

# *The confluence of James Joyce and Guimarães Rosa<sup>1</sup>*

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**Abstract:** *This paper aims to show the similarities between two novels, Ulysses, by the Irish writer James Joyce, and Grande Sertão: Veredas, by the Brazilian author João Guimarães Rosa. A large number of comparisons have been made between these two novels in the field of literature. They have many things in common, mainly the use of language. It is creation; and, even more, it is poetry, a magic path leading one author to the other, a novel about the other novel; and yet more: the language is the magic magnifying glass that brings readers and authors closer to the solitary journey of the characters. It is in the poetry and expression of these narratives that the readers discover the “spirit” of creation.*

In the history of the world literature, there are rare writers whose genius produce great works of art. Two novels can be brought together due to the similarities in their language aspects: *Ulysses* by the Irish writer James Joyce, and *Grande Sertão: Veredas* by the Brazilian author João Guimarães Rosa. Because they are not purely realistic, they make the reader dig deep into their narratives. A large number of comparisons have been already made between these two novels in the field of literature. Besides language, topics such as good and evil, hell and heaven, passion, monotony of the dry land and nights filled with nightmares, anxiety and reason for living are creatively developed. Whether in that insipid and inconceivable day that Joyce was given to describe, or in the arid and universal lands that Rosa was given to cross, in each case the writers face the same experience from their own perspective. It is understood that this is similar to the aesthetic experience of writing a novel. A novel is the aesthetic expression of a reality, and the expression is language, the same language that is the main element in the plot of Joyce's and Rosa's works. Language is everything in those two novels. It is creation; and, even more, it is poetry, a magic path leading an author to the other, a novel about the other novel; and yet more: language is the magic magnifying glass that brings readers and authors closer to the solitary journey of the characters, in language itself. It is in the poetry and expression of these novels that the reader discovers the “spirit” of creation.

Every comparison between *Grande Sertão: Veredas*, by Guimarães Rosa, and *Ulysses*, by James Joyce, has to be carried out from the point of view of their language,

highly perceived by a sensitive reader of poetry. This occurs because both novels are something essentially created in the field of Literature, novels produced in literature, something totally literary. Novels made of literature, novels which have significant literature itself as their meaningful material. Joyce has been contrasted to Rosa, however, we must keep in mind his specificities. Joyce's novel has a song – Do the mermaids sing? – it is the musicality of the English language that elevates the most stale words to the sublime; Rosa's novel has music, too – the Pan's flute? – it is the orality of the words that come out of the memory to show exactly where things are. But the awareness of the novel is the same in the two writers: from Homer to Joyce, from Joyce to Guimarães Rosa, everything ends in a novel, a literary novel. And something remains: the narrative, made of adventures and misadventures; narrative that is language and language that is, essentially, poetry. Here we are under the breath of the "Spirit", the "Spirit of Literature"; reality is literature itself. And the language created by the writer, who is embraced by the "Spirit", will make the visible reality to be shown in its particularities and peculiarities. Reality, in this case, works only as an opportunity, and literature itself surpasses its fundamentals when it attempts to recreate it. When we are forced to reflect on the reality of these two novels, we are led to see other images in the words, other realities, realities that we feel as the most beautiful ones and that are beyond any space where they could be confined. Both Guimarães Rosa and James Joyce wish to make the reader sense the action of the language they created by using, in many passages, some expressions that are aimed at reflection and epiphany. The strength of the expressions used entails the epiphanic clarity that radiates throughout the narrative, and, in fragmentary form, reverses the beginning and the end of the narrative in order to show, in the shape of fragments, how quickly things are remembered and recapitulated. In the case of Joyce, we have the city, Dublin, in Ireland; in the case of Rosa, there is the dry wilderness of Minas Gerais, in Brazil. City and *sertão*, everything devised for the reader not to forget that our existence is composed of confusion and chaos. *Grande Sertão: Veredas* is the world; *Ulysses* is everywhere. The wilderness of Rosa is the world, it is everywhere. "Sertão é sem lugar... Sertão é dentro da gente..." ["Sertão is placeless ... Sertão is inside us"] – Rosa writes. Joyce's Dublin is the *urbe* without *orbe*. The true reality of these two novels in their modern epic conception can only be perceived in language that, as parody, contains the true personality of their characters; characters tattooed with shadows and guilt that only the language of poetry makes it possible for readers to see.

