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## Luiz Costa Lima

*Between Realism and Figuration:  
Auerbach's Decentered Realism*

Costa Lima examines how in Auerbach's work explicit theorising is replaced by a tension which uses the combination of realism and *figura* to create a dynamic movement between literary texts. From this, and through an analysis of the prefiguration of Hegel's *Aufhebung* in Tertullian's use of the *figura*, Costa Lima locates a point of departure in Auerbach's work which enables us to surpass its implicit Hegelianism. This also provides fresh avenues for further theorising. 'He [Auerbach] was on the right path,' Costa Lima concludes, 'because apropos mimesis it is not enough to say that it presents a correspondence between reality and the literary (and artistic text), but one must add that it presents a correspondence in which the differential vector, predominates over the resemblance. The resemblance is the condition necessary for establishing contact between the work and the world; the differential vector is what opens the chance that the work becomes a literary one.'

This is the third and final meditation on the work of Erich Auerbach included in this Special Issue – the others being "Erich Auerbach: History and Metahistory" (1988) and "Auerbach and Literary History" (1996) – and it is the development of an idea which Costa Lima first describes in "Figura as a Kernel of Auerbach's Literary History" (2000), *Literary Research* 17.34 (fall/winter), pp. 268-79.

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## BETWEEN REALISM AND FIGURATION: AUERBACH'S DECENTERED REALISM

The British critic J.P. Stern justified Auerbach for not defining his capital concepts, asserting that his undertaking was “practical criticism in the service of an historical design.”<sup>i</sup> Although I would like to agree with him, I will rather question the dichotomy taken for granted by Stern between the two branches of criticism. I don't mean to say that they are unsuited for the purposes they have but simply that one cannot assert one without taking into consideration the other as well. Considered as mutually exclusive, both theoretical and practical criticisms tend to become ossified bodies, since they both tailor the object according to unchallenged and, then, discriminatory decisions.

To state the above does not mean we don't recognize Auerbach's distaste for open theoretical reflexions, yet, in spite of this, it seems possible to detect his theoretical background and his effort to maintain its flexibility. Thus, if we agree that the general purpose of his most important book, *Mimesis: the Representation of Reality in Western Tradition* is to follow the metamorphoses of realism, the immediate question becomes how did he act in order to avoid a rigid characterization of literature? The answer is already instilled in the first chapter when Auerbach confronts the transparent mood of the Homeric epic – “The Homeric poems conceal nothing, they contain no teaching and no secret meaning”<sup>ii</sup> – and the Old Testament account, in which “the perpetually smouldering jealousy and the divine blessing lead to daily life permeated with the stuff of conflict. Often with poison.”<sup>iii</sup> Considering this sharp and precise contrast, whose consequences will permeate the entire book, one might add that in Auerbach tension propitiates what is the grounds for a theoretical project: to incite problems to the analysis. Therefore, instead of looking to harmonize later the trends remarked in Greek and Hebrew texts, confrontations become a strategy maintaining the book's dynamics. In short, in Erich Auerbach's writing, tension replaces theory, and, indeed, this tension possesses the advantage of avoiding the speculative risk of a purely theoretical reflection. However we must agree that it was not always that he achieved his goal. Already in 1934, his bright assistant and friend Werner Krauss had criticized one of Auerbach's most striking essays, originally published with the same title as the book in which it appeared, “The French public of XVII century” (1933), with the argument that “in Auerbach, the new society is characterized by a double denial, the breaking of the aristocracy power and the escaping of its class, although in process of becoming powerful by bourgeoisie”, without trying to explain in “the new articulation, the reason of its configuration.”<sup>iv</sup>

