

Introduction

Special Issue: ***Language, rustle, power***

The events of last decade, around the world, have brought us the returning of social and political configurations that many believed to be properly fought and removed from daily decisions of contemporary democracies. Today's events show that, although removed, discriminatory beliefs and practices were not banned, but they were in a sort of veiled-embers state in which now they become increasingly devastating fires.

A “the return of the repressed” deserves a careful analysis, like the discourses that enable us, from the second half of the twenty century, to critique and to deconstruct potentially dangerous arbitrariness deserve as well. Among these discourses, Roland Barthes' work remains in force since it, after investing in the structuralist fashion and in the search for a semiology of cultural systems, strengthened the critical stance against *doxa* and the arrogance with which it imposes itself, through a personal attitude contrary to militantisms, stereotypes and grandiloquence. Instead, his preference for fragmentary writing impresses in a critical discourse, as well as his obsessive pursuit for the “neutral”, an unattainable point seen in the “gaps” of the languages he dealt with in his texts, like the Canaan that Moses would never tread.

Twenty years after achieving a great notoriety with *Mythologies*, a book in which he unveils the various facets of French culture of the 1950s, in 1977, during the hegemony of psychoanalysis, in the libertarian years after May 1968, he launches the *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, which resumed a forgotten and lonely discourse, what does not mean failing to concern the subjectivities of the time. These two books did not achieve a great success incidentally. They did because they deal with language practices (“myth is a speech”) centred on social analysis, in the first one, and on figures that permeate the loving discourse of individuals, in the second one. These are books that keep saying something about the author and about societies, despite the spatial and temporal marks, and the subjects' marks. They are books that allow, without seeking adhesion or the construction of a “Barthesian school”, not only the critique, but the evaluation of this critique.

In a preface of one of the reissues of *Mythologies*, Barthes says: “If the alienation of society still forcing to demystify languages (and particularly that of myths), the path of this struggle

is no longer critical decipherment; it is evaluation.” (BARTHES, 1984, p. 79). He completes, in this text of the 1970s, in a direction that goes from semiology to discourse analysis, saying that

[...] rather than myths, it is sociolects which must today be distinguished and described; which means that mythologies would be succeeded by an idiolectology - more formal and thereby, I believe, more penetrating - whose operational concepts would no longer be sign, signifier, signified and connotation but citation, reference, stereotype. (BARTHES, 1984, p. 79).

It is, therefore, this evaluation that is proposed in this issue, which contains analyses based on current readings of relevant theorists, besides Barthes' work. In the almost forty years that followed the writer's death, his work has continued to dialogue with successive generations, being most prominent today Eric Marty, Claude Coste, Andy Sttaford or Tiphaine Samoyault, and, in Brazil, Leyla Perrone-Moisés, Vera. Casa Nova, Claudia Amigo Pino and Laura Taddei Brandini. Many of these researchers are near or in the research group **Plural writer: multidisciplinary studies on Roland Barthes' work**, headed by Márcio Venício Barbosa. These more recent works allow us to glimpse the dialogues of Barthes's work with different areas of knowledge. Even nowadays, his work keeps, beyond its unique flavour, something of the knowledge that is desired by every researcher who investigates it.

In this issue, it is presented a wide range of studies on the Barthesian work that, while converging on reflections about the relations between language and power, also open to the rustle that permeates these relations. The multiplicity of voices captured by Barthes's listening is evidenced by the variety of viewpoints chosen by the authors.

At first, two articles focus on the Barthesian language, dealing with some of its main concepts. *A wound in the heart of love: writing in Roland Barthes' Mourning diary*, by researchers from Federal University of Ceará, Priscila Pesce Lopes de Oliveira, Bárbara Costa Ribeiro and Cid Ottoni Bylaardt, deals with the writing of mourning in Barthes, articulating notions of psychoanalysis to reflect on the place of affection in his language, the raw material of literature. This reflection centred on Barthesian writing finds in *Roland Barthes: walking against the absolutes*, by Luiz Lopes, -from POSLING/Federal Technological Education Centre of Minas Gerais -, an investigation about the concept of neutral and its possible avatars in the Clarice Lispector's and Julián Fuks' work, providing readers with suggestions of rereading Brazilian literature, through the lens of Barthes.

Another way of listening to Barthesian language intersects with the works of foreign writers, such as Ítalo Calvino and Maria Gabriela Llansol. In *Bringing it closer: the literary experience from Roland Barthes and Maria Gabriela Llansol*, Janaina de Paula, from Federal

University of Ouro Preto, aims to compare the two writers' conceptions of writing based on reflections of important language thinkers such as Lacan, Blanchot, Deleuze, Derrida and Barthes. Floating notions such as style, literary writing and conceptions of language mark the comparisons between the writings of Barthes and Llansol, bringing them closer together. Between Barthes and Calvino, in *Roland Barthes and Italo Calvino: Readers of Japan*, by Bruna Fontes Ferraz, from Federal Technological Education Centre of Minas Gerais, the meeting point is the Japanese culture, so important to the works of both writers. The approximations between the understanding of Japan and its use are justified by the coincidence of ideas and open an interesting comparative perspective of studies, making the writings of Barthes and Calvin dialogue in a fruitful way. Continuing in the context of foreign relations, *Authority and Alterity in Roland Barthes' China*, by Laura Taddei Brandini, from State University of Londrina, describes the writer's experiences in China of 1974, divided between the oppression caused by the authoritarianism of Mao Tse-Tung regime and the pursuit for otherness by the writer, who made all attempts to establish contact with the Chinese people.

