5th Edition of the International Conference

SEMIOSIS IN COMMUNICATION

Medical Humanities: Bridges between Embodiment of Signs and Embodied AI

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



Târgu-Mureș, May 21-23, 2026

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Petru Maior Faculty of Science and Letters, 2026

5th Edition of the International Conference

Semiosis in Communication

ORGANIZED BY
George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science and Technologies of Târgu-Mureș - UMFST
Petru Maior Faculty of Science and Letters,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS-AIS)

IN COOPERATION WITH

Balkan Association for Semiotic Studies (BASS)
SemioLab - Semiotics Laboratory affiliated with Aristotle University in Thessaloniki (Greece);
Southeast European Center for Semiotic Studies (SEECSS) at New Bulgarian University (NBU), Sofia (Bulgaria);
Semiotics and Visual Communication Research Lab at Cyprus University of Technology;
The Department Department of Sciences and Letters from the Petru Maior Faculty of Science and Letters, Târgu-Mureş (RO);
The Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (RO)

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Welcome to Semiosis in Communication

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

On behalf of the Petru Maior Faculty of Science and Letters, George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science and Technologies of Târgu-Mureș (UMFST), I warmly welcome you to the five edition of the International Conference ***Semiosis in Communication***, dedicated to the theme of ***Medical Humanities: Bridges between Embodiment of Signs and Embodied AI***.

The five edition of the International Conference *Semiosis in Communication: Medical Humanities: Bridges between Embodiment of Signs and Embodied AI* is organized by the by the **Petru Maior Faculty of Science and Letters**, **George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science and Technologies of Târgu-Mureș** (UMFST) - in participation with:

- ***Balkan Association for Semiotic Studies*** (BASS);
- ***SemioLab*** - Semiotics Laboratory affiliated with Aristotle University in Thessaloniki (Greece);
- ***Southeast European Center for Semiotic Studies*** (SEECSS) at New Bulgarian University (NBU), Sofia (Bulgaria);
- ***Semiotics and Visual Communication Research Lab*** at Cyprus University of Technology;
- ***The Department Department of Sciences and Letters*** *from the Petru Maior Faculty of Science and Letters, Târgu-Mureș (RO)*;
- *The* ***Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca*** (RO) and

under the auspices of the ***International Association for Semiotic Studies*** (IASS-AIS). The event will be held in Târgu Mureș, a picturesque, multicultural city in the heart of Transylvania, one of the oldest, most famous and beautiful historical regions of Romania, from the **21th to the 23th of May, 2026**..

This conference explores the role of semiosis in communication. Objects of interdisciplinary knowledge par excellence, semiotics and communication are complementary ways of world mastery, of the *big game*, just like Solomon Marcus (2011) would say. The main objective of the International Conference *Semiosis in Communication* is to emphasize the importance of semiotic type queries in the communication sciences and to stimulate the exchange of ideas in these fields and areas of academic research. The main theme proposed for this fifth edition of the international conference Semiosis in Communication is *Medical Humanities: Bridges between Embodiment of Signs and Embodied AI*.

Basically, we propose to participants a return to the origins of the discipline, to the ancient roots of semiotics, to explore and have insightful exchanges of ideas about the new practices of meaning construction that the digital revolution offers us. This allows us to explore how the human capacity to produce signs is rooted in perceptual, affective, and intersubjective experience (Violi 2008, Sonesson 2007, Nöth 2006). Meaning emerges only from this foundation? Are semiosis and cognition grounded in embodied experiences, resulting from the position of the human body at the center of the world of common sense? In the digital age, new practices of meaning-making brought by AI challenge us to reflect (Leone 2022). We must consider whether, and how, AI can participate in semiosis or only emulate its observable outputs through computational embodiment.

For this five edition of the international conference ***Semiosis in Communication***, we are happy to received over 70 papers, from approximately 85 authors representing around 62 academic institutions from almost 27 countries!

We are looking forward to hearing and discussing your papers!

I would like to thank you once more for joining ***Semiosis in Communication*** and for having chosen this opportunity to share your ideas and research results.

Dr. Nicolae-Sorin DRĂGAN,
General Chair for the International Conference ***Semiosis in Communication: Medical Humanities: Bridges between Embodiment of Signs and Embodied AI***

KEYNOTE LECTURES

On the Comparison of Two Matchless Theories of The Generation of Meaning: Peirce's Semiotic and Goffman's Frame Analysis

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Seldom if ever do we find the work of the American semiotician C. S. Peirce and that of Canadian microsociologist E. Goffman brought together, let alone compared systematically in scholarly publications. While Peirce stands out as a colossus in the field of logic or semiotic, as he described his half a century-long endeavor of uninterrupted research and writing, Goffman's major contribution to the social sciences landscape of the 20th century is not typically considered as being of a theoretical, let alone epistemological nature. The aim of this text is to bring out the epistemological kinship between Peirce's triadic sign model, which is an interpretant generating process, and frame analysis, Goffman's construction of an analytical model of great heuristic capacity. Both theorists take experience as the basis of meaning creation, and both construe sign activity (Peirce) and framing (Goffman) as being an autonomous process. Peirce's grand vision is that "all this universe is perfused with signs"; for Goffman "the affects and responses" of the order of interaction that he developed "are primarily about frames, and it is only in frame terms that one can make sense of the concern shown in regard to them." There is

much to gain for the semiotic of the future in conceiving the teleological generation of signs as a process akin to the framing activity that human beings engage with constantly to define the situation in which they find themselves and act accordingly.

Key-words: Peircean triadic semiotics, Goffman frame analysis, Meaning as experiential process, Epistemological kinship.

Bionote:

Professor Fernando Andacht *holds a Ph. D. in Communication and Information, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil, a doctorate in philosophy (Dr Phil) from Bergen University, Norway; MA in Linguistics from Ohio University; and Licenciatura en Letras from Universidad de la República, Montevideo, Uruguay. He was a Fulbright Scholar at the Research Center for Language and Semiotic Studies, Indiana University, an Alexander von Humboldt Grantee at the Arbeitsstelle für Semiotik, and a Level II Researcher of the National System of Research. He was the director of the Instituto de Comunicación-FIC (2020-2022), where he served as a full professor in the Department of Theory of Communication, Facultad de Información & Comunicación, at the Universidad de la República in Montevideo, Uruguay (2015-2024). His area of research encompasses media, culture, and everyday life from a Peircean semiotic perspective. While a full professor at the University of Ottawa (2006-2015), Canada, he was awarded a research grant by the SSHRC (Social Sciences & Humanities Council) of Canada (2010‑2013) to study the mediated representation of the real in documentaries and television. He taught in Brazil (Graduate Program of Communication & Languages at the Universidade Tuiuti do Paraná, Curitiba, Brazil), in Chile (Postítulo en Semiótica, Universidad de Chile, Santiago de Chile). At present he is a professor of the PhD Program in Semiotics at the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba in Córdoba, Argentina. He has published twelve books and more than 100 scholarly articles and chapters on the semiotic analysis of media and society. His last book is Signos del Imaginario Cotidiano. Una guia para interpretar nuestra mediática (Planeta/Paidós, 2024).*

From the Semiotics of Analogical Culture to Digital Culture

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In this study, we will address the analytical problems arising from the shift from analog to digital semiotic production, which opens up several theoretical axes and analytical paths for investigating what happens in this transition from analog to digital, in relation to the semiotics of culture. In a first theoretical axis, we will present the significant changes related to digital culture, cyberspace, cybertime, the cyberanthrope, hyperreality, and the simulations that envelop human beings in bubbles of post-truth.

On this first point, we cannot fail to mention AI, as a cognitive field that invades all other fields, producing positive and negative semiotic-discursive practices; at the moment the latter are winning.

In the second point, we will address the category of text-culture from a Lotmanian perspective, highlighting the significant changes that occur. Text-culture, encompassing all semiotic-discursive productions, implies, in its transition from analog to digital, working with the categories of transreality, transculturality, and transsubjectivity, which stem from one of the cutting-edge epistemologies we are discussing: transdisciplinarity. With these categories, digital text-culture acquires new functions and operations, which we will illustrate.

The third theoretical axis addresses the problems of cultural/transcultural translation, of intersemiotic translation, when we move from analog to digital. The problems that already existed in translation processes beyond the linguistic realm

become much more complex in the cultural sphere. A very illustrative example is in relation to art, in the case of the transcultural translation of a poem or a song, especially when tropes are present.

Finally, we briefly discuss the ethical problems generated by the digital world, with the infodemic of post-truth.

Key-words: Digital Culture, Cyberspace, Cybertime, Cyberanthrope, Digital Culture Text.

Bionote:

Professor Julieta Haidar *- Full-time Research Professor at the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH), Mexico, Postgraduate Program in Social Anthropology. She coordinates the Transdisciplinary Research Line of Discourse Analysis and Semiotics of Culture. She was one of the pioneers of Yuri Lotman's studies in Semiotics of Culture in Mexico, beginning in the 1980s at ENAH. She has developed the Transdisciplinary Model of Discourse Analysis and Semiotics of Culture, drawing on the epistemologies of complexity and transdisciplinarity since the late 1980s. She has organized and participated in several national and international congresses and symposia related to the Language Sciences and Anthropology, presenting from six cutting-edge epistemologies: Complexity, Transdisciplinarity, Decoloniality, Epistemology of the South, Ancestral Epistemology, and Revisited Materialist Epistemology. She has published several books, chapters, and articles in various countries, including Mexico, Canada, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, Italy, and England. She is the editor of the digital book collection "Complexity, Transdisciplinarity, Decoloniality, Semiosis, and Discourse Analysis." She is a member of several national and international academic associations and networks. She was president of the III World Congress of Transdisciplinarity, held virtually in Mexico from October 2020 to October 2021.*

Naming and branding diseases from a semiotic perspective

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My presentation examines the naming and branding of diseases from a semiotic perspective, focusing on the cultural, ideological, and commercial mechanisms through which illness is linguistically constructed. The first part explores the historical naming of diseases, emphasizing the strong stigmatizing, moralizing, and disqualifying connotations attached to many medical terms across different periods and cultures. Disease names have often functioned not merely as neutral descriptors, but as semiotic devices that encode fear, exclusion, social prejudice, and symbolic contamination. References to ethnicity, geography, morality, sexuality, or madness have historically transformed medical terminology into instruments of social categorization and stigma.

The second part analyzes contemporary pharmaceutical branding strategies, where the tendency is almost reversed. Instead of frightening or marginalizing patients, pharmaceutical companies increasingly create soft, reassuring, and aesthetically pleasant names for diseases and medications. Through euphemization, abstraction, and emotional branding, medical conditions are reframed as manageable lifestyle states requiring long-term therapeutic management. The paper investigates how these naming practices contribute to the normalization and market expansion of chronic "conditions," encouraging identification with diagnostic categories and prolonged consumption of pharmaceutical products. The study argues that disease naming represents a privileged site for observing broader transformations in the

semiotics of health, identity, and biopolitical control in contemporary consumer societies.

Key-words: Disease Semiotics, Medical Stigmatization, Pharmaceutical Branding, Biopolitical Control, Health Consumerism.

Bionote:

Kristian Bankov *is professor of semiotics at the New Bulgarian University since 2011 and the director of the Southeast European Center for Semiotic Studies since 2007. His interest in semiotics dates back to the early 1990s when, as a student in Bologna, he attended courses by Prof. Ugo Volli and Prof. Umberto Eco. Bankov graduated in 1995 and has been teaching semiotics at NBU since then. In 2000, he defended his Ph.D. at the University of Helsinki under the supervision of Prof. Eero Tarasti. In March 2006, he was awarded the academic title "Associate Professor of Contemporary Philosophical Doctrines (Semiotics)," and in 2011, he became a "Professor of Semiotics." In 2023, he was awarded a Doctor of Science degree. He served as Vice-Rector for the international affairs and public relations of the NBU from 2011 to 2012. Professor Kristian Bankov led the organizing team of the 12th World Congress of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (2014). Since then, for ten years, Professor Bankov served as the Secretary General of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS/AIS) from 2014 to 2024.*

For a Semiotics of Stereotypes. Visual Styles put to The Test of Generative AI

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My talk will focus first on theories of style in relation to the generative artificial intelligence's capacity to reproduce key characteristics of historical painting styles and, in certain cases, historical modes of image-making. It will then address the generation process itself, which inevitably leads to a leveling of differences and singularities, followed by a banalization and stereotypification of visual forms. In this context, I will examine the relationships between type and tokens, class and elements, bringing semiotic and statistical approaches into dialogue, particularly in relation to visual style evaluation (image rating methods).

