

METAMORPHOSING SPACES IN THE WORKS OF OSMAN LINS

ESPAÇOS EM METAMORFOSE NA OBRA DE OSMAN LINS

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Abstract: The novel *Avalorava*, by Osman Lins, is formed by eight themes assigned to the letters R, S, O, A, T, P, E, N. The theme R – “☉” e Abel: *Encontros, Percursos, Revelações* (“☉” and Abel: Encounters, Pathways, Revelations) – challenges the reader especially due to its seriated composition in which fragments of ten micronarratives are juxtaposed. This configuration in series is presented so as to fuse beginning and end, in a temporality marked by a further-closer motion; interior/exterior, in a spatiality marked by the conjunction of opposites and by the corrosion of established limits. In this process, the recovery of a tradition between painting and literature can be seen, accompanied by innovative strategies. Among the series, this article will examine that of the eclipse taken place in November 12, 1966, as viewed from Cassino beach, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Following that, cosmic space was an object of scientific scrutiny with participation and repercussion among the international community. Some data from this process are portrayed in the novel’s space according to media reports at the time, motivating reflections on the differences between scientific and journalistic materials, and the production of fictional texts. The historicized data are deformed in the juxtaposition of the different series, denouncing what is hidden in official reports, which follow the authorities’ view of facts.

Keywords: *Avalorava*; Osman Lins; space; eclipse.

Resumo: O romance *Avalorava*, de Osman Lins, é formado por oito temas assinalados pelas letras R, S, O, A, T, P, E, N. O tema R – “☉” e Abel: *Encontros, Percursos, Revelações* – desafia sobremaneira o leitor em razão de sua composição seriada em que se justapõem fragmentos de dez micronarrativas. Essa configuração em séries é disposta de maneira a fundir início/fim, numa temporalidade marcada pelo ir-e-vir; interior/exterior, numa espacialidade marcada pela conjunção de opostos e pela corrosão dos limites estabelecidos. No processo, verifica-se a recuperação de uma tradição das relações entre pintura e literatura, acompanhada de estratégias inovadoras. Dentre as séries, aqui examina-se a do eclipse, ocorrido em 12 de novembro de 1966, contemplado a partir da praia do Cassino no Rio Grande do Sul. O espaço cósmico foi objeto de observação científica com participação e repercussão internacionais. Alguns dados são representados no romance como registrados nos meios de comunicação, motivando reflexões sobre as diferenças entre o material científico e jornalístico e a realização textual ficcional. Os dados historicizados são deformados na justaposição dos fragmentos das diferentes séries, denunciando o que se esconde na divulgação oficial, comprometida com uma visão autorizada dos fatos.

Palavras-chave: *Avalorava*; Osman Lins; espaço; eclipse.

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Based on readings of the works of Osman Lins, a Brazilian author who dedicated himself to the study of the *espaço romanesco* (novel space)¹, I highlight aspects of the spatiality of his literature that, if on the one hand recover a tradition of the relationships between painting and literature², on the other hand subscribe to contemporary conceptions that rethink the anthropocentric position developed from the Renaissance onwards. Osman Lins's works function in consonance to the classic patterns of those relationships and, at the same time, transgress them through compositional innovations that give his novels' spatiality a peculiar character.

My selection focuses on noticeable details from the theme R, in the novel *Avalovara*³.

[...] converting a story from a visual record to a written one presumes a process that is not immediate, but is possible and even desirable, if one proceeds toward diverse transpositions sharing a convergence point in the fact that painting and writing are, after all, correlative activities that, in Greek, are expressed through the same verb (*gráphein*) (BRANDÃO, 2005, p. 120).

The convergence of languages, mediated through visual sense, reveals itself in the search of the representation in which real and imaginary, concrete and abstract, space and time, conjugate themselves. To Bachelard (2000), "To give unreality to an image linked to a strong reality puts us under poetry's vigorous breath [...] And look! When I sincerely say image, I feel the need to underline it. Shouldn't *to underline* be *to record* by writing?" (p. 66).

In *Avalovara*, the refraction of the observed real, or of the reference identifiable by the reader in the mobilization of their own repertory – which includes their dreams, fantasies, and desires –, projects itself on images often fantastical, unusual, dreamlike.

