

Culture, Literary Scholarship, and *Great Time* / *Cultura, estudos literários e grande tempo*

The author is a captive of his epoch, of his own present. Subsequent times liberate him from this captivity, and literary scholarship is called upon to assist in this liberation.

Mikhail Bakhtin

In a time as troubled as the one we are living in, *Bakhtiniana* highlights the importance of literature in an issue in which literary discourse is effectively present in seven of the nine excellent articles submitted in the magazine's continuous flow; an eighth text deals with the teaching of literature and, the last, the performance and competence of Tilsp (*Tradutores e intérpretes de libras e português* [Translators and Interpreters of Libras and Portuguese]). This focus on literary studies reminds us of Benedito Nunes' words about "the ethical importance of reading [which] lies in its value of discovery and renewal for our intellectual and moral experience."¹ Continuing, the philosopher states: "(...) reading is an exercise in knowing the world, ourselves and others" (1999, p. 193).² On the other hand, when we contemplate the set of these articles, we see a certain unity in them, as they are all anchored in the culture of our time, which reminds us of a brief, but essential, text by Mikhail Bakhtin, "Literary studies today (Response to a question from *Novi Mir* magazine)."³

In 1970, the editorial staff of *Novy Mir* asked Bakhtin to evaluate literary scholarship at that time, in the Soviet Union. In answering this question, the author proposes very thought-provoking questions, of which we will highlight just two. Initially, the need to think about literature as part of human culture, not just in the here and now, but in a broader and more complex way, a constituent part of the culture of different times and spaces: "literature as an inseparable part of culture cannot be understood outside the

¹ In Portuguese: "a importância ética da leitura [que] está no seu valor de descoberta e de renovação para a nossa experiência intelectual e moral."

² In Portuguese: "a leitura é um exercício de conhecimento do mundo, de nós mesmos e dos outros."

³ BAKHTIN, Mikhail. Response to a Question from the *Novy Mir* Editorial Staff. In: *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*. Translated by Vern W. McGee and Edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. pp. 01-09.

total context of the entire culture of a given epoch” (p. 2).⁴ Dealing with the tenuous borders among the different fields of culture, Bakhtin adds that intense cultural activity occurs among and on the borders of the various special and interdependent fields, which vary at different times.

From the same essay, the other point we want to highlight is the Bakhtinian notion of *great time*, also fundamental in understanding literature and its relationship with culture. If, in the text “Toward a Methodology for Human Sciences”⁵ written between the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s, the Russian philosopher had already said that “nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will have its homecoming festival. The *problem of great time*” (p. 170),⁶ in Bakhtin’s response to *Novy Mir*, the scholar clarifies it saying that literary works

(...) break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in *great time*... (...) But the work cannot live in future centuries without having somehow absorbed past centuries as well. If it had belonged entirely to today (that is, were a product only of its own time) and not a continuation of the past or essentially related to the past, it could not live in the future. Everything that belongs only to the present dies along with the present (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 5).⁷

It is in this sense that later times can free the author from his own time, especially through literary scholarship. And, by highlighting these two topics from Bakhtin’s 1970 essays – literature as part of human culture and the notion of *great time* – we invite readers to incorporate them in reading and reflecting on the articles we now present. As you will see, the boundaries among the diverse spheres of human activity represented in the analyzed discourses are fragile, and that makes us wonder about the possible new meanings such discourses will have in the great time.

The three opening articles in the issue analyze, each one in their turn, the work of a specific author. The first one of them, which contains the name of the author already in the title, “The Chronotope of Paris in the Poetry of First-Wave Russian Emigrants: A Case Study of Irina Knorrning’s Poems,” brings the context of the poet under analysis

⁴ For reference, see footnote 3.

⁵ BAKHTIN, Mikhail. Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences. In: *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*. Translated by Vern W. McGee and Edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. pp. 159-177.

⁶ For reference, see footnote 5.

⁷ For reference, see footnote 3.

closer to problems that are also very evident in contemporary times: countless waves of emigration and refugees for political, social and economic issues around the world... The article is written by Daria Shchukina and Dorra Aouini, both from Saint Petersburg Mining University, Department of Russian Language and Literature, Saint Petersburg, Russia. The authors focus precisely on the way in which the new chronotope experienced by the poet Irina Knorring, in Paris after the 1920s, is expressed in her poems, allowing us to observe the life trajectory of Russian emigrants in the French capital, spatially and temporally representing individual and the broader context of Russian emigration as a whole.

Fabiano Tadeu Grazioli, from the Universidade Regional Integrada do Alto Uruguai e das Missões [Regional Integrated University at High Uruguay and the Missions], Rio Grande do Sul, takes us back to Brazil, especially to the country of our childhood, in the article “Poetry and Oral Collection in the Weaving of Poems of *Batata cozida, mingau de cará* [Cooked Potato, Yam Porridge] Written by Eloí Bocheco.” The text recovers oral collections known to children, from which the poet Eloí Bocheco produced the collection of poems whose title is the popular verses composed of seven syllables: *Batata cozida, mingau de cará*. The author presents a reflection on poetry for children, the playful aspects it represents and the very notions of orality, memory, and folklore.