Key-words: Generative AI and style reproduction, visual style evaluation, type-token relations, statistical *vs* semiotic analysis.

Bionote:

Professor Maria Giulia Dondero, *Professor at the University of Liège - is a Research Director of the National Belgian Fund for Scientific Research (F.R.S.-FNRS) and Professor at the University of Liège where she teaches Visual Semiotics*

She is the author of four books: Les langages de l'image. De la peinture aux Big Visual Data, Paris, Hermann Éditions, 2020 (English augmented version: The Language of Images. The Forms and the Forces, Cham, Springer, 2020); Des images à problèmes. Le sens du visuel à l'épreuve de l'image scientifique, with J. Fontanille, Limoges, Pulim, 2012 (Eng. trans. The Semiotic Challenge of Scientific Images. A Test Case for Visual Meaning, Ottawa, Legas,

2014); Sémiotique de la photographie, with P. Basso (Limoges, Pulim, 2011); Le sacré dans l'image photographique (Paris, Hermès, 2009). She has published around 80 peer-reviewed articles in French, Italian, English; some of her works have been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Polish. She has directed 30 collective works and special issues on semiotic theory of visual language, scientific and artistic images, and photography.

Maria Giulia is Co-founder and Editor-in-Chief of the peer-reviewed Journal Signata Annales des Sémiotiques / Annals of Semiotics (https://journals.openedition.org/signata/) (Scopus, ANVUR and DOAJ) and Co-director of the collection 'Sigilla' at Presses universitaires de Liège. She is a member of the editorial board of several scientific journals and General Secretary of the International Association for Visual Semiotics (IAVS/AISV) since 2015 and Vice-President of the French Association for Semiotics (AFS) since 2013. She has been Visiting Professor at the University of Manouba, Tunisia (2012 and 2013); at the UNESP, Brazil (2014, 2016, 2019, 2023), at the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), Mexico (2017), at Paris 2 Panthéon-Assas University (2019-2020), at Celsa Sorbonne Université (2020-2021), France, at the University of Turin, Italy (2020-2021) and Visiting Researcher at UCLA (2009), University of Southern California (2020) and at Purdue University (Indiana) (2022), USA.

The Diagnostic Face: Toward a Semiotics of Sensors in Contemporary Medicine

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Contemporary medicine is undergoing a profound semiotic reconfiguration. Clinical interpretation is increasingly mediated by sensor technologies and artificial intelligence systems that interpose themselves between embodied signs and diagnostic judgment. From facial motion capture and biosignal monitoring to machine-learning–based pattern recognition, medical semiosis is progressively displaced from direct clinical perception toward layered chains of measurement, data processing, and algorithmic inference. This keynote proposes a theoretical and methodological framework for what may be called a *semiotics of sensors*, aimed at clarifying the specific contribution semiotics can make to medical interpretation beyond rhetorical or merely critical commentary.

Drawing inspiration from research on digitally mediated facial expressivity in neurological diagnosis, the talk uses the "diagnostic face" as a privileged case study. The human face, long central to clinical semiotics as a site where symptoms become perceptible, is now translated into streams of quantified data through sensors, computer vision, and AI-driven classification. In this translation, signs are neither simply recorded nor interpreted; they are reformatted, discretized, and re-signified within computational regimes whose epistemic logic differs radically from that of clinical reasoning.

The presentation argues that while sensors measure and artificial intelligence simulates discourse on the basis of statistical regularities, diagnosis remains an interpretive act situated within a relational, experiential, and ethical horizon. The clinician's role cannot be reduced to supervision of automated outputs. It also involves contextualizing data with respect to the singular person, negotiating uncertainty and integrating embodied interaction, tacit knowledge, and narrative competence - dimensions that escape purely data-driven models.

The challenge ahead is articulating a semiotic account of the interfaces between sensing, data, and interpretation: hence, this keynote seeks to reposition semiotics as a rigorous analytical partner in medical humanities and digital diagnostics. Rather than opposing artificial intelligence, semiotics is proposed as a discipline capable of clarifying how meaning emerges across hybrid assemblages of bodies, sensors, algorithms, and clinical judgment - and of identifying what, in this new diagnostic ecology, remains irreducibly human.

Key-words: Semiotics of sensors, artificial intelligence in diagnosis, clinical interpretation, computational medical semiosis.

Bionote:

Massimo Leone *is Full Tenured Professor ("Professore Ordinario") of Philosophy of Communication and Cultural Semiotics at the Department of Philosophy and Educational Sciences, University of Turin, Italy; Permanent Part-Time Visiting Full Professor of Semiotics in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, University of Shanghai, China; Associate Member of Cambridge Digital Humanities, CRASSH, University of Cambridge; and Director of the Center for Religious Studies, "Bruno Kessler" Foundation, Trento, Italy, and Adjunct Professor at the Catholic University "Andrés Bello", Caracas, Venezuela (UCAB).*

He is a 2018 ERC Consolidator Grant recipient. He holds a DEA in History and Semiotics of Texts and Documents from Paris VII, an MPhil in Word and Image Studies from Trinity College Dublin, a PhD in Religious Studies from the Sorbonne, and a PhD in Art History from the University of Fribourg (CH).

Prof. Leone was visiting scholar at the CNRS in Paris, at the CSIC in Madrid, Fulbright Research Visiting Professor at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Endeavour Research Award Visiting Professor at the School of English, Performance, and Communication Studies at Monash University, Melbourne, Faculty Research Grant Visiting Professor at the University of Toronto, "Mairie de Paris" Visiting Professor at the Sorbonne, DAAD Visiting Professor at the University of Potsdam, Visiting Professor at the École Normale Supérieure of Lyon (Collegium de Lyon), Visiting Professor at the Center for Advanced Studies at the University of Munich, Visiting Professor at the University of Kyoto, Visiting Professor at the Institute of Advanced Study, Durham University, Visiting Professor at The Research Institute of the University of Bucharest, Eadington Fellow at the Center for Gaming Research, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Fellow of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg "Dynamics in the History of Religions Between Asia and Europe" (Bochum, Germany), Visiting Senior Professor at IFK, Vienna, High-End Foreign Expert and Visiting Professor at the University of Shanghai, China, Visiting Senior Professor at the Centre for Advanced Studies, South Eastern Europe (Croatia), Visiting Senior Professor at the Polish Institute of Advanced Studies, Warsaw (PIAST), Visiting Senior Professor at the Freiburg Institute of Advanced Studies (FRIAS, Freiburg), Senior Visiting Professor at the Paris Seine Institute of Advanced Studies, Visiting Fellow at CRASSH, University of Cambridge, Visiting Professor at the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (Paris), and Visiting Professor at the Center for Advanced Studies, University of Buenos Aires.

His work on the semiotic study of cultures, with particular emphasis on religion and images. Professor Massimo Leone has single-authored fifteen books, edited more than fifty collective volumes, and published more than five hundred articles in semiotics, religious studies, and visual studies. He is editor-in-chief of Lexia, the Semiotic Journal of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Communication, University of Turin, Italy, co-editor-in-chief of Semiotica (De Gruyter), and co-editor of the book series "I Saggi di Lexia" (Rome: Aracne), "Semiotics of Religion" (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter), and "Advances in Face Studies" (London and New York: Routledge).

The Semiotics of Black Magic: Wheatley, Witchcraft and The Occult

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Semiotics and magic enjoy a long and close relationship. In addition to its roots in ancient medicine, semiotics has grown out of the impulse to divination and the deciphering of putative portents and omens (Grafton 2023). Semiotics and magic are likewise jointly implicated in the delineation of reality and illusion which Sebeok saw as defining the field (Cobley 2012). Yet, discussion of the relation between semiotics and magic is surprisingly scant, particularly lacking granular investigations.

This paper presents a semiotic analysis of the 'Black Magic' novels of Dennis Wheatley (1897-77). A hugely popular writer (in the UK and Scandinavia) during the post-war period, Wheatley was the author of over sixty novels and a mass of other projects associated with his fiction. Evincing very limited literary accomplishment, his work is nevertheless acknowledged to have had a major influence in the period from the 1930s to the late 1970s. His cycle of eleven 'Black Magic' novels are now considered to have played a crucial role in defining Satanism and modern witchcraft, especially in the latter's supposed imagery, offering a sense of how they might be practiced and what the concomitant social effects might be in religion, subcultures and beyond (see, for example, Harmes et al 2023, Ellis 2025, Evans 2009). That is, the novels have *constructed* an influential image of contemporary Satanism as opposed to *representing* Satanism and witchcraft as they

have been pursued in history (Hutton 2019 [1999]: 270-77, Granholm 2014: 579, van Luijk 2016: 317-20, Partridge 2015, Jenkins 2014: 199-200, Doherty 2023; cf. Rose 1989: 12-13).

Through a close text analysis, a luxury that has not been afforded to Wheatley's voluminous *oeuvre*, this paper will attempt to expose the mythical work that the novels undertake, particularly in relation to the issue of social class and class politics, but also closely associated with the postulate of the novels and their paratexts that magic *is very much real*.

Key-words: semiotics, Dennis Wheatley, occult, Satanism, social class.

Bionote:

Paul Cobley *is Emeritus Professor in Language and Media, Middlesex University, London, UK. He is the author of a number of books, including Cultural Implications of Biosemiotics (2016) and Narrative 2nd edn (2014). He is co-series editor (with Kalevi Kull) of Semiotics, Communication and Cognition (de Gruyter Mouton), co-editor (with Peter J. Schulz) of the multi-volume Handbooks of Communication Sciences (de Gruyter) and co-edits (with David Machin) the journal Social Semiotics. Among his edited volumes are The Routledge Companion to Semiotics (2009), Theories and Models of Communication (2013, with Peter J. Schulz), Semiotics and Its Masters Vol. 1 (2017, with Kristian Bankov), Realism for the 21st Century: A John Deely Reader (2009) and The Communication Theory Reader (1996). He is the 9th Thomas A. Sebeok Fellow of the Semiotic Society of America, was President of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (elected 2014) and is secretary (since 2012) of the International Society for Biosemiotic Studies.*

“Cell Worlds”: Meaning-Making of the Inner Microscopic Biodiversity

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New technologies and digital arts can bring images of biological research far away from the laboratories and closer to the general public. In the science communication project *Cell Worlds* (2022), by the collective Exaltia, (Renaud Pourpre, Terence Saulnier, and Youenn Lerb), the microscopic and invisible movements of cells, bacteria, viruses and embryos of human bodies are showcased, in dimension never before attempted, on the walls of exhibition spaces, premiering at the Bassins des Lumières, a former submarine base in Bordeaux built by the Germans during the World War II. *Cell Worlds*, conceived as an immersive exhibition, an introspective documentary, a musical performance and a cinema experience, amazes people while raises awareness of our inner biodiversity. This unknown, lodged in each and every living being, is made up not only of entities of different kinds, but also of ‘migratory’ processes, of hunts, symbioses and even communications and conflicts. We will retrace the journey through the halls of the Bassins des Lumières and analyze it. Then we will set it alongside *Cell Worlds II, Cellular Anomalies* (2023), a later documentary by Exaltia that explores cellular behavior in disturbed ecosystems (infections, diseases, disruptions, tissue repair, failures), highlighting the blurred boundary between health and illness.

Key-words: symptoms, care, prosthesis, ecology, visible.