James Joyce, an Irishman considered the greatest writer of the twentieth century; Guimarães Rosa, a Brazilian writer known as far as the Portuguese language can reach and as much as someone could enjoy his novel. Whereas one could argue that James Joyce wrote *Ulysses* in some kind of new English and that Shakespeare would laugh at him in the other world, we can say that, in *Grande Sertão: Veredas*, Rosa created words and wrote in such a different style that Padre Vieira would deride him in his *Grande Sermão da Sexagésima*. We know that, in that sermon, Vieira focuses on one thing: the

way the preachers in his time, the seventeenth century, preach. This sermon is really a theatrical spectacle of language: the words, the repetitions, the quotations and the recitations impose this theatricality on the voicing of the sermon. When writing their novels, both Joyce and Rosa probably knew of the danger that the language used in these works could cause. As great readers themselves, they could not ignore that they were in the forefront, anticipating the revelation of the secrets of the artistic creation itself, because there is not a creator, i.e., a writer, without the knowledge of Science. And herein James Joyce and Rosa coincide. They knew before writing; they had the poetic science and, for that reason, they exposed their own language to the danger and the irony of the parodical deconstruction, epic *par excellence*. Parody is the paradigmatic axis that unites these two great writers, so distant from a geographic perspective, and so close from the point of view of literature. There are writers and philosophers who have been read by Rosa and Joyce: Vico, Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Aristotle, Plato, Cervantes, Goethe, Mallarmé, Flaubert, Dante Alighiere, among others. Writers who make readers get lost in their obscure passages; the confluence of these two writers does not belong to the mere facts of real life, but reaches the order of the myth, only captured through literature.

To compare *Grande Sertão: Veredas* to Joyce's *Ulysses* is not a strange task in the field of comparative literary studies. In these two novels, we find a vast field to discuss. The exotic journey that Riobaldo makes along the crossroads of *Grande Sertão: Veredas* indicates marked coincidences with the journey of Stephen/ Bloom in the streets, alleys and crossroads of Joyce's Dublin on June 16, 1904. These coincidences are essentially expressed in the language and in the procedures of construction and deconstruction in the works of both authors. The epic procedures of construction and deconstruction mean the strength and work of the consciousness of the language that was deposited in these works by providing the reader with a logical understanding of the matter in them. The epic material *par excellence* is epic in the sense of fragmentation of language, which is the fragmentation and erudition of the memory. We emphasize here the epic meaning of the memory. As it is possible to see in *Grande Sertão: Veredas*, the characters Riobaldo/ Diadorim come and go, move around, bringing memories back and forth; reminiscences of animals, streams, places, battles ... In *Ulysses* the same thing happens: its pages are full of recollections; *Ulysses* is the Homeric memory that the reader scrutinizes in all its episodes. In a very clear relation (based on a deep awareness of procedural epic/ parodic language, the epic is a resource of the parody), the memories and the phenomena overlap and intertwine to the point that the resumption of the past brings forth the new, which is so epically deployed in the form of parody. In *Grande Sertão: Veredas* as well as in *Ulysses* one sees everything parodically, in a (de) constructed way: nothing seems to begin; nothing seems to end in the process of these two magical narratives.

We shall return to the time when Joyce's *Ulysses* is first launched, in 1922, in Paris. It is a crucial event for all literatures of Europe and of course for the world literature. It is a time when literature itself is being threatened by the experiences of the vanguards. Certainly, artists and lovers of literature had browsed through Joyce's

book in order to find out “some novelty that mattered”. Undoubtedly *Ulysses* surprised and disappointed many of them. But one thing is certain: the direct or indirect influence that this work has exercised, and that still exercises, on generations and generations of writers in Europe and America. In Brazil, for example that can be noticed especially in the critique launched by Oswald de Andrade, mainly continued by Guimarães Rosa and Clarice Lispector.