By selecting an author from the Brazilian literature, the third article belonging in this group seeks to understand this author’s creation process. Cecília Almeida Salles (Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo [Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo], São Paulo, Brazil), whose research project views the critique of creation processes, signs “The Creation Process of João Anzanello Carrascoza: Dialogues with Bakhtin.” Cecília starts from the concept of creation as a network, expanded by Bakhtinian thought about the multiplicity of voices, in order to study Carrascoza’s archives prior to the publication of each of his works, looking for the questions that make this author move on his literary project.

The two articles that follow the opening three present another side of literary scholarship by proposing reflections on theoretical concepts. In “Grotesque Realism and Grotesque Body in Bakhtin,” Francisco Benedito Leite (Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas [Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas], São Paulo, Brazil) deepens

the meanings of Bakhtin's concepts of grotesque realism and grotesque body, recovering the Russian scholar's process in the elaboration of his doctorate thesis; the approaches to the concept by our contemporary linguists and semioticians; and the meaning of both within the work *Rabelais and his World*. The in-depth study ends by examining some manifestations of the grotesque in literary and visual arts from ancient Judaism and ancient and medieval Christianity, directly or indirectly cited or alluded to by Bakhtin.

"Myth and Mythological Discourse in Literary Studies" is a good example of a border study between culture and literature. Prepared by Zhansaya Zharylgapov, Bibi Syzdykova, Issa Kaiyrbekova, Azat Babashov and Katira Shakirova, all from Karaganda Buketov University, Kazakhstan, the text follows the traditional meanings of the myth, compares them with contemporary neo-myths and examines their insertion in literary narratives. The most significant and original part of the essay is the description of these stages as they relate to Kazakh literature, attesting, among other aspects, how myth schemes influence culture as a whole.

Science fiction literature, often considered by critics to be a "minor" genre, is the focus of the article by Stener Carvalho Fernandes Barbosa (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais [Federal University of Minas Gerais], Belo Horizonte, Minas, Brazil). In the article "Science Fiction: the Hyperaware Enunciator and the Concept of Journey from the Point of View of Referencing Processes," the author enunciatively analyzes a fragment of the narrative *Dune*, by Frank Herbert, seeking to show how the characters' superpowers can be explained linguistically and how the theory of points of view (POV) can contribute to a better assessment of the genre.

Continuing on the theme of science fiction, we have the article "Productive Organizations: The Human-Computer Interaction in *Black Mirror*," produced by researchers from the *Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica Celso Suckow da Fonseca* [Federal Center for Technological Education Celso Suckow da Fonseca], Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The authors, Georgia de Souza Assumpção, Carolina Maia dos Santos, Raquel Figueira Lopes Cançado Andrade and Mayara Vieira Henriques have masters' degrees in the area of Production and Systems Engineering; Alexandre de Carvalho Castro has a doctorate in the field of Social Psychology. This transdisciplinarity greatly enriches the article, which dialogically analyzes the television series *Black Mirror*. Initially, the authors show how science fiction, initially a literary genre, reaches the media network in

cinematic discourses, comics, and electronic games. Next, by means of a thorough and in-depth analysis, the authors highlight the way in which science fiction, in general, and especially the series, criticize existing science, future society and the way we interact with technology in the present. Once again, we have the tenuous border between the fields, concretized in the last article, if we think especially about digital technologies.

Elizabeth Penha Cardoso, Diana Navas, Fábio Roberto Lucas and Maurício Pedro da Silva, professors at Program of Graduate Studies in Literature and Literary Criticism at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo [Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo], São Paulo, Brazil, sign the text “The Articulation of Curricular Contexts and the Use of Digital Technologies in the Construction of an Open Science Platform.” Based on successful experiences with different digital works carried out during the pandemic, the authors report a teaching-learning practice through active methodologies and digital information and communication technologies. In the text, they show how they have put notions and practices of open science into dialogue at the service of literary studies in the creation of a digital platform with wide reach in heterogeneous academic and social contexts. This experience sharing in the article highlights the possibility of building a science for citizenship in digital humanities.

Responsible citizenship, for everyone, takes us to the next article “The Term Competence in Official Documents that Standardize the Tilsp’s Performance: From Hierarchization to Specialization,” by Carlos Alberto Matias de Oliveira and Paulo Rogério Stella, both from the Federal University of Alagoas. The authors examine possible meanings constructed regarding the term competence of Libras and Portuguese Translators and Interpreters in official documents produced over the last few years, showing shifts in meanings of the term in the field of work of this professional.

Finally, as you can see, the issue offers notable examples of the culture of our time and the intersection of discourses from different spheres of human activity. Therefore, we invite everyone – readers, authors, and collaborators – to actively respond to these texts, enjoying and including this set in their research. This is a number that brings together 15 researchers from six different Brazilian universities (Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica Celso Suckow da Fonseca, PUCCAMP, UFMG, PUC-SP, URI-RS, UFAL), and 07 researchers from foreign universities (Russian Federation, Kazakhstan).

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