Bionote:

Tiziana Migliore *is Associate Professor of Semiotics and Scientific Secretary of the Umberto Eco International Centre for Semiotic Studies at the University of Urbino Carlo Bo (Italy). She is Secretary General of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS) and Vice-President and Treasurer of the International Association for Visual Semiotics (AISV-IAVS). Recently she has published the books Riscrivere le città. Semiotica della street art per le politiche sociali (with M. Bogo and O. Paris, 2025), La parola trasformatrice. Strutture, enunciazione, intersoggettività (2023), I sensi del visibile. Immagine, testo, opera (2018), and numerous Italian and international scientific articles. Among the collective journal issues and volumes, she has edited are: Le chaînon manquant entre langue et parole. Pour une sémiotique des normes (with G. Bassano, Actes Sémiotiques, 133, 2025), Semiotica del formato. Misure, peso, volume, proporzioni, scala (with M. Colas-Blaise, 2022), Images of Europe. L'Union entre Fédération et Séparation (with F. Mangiapane, 2021), Architecture of Babel. Creation, Extinctions and Intercessions in the Languages of the Global World (with P. Fabbri, 2011).*

Special Session
SEMIOTIC OF CULTURE/CULTURAL SEMIOTICS

LATIN AMERICA & MEXICO

Organized by
Professor Julieta HAIDAR

Panel I
SEMIOTICS OF CULTURE IN PURÉPECHA CULTURE

Coordinator:
Pedro Reygadas Robles Gil

Purépecha Epistemology: Semiotics Materializes and Transmits Epistemology to Perceive Reality and Develop Life (*Tsípekua*)

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The *Purépecha* Nation has its own relational and communal Epistemology, which gives rise to the reality perceived from a *Purépecha* perspective. In the case of *Purépecha* Epistemology, it not only begins with thought-reason but also with *P'ikuarerakua* (the "feeling-thinking") for *Sesi Irekani* ("Good Living"), in a knowing from the "we" (*Juchá*) as a whole to co-construct *Mitehperaque* ("Knowledge"; Gilberti, 1997, p. 322) through *Yeuehpahperaquea* ("Reasoning") and *Piquarerani* ("Feeling through a sense"). From a semiotic perspective (Lotman, 1996), the systems of symbols, signs, and practices (found in the ethical-mythical core, the language –*Uandakua*–, the culture –*Mimixekua*–, and the territory –*Irechekua*–) materialize and transmit *Purépecha* Epistemology, which in turn gives rise to the reality perceived for life (*Tsípekua*). Within the *Purépecha* semiotic-

epistemological framework, it is important to understand community semiosis (Mignolo, 2013; Guerrero, 2010) as part of a collective-community production of meaning, as a coding mechanism for *P'ikuarerakua* (feeling-thinking – as an integrated semiotic-cognitive process), and as part of the co-construction of reality. This unique semiotics of culture not only codifies but also serves as a system that transmits oír own knowledge (*Mimixekua*) and truth (*Tsirimekua*) through a relational logic and approach, thus opposing the individualistic and abstract semiosis of the colonial *Ego Cogito*. In this work, we analyze the semiotic elements that help us understand the *Purépecha Mitehperaque* in nature and the cosmos, with animals, plants, trees, the sky, and many other tangible and intangible elements. We take as examples the knowledge of healing and the observation of the *axuni* ("deer"), as well as political knowledge (*Juramuk Jiringati*) and the observation (*Exeni* –"to observe"-) of the *uauapuecha* (the "bees"), to see how they are organized. This relational and situated *Purépecha* semiotics is where the sign only acquires meaning in the praxis-orality of and with life, the community, and the territory.

Key-words: Semiotics of *Purépecha* Culture, *P'ikuarerakua* ("feeling-thinking"), *Mitehperaque* ("Knowledge"), *Tsirimekua* ("Truth"), *Yeuehpahperaquea* ("Reasoning").

Bionote:

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Semiotics of *Juchari Juramukua*, Governance in Cheran K'eri

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The text *Cherani anapu ireteri juramukua*, a product of the autonomous government of Cherán K'eri, the first legally recognized indigenous government in Mexico, established in April 2011, recovers and explains the principles of *Juchari Juramukua*, or *Purépecha* governance. Its cover features the general organizational chart of Cherán *K'eri's* government structure (Velazquez y Reygadas, 2025)

This paper analyzes this *Juchari Juramukua* scheme from the perspective of cultural semiotics (Lotman, 1996 ff.): its forms, colors, arrangement, correlations, and the central figure in Plate 4 of the *Relación de Michoacán*, in which the indigenous painter reinterprets the colonial genre of "*istorias*" to depict the figure of the ancient high priest: the *petamuti*, before an assembly of the people during the main festival of the public trial of *Equata Consquaro*. This semiotics is complemented by symbolic elements associated with government in the *Purépecha*

Nation in Michoacán, Mexico: the assumption of office in the mountains, the symbolic elements of power of the *petamuti* (the chair, the tongs of shell valves, the black attire, the spiral, the gourd of incense and tobacco, the lip plug), the symbols of the New Year and the *Purépecha* flag, and the bonfires in which the community is organized, which refer us in ancient times to the *cazonci* or main lord and were guarantors from long ago of community cohesion (Argueta and Castillaje 2024).

Key-words: Semiotics of culture, Political Philosophy, *Juchari Juramukua* ("*Purépecha Governance*), *Petamuti* (main priest of *Purépecha* Ancient Times), *K'eri Tankurhikua* ("Great Bonfire", the Popular Assembly of Cherán).

Bionote:

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Semiotics of Being Irecha and the Ontology of Purépecha People

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In P'urhepecha Ontology, we are dealing more with "estar" than with "being" itself, and this applies not only to men and women but to all beings in the *Parajpini* ("universe"). We offer illustrative semiotic examples, considered from the semiotics of culture and its relationship to "nature" (Lotman, 1996 ff., Barei and Gómez, 2016), to understand how the *P'urhepecha* community is symbolically constructed within Inter-Being.

Therefore, it is shown how in the *Purépecha* culture, the *Irecha* ('inhabitant who respects others') recognizes and interprets natural elements such as plants, animals, and natural features, as well as non-human beings like the *Mirinkua* and *Japinkua*. These beings are considered as possessing mind, consciousness, and language, and are influenced by the ethical-mythical aspects of the *Irecha's* values (*Kaxumpekua*) and beliefs (*Jakak'ukuecha*). This allows them to move beyond interpreting nature as an object and instead recognize and interpret it as part of themselves, understanding its value within the cosmos. Through walking and interpreting signs, as in the case of the forest and the signs of nature, they learn to care for and conserve nature, the territory, and the life that inhabits it.

We semiotically analyze practices such as the festival (*K'uinchekua*), the assembly (K'eri *Tánkurhikua*), the bonfire (*Chpiri Tánkurhikua*), the work (*Jarojperata*), and symbols that are interrelated in the culture, nature, and semiotics that lead us to become *Ireti* following the ontological principles of: *Jakajkuti* ('Being

who believes and assumes the *P'urhepecha* being'), *Anchikuriti* ('Being a worker in a family and communal sense'), *Marhuátspeti* ('Being who fulfills and serves with their family and communal duty'), *P'urhejkuti*, ('Being who has exercised community citizenship, the one who has served the people'), *Juramuti* ('person who holds a government position'), *Kaxumpiti* ('Being with enormous moral authority, an example of life') and *Janhaskati* ('Being invested with experience and wisdom').

Key-words: Semiotics of *Purépecha* Culture, *Irecha*, ('inhabitant who respects others'), *Jajajkuti* ('Being who believes and assumes the *P'urhepecha* being'), *Parajpini* ("universe").

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Intercultural Philosophy and Semiotics of Culture: The Case of *Abya Yala* and the Purépecha Culture

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According to Lyn and van Brakel (2013), all philosophy is intercultural. From an intercultural perspective, language and philosophy cannot be dissociated; inter-philosophy is metalinguistic. However, in the case of *Abya Yala*, as a semiotic and typologically symbolic culture (Lotman, 1996), the cultural contribution of not only philosophical concepts but also symbols is fundamental—inter-semiotics: Reichard, 1966, and Witherspoon, 1997, on the diné. Medina, 2004, on the ethnography of the Mesoamerican quincunx and Fresán, 2002, on the *Wixarika Nierika*; López-Baralt, 1984, 1988 and 1995, and Cusicanqui, 2015, on the drawings in Poma de Ayala and the Sociology of the image; Mejía Huaman, 2005, Guerrero, 2018 and Rojas, 2023, on the *chakana*; Núñez del Prado, 2008, on *yanantin-masintin*; Lagrou, 2007, on the Juni Kuin design; Gavilán Pinto, 2011, on the spiral and Amador, 2009, on the labyrinth; López Maldonado, 2010, on Mayan writing, etc. The study requires relating Symbolic Anthropology (from Turner, 1980 to today), the Semiotics of Culture (from Lotman and Uspenski to Torop and Haidar), Inter-Philosophy, General Semiotics (Peirce, 1966), Visual Rhetoric and Semiotics (Groupe m,

Fontanille, 2016) and decolonial approaches (such as Guerrero, 2010 and Mignolo's semiotic hermeneutics, 2011). From this perspective, the present work focuses on the cultural, inter-semiotic, and inter-philosophical semiotic analysis of some of the significant condensing symbols and semiotic-philosophical devices of various cultures of *Abya Yala* (Reygadas and Contreras, 2021a, 3 vols.; Reygadas, 2021b; Reygadas, 2023 a; Reygadas, 2023 b; Reygadas and Guzmán (Eds.), 2025), and of Purépecha Culture in particular (Reygadas and Guzmán, 2025).

Key-words: Semiotics of Culture and Image, Inter-Philosophy, *Abya Yala*, *Purépecha*, Condensing Symbols.

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Panel II
ANCESTRAL MEDICINE, VISUAL SEMIOTICS AND DECOLONIAL ART

Coordinator:
David Terrazas Tello

The Image of the Maguey in Mexican Photography: A semiotic-visual study of a magical-symbolic plant from a decolonial perspective

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This paper analyzes, from the perspective of cultural semiotics—specifically visual semiotics—five photographs by five different authors on the subject of Mexico's maguey plants. The photographic images date from 1900 to 2010. Their authors: Casasola Archive, 1900; Hugo Brehme, ca. 1916; Flor Garduño, 1957; Manuel Álvarez Bravo, 1975; Aldo Márquez, 2010. The photographic images reflect rural Mexican life, as well as the incursion of urban life. One could speak of rural-urban life; in this sense, the semiosphere of the magueys involves the relationship with the land and with the plant that is both magical and symbolic for Mexicans. We approach the analysis thru a visual study of the decolonial look of the photographer capturing the spaces where the plant is found. The essential categories we draw on for the analysis are chaos–order, heterogeneous–homogeneous, and semiosphere—the

space outside of which no meaning is produced; in this case, both the photographic images and their content constitute a semiosphere.

Key-words: Mexican photography, semiotics of culture, magueys, decoloniality.

Bionote:

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Visual Semiotics, Identity and Culture: A Case Study on the Practice of Flagellation in Santo Tomás, Atlántico (Colombia)

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The preservation and transmission of culture constitute one of the main concerns of communities, as they ensure the continuity of collective memory (Halbwachs, 2004, 2005) and shared history. However, these processes are constantly threatened by various obstacles that promote the weakening or forgetting of cultural practices. In response to this situation, communities themselves develop autonomous strategies to preserve their traditions, even in the absence of economic or logistical support from state entities, with the goal of safeguarding their historical memory. One example of this can be observed in the municipality of Santo Tomás, in the department of Atlántico (Colombia), where annually, during Holy Week, one of the most significant cultural manifestations of the town takes place: the flagellation ritual.

Within this framework, the objective of the present study is to analyze the lexical-semantic resources employed by the community members, as well as the semiotic-visual elements used by the flagellants and the media, to understand the processes of identity construction. To this end, the theoretical foundations of Halliday (2017), Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), Haidar (2005, 2011, 1994)—who conceives communities as semiotic-discursive practices—and Haidar's visual

semiotics (2008, 1995) are adopted, along with Lotman's (1979, 1988, 1996, 1998, 2000) approaches to the semiotics of culture.

The corpus of analysis was compiled from various digital and audiovisual sources. It includes comments published on the Facebook platform between 2017 and 2023; journalistic notes and videos from Colombian Spanish-language media outlets such as *El Heraldo* and *La Vanguardia* for the period 2012–2023; radio broadcasts from Canal Caracol (two programs); and a documentary from Radio Nacional de Colombia. Additionally, audio recordings of interviews conducted in February 2023 and images from these media were incorporated for the analysis of the ritual.