The kind of observation made by Krauss could be taken as the motto for this paper. Surely, I am not blaming Auerbach for not adopting the Hegelian tradition (!), and the category of totality; I am rather trying to point out that the outcome of his immediate reaction to any kind of theoretical reflexion may have damaged his interpretation, at last. The core of my argument will therefore be that Auerbach had foreseen that realism, as a naked term, might introduce the risk of reducing the relationship between historical reality and literature to a mechanical one. In this sense, this risk would be homologous to theoretical jeopardy. For avoiding both, practical and the theoretical risks, Auerbach appealed to a particular device: he introduced tension, which as a not self-explanatory concrete phenomenon, forced him to look for further elucidation. This was basically done by combining realism and figure. Apropos, it seems fruitful to remark that in the quite different kinds of realism that Auerbach stresses, the creatural and the figural one, the creatural realism could be understood as a more simple and almost “heretical” variant of the figural kind. Let us note some examples taken from the period in between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The first passage belongs to the exegesis of a late medieval writer, Antoine de la Salle, in which the mixture of ostentatious style (*Prunkstill*) of knightly ceremony and creatural tradition stands out. For our purpose, we can ignore the first one. La Salle's adoption of creatural realism is directly related to the Christian tradition: “The traditionalism of the serious, creatural realism of this period is explained by its origin. It stems from Christian figuralism . . . Further we must point out that the representation of real contemporary life now turns with particular care and great art to the intimate, domestic, and everyday detail of family life.”<sup>v</sup> Although La Salle is a minor writer, Auerbach does not consider his reduction of serious creatural realism to a domestic one to be a sign either of failure or of decadence, but sees it rather as one of an emergent metamorphosis. The transformation of the previous pattern of the complete figural kind, for which Auerbach has a special appraisal, the complete figural kind, becomes more evident when he turns to Rabelais: “In Rabelais, creatural realism has acquired a new meaning, diametrically opposed to medieval creatural realism – that of the vitalistic-dynamic triumph of the physical body and its functions. . . . In Rabelais there is no aesthetic standard; everything goes with everything. Ordinary reality is set within the most improbable fantasy, the coarsest jokes are filled with erudition, moral and philosophical enlightenment flows out of obscene expressions and stories.”<sup>vi</sup> At last, we turn our attention to a short excerpt on Montaigne: “His creatural realism has broken through the Christian frame within which it arose. Life on earth is no longer the figure of the life beyond; he can no longer permit himself to scorn and neglect the here for sake of a there. Life on earth is the only one he has.”<sup>vii</sup>

What can these passages tell us? First of all, that Auerbach would not have seriously considered any variant of the XIX's century attempt to define realism as "la littérature du vrai", according to a definition printed in an issue of 1826 of *Mercurie français*.<sup>viii</sup> Also, that realism's fusion with *figura* didn't imply that he would evaluate the expression, figural realism, as the embodiment of some ideal configuration; as we have already seen, creatural realism can be considered as one of figural realism's variants and not in the sense of something incomplete or inferior. This means that creatural realism can be taken as an expressive possibility and not as an immediately unaccomplished tool. In other words, *figura* is a central analytic tool for Auerbach either because in its translation from Greek to Latin its significance of plasticity is maintained<sup>x</sup>, and/or because of the role it carried out in the Christian tradition. One of the key passages in Auerbach's 1938 essay states:

Beside the opposition between *figura* and fulfillment or truth, there appears another, between *figura* and *historia*; *historia* or *littera* is the literal sense or the event related; *figura* is the same literal meaning or event in reference to the fulfillment cloaked in it, and this fulfillment itself is *veritas*, so that *figura* becomes a middle term between *littera-historia* and *veritas*.<sup>x</sup>

Later on, we will look at the consequences of those two remarks, and of the Christian relation between *figura* and *historia*. For the time being, however, we must develop the observation previously made regarding the replacement of an explicit theoretical frame in the creation of a tension between texts belonging to different traditions.