Clarice Lispector was inspired by Joyce. Here it is worth recalling the novel *Perto do Coração Selvagem*, her first book, published in 1944, when Clarice was seventeen. Álvaro Lins, who is regarded as one of the best critics of the country, wrote about *Perto do Coração Selvagem*: “[This is] our first novel within the spirit and technique of Joyce and Virginia Woolf”<sup>2</sup> The title of this novel is taken from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, whose author used to be so difficult and so familiar among our most radical authors. I would suggest a “synchronic poetic” here among these authors that were contaminated by Joyce’s fluent flow of language, marking its specificities, but always perceiving that the human habit of imitation is universal and that James Joyce to us is the great master of the authors who read his text.

The “Concrete Poets” also supported projects and theoretical positions on art and poetry based on Joyce’s work. When reading the book *Teoria da Poesia Concreta*, by Decio Pignatari, Augusto and Haroldo de Campos, readers are faced with this truth: true aesthetic emotion. It is full of critical comments and opinions about Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Joyce’s influence was decisive in the case of the Brazilian “Concretismo”, from the 1950s on. The “Concrete Poets” were indeed radical readers of Joyce and they were the first to see Ulysses’ language shadows in Rosa’s shaded *Grande Sertão*. One cannot forget this: everything started with the 1922 Modernism, especially with Oswald and Mário de Andrade, who read *Ulysses* in the French version. In an anthropophagic insight during which he returned to and resumed viewpoints, in 1964, Haroldo de Campos, in an essay entitled *Miramar na Mira* (a study of Oswald’s work in confrontation with *Ulysses*) remarks and recalls, coincidentally, the date of the publication of Joyce’s book, which was our modernist writer’s concern. I quote:

In 1922 – a year that would become renowned among us by the outbreak of the Modern Art Week – The Shakespeare and Co. (currently the legendary Publishing House owned by the American Sylvia Beach) published in Paris the first edition of a book destined to change the course of modern fiction: *Ulysses*, by James Joyce.<sup>3</sup>

This perspective increasingly confirms and strengthens the hypothesis that *Ulysses* aroused the interest of a strand of modern writers. We can identify in *Miramar na Mira* important observations about the style created by Oswald de Andrade, in contrast with the more radical artistic trends that were developed in Europe during the Modernist period. In *Miramar na Mira*, Haroldo de Campos gathered and wrote some amount of data to understand and analyze those trends focused on his creation. He is quoted in Julio Ortega’s text in honor of James Joyce’s birth centenary:

... I do not believe in a bulky repetition of Joyce. The idea of a work with Joyce I had was to be concerned with some precise textual devices, and to deal with the signifiers and parodies on the proliferation of cultures. But I wanted to apply an anti-Joycean device on Joyce, and that device is synthesis. And I picked up that device from the Brazilian experience in Oswald de Andrade, from [his] Cubist prose and short novels made of fragments. For example, the contemporary critique was surprised at Oswald's *João Miramar* because it was a book that seemed a self-anthology, where each fragment was isolated as an anthological piece produced by the book itself -- an anthology assembled in the spirit of the reader. It was already the outline of an open work. I also have this very clear concern on the open work since a theoretical paper in 1955. In this article I speak of a baroque and an open work. Now, my crucial point regarding Joyce was to seize some devices and replace them with the dialectic introduction of an anti-Joycean device -- that was an effort toward synthesis. Therefore, my *Galaxias* are made of condensed pages in which the whole book is on every page. (12-13)<sup>4</sup>