¹ The book *Lima Barreto e o espaço romanesco* (Lima Barreto and the novel space), by Osman Lins, was originated from the author's doctoral dissertation. "Due to all of this and, more so, due to my readings' revelation of how important space was in his novel works, I was attracted to the idea of writing an essay on him [Lima Barreto], [...]" (p. 12)

² Painting is considered by Lessing (1998) to be where space predominates – due to the spatial coexistence of its elements –, and literature, where time predominates – due to its sequential development. This delimitation, of excessive simplification, is already dated and surpassed, given the symbiosis between space and time, and these categories' manifest complementarity in the acts of reading and perception.

³ *Avalovara* is composed of eight overarching letters, indicated by the letters: R, S, O, A, T, P, E, N.

In refraction, the effect is that of an altered and doubled vision of an object that, at the same time, approaches the reference imaginarily and distances itself from it. That is exactly what Horace's well-known quote is about: "Poetry is like painting: some things please more the closer you are; others, the further away".⁴

This appropriation in verbal language of a *topos* from the plastic arts language relates to the field of vision which is altered due to the distance and position in which the object is observed, or presented. The Latin *evidentia* is strategically established in the discourse, aiming toward a clear, precise vision of the composition associating itself to the narrative.

Correlating to the Renaissance's new attitude toward seeing and representing,

[...] the "point of view" or the fixed position of the reader – "where I'm coming from" – started receiving equivalent importance. This Relief or visual accentuation was completely impossible before the press raised the written page's visual intensity through its complete uniformity and repeatability. These last two, completely foreign to the manuscript culture and typographic characteristics, were the necessary preliminary to the notions of unified or pictorial space and of "perspective" (McLUHAN, 1977, p.160-161).

We cannot forget that *Avalovara*'s structure has, declaredly, its driving force in the spiral, the geometric shape that simulates the flow of time in infinite movement, contained by the square, the geometric shape that is closed and "evocative, if possible, of windows, rooms, and paper sheets" (LINS, S 4, p. 19)⁵, spaces of transit between the exterior and interior, closed and open. The superposition of these two geometrical shapes, incorporated to the palindrome *Sator arepo tenet opera rotas* in the formation of the magic square, dilutes, by way of imagery, one's fixed position, either that of the narrator(s) or of the reader(s), installing in the page's enclosure the diversity of spaces and times.

The concept of literature as based on the impressed support and singular perspective of a narrator is tensioned by the break of a fixed viewpoint represented, in

⁴ "Vt pictura poesis: erit quae, si propius stes, te capiat magis, et quaedam, si longius abstes; haec amat obscurum, uolet haec sub luce uideri, iudicis argutum quae non formidat acumen; haec placuit semel, haec deciens repetita placebit." (HORACIO, *Ars Poetica*, vv. 360-365)

"Poetry is like painting: some things please more the closer you are, and others, the further away. The former wants to be seen under darkness, and the latter, under living light, for it does not fear the piercing eyes of its critics; the former pleased only once, the latter, seen ten times, will always please." (HORÁCIO. *Arte poética*. Trans. from Latin by R.M. Rosado Fernandes, p.109 and 111).

⁵ Citations concerning *Avalovara*, indicating the themes by letter/number, and with page numbers, shall be according to the following edition: LINS, Osman. *Avalovara*. 2. ed. Preface by Antonio Candido. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1974.

Avalovara, in the multifaceted space of the novel, self-referent and specular, by the words of the character named “carne e verbo” (flesh and verb):

Twelve years, six months and two days. Time, life, events – windowed rooms. In all walls, open windows, and the windows look out onto other rooms surrounded by windows through which new windows of new and strange rooms can be seen, and so many are the rooms that each one is the center of the others. In this mobile, imprecise center, with ages of no defined age and two pairs of eyes scrutinizing as if they were a single pair or even one eye, in this center, probing, through all windows, the windows nearby, I, inserted in a game of arbitrary mirrors and where the iterations, uncountable, tend toward the spherical, see myself, see all others and also see myself in the act of seeing myself and those around me. I see myself, all others and the many scenes in which we move. All. All scenes. All of us. (LINS, 0 19, p. 197)

This reflection, metaphorically expressed by ‘O’'s perspective, who is a word-character, text-character, thematizes the spatial experience in time and the temporal experience in open space – flow and integrated dimensions –, spatial movements demanding timespans in which to occur and the unfolding of viewpoints. Once again from the fictional text one can infer the author’s obsessed search for a literary practice that self-references, bares its fictionality, and enfolds the reader in its complex and dense reflections that involve the process of verbal expression. In here, we can see/read the acknowledgment of tradition, the social compromise, and the search for new forms.