The fact that figure is transformed into a progressively serious creatural realism during the later Middle Ages as well as during French Renaissance, suggests that Auerbach's mistrust for a theoretical pattern had positive consequences. Yet no serious contemporary reader would ever think that the use of *figura* is restricted to those temporal expressions, although it is useless for pre-Christian texts. Moreover, the recent controversy between Timothy Bahti and Hayden White regarding the meaning of figural interpretation, to which we will come back to later, does not emphasize the passage from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance but rather what happens in literature from Flaubert onwards. Thus, we will arrive at a second and enlarged formulation of our central question: is Auerbach's usage of *figura* endowed with enough plasticity for a changing and fertile conception of historicism, as Hayden White claims, or, on the contrary, does it unconsciously submit itself to a hidden and troublesome conception of history, and, consequently, to an unsatisfactory understanding of post-Flaubertian literature? The reply to this question depends on two premises:

- (a) In what proportion is Hegel's thought still present in Auerbach's work?
- (b) What is the role that the figural conception of the First Fathers had on Auerbach's conception of history?

As to the first premise, we can simply recall Auerbach's remark about his masterwork: "One could not think *Mimesis* . . . but in the German romanticism's and Hegel's tradition."<sup>xi</sup>

Now, between Hegel's conception of history and Tertullian's ideas on figural conception, to which I will restrict my research, there seems to be a clear correspondence, which, maybe because I am not a Hegelian, I have never seen explored. To render it explicit: if *figura* presupposes a space created between two events or two human agents, the first of which points out not only to itself but also to a second, while the second one encompasses or fulfills the first, what could, in terms of history, explain this mutual attraction but a finalistic direction given to history, i.e., a teleological history? If this is true, the second premise requires a proper presentation of Tertullian's treatise, *Adversus Marcionem*, in which the figural interpretation, as a concrete phenomenon, achieves its most intense resolution. We must therefore turn our attention to that old text.

A shorter edition of *Adversus Marcionem* appeared previously around 198, while the current version was written between April 207 and April 208. Quintus Septimus Florens Tertullianus (ca. 160 – later 220), had had a rhetorical education and was a jurist by profession. Converted, he became a theologian and an author of apologetic pieces. Although he fought against one of the strongest heresies of the first Christian centuries with his treatise, being, therefore, extremely helpful to the Church, a few years later, circa 212, he was formally estranged from the Church<sup>xii</sup>, being identified as a Montanist.

It will be useful to begin with a preliminary remark. In his treatise, Tertullian introduces his attack on Marcion with the following remark:

Like many in our day, heretics in particular, Marcion had an unhealthy interest in the problem of evil – the origin of it – and his perception were numbed by the very excess of his curiosity [*Languens enim*

*(quod et nunc multi, et maxime haeretici), circa mali quaestionem, unde malum, et obtunsis sensibus ipsa enormitate curiositatis]*<sup>xiii</sup>

For his huge interest on the presence of evil, Marcion had stressed the Gospel according to Luke – which he would have expurgated to adjust it to his own interpretation – as well as Paul’s epistles, of which he became the disclosing agent. To Marcion, divinity had had a double personification: the ancient god being a god of justice, a warrior and a punisher of sinners, while the new god, announced by the New Testament, was the embodiment of goodness, and Christ his legitimate son. (As Ernst Evans warns us, we must remember that all of this is inferred from the fragments of his remaining writings). In his reply, Tertullian established a heated polemic against god’s double nature. And, although he does so from the very beginning of his treatise, Tertullian attacks the Marcionites mostly in Books IV and V. At the end of his text, he summarizes his argument thus:

Who is this that makes a distinction between two gods, one of them just, the other good, when he whose commandment is both good and just must himself be both the one and the other [*Quis discernit duos deos, iustum alium, bonum alium, cum is utrumque debeat credi cuius praeceptum et bonum et iustum est?*]<sup>xiv</sup>