All these comparisons are inevitable. Critics, scholars and researchers were aware of it, they were aware of the influence of Joyce on our writers. Although some have not effectively read the book, *Ulysses*' fame spread all around: a single word mentioned or an extract commented is enough to influence creative writers. In this sense, it is never unreasonable to recall the comments made by Haroldo de Campos in Ortega's text to justify the influence of Joyce on Guimarães Rosa. These words are timely, since they justify the way that influence takes place:

In Brazil we can see this in a tradition that reaches Guimarães Rosa... despite the opinion of some conventional critics, who think that, to be influenced by *Finnegans Wake*, one must have read it all – when Guimarães Rosa is reputed to not have reached half of *Ulysses*, which does not mean anything, since one can be already contaminated after reading only one page of *Ulysses* or of a review about it.<sup>5</sup>

Notice that, in the title of this article, we used the word “confluence” to avoid the simple ideological conventionality of “influence” of one author on another, in this case, of James Joyce on Guimarães Rosa. Here I worship the “Spirit of Literature” that is in the air and, it seems, brings together writers of different spaces and traditions and makes them contemporary and belonging to the same group of creators. These writers, according to their coincidences, radically define themselves by their own literary heritage; they are heirs of the same tradition. It would be worthwhile to recall here the famous text by T. S. Eliot, “Tradition and Individual Talent”, a poetic way of evaluating, comparing and contrasting the work of creation, not as an isolated fact, but in a relation, a form of aesthetic criticism to overcome the historical limits. One must read this well-known text of Eliot, one of the first readers of James Joyce. It is worth mentioning from Eliot's essay:

Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year, and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence, the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in the bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. The historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is the same time what makes a writer most actually conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporary. (13-14)

The poet of *The Waste Land* continues, and what an admirable way of ordering the argument of his criticism and what an admirable critical consciousness in the face of the literary creation:

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism.

Therefore, influences and confluences exist and will always exist. Readers who are aware of this will be able to learn how authors, such as James Joyce or Guimarães Rosa, conceived their works. Stepping on a little firmer ground in Brazilian literature, it is easier to understand, for example, the strong foreign (mainly British) influences on Machado de Assis' novels. His creation reflects the broad reading of the English novel; his realism is literary, it does not deceive the readers with the false local realism. A reader or writer outside this tradition cannot establish any relation between Joyce and Rosa. Furthermore, a critic tied to the historical past cannot admit the fruitful influence of Joyce on the major authors of the coming generations. The difficult thing is to understand the universe of its tradition, one of Homeric poetry, full of mythology, which requires an understanding of things anyone hardly knows. This is where Joyce's novel acquires the *Odyssey* characteristics, its language becoming increasingly dense. For example, Stephen is artificially given the name and role of Dedalus; Molly, in *Ulysses*, is Penelope, etc. Joyce proceeds like this throughout his work. He exposes the myth in the form of parody and laughter and involves it in language, leaving it hidden between different images. Likewise, *Grande Sertão: Veredas* is a *Ulysses* twisted with mythologies. Riobaldo is madly in love in the dry lands of mythology; he suffers for love for his mythological Diadorim. This way, these two novels can only be understood by readers that dive in the secret of their language; therein lies the secret of each novel. It has already been said

that the true protagonist of *Ulysses* is not Mr. Bloom, nor Stephen, but it is the language. This one might also say of *Grande Sertão: Veredas*. Its real protagonist is not Riobaldo nor Diadorim, but language.

Joyce and Rosa: two creators connected by a common lineage and tradition, an epic tradition of construction and deconstruction of the novel that broke with the tradition of the novel itself. They have broken with the traditional order and inaugurated a new expression, i.e., they have given a new language to the novel, where the past and present are reunited, the primitive and the scholarly, the vision of East and West, the Greek and the Latin world, authors of different times and literatures, the regional as a local expression and universal quotations, everything highlighting the difficult structure of a new novel with its fragmented narrative technique. All this forms the complex language of Joyce's novel, the complex language of Rosa's novel.