In *Avalovara*, the functionality of the categories of time and space is exercised in different forms and their potentialities are reiterated in unusual contexts, such as the one during the Wharf’s formation in T, in which the suggestive approximation, of long tradition in Western culture, between painting and poetry can be read. The references to the plastic arts entice, in a privileged fashion, hybrid formations that not only associate pictorial language with its verbal counterpart, following the tradition, but also provoke spatial metamorphoses, fusing different spaces and times.

Horace’s well-known quote, “*Ut pictura poesis*”, cited and commented in different contexts, means something beyond what could be understood in its concision: “Horace does not say that poetry is painting or that painting is poetry, but instead ut, ‘as’, proposing via comparative conjunction the rhetoric homology of the mimetic procedures ordering one and another’s effects.” (HANSEN, 2006, p. 98).

Far away, in time and space, from these ancient rhetorical precepts that involve invention, disposition and elocution of the poetic genre, “so that the work in question

fulfills the three general functions of rhetoric, namely teaching (*docere*), pleasing (*delectare*), and persuading (*movere*)” (*Ibid*, p. 98), Osman Lins’s literature moves itself, sometimes ostensibly, at other times concealed, in the intertwining of word/image/sound, giving significance to the persistence of the alliance between *pictura/poesis*, space/time.

In this text, I will privilege the relation between earthly events and a view of cosmic space, which take part in the narrative structure of one of the eight themes in the novel *Avalovara*. The theme R – ‘☉’ e Abel: *Encontros, Percursos, Revelações* (‘☉’ and Abel: *Encounters, Pathways, Revelations*) – is composed of ten series of micronarratives, subthemes or motifs⁶. All series are organized in small snippets and fragments, forming a set of units. I have titled these micronarratives according to their corresponding motifs. One of them has, as a theme, the Eclipse⁷.

In the Osman Lins collection in the *Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros* (Institute for Brazilian Studies) of Universidade de São Paulo (IEB/USP), a typewritten note can be found, which contains indications on the distribution of the chapters from themes R, A, O, and T. In the note’s footer, there are handwritten annotations, in three columns, with a relation of subunits. In one column, there is the entry: Eclipse, Praia Grande, Ubatuba, São Paulo; in the other: Burial, Time, lolipus, The Opression, The Suicide, Wages, Brazil (newspapers)⁸ and, in the column to the right, the quote “The Divine Word, namer of things and Orderer of Chaos” is written. The first two groups refer to the motifs or subthemes composing theme R, numbered 11⁹, in this annotation of the author. Thus, there is a coincidence between the systematized series and the

⁶ This same systematization served as basis for two other articles previous to this one: *Das partes e do todo: um estudo da ékphras em Avalovara, de Osman Lins* (*Of the parts and the whole: a study of the ekphrasis in Osman Lins’s Avalovara*), published in the journal *Eutomia*, v.1, n.13, 2014; and *Das partes e do todo - considerações sobre a composição de Avalovara* (*Of the parts and the whole – considerations on Avalovara’s composition*), published in the book *Nove, novena, noventa: ensaios sobre a obra de Osman Lins* (*Nine, novena, ninety: essays on the work of Osman Lins*), organized by Sandra Nitri (Universidade de São Paulo). The former deals with the rhetoric procedure named *ekphrasis* and the establishing of relationships between it and the fragments referring to the formation of the wharf in T. In the latter, I study the possibilities of ordering the theme R in accordance to the *Golden Ratio*, taking the number of lines in the theme as a sorting principle, as calculated by the author.

⁷ My identification of the motifs in theme R: The eclipse, Trip through the center of São Paulo, The Carousel – Praia Grande, Nativity’s burial, Dialogue on oppression, Journalistic headlines, Reflections on fiction, The voyage and the river, The lolipus, The wharf in T – Ubatuba beach.

⁸ Typewritten note/manuscript from the Osman Lins archive in the *Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros* (Institute for Brazilian Studies) (IEB/USP).