The separation established by Marcion supposes a split between the god of the prophets and of the Jewish law, to whom would correspond the armed and inflexible god of justice, while the good divinity would be properly speaking the Christian god. It is from the dichotomy in the divinity that originates the split at the moment of rescue and salvation, the soul becoming separated from the flesh, and the only human component to resurrect from the dead. So, as long as Marcion tried to acquit the Christian god of the earthly evil, he was pressed to adopt a spiritualistic view, in which flesh occupied a very secondary and transitional place. Tertullian, on the other hand, supported a realistic view: an exclusively good god, who condemned flesh to nothing, would be unfair to his creatures because he would promote “this halving of salvation” (*haec dimidiatio salutis*), what represented a “defect of goodness” (*ex defectione bonitatis*)<sup>xv</sup>. Furthermore: the precedence given to the soul did not consider its weighty role in sinfulness:

Even if the flesh has sins accounted to it, the soul’s guilt precedes, and the initiative in blame ought for preference to be imputed to the soul to which the flesh ministers in the capacity of a servant. In fact, when flesh is deprived of soul it ceases to sin [*Etsi carni delicta reputantur, praecedit animae reatus, et culpae principatus animae potius adscribendus, cui caro ministri nomine occurrit. Carens denique anima caro hactenus peccat*]<sup>xvi</sup>

In short, in rescuing only the soul, the Marcion’s fair god would simply be unjust, as well as being a divinity who ignores the human nature, since “what else is man if not flesh?” [*quid est autem homo aliud quam caro?*]<sup>xvii</sup>

I am sorry to have had to introduce this incompetent theological discussion, however I deem it required in order to render more concrete the context from which Auerbach’s figuralism originated. This contextualization acquires bright colors when we remember the immediate consequences of the theological debate: according to Marcion, to be Christ son of a god unknown by the prophets meant that he came to abolish the ancient law, therefore establishing a gap between the tradition and the correct means of conduct to be followed. On the other hand, for Tertullian, Christ gave continuation to the law of the prophets and renewed it. It is from this basic divergence that stems the crucial role of the figural for Tertullian, who quotes Matthew against Marcion’s spiritualistic position: “I am not come to destroy the law and the prophets but rather to fulfil (them)” (Mt. 5: 17). To make help it to endure, he places the Jewish law under the condition of a *figura* to be fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah. Glossing over Tertullian’s words one finds that: Christ expressed his approval of the Jews more than of any other people with the parable of the sick – i.e., heathens and publicans – and of the physician – “For if by those in ill health he meant them to understand those heathen men and publicans of whom he was making his choice, this was an assurance that those Jews who he said had no need of a physician, were in good health [*Si enim male valentes voluit intellegi ethnicos et publicos, quos adlegabat, sanos Iudaeos confirmabat, quibus medicum necessarium negabat.*]<sup>xviii</sup>”

Not only do the previous data allow us to understand the significance of the figural principle as consisting in the complementary nature of two events – the first of which allows us to signalize and announce the second one – it also includes the event to occur, which fulfills the first one. By this second event, the first one’s promise is accomplished. The universe is based, and run on meaningfulness, and *figura*, as its instrument, links the poles of the meaningful universe. In this way, the exhortation acquires an acute significance: “Even in new things Christ is as of old” (*O Christum et in novis veterem!*)<sup>xix</sup>. It is by Christ’s intervention that the material body is rescued: “That which was lost, is what the Son of man saves: and so the flesh obtains salvation (*Quod perierat, salvum facit filius hominis: habet igitur et caro salutem*).<sup>xx</sup> Figure therefore supposes the acting of the body, which is as

much the outset of the process as it is its accomplishment. The figural space is accomplished in an entirely earthly scenery, although, one should add, what propels its meaning is an unearthly *telos*. (In parenthesis, it must be said that the principle of *telos* as the way to give sense to the world had not been started by Christianity. As remarked on Virgil's *Aeneid*, the protagonist's outstanding trait is *predetermination*, given that his role is that of founder of the Roman Empire.<sup>xxi</sup>) Christianity infused a sacral aspect to life in the world. As we will explore in the last paragraphs of this paper, it is the presence of this divine teleological element that approaches Tertullian and Hegel one to another, although they will be differentiated by their respective views on the teleological element: Tertullian undertaking it as celestial, Hegel, as spiritual.

