has 52 chapters that discuss Anita's life before meeting Giuseppe in the city of Laguna in Santa Catarina. The second and longest part of the work, “The war”, begins with David Canabarro and the arrival of combatants in Laguna, with the establishment of the Juliana Republic, which historically receives this name because it was established in July of 1839. It is only in chapter 60 that Anita and Giuseppe Garibaldi meet for the first time when he arrives by the sea in the city of Juliana. According to the narrative, Anita recognizes him at the first moment and, moved by great excitement, celebrates the arrival of everybody.

²⁰ A história é a compilação dos fatos que ocuparam maior lugar na memória dos homens. No entanto, lidos nos livros, ensinados e aprendidos nas escolas, os acontecimentos passados são selecionados, comparados e classificados segundo necessidades ou regras que não se impunham aos círculos dos homens que por muito tempo foram seu repositório vivo.

²¹ A protagonista de *A guerrilheira* é totalmente avessa às tarefas domésticas e luta com atos e palavras para ganhar a liberdade de frequentar o universo masculino.

²² A terra

²³ A guerra

Thus, João Felício dos Santos, in *A Guerrilheira* (1979), profiles a possibility of historical reconfiguration by Anita Garibaldi that sheds light on a critical perspective, which deconstructs her historical image as someone in the shadow of Giuseppe Garibaldi, of a woman who is considered to be a heroine for the love she felt, and not for understanding the urgent need to seek social justice through political clashes. Anita, in this narrative, is a politician, a fighter, an idealizer. In the critical and deconstructionist fiction of the Latin America's new historical novel, she is the appropriate representation of a woman who actively participated in combat not only in Brazil but also in Uruguay and the European continent. The character's critical engagement permeates the entire novel, especially Anita's speeches, when she comments on the war and the Brazilian social conditions of the period, such as slavery. The fragment below reveals this character:

Just mounted, Anita leaned over to release the reins of the ring from the municipality's hose. Then, she tilted with immense grace and skill, Fidélis, her big Brazilian horse, with long manes as if they were the back of his dreams of freedom, and freely said what she wished:

- Good night, in general! Good, big guys! And you, Tancredo Escobar, may the pampas enter you through the window in the infinity of this night ... And you, friend Chaves, remember that, while there are hunger, injustice and abandonment, how can a king sleep in peace? (SANTOS, 1979, p. 33, 34, our translation)²⁴

This critical positioning about politics and social reality that characterize the configuration of the character Anita in the novel by João Felício dos Santos is recurrent in the work, as we can also see in the following fragment:

- And if Your Reverend messes with those people who are mine, with or without a paper of truth it is the same as messing with a jaguar! And I tell you more, Chico, you are as much owner of those lands as the imperialists of the devil are owners

²⁴ Apenas montada, Anita se debruçou para soltar as rédeas do argolão do mangueirinho da municipalidade. Em seguida, empinou com imensa graça e habilidade, o Fidélis, seu brasino meão, de crinas longas como se fossem o dorso de seus próprios sonhos de liberdade, e largou no vento mais desejos de:

– Buenas noches, no geral! Buenas, grandões! E tu, Tancredo Escobar, que os pampas te entrem pela janela nos infinitos desta noite... E tu, Chaves amigo, lembra-te que, enquanto houver fome, injustiça e abandono, como pode um rei dormir em paz?

of the blacks who steal in Africa, all only owned by God! (SANTOS, 1979, p. 76, our translation)²⁵

Therefore, we infer that the fictional representation of well-known historical characters in this critical modality of the historical novel happens through a different approach, offering the reader a perspective that does not corroborate with the official discourse, on the contrary, criticizes and refutes it. The author, in this novel, critically fills in what Candido (1988, p. 175, our translation) claims to be the attributions of literature: "Literature confirms and denies, proposes and denounces, supports and fights, providing the possibility of experiencing problems dialectically."²⁶