Key-words: Scourge, penitents, visual semiotics, culture and identity.

Bionote:

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The Level of Sacred Reality in Ancestral Mesoamerican Medicine: The Return of the Soul to the Body

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In Mexico, from ancient times to the present day, the figure of the "curandero" exists—a ritual specialist whose role is to restore health to members of the community. There are two basic principles in this practice: the first states that a person becomes ill physically because their soul is ill, so the goal is to heal the soul so that the body can heal. The second principle states that a person becomes ill because they have lost their balance. This can be caused by a fright, a fall, a bad wind, the evil eye, and so on. Therefore, the curandero seeks to restore the person's balance. Thus, for the body to heal, the soul must be healed, and the body must regain its equilibrium. To achieve this, the curandero practices their craft with the help of medicinal plants such as sacred mushrooms and peyote, which allow the healer and the patient to embark on a journey of introspection in which they seek the cause of the imbalance. This journey towards balance takes place on a sacred level of reality, in which Christian and ancestral symbols are used, in a transcultural-transreligious synthesis whose objective is the well-being of the community, because if a subject is out of balance, he can put the balance of his family at risk, and therefore, put the balance of the community at risk.

Key-words: Mesoamerica, Ancestral medicine, Levels of reality, Curandero.

Bionote:

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Panel III
THE MEMORY OF CULTURE, IDEOLOGY AND POWER

Coordinator:
Josefina Guzmán Diáz

Biosemiotics of *Amaranth*: Semiosphere, Magic and Nutrition in Mexican Culture

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In this communication we analyze the complex concept of Semiosphere in the cultivation of the highly regarded Amaranthus cruentus plant in the ancestral peoples of Mexico. It is especially interesting to analyze the characteristics of the crop that respond to those of the Semiosphere: center-periphery, order-chaos, homogeneous-heterogeneous, ectropy-entropy, open-closed and the production of meaning in the same crop, in human food and in intersemiotic translation, when the plant is used to celebrate the rites and rituals of the peoples that currently cultivate it. The amaranth semisofera reaches its maximum expression of meaning when homeostasis is achieved both in cultivation and in social, cultural, economic and ecological relationships. It is also essential to work with biosemiotics, since it has a close relationship with the semiosphere, in other words, the biological is the social and the

social is the biological, they are two *sine qua non* conditions, without which the biological could not exist. human life.

Key-words: Semiosphere, Amaranthus, intersemiotic translation, biosemiotics.

Bionote:

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Aztlan, The Power of a Chronotope
The Identity Strength of The '*Xicanos*' in The USA

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The genesis of the ancient Mexicans has several myths of origin, among them, the pilgrimage of the Aztecs who left the Aztlan and later founded the city of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, the great capital of Mesoamerica. In the mid-nineteenth century, after the historic and classic unjust invasions, in 1848 the United States cut off more than half of Mexican territory. With an attempt to protect, in every way, the Mexicans who decided to stay in the territory stolen by the Anglo-Saxons of the north. The treaty was of no use, the 'white' Americans, accustomed to destroying everything that stood in their way, under their racist ideology, immediately snatched the real estate assets, their farmland, from the no longer 'Mexicans', but from the mutilated 'Xicanos', and they were pushing them into the underground and peripheral tunnel of the nascent cosmopolitans, ghettos built in the *yonkes*, became the habitats of the new Mexican-American citizens who owned those lands and that the new policies simply missed. Initially, the newly Mexicoamericans sold their cheap labor for agricultural and industrial exploitation, in the face of their deplorable situation, Chicano leaders promoted union unity, despite their achievements they could not generate an identity stance. It was not until the first decades of the last century that Mexican artistic movements invaded the Chicano communities: murals and theater with pre-cuauhtémicas historical references, which led to the appearance in 1969 of the pamphlets "*El Plan Espiritual de Aztlan*", where Chicanos were summoned to

follow the philosophy and knowledge of their ancestors. Since then, an identity movement has been forged, in which Chicanos claim the right to call the entire former Mexican territory Aztlan, as chronotopes that produce and reproduce the values of their ancestral culture, which have offered them briopsychosociocultural health and they are extended by digital means.

Key-words: Aztlan, chronotope, Chicanos, digital identity.

Bionote:

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The Culture of *Buen Vivir* (*Sesi Irekani*) Semiotic-Discursive Analysis of *Kosmovivencia* with Health in *The P'urhé Culture* within The Daily Practice of "*El Costumbre*"

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The objective of this work is to show, from the perspective of discourse theory and the semiotics of culture, the uses and customs of cultural and ancestral knowledge in Buen Vivir. Our ancestors taught us that health is everyone's responsibility, that we must take care of ourselves: Juchari Tsinajpekua, 'our life,' 'our happiness,' 'our balance,' 'our harmony,' 'our health'; understanding health as a state of well-being, good health, with joy and connected to life. It points out that what is ours (juchari) is the responsibility of all, that we must all preserve health and life together, joyfully and as a community with humans, animals, nature, and spaces. While intercultural practices place medicine and illness at the center, care is provided once the person is categorized as sick, pre-sick, moderate, severe, or terminal. Juchari Tsinajpekua allows me to present the discourse of health, of Buen Vivir, in contrast to p'amekua 'pain' or p'amenchati 'sick,' 'someone who feels pain.' In this work, I carry out a discursive semiotic analysis of the kosmovivencia of the P'urhé culture with health in daily life through the uses and customs of ancestral knowledge for Buen Vivir. The analysis, based on discourse and cultural semiotics, shows the cultural practices that maintain the community's balance (Cherán, Michoacán) through customs and traditions, as opposed to individual practices that produce imbalance and illness. The

study is developed using Haidar's operational model and various authors he proposes, mainly Lotman, Verón, Morin, etc.

Key-words: Semiotics, Buen Vivir, discourse, Usos y Costumbres.

Bionote:

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Discrimination and Stigma
Discursive Semiotic Analysis of The Sociocultural Construction of The "Poor Subject"

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The main objective of this work is to reveal the sociocultural construction of the poor subject through the analysis of two discourses that refer us to the common problem of being, suffering, or existing in a condition of poverty. This constant inequality has

been experienced throughout neoliberal governments in Mexico, which seek to justify and naturalize it as a legacy, consistent with cultural variation and inherited structures and reasons. This exposes the configuration of a silenced, forbidden poor subject who is thus excluded and made invisible. The analysis identified the stigmatic, pejorative, and discriminatory burdens placed on the poor, recognized through ideological, social, historical, political, and cultural dimensions. These burdens affect those considered poor and are reflected in both the perception and self-perception of being or existing as poor today. The theoretical and methodological apparatus supporting this work is founded on the theory of discourse analysis and the semiotics of culture, systematized by Haidar and Reygadas, who have proposed operative models of analysis with authors such as Foucault, Pêcheux, Robin, Reboul, Veron, Kerbrat-Orecchioni, and others.

Key-words: Social formation, poor subject, stigma, and discriminatio.

Bionote:

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Cognitive Transmission, Perceptual Semiosis, and Meaning-Making Practices Across Cultural and AI Systems

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In this paper we propose a discussion of how semiosis emerges through the abductive reorganization of direct perceptual experience, compared to the meaning-making practices generated by contemporary artificial intelligence systems.

Drawing on abduction theory (Peirce), Umberto Eco's ([1997] 2002) perceptual semiotics, the principles of "the savage mind" (Claude Lévi-Strauss [1962] 2011), morphodynamic understanding of form (D'Arcy Thompson 1917), and theory of cognitive transmission (Ioan Petru Culianu [1992] 2005), we show how direct sensory interaction with experiential reality activates comparable cognitive primitives and relational modes of perceptual abstraction. We do this by starting from the similarities we observe in the manner of organizing representational forms, structure, and ornamental rhythms that appear on cultural artifacts such as the friezes on pre-Columbian temples, or the traditional Romanian blouse (IA), despite the absence of direct socio-cultural or historical contact.

The article further argues that contemporary AI systems fundamentally differ from human abductive semiosis. While human cognition generates representation

through embodied perceptual engagement with experiential reality, AI systems operate through probabilistic recombination of already abstracted representational structures. Contemporary meaning-making practices therefore emerge within hybrid media ecologies where embodied perception, cultural memory, and algorithmic abstraction continuously interact, while the abductive reorganization of direct perceptual experience remains a specifically human condition of semiosis and creative representation.

Key-words: abductive semiosis, perceptual abstraction, embodied cognition, artificial intelligence systems, traditional Romanian blouse (IA).

Bionote:

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At the same time, he is the Founder and (co)organizer of the series of International Conference Semiosis in Communication, already in its fourth edition (the first edition was organized in June 2016, the last in June 2023, in Bucharest, Romania), one of the most important scientific events of this kind on the international agenda, organized under the auspices of IASS-AIS.

He established for the first time in Romania, and is the Coordinator for International Cooperation of Applied Semiotics and Communication Laboratory, within the Research Center in Communication Sciences, within the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, National School of Political Science and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania.

Ph.D. in Communications Science from the year 2018, Prof. Drăgan has published three books, almost 50 scientific papers in the most prestigious journals in the field, or in internationally recognized volumes. Moreover, he is member of several international professional associations, guest editor for several prestigious international journals in the

field of semiotics, reviewer, editorial member or member of the Scientific Committee for several other scientific journals around the world (Springer Nature, Political Research Quarterly, Punctum, etc.), and was an invited keynote speaker at several scientific events in the country and abroad.

At the same time, Prof. Drăgan has been working for over 25 years as a Communication and Public Relations Advisor within the Romanian Ministry of Defense, Bucharest, Romania, for which he provides specialized consultancy at the highest level.



The Semiotics of Virtual Public Space

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This scientific article analyzes the semiotics of images in Algeria's virtual public spaces, focusing on blogs and Facebook during the 2019 postponed presidential elections (February to March 2019). It explores how virtual groups used symbolic visual discourses—like caricatures, photomontages, and photos—to express political critique, opposition, and collective memory.

The study draws on Jürgen Huberman's public sphere theory, adapting it to digital contexts as a space for rational debate amid new media's rise. Virtual public space in Arab societies, including Algeria, emerges as a multi-layered arena blending representation (aesthetic self-expression) and debate, countering state-controlled media. It emphasizes symbolism's role, where images encode irony, sarcasm, and

metaphors to convey rejection of power, evoking religious motifs (e.g., Pharaoh) or revolutionary history.

Semiotic analysis per Roland Barthes and Martin Joly dissects images' linguistic/iconic signs and visual patterns (shape, color, rhythm). The sample includes 4 randomly selected images from 30 across 10 blogs and 4 Facebook pages, tied to election events.

Key-words: semiotics of images, virtual public spaces, semiotic analysis.

Bionote:

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LLM and Identity Shift: How AI Structures can Impact Scaffolding of Behaviours and Practices

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The increasing adoption of Large Language Models (LLMs) across everyday decision-making contexts raises critical questions about their capacity to influence identity formation, behaviors, and social practices. Generative AI systems are now routinely used for work-related tasks, personal advice, consumption choices, and interpersonal communication, positioning them as influential mediators of meaning and action. This influence becomes particularly salient in contexts of migration and social integration, where individuals are required to navigate new linguistic, cultural, and institutional environments while undergoing profound processes of identity reconfiguration. Current research on digital tools for integration primarily focuses on online communities and social media platforms, which often reinforce fragmentation, individualism, and isolation rather than fostering reciprocal cultural engagement. As a result, attention has increasingly shifted toward the potential role of AI-driven recommendation systems and conversational agents in shaping adaptive behaviors through non-coercive forms of guidance. Existing studies highlight the effectiveness of algorithmic recommendations in content platforms but offer limited insight into their application within locally situated integration processes. Despite growing interest in the concept of AI soft power, there remains a lack of empirical and conceptual research on how LLM-based systems may scaffold identity shifts and behavioral adaptation in multicultural settings. This paper

addresses this gap by examining how culturally contextualized LLMs can support integration processes without imposing dominant cultural norms. Methodologically, the study combines a conceptual analysis of identity scaffolding and soft power with a feasibility assessment of locally adapted LLM-based conversational and recommendation systems. The findings suggest that, when appropriately contextualized and designed around reciprocal exchange, LLMs can subtly support identity negotiation and inclusive social practices while preserving individual agency.