⁹ In my 10 series systematization, the one I denominated “Reflections on fiction” is present, which, to me, corresponds to the motif Wages, numbered by the author. On the other hand, there is in this relationship, the theme of suicide, which I do not consider a series.

manuscript's indications. The relationship predicted in the author's planning is conformed to in the distribution of the fragments, which juxtapose themselves in movement, maintaining a relational order of the series concerning different spaces and times.

The juxtaposition of those units creates a type of narrative spatialization through the breaking of the linear sequence of narrated actions. Different times and spaces unite in the discursive contiguity, symbolically grouped by the spiral's movement, breaking the limits of lines, paragraphs, pages, chapters, composing a pluridimensional aggregate in a single space. Thematic units, or motifs, intermingle, challenging distracted readings.

Four of the ten series of micronarratives, following my systematization, (The wharf in T, Nativity's burial, The voyage and the river, The eclipse), deal with the relations of the whole with the parts, either by referring to the macrocosm and microcosm as in The eclipse and Nativity's burial, or through the relationship of the novel with its units and thematic-formal motifs like in The wharf in T and The voyage and the river. Other four of the ten series (Dialogue on oppression; Journalistic headlines; Reflections on fiction; The lolipus), mainly deal with the conditions of creation under a scenario of repression of artistic freedoms of production and general expression. The last two series, Trip through the center of São Paulo and The carousel – Praia Grande beach –, describe the romantic encounters between the protagonists Abel and '☺':

Would love be, in our time, an instrument about to disappear? Does only the word love survive still? Let all be restored, then, and through us, Abel, endure. What will everything come to, if they also take from us love's strength? Love's joy? Love's anger? (LINS, R 17, p. 320).

A detailed description of '☺'s body is followed by Abel's unrest at not mastering the sounds that come out of this body: "Get to the bedroom creaking this self-contained speech, launched, however, with violence and truth, impenetrable sphere I contemplate, disturbed and one step short of knowing. Knowing? What?" (*Ibid*, R 14, p. 221). The final meeting, which doesn't happen in theme R, is prepared and announced in the Trip through the Center of São Paulo series.

Although we can identify the series' singularity, they keep common conductive threads – metaliterary, auto-reflective, oppression-denouncing, passion-regarding threads – conformed to in several speeches: "The wax that clogs my ears dissolves

and I listen, not ☹️'s words, not the voice but the connection, the meaning, the law, the order, the coherence, the relation, the set, the symmetry, the design, the contour, the plot" (*Ibid*, R 17, p. 320). Furthermore, the series juxtapose themselves not as a patchwork pattern, but in movements similar to that of the *Lemniscata*, which confuse the beginning and the end, in a temporality marked by the coming-and-going; the interior and the exterior, in a spatiality marked by the conjunction of opposites.

Theme R, which simulates the geometric shape Spiral in its composition of discursive agencies, also that way pays homage to Dante, referred to in the beginning of R5. In a special way, this relationship makes sense if we remember that the meeting with ☹️ is the meeting with the work itself, with literature, under the sign of oppression: "Oppression, if installed as a norm, more so when manifested with precise instruments – almost always covered in a sanctimonious aura –, takes over the moral world in an absolute way: a replica of the gravity in the physical world" (*Ibid*, R 14, p. 221).

All those ten subthemes are associated; however, for this study, I highlight the fragments concerning the Eclipse, tangentiating those regarding the Newspaper headlines. These headlines replicate informations, conveyed by the press, about actions connected to the Dictatorship in Brazil and about activities of the american spaceship *Gemini 12*, which is related to Project Eclipse¹⁰.

The series regarding the Eclipse, which examination is of interest here, brings records of the alignments of the celestial bodies Sun, Moon, and Earth, as occurred in 12 November 1966 and seen from Cassino beach in Rio Grande do Sul. Cosmic space was, following that, an object of scientific scrutiny with participation and repercussion among the international community. Some data from this process are portrayed in the novel's space according to media reports at the time:

The ultraviolet camera mounted by Edwin D. Aldrin on the capsule's outer hull (*Ibid*, R 5, p. 21);

The launch of the rockets Nike-Tomahawk, Nike-Apache, Nike Hadac, and Nike-Javelin, empties the streets and squares of Rio Grande (*Ibid*, R 7, p. 36);

The rising white trail of the second rocket, a Nike-Javelin (*Ibid*, R 13, p. 182).