Fictional writing points out that Anita would be involved in fighting in the struggle for her land even if the love affair with Giuseppe had not taken place. Her actions in this sense, according to the narrator, occur because she is an idealist and actively fights for what she believes. As the novel makes it clear: "- What I want is the Farroupilha Republic! How, I still don't know. But I want it! Who I am! Are you my husband and ask me who I am? Well, Chico: I am the Republic!" (SANTOS, 1979, p. 100, our translation)²⁷

Santos' (1979) work is, therefore, parodic writing since the historiographic material inserted in it is critically redefined. To highlight the critical aspect of *A Guerrilheira* (1979), we selected two excerpts that illustrate the refutation of the historical discourse, attributing to the protagonist a high level of criticism and dissatisfaction with the reality in which she is part of. As we can see in:

- Now, Manuel, let me finish: do you know who did things? All crowns, and kings, and rulers, and governments in the world? It was not oxen with their meekness; it was the ones who needed to protect themselves under any wing. The cowards. The bloodhounds. Those who lie down. Those who, because they fear the fight, fight for one who commands all. They are weak and require a boss... a leader... I

²⁵ – E se Vossa Reverendíssima mexer naquela gente que é minha, com ou sem papel de prova, é o mesmo que mexer com onça parida! E vou lhe dizendo mais, Chico, o senhor é tão dono daquelas terras como os imperialistas do diabo são donos dos negros que roubam na África, tudo só de propriedade de Deus!

²⁶ A literatura confirma e nega, propõe e denuncia, apóia e combate, fornecendo a possibilidade de vivermos dialeticamente os problemas.

²⁷ – O que quero é a República Farroupilha! Como, ainda não sei. Mas quero-a! Quem sou! És meu marido e me perguntas quem sou? Pois bem, chico: eu sou a República!

don't know, Manuel - Anita grew in words - but I am like animals. I don't admit that anyone gives me orders. [...]. (SANTOS, 1979, p. 78, our translation)²⁸

And also in:

- Blacks do lie, my general. But, they lie when they realize that, telling the truth, it ends in whipping! Furthermore, hico, if we ate what we give them to eat and worked only half of what we make them work, we would be much lazier than the worst of them. Also, I'm sorry, General, they are ignorant because nobody lets them learn anything but toiling. Nobody wants them to know even that they are humans, God's creatures, like us-others! This, friend, cannot last any longer... what do you think? They bring the slaves here in boats or filthy troops, without air or food... More than half die on the way ... And the men who deal with this load of pieces say they are Christians! Shame on you, Saint Crispim! (SANTOS, 1979, p. 215-216, our translation)²⁹

Both excerpts present a questioning, dissatisfied and revolutionary character. The narrative, therefore, uses the fact and the historical character to reposition her fictionally, elaborating a parody that can be understood by its self-referentiality, causing the first text on a given subject to be discussed. As in a mirror game, it is the coexistence of two texts evidently confronted.

In this sense, Santos (1979), when narrating a story about Anita Garibaldi that not only represents it but also reinvents it, collaborates so that the historical discourse is not the only possibility of a perception of the past. Literature thus presents itself as an interpretive possibility that is not tied to historiographic cutouts. The leading role in *A Guerrilheira* (SANTOS, 1979) is, first, that of a free, idealistic woman who always acts in favor of the feeling that she is affected, not being inhibited by social issues.

²⁸ – Agora, Manuel, deixa eu terminar: sabes quem fez as coisas? Todas as coroas, e reis, e regências, e governos no mundo? Não foram os bois com a sua mansidão; foram os que precisavam se proteger debaixo de uma asa qualquer. Os covardes. Os sabujos. Os que deitam. Aqueles que, porque temem a luta, lutam por um que mande em todos. São fracos e exigem um chefe... um líder... Não sei, Manuel – Anita crescia nas palavras –, mas eu sou como os bichos. Não admito que ninguém me dê ordens. [...].