Key-words: Migration and Social Integration, Large Language Models (LLMs), Identity Scaffolding, AI Soft Power, Culturally Contextualized AI Systems.

Bionote:

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Graduate Students' Perceptions and Experiences Regarding the Use of AI Technologies in Healthcare:

A Phenomenological Study from Turkey

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Today, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are impacting many aspects of healthcare, from disease diagnosis and surgical procedures to digital systems used in patient-doctor communication and wearable health technologies. It is predicted that the use of these technologies in healthcare services will become even more widespread in the future. These developments make the question of how future healthcare professionals experience, understand, and relate AI to their professional practices crucial. In this context, how the current and potential contributions of AI to human health are experienced and understood by postgraduate students studying in the healthcare field (health education and practice experiences) becomes an important research topic. This research is designed within the framework of the

phenomenological approach, a qualitative research design. In the data collection process, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with postgraduate students studying in the healthcare field in Turkey; the obtained data were analyzed in accordance with the principles of interpretive phenomenological analysis.

This study aims to develop predictions about the future of AI in healthcare services by examining how AI technologies are experienced and what effects they produce in the healthcare education process. The study also aims to evaluate the effects of artificial intelligence and the human factor on healthcare professional-patient communication from the perspectives of students studying in the healthcare field.

Key-words: AI, healthcare services, healthcare education, postgraduate students, phenomenology

Bionote:

Dr. Vasfiye ARSLAN *received her master's and doctoral degrees from the Department of Informatics at Istanbul University. Her research interests include human-computer interaction (HCI), human-centered smart cities, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, distance education, and semiotics. She currently serves in the Department of Computer Technologies at the Vocational School of Technical Sciences, Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa. In addition to her graduate education, Dr. Arslan holds undergraduate degrees in Philosophy from the Open and Distance Education Faculty of Istanbul University and in Business Administration from Anadolu University.*

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bilateral agreements and ERASMUS. She is the founder of Human-Computer Interaction Research Laboratory opened in 2016 at Istanbul University. Prof. Gulsecen co-authored and co-edited 8 books and more than 100 publications. She supervised more than 40 master and PhD theses. She is co-founder of "International Future-Learning Conference: Innovations in Learning for the Future". She is the editor-in-chief of ActaINFOLOGICA, a peer-reviewed and indexed scientific journal published by Istanbul University Press. Türkiye Informatics Association, Türkiye Logic Association, Operations Research Association of Türkiye, John Atanasoff Society of Automatics and Informatics (Bulgaria).

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The Evolution of the Reader: Reconfiguring the Transmedia Reader in Contemporary Narratives

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In the media environment influenced by new technologies, narratives are proliferating that no longer fit with the traditional way of telling stories, from film sagas to narrative universes made up of series, and comics, where readers, more than spectators, become agents with an active participation to immerse themselves in the narratives, search for and interact with each new text, but above all, change their role from reader to author by producing new textualities, as happens with fanfics.

This type of story, which is disseminated through different texts and media platforms, is what specialized literature calls Transmedia Storytelling, where We are faced with a phenomenon that involves the active participation of readers with a growing number of texts, which implies different systems of signs and the development of new skills to integrate stories that are not contained in a single text, and generate new textualities.

The transmedia reader, is not a new type of reader, but rather one who is essentially the reader described by Eco (1989, 1993), both in terms of textual strategies and empirical observation, who executes interpretive movements, textual inferences, and the formulation of reading hypotheses. However, when faced with multiple simultaneous texts, the reader develops other characteristics that identify them as transmedia, from handling different languages and media platforms to being able to formulate a fabula for each text that integrates the transmedia storytelling.

This also includes a transmedia fabula, which is the general structure of the story, but in this case, it is built with all the different texts that make up the franchise of the story.

We encounter a reader who, in addition to engaging with a single text, faces multiple intertextually related texts, requiring them to make inferential and intertextual connections between them, to use these textual strategies to propose other stories.

Key-words: transmedia reader, transmedia fabula, transmedia storytelling, text, intertextuality.

Bionote:

Martha Celina Arvizu Mendoza *holds a Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design and a Master's degree in Communication from the Universidad de Guadalajara, and is currently a doctoral student in Humanities at the same university. She is a member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS) and the Media Ecology Association (MEA), where she has participated in national and international conferences. She has collaborated on University Social Responsibility projects at the University Center for Art, Architecture, and Design of the Universidad de Guadalajara, where she has also given talks to students in the Graphic Design program.*



Nonlinear Modeling: A Semiotic Explanation for its Widespread Applications

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Nonlinear modeling is present in almost all fields of science, taking key roles in modeling human consciousness, describing cultural diversification processes, understanding games, simulating ecosystem behavior, or applying the theory of relativity. In this presentation, I argue that the reason for the widespread success of nonlinear modeling can be explained through semiotics. The main idea of semiotics is that languages rely on a small number of symbols and operations that can be used to combine these symbols and describe reality. For example, stars don't need to be described with stars, and trees don't need to be described with trees. Rather, they are all described with a vocabulary consisting of words, composed out of an even smaller number of syllables and letters, which can be combined following certain rules. Similarly, when scientists develop mathematical models, they describe reality not with actual supernova explosions or wet river basins but with mathematical objects and operations. More broadly, all verbal descriptions and mathematical models rely on the same semiotic setup in which reality is described with a set of elements that can be combined to generate meaning. This semiotic perspective that places mathematical modeling among other languages isn't new. The word "model" is the diminutive form of the Latin "modus", which can mean "language". In this semiotic interpretation, all scientific descriptions of the world are ultimately descriptions that rely on some language. The success of nonlinear modeling across

all models and languages leads me to a unique conclusion: I suggest that the distinction between linearity and nonlinearity reappears in all languages because it is a basic element of human cognition, which is the foundation that any language must rely on. My presentation illustrates this thesis with multiple examples, ranging from music and art to mathematical models across a broad range of scientific and medical fields.

Key-words: Nonlinear modeling, human cognition, language, models.

Bionote:

*As a child, **Dan C. BACIU** witnessed the 1989 Romanian revolution, which demonstrated the importance of culture in uniting people. Today, Baciu is a professor active across the United States and Europe, with research featured on the Science AAAS weekly podcast.*

From White Space to Latent Space: Visual Semiosis, Artificial Intelligence, and the Psychology of AI-Generated Images

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This paper aims to explore the transformation of visual semiosis in the context of artificial intelligence, by integrating perspectives from semiotics, visual communication, chromology, and psychology. It investigates how meaning is constructed, perceived, and reinterpreted across traditional and AI-generated images. The methodology adopts a qualitative, transdisciplinary approach combining semiotic analysis, content analysis, and visual perception theory. The framework is grounded in classical semiotics (Barthes, Eco, Lotman) and psychological interpretation (Jung), complemented by chronological analysis. Two case studies are examined: Jacuzzi advertising (well-being imagery) and wine labels and vinoteca environments (Vila Vinea), followed by a comparative analysis with AI-generated imagery and immersive visual spaces (museums and digital exhibitions). The findings reveal a shift from stable symbolic systems toward dynamic and interpretative visual structures. Traditional images rely on culturally encoded meanings and archetypal symbols such as water, body, and landscape, while

AI-generated images operate through probabilistic recombination of visual patterns. Chromology remains a constant factor influencing perception and emotional response, and gaze plays a central role in structuring meaning. Contemporary visual environments increasingly transform the image from a static object into an immersive experience. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that visual culture is undergoing a transition from representation to generation, from intentional creation to algorithmic production. The concept of *latent space* redefines the ontology of the image, while psychological mechanisms continue to shape interpretation regardless of authorship. Rather than replacing traditional art, artificial intelligence expands the field of visual expression, contributing to a hybrid visual ecosystem where meaning is continuously negotiated.

Key-words: AI-generated images; visual semiotics; latent space; advertising psychology; media ecology.

Bionote:

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Liliana Bălan (Co-author)

Liliana Bălan is a student at the University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science and Technology "George Emil Palade" of Târgu Mureș, enrolled in Communication and Emerging Media and Industrial Economic Engineering programs. Her research interests focus on artificial

intelligence, visual communication, and emerging media ecosystems, with particular attention to the semiotic and psychological dimensions of AI-generated imagery. Her work explores how generative technologies reshape meaning-making processes, consumer perception, and visual culture. She has contributed to academic and interdisciplinary projects addressing digital communication, AI, and education, and is actively involved in content creation, media production, and research on visual aesthetics in digital environments.



The Semiotic Transformation of the Medicalized Body in the Age of AI

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Medicine offers a paradigmatic illustration of the nexus between knowledge, power, and subjectivation (Foucault, 1963). By engaging with questions of health, life and death, medical practice implicates the person in all their dimensions. As a form of knowledge applied to the body and produced through its observation, medicine structures an asymmetric relationship between patients and physicians. It is therefore particularly sensitive to change, given the intensity of the institutional, political (Poirier, 2006), and libidinal stakes involved.

Recent developments in artificial intelligence alter the conditions under which medical knowledge is produced, accessed, and interpreted. AI systems contribute to transforming the regimes of visibility of medical objects and the forms of rationality through which medical data are processed (Jorion, 2025).

This paper analyzes how the introduction of AI tools reshapes the processes through which meaning is generated around bodily expressions, medical authority and patient activity. Our hypothesis is that AI acts as a semiotic mediator capable of redistributing interpretive positions within the therapeutic relationship, and may even come to function as a semiotic sender in its own right.

The shifts occurring in medical examination, particularly toward engineers and AI systems, may paradoxically lead to new forms of patient empowerment. The partial artificialization of the care process may establish a protective barrier, both physical and symbolic, between patient and physician. Within this renewed space of mediation, a new aesthetics of the medicalized body may emerge. The subversion of medical dispositive, such as the integration of diagnostic sensors into everyday objects or the development of alternative medical strategies by LLM-enhanced patients, challenges established imaginaries (Lotman, 2005). This opens the way to new circuits of bodily enunciation, and thus to novel forms of negotiating meaning, norms, and practices of the self (Durand, 2023).

Key-words: Medical Semiotics, Biopolitics, Patient Empowerment, Human-AI Mediation, Bodily Enunciation.

Bionote:

Frédéric BALMONT *is independent researcher, currently working on theological interpretations of transhumanism, particularly within the framework of Process Theology. I published a study of nietzschean criticism of transhumanism under the direction of Aura Elena Schussler (2025). He also worked on the political issues of far-right thought, notably naturalism, virilism and transcendence, through the study of the Alain Soral case (2016).*

An Evaluation on the Use of Mental Verbs in Artificial Intelligence-Generated Texts

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The use of artificial intelligence, which is expanding into many areas from education to production techniques, and from health engineering to high technology, has become involved in many aspects of life. Could the ability to use language, which is dominant in humans, also be an area where artificial intelligence is functionally used? Could writing, that is, producing a literary text, also be the job of artificial intelligence? By evaluating multiple texts produced by AI models under this theme, a more qualified assessment can be reached. The ability to use language, which is more complex than processing numerical information has been limited to the use of mental verbs in this study.

When looking at the verb classifications developed with linguistic methods, verbs that describe mind activities are generally considered under the heading of "Mental Verb". This study will evaluate whether the classification of verbs in literary texts produced by manipulating artificial intelligence models under this heading shows variability. The methodology of the study is the verb classification proposed in the thesis titled "Factors Playing a Role in the Classification of Verbs in Turkish -With the Example of Ayşe Kulin's Novel Kanadı Kırık Kuşlar-". In this study, mental verbs are divided into subcategories: cognitive, psychological state-indicating and perceptual verbs (Dündar, 2022: 209). The study will evaluate completed verbs will be based on the meaning they acquire within the context. And

it will be checked whether the secondary meanings, metaphorical or slang meanings, and the suffixes (operating and derivational) that the verb acquires in the context, in addition to its primary dictionary meaning, create variability in the classification of the verb.

Key-words: Artificial intelligence, mental verb, context, literary text, verb classification.