¹⁰ In the year of 1965, a "memorandum of understanding between Comissão Nacional de Atividades Espaciais (CNAE) (National Commission of Space Activities) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the USA (NASA)" (ROLIM, 2016, p. 17) begins the Eclipse project. "[...] for the first time an eclipse was photographed by astronauts, who were in orbit within the US spaceship *Gemini 12*, three hundred kilometers above Earth. (*Ibid.*, p. 34)

Many of those data coincide with the ones gathered in the *Correio do Povo*, the biggest newspaper in Rio Grande do Sul at the time:

Space walk by Edwin E. Aldrin [...] rockets ascended in the exact time.

| Launch | Rocket | time |
|--------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. | S-1 Nike Tomahawk | 10 h 00 m 00 s |
| 2. | D - 3 Nike Javelin | 11 h 38 m 10 s |
| 3. | D - 4 Nike Hydac | 11 h 55 m 19 s |
| 4. | N - 5 Nike Apache | 12 h 02 m 00 s |

(*Correio do Povo*, 14 Nov. 1966)¹¹

In the media, information was also conveyed regarding the launch of the *Gemini* XII, NASA's human spaceflight program, which took place between 11 and 15 November, 1966. Following journalistic information, Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin – the second man to step on the moon – did the longest and most successful spacewalk of the program. This fact is depicted in theme R: "*Gemini 12 breaks record in space and finishes his mission with success*" (LINS, R 13, p. 184), "*Gemini 12 concluded successfully*" (*Ibid*, R 17, p. 318).

The eclipse, symbol of the union between opposites and of the transmutation process (life/death-light/darkness), which marks a defined moment in the celestial bodies' movement, maintains a parallel with Abel and ☾'s encounters:

The extended line between Sun and Earth crosses the center of the Moon, black disc, the Moon is encircled by a blue light above which the sky darkens, nocturnal, the sky constellated, a last tongue remains, fierce brightness, a long explosion sliding on the Moon, and ☾, simultaneously visible and hidden by the eclipse, her hair with a gleam of fishes in penumbra, vague shape, undulating, unreal tree, walks toward me, the moths coming and going between us as if binding our bodies together. (*Ibid*, R 20, p. 355).

¹¹ A book about the event was recently published: *O dia em que o Sol se escondeu: A história do fenômeno do Eclipse Solar, do dia 12 de novembro de 1966, no Bairro/Balneário de Cassino da cidade Rio Grande/RS* (The day the sun hid itself: History of the Solar Eclipse event of 12 November 1966, in the Cassino Neighborhood/Balneary in Rio Grande city/Rio Grande do Sul (ROLIM, Keble Danta. Cassino: Self-published, 2016).

The book is part of the results from a research on the history of the Brazilian Space Program in the Launch Center of Barreira do Inferno (Hell's Wall); the project's author and coordinator is an electrical engineer in the aforementioned Center. The Eclipse Project, realized in cooperation with NASA and Brazil's National Commission of Space Activities, is a part of that history. The book contains accounts of the assembly, installations and launches of the rockets with detailed technical data. "The Eclipse Project operation in 1966 was the most complete and complex of its kind ever accomplished, it can be said, in the Southern Hemisphere, involving teams from Brazil, the US, Italy, the Netherlands, and Uruguay. Although its operative phase lasted very little time, the results, however, made up for it." (*Ibid*, p.56)

"The Eclipse Project required the installing and dismantling of a Spaceport with 8 buildings, 19 platforms, 7 kilometers of roads and extension cords and means of communication for 16 instrumentation trailers". (*Ibid.*, p. 57)

The movement of the Cosmos and that of the entities that unite the protagonists suggest, in the symbology of Sun and Moon and in the eclipse's interpretative possibilities, a plethora of significations associated to the perception of the text's narrative strategies, which seek the formal capture of spatial movement and of the convergent correlation between both spaces.