²⁹ – Os negros mentem sim, meu general. Mas, mentem quando percebem que, dizer a verdade, termina em açoites! Ademais, chico, se nós comêssemos o que damos para comer e trabalhássemos só a metade do que os fazemos trabalhar, seríamos bem mais preguiçosos do que os piores deles. Também, me desculpe vancê, seu general, são ignorantes porque ninguém os deixa aprender nada além de labutar. Ninguém quer que eles saibam nem mesmo que são homens, criaturas de Deus, como nós-outros! Isso, amigo, não pode durar mais tempo... que te parece? Trazem os escravos para cá em barcos ou tropas imundos, sem ar ou sem comida... Morre mais da metade pelo caminho... E os homens que lidam com essa carga de peças se dizem cristãos! Que vergonha, São Crispim!

4 *Xicoténcatl* (1826): the first Latin American historical novel and the first in the Spanish language

In the case of Spanish speaking Latin-American, the events of 1492, the colony, and the struggles for independence became historical references around which a collective memory summons up a common past. Those episodes were remembered and reproduced several times, and still are, provided that they are part of their cultural identity.

Candau (2016, p. 25, author's italics, our translation) states that "[the term identity is] used in a less strict sense, close to similarity or similitude, that always satisfies natural spirit's inclination. [...] a (cultural or collective) identity is certainly a *representation*." It is thus understood that every Spanish speaking Latin-American shares, in similarity or similitude, a representation of three specific moments: the accounts of a) the arrival of Europeans to the Americas, b) memoirs of times in which took part of Imperial Spain's colonies and c) the struggles for independence against Spain.

Such events are already present in the anonymous oeuvre *Xicoténcatl* published in 1826. It becomes the first in the Spanish language – the book is previous to any other earlier Spanish historical novel (CASTRO LEAL, 1964) –, and the first Mexican and Latin American historical novel. This work is the perfect example of intermediate writing between the neoclassical heritage and the birth of the archetype of writing in our continent.

Its release occurs concurrently with the French author Alfred Vigny's *Cinq-Mars* (1826), without any conceptual or purposeful linkage between the works. The anonymous Latin American text, however, breaks with Scott's model of historical novel – implying that the historical background turns into the central thread in the work where characters, of historical extraction and purely fictional, collaborate with the progress of the narrative. And, beyond that, the anonymous narrative, even while considered as of traditional phase (FLECK, 2017), provides a criticality that only will be monitored in Latin American works of the twentieth century, officially established by Scott (1949), that comes from historical novels of the second phase, according to Fleck's proposed theory (2017).

Additionally, the title *Xicoténcatl* (1826) refers to the name of an ex-centric hero, a character of historical extraction. Customarily, this type of character would never have been chosen as the Apollonian hero in a Euro-phallogocentric narrative as i. e. in works of Scott and Vigny. The literary

piece presents the historic deeds of Xicoténcatl, the young. The hero cannot prevent the conquest of the territories of today's Mexican nation by Hernan Cortés, the villain. Therefore, the fictional discourse explains how the death of the indigenous world occurs to give way to the mestizos' world, our Latin America.

Hence, Forero Quintero (2012) states that the narrative in *Xicoténcatl* (1826) already endures the *status quo* of that time because it argues not only the Spanish authorities³⁰ but also the narrative voice shows itself concerned about the US imperialism empowerment around the world. Furthermore, according to the scholar, the oeuvre delivers the thesis of a Manifest Destiny of the Mexican nation.

In the texture of this novel, it can be seen two antagonistic groups: one lead by Cortés, degraded to a villain, and his host, including corrupted native collaborators. They stage together with the group lead by Xicoténcatl, the young, a Tlaxcalan hero, framed as a classic hero (DEL POZO GONZÁLEZ, 2017) – for a long time considered a deserter, due to him opposing to support Cortés' cause – and his native followers. The Tlaxcalan Republic, as it is exhibited in the narrative, is one of the coexisting *señorios* during the Aztec Empire. It is appointed as the utopian republic, the future seed of the Spanish speaking countries in America conceived by the speaking voice in the narrative.