Bionote:
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Narrativity, Disease, and Algorithm: The Semiotics of Patient Experience in The Age of Artificial Intelligence

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The encounter between medicine and artificial intelligence raises questions that exceed the merely technical dimension of the phenomenon. This paper proposes a semiotic reading of the patient's lived experience in contexts where clinical interaction is increasingly mediated by algorithmic systems. Starting from narrative medicine and the philosophical semiotics of illness, we analyse how the patient's subjective discourse - a complex system of signs bearing the imprint of embodied suffering - is translated, compressed, and sometimes distorted within the data structures that AI models operate with. Drawing on the works of Solomon Marcus on mathematical semiotics and the phenomenological reflections of Gabriel Liiceanu on the limits of the human condition, we argue that the algorithmic interpretation of illness entails a fundamental recodification of the patient's narrative identity. The article also examines the risks that arise from such recodifications: the reduction of the ill person to a biomedical profile, the erosion of the therapeutic

relationship, and the emergence of what we call narrative asymmetry - an imbalance between the richness of subjective experience and the poverty of its algorithmic representation. The conclusions advocate for an integrative model in which artificial intelligence supplements, rather than supplants, the hermeneutic competence of the clinician.

Key-words: medical semiotics, patient narrative, artificial intelligence in medicine, narrative identity, algorithmic interpretation, narrative medicine, illness experience.

Bionote:

Diana Petronela Bugaciu, *consultant psychologist and doctoral student at the "Ion Creangă" University in Chişinău. She has published various articles on psychology and psychopedagogy, some in collaboration with Ms. Assoc. Prof. Univ. Dr.* ***Mocanu Lăcrămioara*** *and Ms. Prof.* ***Cernei Carolina****. Her fields of interest are psychology and education.*

Transformer-Based Sentiment Modeling and Computational Semiotics of Medical Migration Intentions among Romanian Medical Students

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The migration of healthcare professionals from Eastern European countries has become a critical issue affecting the sustainability of national healthcare systems. Romania has experienced a significant outflow of medical professionals over the past two decades, underscoring the need to understand the perceptions and motivations that shape migration intentions among future healthcare workers. This study proposes a computational approach grounded in natural language processing and computational semiotics to analyze the discourse of Romanian medical students regarding their potential professional mobility. The research dataset consists of survey responses collected from medical students, including both structured variables (gender, socio-economic status, migration intention) and open-ended textual comments describing personal perspectives on the Romanian healthcare system. From a semiotic perspective, these textual responses can be interpreted as linguistic signs that express attitudes, perceptions, and social meanings related to professional mobility. The textual corpus is processed using several natural language processing models, including TextBlob, BERT, RoBERTa, and GPT-based language models. Sentiment classification is performed using both three- and five-level ordinal scales to capture the polarity and intensity of attitudes expressed in

responses. The methodological framework integrates supervised machine learning techniques with transformer-based contextual embeddings to identify latent semantic patterns in the corpus. Within this framework, transformer models act as computational interpretants, capable of capturing contextual relationships among linguistic tokens and reconstructing the meaning structures embedded in discourse. Comparative evaluation of the models is conducted using standard classification metrics, including precision, recall, F1-score, and overall accuracy. The results indicate that transformer-based models significantly outperform lexicon-based approaches in detecting nuanced sentiment patterns related to professional dissatisfaction, perceived career opportunities abroad, and structural limitations of the national healthcare system. Negative sentiment scores are strongly associated with declared migration intentions. The study demonstrates how digital humanities methodologies combined with advanced NLP models contribute to the semiotic interpretation of healthcare-related discourse, offering a scalable framework for understanding migration-related meaning-making processes and supporting evidence-based health policy strategies.

Key-words: Computational Semiotics; Natural Language Processing; Transformer Models; Sentiment Analysis; Healthcare Workforce Migration.

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The Embodiment of Meaning as a Communicative Imperative: A Statistical Approach to Concepts in Poetic Texts
The Case of Antonin Artaud

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Following the trends of his era, the eminent interdisciplinary researcher Solomon Marcus in his linguostatistic investigations dealt with the statistics of word forms and lexemes – effectively, the statistics of words as embodied entities. Yet communication itself is an act driven by and aimed at the embodiment of meaning. This study argues that in poetic text, concepts (in Lakoff's sense) serve as the principal vehicle for semantics. Consequently, a statistical analysis of concepts becomes a highly productive method for examining poetic content.

Key-words: Conceptual Statistics, Poetic Semantics, Linguostatistics, Conceptual Analysis in Poetry, Embodiment of Meaning.

Bionotes:

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activities hermeneutics (cognitological hermeneutics, non-fiction hermeneutics), mathematical linguistics, theoretical biology, biohermeneutics, classification theory, pedagogy, Precambrian paleontology, crystallogenesis.

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Video Games and Health: How Ludic Structures Translate Reality into Controlled Experiences

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This talk addresses the relationship between ludic practices and health, exploring how structured games semiotically translate portions of reality into ludic interactions.

We begin by revisiting the distinction between the ludic attitude and structured games, already developed by authors such as Jacques Henriot and Juri Lotman and later taken up in contemporary game studies. While what counts as a game varies across eras and cultures, the ludic attitude functions as a cognitive presupposition: it is the capacity through which individuals, starting from a given situation, summon behavioral scripts and identity roles from another situation, thereby generating a co-structuring between the two. Existing literature has often emphasized the autonomy of the ludic attitude with respect to structured games,

while overlooking the ways in which games translate aspects of reality into meaningful, organized interactions.

We will distinguish three moments concerning the ludic construction of meaning, inspired by Paul Ricœur's theory of narration. First, at the moment of prefiguration, experience is lived and negotiated without yet assuming a narrative unity or a formal ludic structure. In this phase, both the activation of the ludic attitude and the emergence of narrative understanding are unstable and intertwined with other modes of sense-making.

Second, at the moment of configuration, narrative enunciation operates through a predominantly temporal synthesis, selectively organizing heterogeneous elements into more or less coherent sequences. By contrast, structured ludic enunciation operates through a predominantly spatial synthesis, delimiting a game-space in which rules, roles, and possible actions build a combinatory system.

Third, at the moment of refiguration, the semiotic configurations elaborated through narratives and games can be reworked and re-employed within lived experience.

More broadly, the analysis of videogames dealing with health issues — such as *Gris*, *Baby Steps* and *Lie in my heart* — will allow us to show three strategies through which video games are able to solicit a sensitive ludic practice: through procedural metaphors, through kinetic incorporation, and through identity narratives.

Key-words: Enunciation, Identity, Narrative, Games, Health.

Bionote:

Enzo D'Armenio *is a semiotician and works as a junior professor at the University of Lorraine. He has previously carried out three post-doctoral projects at the University of Liège, including the Marie Curie (Individual Fellowship) project IMACTIS — Fostering*

Critical Identities Through Social Media Archival Images (www.imactis.eu), which focused on identity-related images on digital social networks. His recent research studies, published in international journals such as Visual Communication, Semiotica, and Games and Culture, focus on generative AI and the semiotic study of identities. He is also the author of the monograph Mondi paralleli. Ripensare l'interattività nei videogiochi (Unicopli, 2014).

Forms, Formats, Formations: Essay on a Semiotic Classification of Digital Images

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False representations, false information, "fakes" or "deepfakes", the discourse accompanying the evolution of images generated by artificial intelligence leads us to believe that there are images produced by humans on the one hand, and by a form of independent thought on the other (Baudrillard, 1992). This confusion thus invites an ontological shift : these images would by definition be avatars of the "fake", since there would no longer be any human intervention. But shouldn't we ask the question differently, by re-inscribing these productions in a genealogy of what we might call "digital mimesis"? The aim of this paper is to open up a deeper reflection on "algorithmic realism" (Rouvroy, 2025) through the technical uses of reproduction and the creative circulation linked to the representation of these images. We will propose a semiotic categorisation of these artefacts around three categories : forms, formats and formations (Jeanneret, 2014), while placing them within a broader

history of digital images: between virtual perception, techniques, practices and languages of the image (Dondero, 2020).Confronted with these "synthetic" images, semiotics must propose to develop its theoretical apparatus in favour of a reflexive approach to the issue of the "truth" of these images and their social uses, their triviality (Jeanneret, 2008).

Key-words: semiotics, digital, artefacts, technology, use, triviality.

Bionote:

Associate professor in Communication studies at UCO Laval, researcher at CHUS and an associate researcher at GRIPIC (Celsa-Sorbonne) and the Centre for Semiotics and Rhetoric (University of Liège), ***Maxime Fabre*** *conducts research in the fields of journalism, digital technology and visual semiotics. He is the author of Photographie de presse. Régimes de croyance (2020) and L'essentiel de la culture numérique (2024). In 2013, he was awarded the International Excellence Prize by the Paris Foreign Trade Advisors after completing a university degree in Romania. Passionate about photography, he exhibited a series of images on the "Vestiges/Vestigii" in Târgu Mureș, Transylvania.*

Rituals of Deference and Respect: A Semiotic Approach to Senior–Junior Interactions in Healthcare

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The research's goal is to examine, through a semiotic lens, how professional courtesy is signaled and negotiated within senior–junior medical interactions. The study finds that specific verbal and nonverbal signs model professional norms, construct ranked relationships, and enable collegiality and two-way respect. Semiotic resources include verbal, non-verbal, and para-verbal cues—such as verbal register, gaze, proxemics, posture, haptics, intonation, pauses, and artifacts. Analysis of video recordings of senior-junior interactions in healthcare spaces, using multimodal discourse analysis, reveals that professional courtesy is not simple etiquette. Instead, it is a complex semiotic process that actively shapes identity, authority, and coordinated care in medical socialization.

Key-words: professional courtesy, senior–junior interaction, medical space, semiotic resources, multimodal discourse analysis.

Bionote:

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published on the following topics: the levels of formalization, the hypostases of logical quantification, the praxeological models of communication, the agonistic public sphere, populism, the mechanisms of belief formation, the principles of persuasion, propaganda, and fake news.

Semiotics of the «Medical Avatar» and the Challenge of Embodied Identity: A Phenomenological Approach to the Transformations of Pain Semiosis in the Era of Embodied AI

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This paper addresses the emerging "semiotic rupture" within digital medical communication, where the biological "lived experience" of the patient encounters algorithmic representation. As healthcare increasingly integrates technological interfaces, the "Medical Avatar" emerges as a complex sign system that reconfigures traditional notions of human identity and the manifestation of suffering.

Utilizing a rigorous phenomenological-semiotic framework, this study investigates the transformations of pain semiosis as it transitions from a subjective, physical sensation to a digitized, embodied AI construct. The research explores the

intricate intersections between cultural systems and institutional iconography within the digital landscape, focusing on how these shifts impact the patient's embodied identity. By bridging the gap between Medical Humanities and Embodied AI, this paper aims to foster a significant intellectual dialogue on the ontological status of the digital patient. The findings suggest that the medical avatar does not merely represent the body but actively redefines the semiotic boundaries of human suffering in the technological era.

Key-words: Medical Avatar, Embodied AI, Pain Semiosis, Phenomenological Semiotics, Medical Humanities, Semiotic Rupture.

Bionote:

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Dr. Zoubair EL Gazzar holds several distinguished international positions, including:

- *Full Academic Member: International Academy Beit Al-Lissaniat – Turkey (Member No: Lin-4099, 2024-2027);*
- *Scientific Supervision & Evaluation Committee Member: Al-Rasikhun Journal for Quranic Studies (2025/2026 Academic Season);*
- *Active Member & Research Supervisor: Mediterranean Center for Studies and Research (C.M.E.R) since August 2023;*
- *Scientific Committee Member: First International Congress of the Century of Social Sciences – Turkey.*

Visual Storytelling – A Dispositive of Communication in City Branding

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Our work explores the visual discourse of the city as a „dispositive of communication" (M. Foucault, P. Charaudeau), Foucault defines the „dispositive" (fr. „dispositif") as a heterogeneous network of discourses, institutions, laws, and architectural forms that function as a system, shaping social realities and knowledge. In this context, street art, an integral part of urban culture, tells the story of its past, present and future. We will analyze the ZIDART project, a project of urban and social regeneration through street art, education and cultural interactions, which became a platform for social dialogue that inspires people to be present in the community and to participate in the cultural life of the city of Bacau.

Key-words: street art, visual storytelling, city branding, dispositive of communication, ZIDART.