In short, Tertullian takes *figura* as the axis that singles out the Christian teachings, with their emphasis on corporeal matter, and total human redemption. From it stems the figural play that the author establishes between the *primus Adam* and the *novissimus Adam*: "For why 'first Adam', if not because there is also a last Adam? (*Cur enim primus Adam, nisi quia et novissimus Adam?*).<sup>xxii</sup> The first Adam is a figural announcement of Christ; by sinning, the first Adam announces and presses for Christ. A deep bond connects them: without the fall of *primus Adam* there would have been no renewal and the entire meaning of creation would have been lost. Both the first and second Adams belong, therefore, to the same concrete even though the first is a son of clay, while Christ is the son of man. Both are fully real, concrete and singular creatures. Auerbach would say: historical creatures.

The understanding of Marcion and Tertullian's antagonistic views – with Marcion's emphasis on discontinuity and spirituality, and Tertullian's underlining the renewed continuation of the ancient Law, as well as the realism of the evangelical *mise en scène* – displays the kernel embodied by the figural element in *Adversus Marcionem*.

We are left to wonder at the process that was actualized in Tertullian's determination of *figura*. As a man of letters, a jurist and an expert in forensic practice, Tertullian might have been aware of the distinction drawn between *figurae sententiarum* and *verborum* (figures of thinking and of words) by Quintilian, in the previous century.<sup>xxiii</sup> Although this distinction is not quite precise, one may state that the first kind is closer to the world of things, of facts and of ideas, while the second kind is moved by verbal elasticity. So, we may assume that the first would be better adjusted to Auerbach's characterization of the combination of two real and historic events, in which "Figural interpretation establishes a connection between two events or persons, the first of which signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second encompasses or fulfills the first. The two poles of the figure are separate in time, but both, being real events or figures, are within time, within the stream of historical life."<sup>xxiv</sup> Let us consider one example that Auerbach stresses from Tertullian's treatise, without acknowledging the distinction done by Quintilian: "How can Christ be the Passover except that the Passover is a figure of Christ because of the similitude between the saving blood of the (*paschal*) lamb and of Christ? (*Quare pascha Christus, si non pascha figura Christi per similitudinem sanguinis salutaris peccatoris et Christi?*) (V,7,3).<sup>xxv</sup> According to Tertullian's explanation, what unites them is the resemblance between Christ's blood and the blood lost by the lamb; i.e., the figure only becomes a *figura sententiae* because it depends upon a metaphor, a transfer of the word, created by the analogy that brings them together: the blood lost by both. Passover, which has the sacrificial lamb as its token, celebrates the leavetaking from Egypt by the Jews, while it celebrates, on the other hand, the resurrection of the Savior for the Christians. As with Adam, one might also say that, as the first guide of the Jewish people in the quest for freedom, Moses is a *figura* of the last and definitive guide, Christ. Furthermore, *figura* could be considered, as Auerbach so finely remarked, as *umbra* (shadow) while the fulfillment term could be considered as *veritas* (truth) or as *historia*. Proceeding, however, with the example of Passover one might observe that its historicity is subordinated to a ritual, i.e., to the return of an annual cycle, and that it does not depend upon an historical event. Although the identification of a ritual with *figurae verborum* is not self-evident, the fact is that one cannot fuse it at once with the singularity of an historical event. Tertullian himself explained the Creator's ordainment and revealed it by figures, enigmas and allegories: ". . . in figures et aenigmatibus et allegoriis praeministravit."<sup>xxvi</sup> Before this *figura* by enigma, we may have wondered: is it a figure by words? The question is not easy to solve. According to Tertullian's example, there were twelve apostles due to the numerical choice in previous assignments – "I find figurative indications of this number in the Creator's scriptures, the twelve springs at Elim, the twelve jewels on Aaron's priestly garment, and the twelve stones chosen by Joshua out of Jordan and laid up in the ark of the covenant" (*Huius enim numeri figurae apud creatorem deprehendo duodecim fonts Elim, et duodecim gemmas in tunica sacerdotali Aaronis, et duodecim lapides ab Iesu de Iordane electos et in arcam testamenti conditos*).<sup>xxvii</sup> Thus, the number twelve would in itself predetermine Christ's favorite disciples. It could be understood as a figure by word, since "the fact itself must belong to the one with whom is found the preparation for the fact" (*Eius erit res apud quem invenitur rei praepatura*).<sup>xxviii</sup> Then, finally, one must to make up one's mind whether or not the figure by enigma approached allegory. This seems to be the reason why Auerbach chose to ignore the wide spectrum that *figura* displays in Tertullian, and emphasized instead the realist figures,