Consequently, the fictional discourse in *Xicoténcatl* (1826) pursues to attest that natives opposing Cortés enterprise and those who cooperated with the Europeans, all together take part in the constitutive foundation of the *mestizos*' world. The novel follows history voicing strong criticism of the registered facts. Therefore, the work is allocated to the traditional historical novel modality (FLECK, 2017). Seen in these terms, it can be proved that

In this prime work there are two elements which are responsible for the rise of the new Latin American historical novel (MENTON, 1993): the turndown of power, as a result of a history full of sequelae caused by authoritarian regimes in a land plundered by violence and exploitation; and a clear anti-Spain attitude, as observed by Celia Fernández Prieto (2003) to be one of the attributes of the Hispanic-American historical novel in its advanced phase of modernism (FLECK, 2017, p. 48, our translation).

³⁰ Its release arises during the period of struggles for independence of Mexico and other territories under the control of the Spanish colonial empire.

As a result, already at the beginning of the nineteenth century, this oeuvre holds what Santiago (2000, p. 20 – 21, our translation) refers to as “assimilation uneasy and insubordinate, anthropophagic [...] [of other’s writing, a] [...] sensuous experience with the foreigner’s sign”. Throughout the narrative, the discursive voice debates on Spaniards’ stance chosen, since the events of 1492, at the treatment of natives, politics, and actions. Moreover, the diegesis debunks the destruction of native peoples by Spaniards during the period of conquest/invasion. And, finally, there is an impassioned anti-Spain speech along the entire narrative calling for the independence of the Spanish Empire. As a result, *Xicoténcatl* (1826) is regarded as the germ of Latin America’s new historical novel.

5 Reconstruction of the memories of indigenous women in America: *Xicoténcatl* (1826)

In *Xicoténcatl*'s diegesis, we draw attention to the portrayal of indigenous women in the oeuvre: *doña Marina* – the name the historical character La Malinche received during baptism from Spaniards – and Teutila – a wholly fictional character³¹. Together, these two characters function as evidence of the thesis in the narrative on the birth of the Mexican Nation, embodied by the child's birth of La Malinche and Cortés at the end of the fourth chapter.

The first literary representation of La Malinche occurs in *Xicoténcatl* (1826). Understanding this first portrayal of the historical figure in literature, one of the most important indigenous women for the process of Spanish colonization of Latin America, allows us to understand how was the process of formation of American peoples' identity.

³¹ In the oeuvre, all characters are of historical extraction. Teutila, on the other hand, is the only fully fictional character. She was created as a synecdoche to represent every woman who rejected the conquistador's culture (DEL POZO GONZÁLEZ, 2017). Another interesting feature in the narrative is that, besides *doña Marina*, according to Pulido Herráez (2011, p. 53 – our translation), all are type characters: “*Jicoténcatl es una novela que centra su composición en los personajes. Estos devienen tipos, ideólogos que defienden una postura política y una actitud moral: o son republicanos, y ello implica que respetan las leyes y los acuerdos, que defienden la libertad y la justicia, que están dotados de virtudes; o, por el contrario, son defensores de la monarquía, es decir tiranos (como sucede con Cortés), y al tiempo que déspotas son ambiciosos sin medida, corruptos, seres sin escrúpulos en su meta de obtener el poder*” [Jicoténcatl is a novel that centers its composition in the characters. These are type, defending a politic posture and a moral attitude. They are or republicans, implying that they respect laws and treaties; they are defenders of liberty and justice. They are gifted with virtues. Or, by contrast, they are defenders of monarchy, that is, they are tyrants (as it happens to Cortés), and, at the same time they are despots. They are unlimitedly ambitious, corrupts, beings without scruples in their goal to get power].”

La Malinche, or *doña Marina*, thenceforth this first literary portrayal, becomes one of the most re-created in fictional narratives (HERREN, 1993), not only in Mexico but also worldwide. As Herren (1993, p. 11, our translation) puts it, this character grows in importance for being “so gifted, so mysterious, so strange, so singular and without whom the fall of the almighty Aztec Empire in 1521 would not be possible.”³² Cypess (1991, p. 2) remarks that “despite the many controversies concerning other participants in the conquest, no figure is as ambiguous and abstract as La Malinche.” This ambiguity is partly related to the fact that there are only some registers about Malinche’s life written by Europeans.