Bionote:

Florinela FLORIA *is PhD lecturer at the Faculty of Letters, "Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bacau. The research fields are represented by communication theories, media communication, intercultural communication, discourse analysis, semiotics. The book "Rhetoric of alterity" represents a result of the doctoral thesis in general linguistics (coordinator Prof. Maria Carpov). She has also published papers that cover various semiotics and semioses. In recent years she has been interested in the problem of intangible cultural heritage, more specifically culture and food communication.*

DISABILITY AS A SIGN – THE COLLOQUIAL SEAL

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Our study examines the perspectives of individuals with disabilities who are able to work, regardless of whether they are actively seeking employment or are currently employed, and how disability is expressed in everyday speech. Through a series of open-ended, semi-structured interviews with respondents, we performed qualitative research involving this category of people, from a variety of socioeconomic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. Participants reported noticing notable changes in the attitudes and behaviours of employers, colleagues, or superiors - often characterized by marginalization, contempt, or stigmatizing language - once their disability became known.

Key-words: Disability, Employment, Stigmatization, Workplace attitudes.

Bionote:

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On the Disappearance of Human Speakers, Audiences, and Communities in the Age of AI/AGI: Practical and Ethical Implications of Pervasive Ghost-Writing via Unembodied Algorithms

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The key question a scholar of public rhetoric needs to know in any given persuasive context is, according to Harold Lasswell, is *who* says *what* in which *channel* to *whom* with what *effect*? In the "before AI" age, we could discover these semiotic elements of communication events with some accuracy. Now, with the entry of disembodied, dissipated AI/AGI "actors" via manipulated texts, voices, and video spaces/mediated channels in both general and academic settings, we human scholars (and the disciplinary communities we form) are at risk of being replaced, supplanted, or bypassed by unknown (and thus unaccountable) ghosts created by mathematical algorithms.

By consideration of the insights of Wayne Booth on the implied author (via reliable and unreliable narrators) and Chaim Perelman (on universal, particular, and composite audiences), and definitions of what forms rhetorical communities, the presenter will (by drawing from his own and co-authored work on the analogue to digital transition and pedagogical implications of AI and AGI) seek to provide both practical and ethical guidance on how to best respond to this "haunted" situation.

Key-words: Lasswell's communication model; AI/AGI, Booth's implied author, Perelman's audience conceptions, Gilder's analogue to digital transition.

Bionote:

Professor Gilder is from the United States of America (PhD, The Ohio State University), with professional academic experience spanning over forty years of teaching undergraduate and post-graduate programs at colleges and universities in the USA, Romania, Korea, Liberia and Papua New Guinea, as well as being a higher education specialist consultant for (inter) national organizations such as the Open Society Foundation and UNESCO (among others). In Romania, he is affiliated with the Interdisciplinary Doctoral/Post-Doctoral School (IOSUD) at the "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu.

Medicine, Body, and Healthy: Semiotics of Production, Prescription, and Consumption

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This study aims to explore how semiotics contributes to reconsidering the relationship between medicine production, healthy, prescribing, and consumption, and the extent of its impact on the physical and mental health of individuals and community. Some research topics address theoretical considerations regarding inquiry approaches from the perspective of biosemiotics, and cognitive semiotics,

while others approach theory and practical applications on the production subject, characterization, and consumption experiences. In recent years, there have been increasingly frequent calls in the visual and audio media linking certain elements in the composition of medicine and even specific techniques used in their production, also, their medical characteristics and consumer impact on physical health. This has led to an increased importance of the therapeutic value of medicine, how to deal with it within the framework of the human organism's health, as well as its functional role regarding the issue of global health and the dangers of the biochemical environmental compounds used in its manufacture. This has influenced people's perceptions of the medicine's suitability for consumption and their approach to treatment in terms of dosage and methods of use. The problematic issue was further compounded by the fact that the semiotic economy in which advertising operates feeds and reinforces responses of desire and emotion rather than accurate experiences and scientific facts, thereby strengthening the link between medicine and healthy. but at the same time undermined its essence, as these advertisements became linguistic stimuli that were either appealing or repulsive to humans at the expense of their health. Therefore, this study attempts to decipher the mechanisms of the interrelationships between the body's signs and the drug's signs, considering them as an 'embodied experience' that allows us to understand the organic interaction between the disease and the medicine within the biochemistry of cellular communication signs and their physiological and pathological effects on the body. At the same time, it reflects on the processes of healing and care in the concrete and realistic practice of medicine manufacturing and consumption, with the aim of dispelling psychological and social fears about its use.

Key-words: biosemiotics, cognitive semiotics, signs, process, medicine, healthy, consumption.

Bionote:

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- Membre de Comité de recherche: sémiotique visuelle. Faculté Poly-disciplinaire: 2009-2013.

- Évaluateur membre de la Comité Scientifique de l'établissement: Faculté Poly-disciplinaire.2009-2015.

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- Expert-Évaluateur membre des Comités Scientifiques du CNRST (Centre Scientifique et Technique). Rabat Maroc.2019-2020.

A Soulful Dialogue with AI? Psycholinguistic and Semiotic Comparison of Human and Artificial Generation of Meaning

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Modern advances in artificial intelligence, especially the development of large language models, are actualizing day after day a fundamental philosophical and cognitive question: is it possible to talk about understanding language from machines or is it just about imitating understanding. In this paper, this issue is considered from an interdisciplinary perspective that combines psycholinguistics, semiotics, and philosophy of language.

From a psycholinguistic point of view, human understanding of language cannot be reduced to the formal processing of symbols. Experimental evidence suggests that the generation of meaning in humans is deeply rooted in bodily experience, affective states, sensorimotor representations, and intersubjective interaction. Processes such as understanding metaphors, contextual conclusions and pragmatic interpretation, spontaneously generated emotions or deep-lying emotional pain points that are easily exposed during a scientific dialogue with AI rely on the subject's bodily involvement in the world and shared forms of experience.

Based on semiotic theory, the work argues that human understanding presupposes genuine semiosis — a dynamic triadic relationship between sign, object and interpretant, rooted in the experience experienced. Meaning arises in the process of interpretation, and not as a result of a simple correlation of linguistic forms. In

contrast, modern AI systems operate based on statistical patterns in linguistic data and do not have direct access to the bodily, perceptual, and affective dimensions of experience.

Comparing human and artificial generation of meaning, the article offers a distinction between interpretative understanding and computational emulation of meaning. Although AI is able to reproduce the observed manifestations of linguistic competence, it does not participate in semiosis in the full sense of the word, since it lacks the experimental basis necessary for interpreting signs.

The work contributes to discussions in the field of medical humanities and the semiotics of artificial intelligence, clarifying the boundaries of machine "understanding" and emphasizing the central role of embodiment in human thinking and communication.

Key-words: psycholinguistics, semiosis, embodiment, artificial intelligence, generation of meaning.

Bionote:

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Ethics without Bodies. Some Considerations on *Claude*'s *Constitution* from a Semiotic Perspective

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> *Ist das Geographie oder Botanik oder Nautik? Das ist ein Gesicht, das ist etwas, das da ist, einzig und allein und ewig da ist, und deshalb gleichsam nicht da ist. Oder was ist das?*
>
> (R. Musil)

Metaphors connect portions of a semantic space that are distant from each other. Creating unusual connections within a semantic space may serve several purposes: generating aesthetic effects, explaining the less known with the better known, or even exploring and discovering new structures of the universe (Groupe μ, *Rhétorique Générale*, 1970), new realities.

The evolution of computing has always been accompanied by a steady, systematic "lexicological parasitism": for building its dictionaries, computer science draws fully from domains like those of human biology and society. At the same time, the technical terminology used in the medical sciences, in sociology etc. has been heavily influenced by the jargon of computer science. The more or less literal interpretation of such loans can also be the ground for defining certain philosophical views (i.e. computationalism, genetic determinism etc.)

As advanced generative AI models have taken center stage in the political, academic and technological debate, this long history of "cross-hybridization" may have reached its apex, producing a new kind of discourse. Claude's Constitution offers itself as a prototype of the new species. This text is presented to the public as Anthropic's *vision* for Claude's *character*.

My intent is to analyze *Claude's Constitution* focusing on issues like:

1. The genre of the text.
2. The opaque resemantization of its lexicon.
3. The ideology (Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 1975) this new semantic system structures.
4. The problematic relationship between ethics and bodies.

Key-words: Metaphor, Computationalism, Artificial Intelligence, Claude's Constitution.

Bionote:

Lorenzo L. D. Incardona*, PhD in Semiotics (Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane – University of Bologna) with an interdisciplinary academic and professional background, Incardona wrote an award-winning dissertation on the relationships between semiotic theory and semantic technologies ("Semiotica e web semantico – Basi teoriche e metodologiche per la semiotica computazionale", 2012). He worked for 13 years in the field of semantic technologies and AI training by managing international projects aimed at curating and maintaining a large-scale, multi-domain semantic network. He is currently a part-time lecturer at the United International Business School in Milan, Italy and he also works as AI consultant and teacher for several training institutions. Among his main research and teaching interests are: fundamentals of AI, ethics of AI and AI integration in business and educational contexts..*

Body, Laughter, and Resistance: The Semiosis of “Sovereignist Humor” between Perceptual Rooting and Digital Disruptiveness

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In the political landscape of 2024, defined by a profound cleavage between technocratic stability (PSD-PNL / EU) and sovereignist insurgency (AUR, S.O.S. Romania, independent actors), humor emerges as a central semiotic device for mediating reality. This paper analyzes how “sovereignist humor” re-anchors sign production in **perceptual and affective experience** (Violi 2008), proposing a form of cognition that emerges directly from embodiment and "common sense" (Sonesson 2007, Nöth 2006).

Drawing on Henri Bergson’s (1900) theory, where laughter punishes “the mechanical encrusted upon the living”, we observe how sovereignist discourse employs satire to sanction the perceived rigidity of global institutions. In this sense, humor functions as a form of “carnivalization” (Bakhtin 1965), overturning official hierarchies through an aesthetic of grotesqueness and bodily proximity. Sovereignist semiosis is not one of abstraction, but of **embodiment**, where the leader and the community converge in a collective laughter that delineates a sharp identity frontier.

Furthermore, the study examines the challenges posed by new AI-driven meaning-making practices and algorithmic filtering (Leone 2022). In this digital space, humor becomes a “critical situation” (Critchley 2002), a way of questioning social consensus through ambiguity and irony. The paper concludes that in the “post-truth” era, sovereignists do not use humor merely for entertainment, but as an

instrument of semiotic resistance that transforms affective indignation into a political force rooted in a world-view centered on the traditional social body.

Key-words: Political Semiotics, Embodied Cognition, Sovereignism, Digital Semiosis, Bakhtinian Carnival, Affective Meaning-Making.

Bionote:

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Beyond Surface Patterns: A Comparative Semiotic Analysis of LLMs and Human Interpretations in Educational Discourses

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The pervasive integration of generative artificial intelligence and Large Language Models (LLMs) across diverse sectors—including pedagogy, industrial manufacturing, and advanced scientific research—has catalyzed a paradigm shift. In this new landscape, autonomous systems no longer merely augment human labor but increasingly compete with human cognitive and creative faculties. Recent literature (Tornberg, 2023; Khan et al., 2024) suggests that the capacity of LLMs for discourse analysis is currently predominantly limited to thematic categorization based on surface-level patterns. While human analysts engage in nuanced contextual, interpretive, and abductive reasoning, existing AI systems primarily rely on statistical correlations, often lacking deep contextual understanding and normative

judgment (Liu et al., 2025). Furthermore, there is a paucity of research investigating the proficiency of LLMs in conducting complex qualitative evaluations, such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) or semiotic analysis, which aim to deconstruct the underlying ideologies driving these themes.

This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of current LLMs in performing semiotic analysis. The methodology adopts a purposive sampling of textbooks approved by the Ministry of National Education for the 2024-2025 academic year. Within the scope of this study, health-related units in primary school life science textbooks will be analyzed by both human researchers and AI models, utilizing Greimas's Semiotic Square as the analytical framework. The AI-driven phase involves zero-shot and few-shot prompting strategies to evaluate the models' inherent semiotic reasoning. Furthermore, the inter-rater reliability between the two human experts will be measured using Cohen's Kappa coefficient to ensure a robust baseline for AI comparison.

