

Presentation

Languages and Cultures / *Das línguas e das culturas*

Could Victor of Aveyron, the “feral child,” have spoken? In the 18th century, there was a general interest in children who were isolated from human contact, abandoned and outcast of civilization. The boy found in Aveyron (a small village in the south of France) in January of 1800 is an example. He could not speak and only uttered guttural noises. In August of the same year, he was sent to the Paris National Institute for Deaf-Mutes to be observed and treated. As Philippe Pinel (1745-1826), a well-known physician specializing in “mental disorders,” compared him to the mentally ill institutionalized in Bicêtre Hospital, located in Le Kremlin-Bicêtre (southern suburbs of Paris), the young Doctor Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard (1774-1838) took charge of his treatment and considered it “a scientific experiment.” His experimental reports, which were published as books, still spark people’s interest to this day. François Truffaut’s film *L’enfant sauvage* (1970) [*The Wild Child*] and two Brazilian books entitled *A educação de um selvagem: as experiências pedagógicas de Jean Itard* [*A Wild Boy’s Education: Jean Itard’s Teaching Experiences*] (BANKS-LEITE; GALVÃO, 2000) and *O garoto selvagem e o dr. Jean Itard: história e diálogos contemporâneos* [*The Wild Boy and Doctor Jean Itard: History and Contemporary Dialogues*] (BANKS-LEITE; GALVÃO; DAINEZ, 2017) attest to it. This meaningful event makes possible the reflection on the Enlightenment’s influence on the scientific knowledge about deafness, once, until then, the “status of imbecile, semi-animal, non-human” (DALCIN, 2009, p.4)¹ had been conferred on the deaf. A competent book review of *O garoto selvagem e o dr. Jean Itard: história e diálogos contemporâneos* [*The Wild Boy and Doctor Jean Itard: History and Contemporary Dialogues*] (BANKS-LEITE; GALVÃO; DAINEZ, 2017), written by Raphael Uchôa (Centro Simão Mathias de Estudos em História da Ciência - CESIMA, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, São Paulo), completes this issue of *Bakhtiniana* (13.3), allowing readers to examine this important topic and the expressive changes it has undergone since the 18th century.

¹ In original: “estatuto de imbecilidade, de semi-animalesco, de não-humano.”

The 21st-century reader will realize how the topic of hearing impairment has advanced to discussions about deaf culture and language, sign language, which is as rich and complex as any other language in the world. There are eight articles in this issue that focus on the specificities of sign language and, especially, on the translation and interpreting of Brazilian sign language, LIBRAS (see Editorial for an overview of the articles). These reflections allude to Bakhtin's extensive thinking about issues pertaining to language(s). According to him, "[l]ife by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds (BAKHTIN, 1984, p.293).² Dialogue is established through words, but human beings express themselves through their whole body; this is corroborated by sign language, its plane of visual expression and the wealth of discourses conveyed in different artistic and day-to-day spheres.

In this issue, eight articles, one book review and 13 authors represent six Brazilian universities (UFSC, UFRS, UFPA, UFSCAR, USP, PUCSP) and two universities abroad (Universidad de la República Uruguay and Rochester Institute of Technology, Henrietta, Nova York). *Bakhtiniana*, thus, encourages readers, authors and researchers to engage in this dialogue, which could have started with LIBRAS, but which, in fact, is axiologically expressed through our whole presence in life by asking questions, heeding, responding, agreeing...

As the situation in Brazil has not changed, we would like to state again that, despite the current difficulties Brazil is facing, the publication of this issue is made possible through the financial support from MCTI/CNPq/MEC/CAPES [Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation/Brazilian National Research Council / The Brazilian Ministry of Education / Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education] and PUC-SP (Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo) [Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo], by means of their Plano de Incentivo à Pesquisa [Research Incentive Plan] (PIPEq) / Publicação de Periódicos [Journal Publication] (PubPer-PUCSP) – 2018. We thank them gratefully. We reiterate that the

² BAKHTIN, M. "Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book" (1961). In: BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Edited and translated by Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.pp.283-302.

high number of submissions and the rigorous selection of papers, done by competent and cooperative reviewers either *ad hoc* or from our Board of Reviewers, allowed us to present our readers with an excellent issue, which will be confirmed by them. Now that the internationalization and visibility of the journal, a requirement of SciELO, is closer to be achieved, *Bakhtiniana* remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting dialogical possibilities between national and international research devoted to language studies.

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