As a slave, a woman, and a native from the sixteenth century, she did not furnish documentary evidence of her own life. And not all of the chroniclers wrote about her as a positive figure. Bernal Díaz del Castillo is who most praises her and writes about her sympathetically in his *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, published postmortem in 1632. However, this chronicle was widely criticized by his detractors due to his writing of those events were during his last years of life.

Hernán Cortés, the only historical character who could have written directly about her, did not do it. He guarded his rule of avoiding to report in his writings about not relevant issues or people. According to Pastor (1983) quoted by Fernández Prieto (2003, p. 156, our translation): “Spanish conquistadors reported history in compliance with his political interests. They silenced facts that could discredit their image before their superiors.”³³

Therefore, Cortés silenced La Malinche in *Cartas y relaciones* (1866) when he mentions her barely by the use of the pronoun *ella*, the noun *lengua*, and the adjective *india*. He only uses her name of baptism once: “It is *doña Marina*, the treasurer’s woman, who verified they were at the city, [...] and this way she appeased the referred commotion.”³⁴ (CORTÉS, 1866, p. 387, our translation). His inference about her happens, according to Cypess (1991) and Herren (1993), when, in that context, she was already forced to marry the treasurer mentioned by Cortés’ orders.

³² “*tan bien dotado, tan misterioso, tan extraño, tan singular y sin el cual un hecho trascendente como la caída en 1521 del poderoso imperio de los aztecas seguramente no hubiera sido posible*”.

³³ “*los conquistadores españoles contaban la historia de acuerdo con sus intereses políticos, silenciando cuanto podía acarrearles desprestigio ante sus superiores*”.

³⁴ “*é á doña Marina, mujer del dicho tesorero, se certificó que estaban en la ciudad, [...] é así se apaciguó el dicho alboroto*”.

Another practice in which the memoirs of La Malinche appear in historical records is in pictorial documents such as in codices commissioned to native artists by Spanish colonial authorities, according to Aguiar (2014), between 1519 to 1521. Those records show Malinche's image positioned not only in the center but also next to Hernán Cortés. It is displayed how important she is in the memory of who represented her. However, those depositions are less powerful when compared to European alphabetic writing. The researcher, in conformity with Aguiar (2014), would require an interpreter who could unravel the meanings of those pictorial representations.

In the past, La Malinche was one of the twenty slaves Totonacs granted Cortes as a statement of submission following the battle of Tabasco. As a biographer, Herren (1993) states she is roughly 16 years old. Thanks to her interpersonal abilities, her mastering of native languages, and her prompt apprenticeship of the Castilian language, Cortés uses her as the decoder passkey of the politic singularity of native peoples in a period when freedom from Aztec servitude was desired.

Herren (1993, p. 35, our translation) states that natives named Cortés, La Malinche, "Marina's master"³⁵. This is the first time in history, attested in our continent, that the name of the native slave woman was used to reference her own master. Later, Cortés' native interpreter became known in history with this designation (HERREN, 1993). In the narrative, *doña Marina* is portrayed as a round character.

In this character, it is of clear understanding of four phases in the construction of her portrayal along the diegesis. The first one is introduced by the voice of the Spanish character, Ordaz, who mentions her as being naive, because Cortés: "[...] almost boasts his adulterous affair with that Indian woman, who is maybe a victim of his seduction [...]". (ANONYMOUS, 1999, p. 16). In the second one, the announcing voice of the discourse unveils *doña Marina's* portrayal as of someone corrupted by Europeans. Consequently, she becomes Cortés' perfect weapon, owing to the benefits she brings to her master, without raising suspicions from her fellow countrymen. The third phase brings the character as a scheming woman, a sexual monster who tries to seduce: "[...] It would be difficult to describe how surprised the honest Spaniard was upon hearing the open declaration of love emanating from *doña Marina*." (ANONYMOUS, 1999, p. 39).

³⁵ "el amo de Marina".