I repeat: *Grande Sertão: Veredas* is a twisted *Ulysses*. Cunningly, Rosa weaves a legendary web that talks about the *Sertão*; ingenious, he spoke of the silence, the desert and the loneliness in his characters. We feel the dryness of the *Sertão* as we feel the insipidity of the urban Dublin in Joyce. The fact that we feel Riobaldo's loneliness and are able to talk about the monologue of Joyce's characters is an aesthetic understanding of the comparison between the two authors. Because of all this, there is a complex view of these complex novels. The reader can observe how these two authors transform all that is real with their metamorphosis on the basis of the fragment and the language. The characters themselves, with their human feelings, are transformed by the strength and nature of the language, fragmented language, but by virtue of his poetic nature, inviolable. Rosa as well as Joyce take this epic fragmentation to the extreme.

Well, these novelists came to me by the similarity in the epic procedure of construction and deconstruction of the language. In one author the language is English and, in the other, the language is Portuguese. Synchronously, we can glimpse Joyce inside the pages of Rosa's book when we face the Devil in the midst of the whirl, where it plays the same role as Goethe's Faust, as if he, Joyce, had known the same secret affinities of a Riobaldo through the crossroads of *Grande Sertão*. How is it possible not to recognize, in the form of the language of Rosa's novel, the decisive trait of Joyce's influence, the poetic heritage that the modern writer has to accept as a companion, to make the novel to continue? This poetic/parodic consciousness defended by a radical tradition of writers is present, also, in another great American writer: it is, for example, in the novel *Paradiso* by José Lezama Lima. At one point in the novel, *Cemí*, the central character, enters a bookstore and approaches a bookshelf where one can hear people talking. When he sees the bookseller, he asks: "– Has James Joyce's *Goethe*, recently published in Genève, arrived yet? – The bookseller blinked at him, since he could notice the jokey tone in your question. – No, not yet, although we are expecting it to arrive these days. -- When you have it, keep a copy for me, asked the person who was talking to Foncion, not aware of the blunder of referring to a book that had never been published" (Lima 237).<sup>6</sup>

Shadows and echoes of Joyce's *Ulysses*! One can see, therefore, how the authors, readers of Joyce's text, are coincidentally related. Connected by a poetic tradition that

makes them contemporary; in all of them the same poetic discourse stands between the writers of the past and the modern writers. The interposition of the memory reflected in epic procedures and in parody is consciously frequent. One can understand the parody as an epic procedure. In the Epic, we see memory printed with all its flaws and faults filled by the interposition of the splendid words of the author and the reader. In this sense, to perceive the trace of an epic text like James Joyce's or Guimarães Rosa's is to recognize structures and specific assembly lines, it is to identify a certain procedure. It means to reveal breaks and detachment from other texts. The epic poet, the rhapsodist, – the name used to call the primitive poet and that corresponds to tailor – is exactly the one who (re)cuts (re)collects and (re)counts the early experience, the thing lived. The epic poet is the one who recites the words and writings of others. The characteristic of the epic text is the cut, the fragmentary, the break, the parodic stitching, between past and present, the said and the unsaid, the gap where the poet/rhapsodist fits parodic texts, fragments and quotes from different sources; gaps where the poet connects texts by authors from unknown times, reports, material of different kinds of genre, etc.

*Grande Sertão: Veredas* is the ordered space where Rosa tries out his novel, his new *Ulysses*, although he had only heard the echoes evoked by the magical hidden forces in the crossroads of the *Grande Sertão*, the Devil's traps that have no limit. *Grande Sertão: Veredas* has no limits in its reality. The limits are set by the reader who is unable to penetrate the universe of his creation. His language, his images, his speech, his diction, etc. are configured with the same mechanism and procedure with which James Joyce built his *Ulysses*. What simply happens is that these works are situated in a clear atmosphere and in a specific landscape, but they are inspired by an educated reality and connected to others that are linked to others yet, hence the apparent difficulty in understanding them. Among the essays and studies listed in Guimarães Rosa's critical heritage, in Brazil, it is worth highlighting Augusto de Campos's essay, entitled "Um Lance de Dês do Grande Sertão". It summarizes the whole idea of comparative literature. Augusto de Campos is a "concrete poet", a critical scholar of a high critical consciousness and Joyce's translator. He says:

The affinity that Rosa's novel presents with those of Joyce is, firstly, the experimentalist attitude towards language, which, in its materiality, is lexically and syntactically shaped and reshaped. From this perspective, various techniques used by both novelists can be identified. Thus, there come the alterations, the co-alliterations, the conscious malapropisms, the inner rhymes and so on. Also the syntax, in some aspects, is manipulated identically both in Joyce and Rosa. It is a telegraphic syntax, or, in the words of David Hayman, 'a type of literary shorthand.' (321)<sup>7</sup>

*Grande Sertão: Veredas*. It is a sumptuous novel, strange, erudite, as Joyce's *Ulysses*, but never unreadable. Both Rosa and Joyce turn simple things into epic ones, the joke, the proverb, the prayer, the popular sayings ..... It seems nothing is being



narrated, breaking up the narrative into parts, endless and meaningless, apparently. Let us take *Grande Sertão: Veredas*. The way that it exposes the language and gives voice to nature itself as baroque authors used to do, like *El Quijote*, for example. And now I say: Baroque is an epic art, the most epic of all arts. This way myth is invented. Remember, in *Grande Sertão: Veredas*, the famous episode, the *Guararavacã do Guaicuí*. We can interpret that as Riobaldo's delusion; cunningly, he swings from Diadorim's green eyes to the bucolic atmosphere of the place: "O vento é verde" ["The wind is green"]. To talk about Diadorim's green eyes, the word *vento* [*wind*] seems too concrete. We feel the colour of the landscape, we see the vast landscape of that place in the *Grande Sertão*, we feel the green of Diadorim's eyes and the greenness of the landscape. There is nothing more beautiful than that! When Riobaldo asks "o vento é verde?" ["is the wind green?"], he is revealing something that is very near and very far from reality, as if he were saying "Diadorim's green eyes make reality look green." In love, Riobaldo thinks he is alone in the midst of the green reality that surrounds him in his loneliness. And he hears the wind or sees the wind, hears the sea and, deep inside, these echoes and visions are kept in the most sonorous syllables of his words.

The confluent narrative leaves nothing defined or clear, everything has to be ambiguous; everything has to run like the flow of rivers: the São Francisco and The Liffey. The mirror of these rivers flowing waters does not reflect equal realities; faces close together, intertwined figures; it is the artistic creation that makes you see them like this. The apparent reality merges with the reality created by the artist. High capacity for understanding the myth; on these margins are found the footsteps of classical concepts and ancient legends.

*Grande Sertão: Veredas*. Beauty is everywhere, from the beginning to the end. What a stunning way to start and finish the novel! "*Nonada*" became famous and caused astonishment, the initial and final word of Riobaldo's narrative that ends up with the symbol of the infinity. And this can be investigated with the same awe and curiosity that James Joyce caused with the famous monologue of Molly Bloom, a Penelope who weaves a verbal web, in the last episode of *Ulysses*. The episode begins and ends with a "Yes," said in every way, repeatedly and without a limit. And this monologue sums up the meaning of Bloom's day; it is the badly slept nights and the nightmares of all Joyce's characters. Molly Bloom's language and her expressions follow the same mechanism with which James Joyce creates all his characters. The secret of Penelope is discovered. *Grande Sertão: Veredas* is the narration of a crossing, crossing the dry lands of Minas Gerais; *Ulysses* is the narration of a journey, a journey through the streets of Dublin; a crossing and a journey converted into a strange language of Protean metamorphoses that the astonished reader will take time to see, in different parts, that everything is difficult to decipher. How difficult it is, indeed, in this crossing and journey, to understand the mythological world of its characters. We face two timeless universal narratives, novels whose problem is the problem of literature, the place itself of its reality. *Grande Sertão: Veredas* is not a novel divided into chapters. In this way, it is similar in its totality

to *Ulysses*' last episode, Molly Bloom's monologue, without a beginning or an end, without pauses, following the flow of consciousness, the order of the memory. Rosa's novel follows a continuous flux without any cuts or chapter divisions; Riobaldo narrates everything at once, everything said without pauses, in one breath. In both novels, the reader stumbles and focuses his consciousness on language, in order to better understand the narration that is created out of fragments, out of any possible order, without rules; narration that goes back to the beginning, retaking what has been said, mending and repairing, capturing the reader's attention.