Expressed in a contiguous manner, without indications explicating the space-time situation, in R 5, the displacements are responsible for the mutual infiltration of fragments from different series, creating discrepancies that motivate the reader's attention to the words that must signal each narrative space: "it shows the first rocket Nike Tomahawk's trail in the sky. It is exactly ten AM. Quick meeting under the trees, at nightfall, next to the statue of Dante Alighieri" (*Ibid*, R 5, p. 20). The statements' sequence, without paragraph pauses in the entire chapter, gathers, in the above quote, the spaces referring to Cassino beach (Rio Grande do Sul/RS), where the eclipse happened, and to the square in front of the Public Library (São Paulo/SP), where the statue of Dante is placed. The gaps and contiguities in the spatial indications cause an interpenetration of spaces, which are only identifiable through analytic effort.

Thus, starting from R 5 onwards, we have these spaces: Cassino beach (Rio Grande, RS), Public Library (SP), Roosevelt Square and Consolação Avenue (SP), Ubatuba beach (SP), amusement park, hotel or beach house (Praia Grande, SP), all related to Abel and 'O's encounters and referred to without transition, like "a text pronounced by a hundred mouths" (*Ibid*, R 5, p. 20-21). The entangling of the cosmic and earthly spaces is already visible in R 5, first chapter of theme R to condense the subthemes to be developed in the other themes. Juxtaposed, without paragraph spaces, we have, in the following order: "ten AM" – Cassino beach (RS) –, "at nightfall, next to the statue of Dante Alighieri" – Public Library (SP) –, "under the noon sun" – Nativity's burial in São Paulo –, "the waves die in the nightly sand" – encounter of Abel and 'O in Praia Grande beach (p. 21). This amalgam of times, spaces and subthemes is afterwards returned to; the subthemes are extended and some are separated by paragraphs, which allows, in tandem with the repetition of some references, for an identification/systematization of each one of them.

The data conveyed in newspapers about the eclipse and project *Gemini XII* are clearly absorbed in the novel, facilitating the reader's identification of the referrer. Let us see some of these links:

Today, the scientific assault on the Sun. The eclipse will project a shadow (the so-called total darkness trajectory) diagonally across the center of South America. This strip of shadow, 88 km wide, will pass through Peru, Bolivia, and the southern extremity of Brazil, continuing throughout the Atlantic (Correio do Povo newspaper, p. 12, 12 Nov 1966).

“Spacewalk by Edwin E. Aldrin” (Correio do Povo, 14 Nov. 1966).

The ultraviolet camera mounted by Edwin D. Aldrin on the outer hull of the space capsule and turned toward the star fields of Sirius and Veolorum, seeks information on the age of the Universe. Numbers and names in these fields flourish. (LINS, R 5, p.21)

Powerful machines amplify in all senses the reach of the probings around the eclipse. Optical instruments of various origins, installed in the densest point of the shadow ellipsis, stalk stars of dubious existence. (“You either shoot yourself in the chest or cut your wrists, to make that piece of rock go away. I’d rather live and if I die it’ll be by chance”.) A fleet of large jet planes, envoys from NASA, flying at altitudes that border on the imaginary, study the solar circles. Over Peru, three hundred thousand meters above the Andes, in a space populated by throatless brays, bursts and bellows, the Gemini’s astronauts film the eclipse and the shadow ellipsis where ☾ and I are, lying still, laughing, half-drunk and with open arms, on a desert rectangle and next us the tree, a point, a speck. The Nike-Apache, equipped with electronic devices, investigates the superior winds, accelerated with the shadow and the cold, and the high atmosphere zoology, which can be unveiled – like, under an adequate reagent, a drawing usually invisible – by the contorted and mysterious light of the eclipse. (*Ibid*, R 19, p. 340)

These quotes are part of a set gathering documented data, not only localizable in the newspapers of that time but also in the records of research projects like that of the Barreira do Inferno Launch Center (Brazilian Space Agency)¹².

However, we cannot let ourselves be fooled by these similarities, which can mislead the discovery of differences. While our attention was channeled until now

¹² “In 12 November 1966, due to the solar eclipse’s occurrence, scientists from various countries all over the world reunited with their technical engineers and experiences to analyze the consequences of the eclipses for the Sun-Earth energetic relation. Together, Brazil, the USA, Italy, The Netherland, Uruguay, plus 200 scientists and technicians from 60 different foreign organizations of scientific research and operations, plus 800 tons of equipment, plus 150 scientists and technicians from 8 Brazilian organizations of scientific research and operations, in addition to 99 experiments performed.”.