Also in the third phase, the diegesis shows the hero Xicoténcatl, the young, irascible at understanding that *doña* Marina is not the maiden he believed her to be (she was already carrying Cortés' child). He even cogitated the possibility of replacing Teutila marrying Malinche: – ‘It is possible, great Lord!’ he exclaimed after a long and deep silence, ‘is it possible for there to be such treachery, and so much duplicity, and so much falseness, and so much artifice, and so much infamy? That unworthy American, [...] Who could have discovered the poison in her tender words?’ (ANONYMOUS, 1999, p. 65). This is how *doña* Marina receives the configuration of Cortés' mistress, a woman that seduces to fulfill her goals.

Finally, in the fourth phase, at the end of the fourth chapter, the character modifies her discourse and behavior as she feels the pains of childbirth. She shows herself repentant: “[...] let my suffering serve as example and lesson to those who, like me, abandon the path of virtue.” [...]. (ANONYMOUS, 1999, p. 98) and she is decided to return to her native traditions, because: “[...] from the moment that I became a Christian, my progress along the road to the crime was greater than the beautiful virtues of Teutila.” (ANONYMOUS, 1999, p. 120). This is how the circle closes when developing the character's configuration.

It is possible to contrast this round configuration with Teutila's portrayal, which is a flat and type character. Teutila is a defensor of the indigenous world ever since the beginning. In the narrative, she is the only fully fictional character and she embodies all indigenous values. Her configuration carries the beauty of the American continent and the indigenous cosmogony (DEL POZO GONZÁLEZ, 2017). At first, it is presented as the antithesis of *doña* Marina. However, only at the end of the reading, it comes to mind that actually, she is the character who supplements *doña* Marina's following the thesis of the diegesis. Teutila is considered a flaw due to her not giving birth to any child to Xicoténcatl, the young, while she does not consent Cortés having children with her. Moreover, Teutila fails to poison Cortés, and by doing so she is guilty, according to the narrative's thesis, for her being unsuccessful in the disruption of Spanish plans to conquer. Teutila's death in the diegesis is as inevitable as the fall of the indigenous world.

Thereupon, the only possible solution, in conformity with the thesis of the fictional discourse, is the birth of the mestizo's world, as represented by *doña* Marina and Cortés child. Therefore, inside the fictional representation, La Malinche becomes the symbolic mother of the mestizo's world, since

she does not only accept the new provided by the European world but also she treasures indigenous values. Therewith, the thesis proves that natives collaborators of Cortés and those not corrupted establish the foundation of the new society. As stated by Nevárez (2004), this is how Teutila contributes to taking the weight off of betrayal that *doña* Marina could keep in *Xicoténcatl* (1826).

From that first representation, the character La Malinche is forgotten for many centuries. Howbeit, it is resumed/retaken in the “first half of the nineteenth century [...] to be turned into an atrocious symbol of betrayal for some, or, to others, a protagonist of a moving love story”³⁶ (HERREN, 1993, p. 10, our translation). González Hernández (2002), in confluence with Herren (1993) and Cypess (1991), studies how Malinche's historical figure is retaken after three hundred years in *Xicoténcatl* (1826). Those studies assess that, after the release of the anonymous novel, Malinche's myth is born. This time, the historical character is taken as “a scapegoat in order to justify the disorder, economic ruin, and administrative chaos of the post-independence to be followed by progress and improved economic status, the pattern of the United States.” (CYPESS, 1991, p. 184), as of the configuration in the anonymous novel of 1826.

Herren (1993, p. 161, our translation) states that in the diegesis of this novel: “[...] the representation of past and present reality is entirely polarized between Spaniards and natives, easily denoting a Manichaeian point of view. Spaniards, what is Spanish, is the scapegoat on which demons of the Mexican soul are vented.”³⁷ In *Xicoténcatl* (1826), the discursive focus falls on the struggles between Spaniards and pro-republican natives. Consequently, cooperating with Spaniards in the texture of the novel is as well condemned.