## Notes

- 1 This article was translated by Ana Canan.
- 2 “Nosso primeiro romance dentro do espírito e da técnica de Joyce e Virgínia Woolf.”
- 3 “Em 1922 – ano que se assinalaria entre nós pela eclosão da Semana de Arte Moderna – era publicado em Paris, pela Shakespeare and Co. (a hoje lendária Casa Editora da americana Sylvia Beach), a primeira edição de um livro destinado a alterar os rumos da ficção moderna: o *Ulysses*, de James Joyce.”
- 4 “... Yo no creo en una repetición voluminosa de Joyce. Mi idea de un trabajo con Joyce era preocuparme con algunos dispositivos textuales precisos, de trabajo sobre el significante, de trabajo paródico sobre la proliferación de las culturas. Pero yo quería aplicar sobre Joyce un anti-dispositivo joyceano y éste es el dispositivo de la síntesis. Y esto yo lo recogí de la experiencia brasileña de Oswald de Andrade, la prosa cubista, de las novelas escuetas hechas de fragmentos. Por ejemplo, del João Miramar de Oswald dijo la crítica contemporánea que estaba sorprendida porque era un libro que parecía la antología de sí mismo, donde cada fragmento era un fragmento aislado como una pieza antológica que el mismo libro producía. Una antología que se armara en el espíritu del lector. Era ya el planteamiento de una obra abierta. La preocupación por la obra abierta la tengo también muy netamente desde un artículo teórico de 1955. Hablo en este artículo de un barroco y de una obra abierta. Ahora, mi idea exactamente en relación a Joyce era apropiarme de unos dispositivos y cambiarlos por la introducción dialéctica de un dispositivo – anti-Joyce, que era el esfuerzo de síntesis. Entonces, mis Galaxias son hechas de páginas compactas donde el libro entero está en cada página.” (12-13)
- 5 “... En Brasil tenemos esto en una tradición que va hasta Guimarães Rosa. A pesar de la opinión de algunos críticos convencionales que se imaginan que para tener una influencia del *Finnegans Wake* uno debe haberlo leído todo, y dicen que Guimarães Rosa no ha llegado a la mitad de *Ulysses*, lo cual no significa nada porque con una página de Ulises, o después de leer una página de una crítica sobre *Ulises*, uno se contamina.”
- 6 “– Ya llegó el Goethe de James Joyce, que acaban de publicar en Ginebra? – el librero le hizo un guiño, sabiendo el tono burlón de su pregunta. – No, todavía no, aunque estamos esperando en estos días. Cuando llegue, guárdeme un ejemplar, le dijo la persona que hablaba con Fonción, que no percibía la burla al referirse a una obra que jamás había sido escrita.”
- 7 “O que o romance de Guimarães Rosa apresenta de parentesco com os de Joyce é, em primeiro lugar, a atitude experimentalista perante a linguagem. Esta é, em sua materialidade, plasmada e replasmada, léxica e sintaticamente. Sob essa perspectiva, podem ser identificadas diversas técnicas, utilizadas por ambos os romancistas. Assim, as alterações, as coliteraões, os malapropismos conscientes, as rimas internas, etc. Também a sintaxe é, sob certos aspectos, manipulada de ma-

neira fundamentalmente idêntica por Joyce e Rosa. É uma sintaxe telegráfica, ou, na expressão de David Hayman, ‘uma espécie de estenografia literária’.”

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