Political power is also discussed in papers that privilege Barthesian notions and concepts, such as the complementary opposition between 'authors' and 'writers' and the concepts of myth and mythology. In *Authors and writers: a political distinction*, by Paulo Procópio Ferraz, -from University of São Paulo, a reading of the important essay written by Barthes, "Authors and Writers", of 1964, is offered, asking about the distinction between the supposedly referential language, which conveys a content, and the literary language, in the light of the political dimension that guides the products of each of these working modalities with language.

The text of Márcio Venício Barbosa, from Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, *Between 'cultural' and 'natural': Mythologies today*¹, revisits Barthes' work of chronicles-critiques that are about French society in the 1950s with the aim of explaining its relevance as a method of critical reflection on the world in which we live. In the face of the power that permeates language, there is always the counterpower which is made of language, and which Barthes names "literature" in his *Lecture*, in 1980.

Following a similar perspective, the Vera Casa Nova's essay, from Federal University of Minas Gerais, *The Mythologies resist*, looks for examples in the current Brazilian context, which, considering the governing authorities, is fertile in ideological discourses that reproduce stereotypes

¹ BARTHES, R. Mythology today. In: _____. *The rustle of language*. Translated into Portuguese by Mário Laranjeira. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2004. p. 76-80.

in order to naturalize them. The author, in reviewing the Barthesian reflections of *Mythologies*, offers readers tools to see the discourse of power that permeates language in order to question it.

Based on this academic journal's editorial policy, the reader will find other six articles that also fit the scope of *Revista Letras Raras*. Therefore, in this section, the first one, *The Ecological teacher: Spanish teacher education as an act of resistance*, by two researchers from Federal University of Alagoas, Sergio Ifa and Jade Neves Moura de Araújo, Makes considerations about an study performed in a teacher education course, aiming at provoking reflections on teacher education as a local for (de)(re)construction of knowledge.

The next paper, *A Black and peripheral in power: possible ethe and representations revealed by Áurea Carolina*, written by Leila Marli de Lima Caeiro and Andrey Ricardo Azevedo, both from Federal Technological Education Centre of Minas Gerais, analyses, based on the perspective of Discourse Analysis (AD), two interviews given by Áurea Carolina after being elected Belo Horizonte/MG councillor, with expressive vote, in 2016, focusing on her speech as a young black woman from periphery, identifying in these discourses “new way of doing politics”. Continuing the discussion in the AD field, the article *The media apparatus as objectivation practice of the subject “businesswoman”*, by two researchers from Federal University of Maranhão, Leticia Maciel do Vale and Ilza Galvão Cutrim, presents a discussion based on Foucault' reflections on “the processes of subjectivity construction, in which the forms of constitution of the modern subject are studied through mechanisms of objectification and subjectivation, which tend to make man politically and economically useful [...] bound to an identity attributed as belonging to him”. Also discussing on the identity issue, Maria Angélica Oliveira de Oliveira, from Federal University of Campina Grande, and Aldenora Márcia Belo Pinheiro-Carvalho, from Federal University of Maranhão, conduct our attention to literature and bring discussions in *From cultural identity to the feeling of place in the short story “the trail of your blood in the snow” by Garcia Márquez* that account for an analysis of the cultural identity marks and the non-belonging sense of a deterritorialized subject from the protagonist of the short story they have studied.

Continuing in the paths of Literature, Yasmin de Andrade Alves and Alyere Silva Farias, from the Federal University of Paraíba, discuss on the representations of the slavers behaviour, considering it as normalization, besides analysing the ways, in the short stories they have studied, natural order of human life is questioned and can trigger a crisis of what would be human in “*The cane*” and “*Father against mother*”: *Between Normalization and human conception crisis*. Closing the thematic section, Laila Pinto Vilela, Dagmar de Mello e Silva and Ruth Mariani, from Fluminense Federal University, present *Pathways travelled by children's literature - a*

bibliographical review, which invites us to reflect on our attitude in the current juncture in which we live, having in literature a potentializing and sensitizing device of our ability to think about life from an ethical perspective.

Also based on this academic journal's editorial policy, we have as the last text of this edition, in the Literary Creation section a poetic anthology, by Vera Lúcia de Oliveira Maccherani, a poet, essayist and professor of Brazilian Literature at the University of Perugia.

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As the reader can observe, even the athematic papers in this edition focus on the reflections proposed in this Issue **Language, rustle, power**, organised by Márcio Venício Barbosa (UFRN-Brazil), Laura Taddei Brandini (UEL-Brazil) and Claude Coste (University of Cergy-Pontoise-France), stimulating concern, promoting considerations and, above all, instigating the "knowing with flavour" of master Barthes.

With this volume, we hope the readers will be urged not only to read and/or reread some of Barthes's works, but to rethink ideas, notions, and concepts in the light of the power relations that flourish in every language. This ability is essential to the survival of ideas nowadays.

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