to which he added the qualification 'historical'. With this division, Auerbach prepared the way to forcefully sever *figura* from allegory.

The historical qualification, however, created an unexpected difficulty for Auerbach. Surely, Tertullian was not preoccupied with history, although making a choice that favored realism placed him in its proximity. In any case, the problem does not stem from a direct historical approach but rather from the source from which this historical view was engendered. Formulating it bluntly: was it not Tertullian's own monotheistic conception, i.e., the very reason for his condemnation of Marcion, that led to his conception of history?

Let us try to think over it, albeit briefly. During one of his last invectives against the duality of divinity, Tertullian pondered over the sole god: "Did he not inevitably know that which beneath his heaven and on his earth was due to be revealed?" (*An non utique notum quod sub caelo et in terra eius habebat revelari?*).<sup>xxxix</sup> What can this simple and direct phrase mean other than that, from the single God viewpoint, to know everything that can be revealed under heaven and earth not only renders the formation of multiple figural arches possible, but also implies that everything shall be known? And what could this mean except that all of creation is under a teleological direction and movement? In short, History already appeared displaying a transcendental destination. If we are right, Tertullian's figuralism was the counterpart of teleological history, in the same way that a religiously oriented teleology is the counterpart of a *telos* grounded on the development of the human spirit (Hegel). So, it is not strange that the fusion between figuralism and history was soon afterwards shown in Augustine's writings. My intention, however, is not to state that Auerbach's figural realism had a definite teleological dimension! My question is rather the following: has not the Hegelian legacy installed itself in Auerbach's interpretation of Western literature, against his conscious purpose? It would be, however, a teleology without a definite *telos*; accomplished by works that might renew themselves by forming different figural arches. How can one explain a teleological direction if this direction is not submitted to a certain goal, i.e., if it is subtracted from a strict Hegelian conception of history? I would reply: it is a teleology constituted by the heritage of the privilege allowed to the *one* over the multiple. Therefore, the theological, philosophical and aesthetical consequences, although they do not overlap, are always derived from the choice for the one. In this sense, the supposed linkage between Tertullian and Hegel in Auerbach's *Mimesis* would be a late consequence of the general observation formulated by Koselleck on modern German conception of history, as concretized in the last quarter of eighteenth century: "The impulse for the transformation of the eschatological future in a temporal progressing process is related to the religious expectation."<sup>xxx</sup>

A last reflexion must be joined to our conclusion. It brings us back to the implied disagreement between Timothy Bahti and Hayden White's interpretations of Auerbach figuralism. According to Bahti, what happens with Emma and Charles, in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, shows the failure of the *figural arch*, configured since Dante. Thus, if Dante represents the zenith of Christian figural heritage, from *Madame Bovary* onwards one has the defiguration of history, what in Bahti's terms would mean that Auerbach had conceived history as a kind of allegory, "what may be called the allegory of *nihilism* . . . of historical meaning, the meaning of historiography being that historical reality is canceled or annihilated in its fulfillment in literature, including those genres called history and literary history."<sup>xxxi</sup>