“The Sun’s total eclipse happened on 12 November 1966, exactly at 11:10 local time, in the southern part of the Rio Grande do Sul coast”. (disponível in <http://www.clbi.cta.br/cceit/projeto/show/12 - acesso em 06/09/ 2014>).

toward the objective data captured by fiction, we must shift our focus to pointing out the differences between the scientific apparatus, journalistic information and text production.

In both fragments above, which we selected with the objective of evidencing the similarities with localizable referrers, the difference in language use soon becomes evident. Highly figurative in *Avalovara*, the language use gives the text, via adjectives and metaphors, ambiguity and the distortion of the event's context and its truth. Subtly, the scientific apparatus, the *Gemini* mission and the large aircraft lose their grandiosity and spectacular gleam in order to "stalk stars of dubious origin", to occupy "a space populated by throatless brays, bursts and bellows", to "film the eclipse and the shadow ellipsis where ☹ and I are, lying still, laughing, half-drunk", to, finally, investigate "the high atmosphere zoology". If the use of only a few words allows for the subversion of propagated values, the serial form adopted by Osman Lins fulfills the additional function of revealing – "under an adequate reagent" – the existence of a false bottom. In the fragment above, the use of parentheses and quotation marks insert the sentences ("You either shoot yourself in the chest or cut your wrists, to make that piece of rock go away. I'd rather live and if I die it'll be by chance") exactly into the discourse regarding the eclipse. To what purpose serves this verbal wedge denoting a borderline desperate situation, mixed with the awe before the cosmic event and the unsuspected technological power? To be sure, it is not just an innovation, given that it has a strategic function in expressing the unspeakable, going against what is said in the newspapers.

The Journalistic Headlines series is distinguished, when compared to others, for the italicizing of its text: "*Members of parliament approve punitive measures on Castelo Branco. President of the Chamber of Deputies renounces.*" (LINS, R 21, p. 367). The series regarding the eclipse follows the standard pattern of novels in its text. This small difference forwards the reader's attention to the dissimulating strategy that keeps the newspaper's shape and information, but also deforms both due to its contiguity in presenting the page, along with the eclipse's fragments that open themselves to the imaginary, which is expressed through symbolic, poetic language.

November's cicadas are silenced, tricked by the night infiltrating itself among the tree branches; moths grow restless in their diurnal hideouts and venture out into the blurry noon. *Cassations and suspensions of political rights: new list is expected today.* The strip of the total eclipse, however, is only a few kilometers away from Rio Grande. Conducted by imprecise news, we go on extensive and costly travels to observe,

in its wholeness, an event predicted to be incomplete in the city. This mistake, though, I deal with in another way, is it still a mistake? (LINS, R 16, p. 301)

The conjugation, in this fragment, of the eclipse with the newspaper headline and the narrator's resourceful commentary is exemplary of how the equivalence of relationships kept between the series is maintained. In the eclipse's case, the reader's attention is grabbed by the data's precision and by the rocket launches' description. However, if we sift through some information in the text, we shall see that the references to these data are few in relation to the countless significations relative to the stars' encounter in celestial space, where light meets darkness; in relation to the characters' pathways and to the revelations of corruption, of misleading news, hidden by apparently precise and truthful statements.

From the moment in which, with the ephemeral simulacrum of night beaten and destroyed, space resounds, the blueness and stars grow pale, they are annulled by a fleeting transparency and I see the true sky – or one of the existing skies, usually inaccessible, who knows why, to our poverty. Less beautiful and comfortable than the sky of clouds, planets and quasars – and simultaneously more disturbing –, this fast and glaring phase of the eclipse uncovers a sky shaped by wear, solid, evoking, in color and penury, I'd say even in its texture, an old wall with graffiti or the door to a toilet stall, with its drawings and inscriptions. [...] How do I know, though, if what I see are remains of the human bustle, or if the writing on this wall marks our visit, or, still, if the letters and figures – geometric, fantastic and domestic – put on it were never traced, having always been there, being there forever [...] (LINS, R 22, p. 381)

