

The “unclassifiable” architectonics of Augusto Ponzio

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To reflect on the importance of contributions made by Augusto Ponzio to studies on language, in a sense means to think about his unclassifiability¹, as well as that of the authors he studies – Aristofane, Artaud, Benjamins, Barthes, Bataille, Blanchot, Borges, Chomsky, Deleuze, Foucault, Freud, Kierkegaard, Leopardi, Foscolo, Levinas, Mann, Manzoni, Nietzsche, Marx, Morris, Orwell, Peirce, Poe, Peter Hispanus, Orwell, Rossi-Landi, Semerari, Szasz, Schaff, Sebeok, Svevo, Vailati, Verdiglione. This is especially important in relation to the Bakhtin Circle from a perspective of another great era and another episteme.

I have to say this because dialogue is also the guiding keyword of Ponzio’s studies and attitudes – more human than authorial. After all, very few scholars are able to bring together conceptions from the areas of philosophy, semiotics, linguistics, economics, logic, art, literature, cultural anthropology, psychoanalysis, music, theatre, cartoons, comic strips, among others, enlarging the boundaries of each of them. And Ponzio does that as no one else for he makes clear connections among concepts, authors and areas respecting their singularities. With such careful work, Ponzio sheds light on the authors he studies as well as on his own thoughts. He mixes knowledge and feelings, dialogically, thereby creating a ‘Ponzian Revolution’².

Having education as his mission³, Augusto is a hero in his teachings. He easily moves around theories making them explicit and comprehensible with such confidence and ability as a maestro conducts his orchestra. As an orchestra and his musicians – his study group comprises researchers and scholars in constant dialogue (M. A. Bonfantini, C. Cosimo, W. Krynski, S. Petrilli, L. Ponzio, among others, but also the musicians M. Lomuto and R. Ottaviano). They are always concerned with musical temperament/theories but also with sounding out their own voices in a symphony, whenever possible polyphonically; more than decodifying, overcodifying is the task of a Master. A Master who is always moving in, around and across different spheres of knowledge, feeling, in various circles and creating a new circle. He awakens, expands,

intensifies, breathes and perspires. In his Italian Circle, the Master composes his Orphean architecture.

Otherness⁴ is the outstanding issue among all the issues discussed in many of his books. These include: meaning, sense, referent, interpretant, verbal and non verbal-signs, interpersonal relations, dialogue, dialectic, responsibility, nonfunctionality, singularity, humanism, otherness, human laws, communication-production, critique of political economy, ideology, values differential calculus, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, metaphor, translation, language origin. A good maestro is not the one who plays to perfection, but the one who listens carefully.

The other who emerges from Ponzio is part of his self. This self is about others, the others he has read, other scholars, other writers, other people, *other others*, an ongoing discursive relationship with other discourses, with life in its open multiplicity. This self is about Augusto's humanity. It is impossible to mention only Augusto the writer, researcher and professor because, above all, he is a human being and not a humanist human; the human himself. More than the subject, a human being. And that is precisely what makes him 'unclassifiable', poetic.

In this context, the architectonics of Augusto Ponzio, as explained in the Russian Circle, made of content, compositional form and style, is dialogically constituted in Bari and in many other places around the world – Brazil, France, Australia, United States, Spain, China and so on. As the Russian Circle, the Bari Circle is not circumscribed to the south of Italy; it overflows, erupts, overflows and spreads around the world.

All things considered, the unclassifiability of Augusto may be well understood by his circularity. Ponzio is an excellent 'Circuladô'⁵. This is his circular architectonics. A non hierarchical circle, with no beginning and no ending; never the same and the only one, because it is heterogeneous – as composed of and by language. A spiral circle. 'Circuladô' dialectical-dialogical because "Somos o que somos / Inclassificáveis, Inclassificáveis" (ANTUNES, 1996).

(Translation: Daniela Nogueira De Moraes Garcia
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Notes

1. According to the words used by Arnaldo Antunes in his song ‘Inclassificáveis’. I use this metaphor as an allusion to *Série Bakhtin – Inclassificável*, four volumes, organized by myself and Grenissa Stafuzza, in which Augusto Ponzio is an author with chapters written in volumes 1 (*Círculo de Bakhtin: teoria inclassificável*, with the text entitled “Il pensiero dialogico di Bachtin e del suo Circolo come inclassificabile”, released in his native language and in Portuguese – “O pensamento dialógico de Bakhtin e do seu Círculo como inclassificável”); and 2 (*Círculo de Bakhtin: diálogos (in) possíveis*, with his text entitled in Italian, “Il dibattito tra strutturalismo linguistico e dialogica bachtiniana sul concetto di linguaggio” and, in Portuguese, “O embate entre o estruturalismo lingüístico e a dialogia bachtiniana no que se refere à concepção de linguagem”).
2. I am referring to the book *La rivoluzione bachtiniana. Il pensiero di Bachtin e l'ideologia contemporânea*, de A. Ponzio, published in Brazil with the title *A revolução bachtiniana*.
3. After all, in the present context of education in the world, being a teacher becomes, in fact, a mission. A heroic act by few. The real master maestro, Augusto. It is no coincidence that this is his name. In Portuguese, according to *Dicionário Aurélio*, Augusto means ‘Adj. 1. Respeitável; 2. Elevado, sublime; 3. Magnífico, majestoso. S.m. 4. Título dos imperadores romanos’.
4. This is quite outstanding in his books *Rencontres de paroles: L'autre dans le discours* (published in Brazil with the title *Encontro de palavras: O outro no discurso*) and *Procurando uma palavra outra*.
5. I refer to the album *Circuladô*, by Caetano Veloso. And, specifically, to the song ‘Circuladô de Fulô’, in which the teaching is alive because it is offered by people who are vibrant with life, free from the ties of the generals in which the twisted is the straight, for it is Carnival as it is Brazil, as it is Rabelais and, in a certain way, it is Ponzio. The following is a passage of the lyrics of that song which exemplifies what I am trying to say: ‘O povo é o inventa línguas na malícia da maestria no matreiro / Da maravilha no visgo do improviso tentando a travessia / Azeitava o eixo do sol // Circuladô de fulô ao deus ao demodará que deus te guie / Porque eu não posso guiá e viva quem já me deu circuladô / De fulô e ainda quem falta me dá // E não peça que eu te guie não peça despeça que eu te guie / Desguie que eu te peça promessa que eu te fie me deixe me / Esqueça me largue me desamargue que no fim eu acerto / Que no fim eu reverto que no fim eu conserto e para o fim / Me reservo e se verá que estou certo e se verá que tem jeito / E se verá que está feito que pelo torto fiz direito que quem / Faz cesto faz cento se não guio não lamento pois o mestre / Que me ensinou já não dá ensinamento’. And the real teachers, the ones who teach are life itself, and the students; we are free to walk with their/our own legs and speak with their/our own language, the one that is common and the other that is full of dialogue, full of reverberations with consonants and dissonants, but tuned to the orchestra of Bari, Russia and Brazil.

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