According to Bernd (2013, p. 47, our translation), “only literature could penetrate flaws and deviations of history and memory, with the help of anamnesis to date back to the source of what was experienced, re-inventing it through fiction in an attempt to rectify the unsaid by history.”³⁸ In the case

³⁶ “*primera mitad del siglo XIX [...] para convertirla en símbolo atroz de la traición para unos, o protagonista conmovedora de una love story para otros.*”

³⁷ “[...] la representación de la realidad pasada y presente se polariza absolutamente entre españoles de un lado e indios del otro, en una fácil visión maniquea. Los españoles, lo español, es el chivo expiatorio sobre el que se descargan los demonios del alma mexicana.”

³⁸ “só a literatura pode penetrar nas falhas e desvãos da história e da memória, tentando proceder à anamnese para remontar à fonte do vivido, reinventando-o, através da ficção na tentativa de colmatar os não-ditos da história.”

of *Xicoténcatl* (1826), literature filled in the gaps left by historical records and broadened repertoires of the memories of several historical figures, among them, La Malinche.

As established by Candau (2016, p. 143, our translation): “[...] every individual death could turn into an object of memory and identity, even better if more distant in time”³⁹ This is how memory selects an individual, and modifies its history through idealization, making up defects and praising qualities. Everything goes through a filter. According to the scholar, it is just a matter of having motivations such as, i.e., to foster national pride. And, concerning Malinche's myth, the author explains that:

The importance of the notion of *Malinchism* in the common Mexican language, together with its positive or negative meaning, reveals at the same time the burden of the memory of some historical figures in the construction of collective identities and the different interpretations, manipulations from which it could be subject⁴⁰ (CANDAU, 2016, p. 144, author's italics, our translation).

To that end, memory is in a constant movement of “constructing/deconstructing”⁴¹ (BERND, 2013, p. 25, our translation) and this enables the understanding of cases such as Malinche's, that, as attested by Cypess (1991), Herren (1993), and González Hernández (2002), the memory of historical figures, by literature, assist on the construction of peoples' identity.

Conclusion

Given the literary works presented in this paper, we can observe the fact that novels which encompass history and memory have huge emphasis “in the recovery of facts and characters from the past, once the subject matter they use – although through many different ways – are the

³⁹ “[...] todo indivíduo morto pode converter-se em um objeto de memória e identidade, tanto mais quando estiver distante no tempo”.

⁴⁰ “A importância dessa noção de *malinquinismo* na linguagem corrente mexicana, com sua conotação positiva ou negativa, revela ao mesmo tempo o peso da memória de certos personagens históricos na construção das identidades coletivas e as diversas interpretações, manipulações, das quais ela pode ser objeto.” *Malinquinismo* (*malinchismo* in Spanish), a negative term alluding to Malinche, who: “alimenta desprezo por tudo o que é mexicano, [...] vulgar [...]” [who disdains everything that is Mexican, [...] vulgar] (CANDAU, 2016, p. 144, our translation).

⁴¹ “construção/desconstrução”.

achievements that were produced and that created consequences that were extended up to today.” (FLECK, 2008, p. 142, our translation). Furthermore, the memories that were considered questionable sources before, turn into valid ones in literature in a huge variety of genres, such as the mediation contemporary historical novel and biographies.

Literature, in the specificity of this research, the historical novel, because of its aesthetic freedom, does not have any commitment with the factuality of its writing, and behaves, however, intending to expose verisimilitude redefinitions for the different themes that were spread through a mainly euro phallogocentric perspective. According to Fleck (2008, p. 142), “literature, when proceeding with a rereading of the past, with appeals to the memory, tries – through freedom of imagination that conducts the discourse through which it emerges – to shed light on past events.”

The literary works *Desmundo* (MIRANDA, 1996), *A Guerrilheira* (SANTOS, 1979) and *Xicoténcatl* (ANÓNIMO, 1826) favor ex-centric and diversified characters, whose narratives brought up in the core of their outcome individuals who became representative of their own history. Such narratives focused on female characters that went against the European type model discourses, for they left their marks in the memorialist literary text in America and of America.

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