The reversion of macrocosm and microcosm suggested by the observed eclipse comes accompanied by suggestive metaliterary indications, as well as of social compromise. The data function as markers, flaggers, which trigger images, reflections, relations resulting from a keen perception of the fact used as a referrer and amalgam with, in a critical way, the context inserted without subordination to the event and its image. The strangeness of the spotted, maculated, sky, in counterpoint to the spectacular human feat of being able to sophisticatedly "spy" on the celestial event, is an opening for the reader to go against the media language. The series' articulation installs the reader's attention in the construction of meanings hidden by the mass media vehicles. On the values authorized to flow socially, established as unquestionable, a questioning look focuses itself, which can include the agents of science. It can include questions regarding the human condition, the insufficiency of

the human being's physical constitution, its necessity of completion and the use of tools: "consisting men's work in seeing (with what eyes?) and unraveling, in the veiled surface they contemplate, some of the possible ropes and stilts that sustain and save them from the helplessness in which they are born?" (LINS, R 22, p. 381).

The eclipse's value is deprived of its notoriety, and the stars' encounter becomes the prefiguration of the fictional encounter, transiting from the journalistic discourse, committed to an authorized view of facts, to the literary discourse, sustained on the "as if":

Here, with the bedroom's lamp turned off and sometimes – me, she – fixing the floor or the walls being just visible, in the course of this unreal night and as prefigured by the short daytime night of the eclipse, shut up or grown unintelligible are the voices of events and things – and its tongue moves convulsed between its teeth. (LINS, R 14, p.222).

In other words, the eclipse prefigures the fusion (in the death) of the character Abel, who aims to become a writer, with the configuration of the work "being". With the fast transit of the Moon that operates the apparent fusion of both stars, we can understand the things particular to art, in a permanent becoming, moved by the change in values, by new perspectives, and, principally, by renewed readings. Were the representation to restrict itself to the vehiculated fact, the reader's work in reconstituting the text would be lost.

Hence, it becomes evident in the reading of theme R – besides its composition in series that imbricate themselves, denouncing a space "Less beautiful and comfortable than the sky of clouds, planets and quasars" –, a movement of "making unreal" that is concretized through different forms of representation, having locatable referrers in mind: "It is easy to perceive a new evocation of 'reality' in the expressive tendencies of literature and arts, which seeks to create effects of reality, in the transgression of historical realism's representative limits." (SCHOLLHAMMER, 2002, p. 78).

In *A rainha dos cárceres da Grécia* (The queen of the jails of Greece) (1977), theoretical questions on the possible treatments of time and space are explicitly addressed. The novel's own narrative structure, which is a critical reading and a criticism of reading – commented in the form of a diary – of the homonymous novel of fictional author Julia Marquezim Enone, favors its own metaliterary essay-like ethos, which motivates the reader to reflect on the infiltrations that corrode the established

limits between fiction, history, reality, the imaginary, truth, space, characters, and actions.

Tradition is revisited under a theoretical and practical focus in the act of writing itself, pairing to the conception of mobile space an infiltrated time:

Yes, perhaps the narrative, in its archetypical expression, does not demand from space more than a name – at most, a name of enchantment. Would then the narrator, century after century, abide to this law? “Dance revered the gods; today it exalts the trained and vibrant body of the ballet dancer”, sentences Marquerol Quarez (LINS, 1977, p. 107).

This allusion to dance authenticates the specificity of artistic language and the validity of adequacies and even innovations regarding the elements of narrative, especially regarding the treatment of time and space. In this last novel of Osman Lins, the inextricable association of space and time has available to itself an ample repertoire of references comprising the real and the imaginary, concrete reality, and the language and strategies of novel writing.

However, this innovation of narrative techniques with the consequent distancing of traditional postulates shows itself to be fecund with what is not very evident. The infiltration of historical or cosmological facts in Osman Lins’s fictional text goes beyond the intentionality of memory preservation or the commitment to offer testimony on some surprising event. On the contrary, the registered, conveyed, historicized facts are deformed, distorted, in the juxtaposition of fragments from the different series, denouncing what hides underneath the common, habitual view. We have in verbal discourse what painting calls anamorphosis, a technique coethnic to the Renaissance’s fixed perspective, which works with the distorted representation of some object/image, not grasped immediately by perception, inserted in a pictorial field of representation, which effect of reality is immediate. Indeed, the distorted image is there, but it is necessary a dislodgement of the observer so that its meaning manifests itself in the metamorphosis operated by the dislodgement of the observer’s view, by the dislodgement of point of view.

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