Without quoting Bahti, Hayden White replies that similar conclusions would imply that Auerbach had recognized only one kind of historicism, exactly that "which crystallized in Germany at the beginning of the nineteenth century,"<sup>xxxii</sup> and corresponded to the configuration of Balzac's novels. This would be a mistake because Auerbach "historicizes historicism itself in the same way that he historicizes realism."<sup>xxxiii</sup> It would therefore be a nonsense to judge his interpretation of high modernism in the last chapter of *Mimesis* according to the pattern of nineteenth century realism. "Auerbach posits a form of modernist historicism so radically different from its nineteenth-century prototype as to appear to consist of a repudiation of history itself."<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Although I think this is indeed a very good reply, the fact is one finishes the reading of the chapter on Virginia Woolf, "The brown Stocking", with a bitter taste in one's mouth. What could be formulated as this new historicism, and this new realism? I merely suggest a hypothesis. Let us recall what was said about creatural realism. In it, for instance in Rabelais, the vividness of the first term stands out, while there is no fulfillment. So, one might ask, could one not think of post-Flaubertian and post-Baudelairean literature as a new kind of creatural realism? Figuralism configured without its accomplishment; a broken teleology since it does not undergo a final tribunal (*ein letztes Gericht*). It maintains, however, its teleological nature, its *telos* or shadow of a *telos* being formed by the correspondence between reality and the literary text.

If something seems to be missing from this conclusion, it would be a precise conception of mimesis. Without this, Auerbach loses his chance of surpassing Hegel's bias. Notwithstanding his allergy to theoretical concerns, I

believe that Auerbach had an insight, and realized it would be necessary to differentiate his own conception from Hegelian mimesis, implied when he preferred as the subtitle of his book, “dargestellte Wirklichkeit”, instead of the more usual designation, “vorgestellte Wirklichkeit.”<sup>xv</sup> He was on the right path because apropos mimesis it is not enough to say that it presents a correspondence between reality and the literary (and artistic text), but one must add that it presents a correspondence in which the differential vector, predominates over the resemblance. The resemblance is the condition necessary for establishing contact between the work and the world; the differential vector is what opens the chance that the work becomes a literary one.

Being impossible to know if Auerbach had the intention to break with Hegel’s tradition, it is more reliable to say that practically he did it as far as he does not take the literary expression as a direct consequence of a certain temporal configuration. Anyway, his resistance against theorizing had the uncomfortable consequence that his conception of mimesis is not but a sophisticated version of the classical *imitatio*.

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- <sup>xxiii</sup> Quintilian: *De Institutione oratoria* (ca. 93-5), bilingual edition (Latin and French), Bornecque, H. (ed.), 4 volumes, Garnier, Paris, 1933, IX, II and III.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Auerbach, E.: “Figura” (1938), republished in *Scenes from the drama of European literature*, University of Minnesota Press, Minn., 1984, p53.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Cited in Auerbach, E.: “Figura” (1938), republished in *Scenes from the drama of European literature*, University of Minnesota Press, Minn., 1984, p65.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Tertullian: *Adversus Marcionem*, bilingual edition (Latin and English), Evans, E. (ed. and translator), 2 volumes, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972, V, 6, 5.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> *Ibid*, IV, 13, 4.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> *Ibid*, IV, 13, 5.

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<sup>xxix</sup> Ibid, p V, 18, 4.

<sup>xxx</sup> Koselleck, R.: “Geschichte, Historie”, in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe, Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, O. Brunner, W. Conze, R. Koselleck (eds.), vol. 2, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart, 1979, p684.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Bahti, T.: “Auerbach’s *Mimesis*”, in *Allegories of history. Literary historiography after Hegel*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1992, p154-155.

<sup>xxxii</sup> White, H.: “Auerbach’s literary history. Figural causation and modernist historicism”, in *Figural realism. Studies in the Mimesis Effect*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore & London, 1999, p96.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Ibid, p97.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Ibid, p98.

<sup>xxxv</sup> I had first suggested the importance of this subtitle in a previous paper, called “Figura e evento” (Costa Lima, L.: 1994, 219-229, especially pages 226-7).