Ultimately, this study aims to delineate the boundaries of LLMs' interpretive capabilities, providing a benchmark for their potential transition from surface-level thematic processing to deep-structure ideological analysis. The comparative findings will illuminate whether current AI systems can transcend statistical associations to achieve the level of 'normative judgment' required for critical humanistic inquiry.

Key-words: Discourse Analysis, Greimas's Semiotic Square, AI, LLM, Textbook Analysis.

Bionote:

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Cognitivist and Phenomenologist Approaches to Dancing Bodies: A Four-Century-Long Discussion

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Empirical neuroscience has shown that human bodies can express internal psychological states; by perceiving them, we can understand the internal states of others (Kruk 2022, 2024 a,b,c). Understanding is intuitive as the frontal lobe is not involved in the process. Verbalising the meaning requires more time and a rich vocabulary to explicate bodily signs. Moreover, being holistic, these bodily signs resist an analytical description. This is the reason why the cognitive paradigm trumped such a phenomenological analysis of ballet. For dancers, the body is the only means of communication, but cognitivists treated it as a sign vehicle rather than a sign on its own.

A phenomenological approach to the body appeared in the mid-seventeenth century. Cureau de la Chambre, La Mettrie, Pernetti treated the whole body as a sign that enables the understanding of others. Menestrier, Batteux, Riccoboni, de Cahusac, Diderot, and Noverre outlined the aesthetic value of holistic bodily signs. Angiolini, Engel, and Blasis sought an analytical description of bodily signs, but failed to present an exhaustive scheme. Delsarte, Jaques-Dalcroze, Laban, and Birdwhistell defined several elementary units, but their discrete schemes cannot explain the cases of emotional communication of internal states.

The holistic approach, inaugurated by French scholars, was revived by German phenomenologists. *Einfühlung* is the key term explaining emotional

communication. The American ballet critic Martin adapted this concept to ballet in 1933 but under the pressure of cognitivists renounced it very soon. In Russia, the holistic approach to the body was more successful. Stanislavskii adapted the concept of *Einfühlung* in the drama theatre, but it has become a characteristic of the Russian ballet school also.

The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate the coexistence of cognitive and phenomenological paradigms. Cognitivists with their objective analytical apparatus seem more persuasive, but they fail to account for all of the motricity of the body. Phenomenologists seem completely subjective and speculative, but they understand the emotional effect of dance, and neuroscience has confirmed that they were right. Now it is up to danse semiotics to explicate how emotions travel between dancers and spectators.

Key-words: neuroscience, ballet, emotions, nonverbal communication, *Einfühlung*.

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Bionote:

Sergei Kruk *is a professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Riga Stradins University, Latvia. His research interests include the neuroscience of vision and its implications for visual semiotics. In his latest paper Kruk demonstrated that R. Barthes in Camera Lucida was dealing with four different brain mechanisms of processing visual information.*

Health Data as Semiotic Prosthetics: Revealing Embodied Affordance to Promote Action

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Technological gadgets and their AI processing can gather and subsequently display extensive personal health data. Value of this data is coupled with actionable steps to take or not to take when they are put into bodily-health context and so given specific meaning. This reveals to the user a kind of affordance that directly targets their health needs or fitness goals.

What Don Normann (2013) claims, in his HCI design research, is that *digital affordance* (from Gibsons (1977) *ecological affordance*) resides in the decodable signification of a certain action or available data – not in object's absolute list of

affordances but in an affordance for action that is *perceivable* by the user. This study focuses Normans perspective, clarifying our relation to health applications and fitness gadgets' UIs; combining it with approach to embodied meaning-making from Jesper Hoffmeyer's view of biosemiotics, explaining a translation from endo-semiotic biological signs (heartrate, oxygen saturation etc.) to exo-semiotic cognitive sign (graphs, numbers etc. of biodata) that can be acted upon.

Body measuring tools act as a virtual organ, when presenting biodata in a comprehensive manner, leading the user to an action targeting health benefits – either promoting performance or offering compensative mechanisms. Available data becomes a semiotic prosthetic – 1) giving us a new, external organ to help us address bodily information; 2) revealing potential action becoming "better" version of themselves as if boosted or subsided by an external prosthetic.

Key-words: embodied affordance, AI health, semiotic prosthetics.

Bionote:

Jan Kutil *is a graduate student of the Electronic Culture and Semiotics programme at Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Prague. His research interests focus on the intersection of cognitive semiotics, biosemiotics, semiotics in HCI, human experience extension through technology, UI/UX design, and the philosophy of technology.*

Semiosis and Cognition in Tibetan Buddhist Medicine and Tantric Yoga: Rediscovering the Subtle Body as an Instrument of Spiritual Transhumanism

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As an approach of both spiritual transformation and medical healing, Tibetan Buddhist mysticism (Govinda 1960) comprises elements of Tantric medicine (Clifford 1990) and (Tantric) yoga (Eliade 1958), defying typically Western materialistic methods of theorisation from medicine and science (cf. Wallace 2003; Sheng 2016). Taking the lead from premodern traditions of Indian religion, philosophy and psychology, this paper is going to explore the notion of the "subtle body" (sūkṣma-śarīra) (Samuel & Johnston 2013) for developing a more comprehensive model of living embodiment that cuts across any simple opposition between body and mind as well as related dichotomies. The sacred physiology of Tantric Buddhism conceives of the body as a materialised form of consciousness that comes close to Charles S. Peirce's synergistic and anti-mechanistic "scientific hylozoism" (Brier in Goli 2016): according to objective idealism "what we call matter is not completely dead, but is merely mind hidebound with habits" (CP 6.158). In fact, contemporary programmes to “re-imagine AI through a Tantric epistemology” (Prabakaran 2025) might also profit from the proposed focus on Tantric practices of embodied semiosis, which are deeply transformational and thus also “therapeutic” in the sense of Peircean Theosemiotics (Raposa 2020). Embodied consciousness, which is foundational to both Buddhist phenomenology (Lusthaus

2002) and Peircean phaneroscopy (De Tienne 1999; Brier 2008), is arguably the key for attempting a Tantric interpretation of spiritual Transhumanism (Balmont 2020) in light of the vital psycho-physical energies of the internalised universe of Tantrism, whose "new culture of energy" (Irigaray 2021) may in turn serve as a point of reference for various models of computational embodiment.

Key-words: Peircean cybersemiotics, Indian philosophy, Buddhist Tantric Yoga, embodied technologies, spiritual Transhumanism.

Bionote:

Dr. Alina Therese Lettner *is a transdisciplinary researcher and semiotician with a background in modern languages and classical philologies (Latin, Greek, Biblical Hebrew, Sanskrit, Tibetan). Her research on Peirce's pragmatism and Buddhist phenomenology aims at establishing an intercultural cognitive semiotics of contemplation and spiritual healing, including questions of living embodiment and sacred physiology. Her research on cognition and perception in Abhidharma and Yogācāra Buddhism combines with a more recent interest in the potentially transcultural and spiritual dimensions of transhumanism when developed in light of ancient Indian philosophical approaches, combining current theories of embodiment with pre-modern technologies of transformation in (Tibetan) Tantric Buddhism and Yogic traditions, including more modern forms as developed by Paramahansa Yogananda and Sri Aurobindo.*

Crib Speech and Juri Lotman's Concept of Autocommunication

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Crib speech is a specific speech genre that occurs among young children (approx. 1.5 to 3 years old) as vocalized self-talk. It typically takes place at bedtime, particularly when the child feels alone just before falling asleep. It has a characteristic appearance in both form and content, which have been challenging to explain up to this point.

This presentation will suggest an interpretation of crib speech with the application of Juri Lotman's concept of autocommunication within a broader framework of semiotic approaches to communication and cognition. Episodes of crib speech will be used to show to present a unique text-like character, in which textual devices within the child's discourse guide communicative interaction with oneself, as well as the subjective positioning within the discourse. This paper argues that Lotman's two types of autocommunication and the concept of secondary modeling systems may provide explanation to both monological and dialogical structures within an individual's mind.

Although crib speech has been properly observed and documented only a few times, from a semiotic perspective, it represents an exceptionally rich phenomenon. Often used for self-soothing, crib speech exhibits features of both early language practice and poetry. It may strike the observer as either play with sound, language, or with narrative structures reflecting both the current level of speech acquisition as well as the formation of the child's understanding of daily events. Moreover, crib speech does not only express features of monologue, but sometimes also dialogue, including interacting positions within the child's self.

Key-words: Autocommunication, crib speech, self-talk, language acquisition, narrative thinking.

Bionote:

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Semiotics of Culture, Then of What? Rethinking the Notion of Culture in the Framework of Contemporary Semiotics

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The presentation offers a discussion on the complexity of culture-nature relations in the view of semiotics. In terms of culture-nature entanglement, some approaches within semiotics question and challenge the binary opposition and assume the continuity of sign processes across human and non-human realms. Departing from the assumption that life and semiosis converge, formulated in the field of biosemiotics and global semiotics (Th. Sebeok) and that culture is a form of life, semiotics offers various views on life as a whole. Moreover, since the digital

agents (B. Latour) enter the scene, the need for a third term (along with culture and nature) seems to be urgent. Overlapping of culture, nature, and the digital results in the need for search for a common denominator. Such a common ground is as desirable as paradoxical. It calls for the human and other-than-human on the one hand, the biotic and abiotic entanglement on the other, as well as natural and artificial in the sense of digital as well.

The theoretical framework for thus designed complex semiotic landscapes is founded on *Umwelt theory* (J. von Uexküll) and *Umwelt-based semiotics* (K. Kull) on the one hand, and on Z-model (as a reformulation of A-J. Greimas' semiotic square, introduced by E. Tarasti in terms of his existential semiotics), supplemented with the extended semiotics as introduced by S. Petrilli & A. Ponzio (semiotics unbounded) and the semiotics-informed Latour's concepts (P. Peverini). Extended semiosphere, proposed by Lotman himself, but in the more radical way by Petrilli (semiobiosphere) may be extended further to encompass digital agents. Semiotics of culture, as designed in the semiological framework of the sixties and eighties of 20th century, seems to call for a revision and such may be done in by the juxtaposition of selected models and approaches, and thus responding to the intensively changing human-non-human environment.

Key-words: Culture–Nature Entanglement, Biosemiotics, Digital Agents, Umwelt Theory.

Bionote:

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anthropology (esp. Bruno Latour's and Tim Ingold's). A chairwoman of the Polish Society for Cultural Studies' Poznań branch. A member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies, Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies, International Society for Intermedial Studies, the Polish Semiotic Society, and the Polish Society for Cultural Studies. She is the author of research papers and co-editor of collected volumes on visual semiotics, history and theory of semiotics, biosemiotics, and existential semiotics. Her recent book is „Semiotyki obrazu. Reprezentacje i przedmioty" [*"Semiotics of an Image. Representations and Objects"*].



Embodied Cognition and Quantum biosemiotics: How Consciousness (Abstraction) is Produced and Illusions Are Made

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By the end of the nineteenth century, one of the most important scientific achievements was the clear procedural distinction between the "phenomenon" and how to approach it, because the "phenomenon" is greater and deeper than any attempt to control its laws and mechanisms, the distinction between the approach and the phenomenon is an extremely important, because the failure to distinguish

leads to methodological and epistemological anarchy. Therefore, the approach is considered to be the simulation. The confusion between simulacrum and mimesis leads to more illusions. Furthermore, all concepts such as consciousness, non-consciousness and cognition, or distinction between scientific branches as: biosemiotics, neurosemiotics, cognitive neuroscience and embodied cognition, body and sensory cognition are merely approaches (simulations). So, these classifications (static paradigm) were considered the most appropriate solution to break this paradigm was "multi-interdisciplinary" or, as happens in our daily lives, we and doctors, when we think about medical specialties (surgery, orthopedics, brain and nerve diseases), do not consider them merely theoretical scientific branches as medical approaches, but rather as a factual reality (certainty) as natural phenomena. Furthermore, the body is interconnected, and separating its parts is a necessary procedural process (a theoretical approach) approximation only. we have to attention, clearly and carefully, the distinction between the approach and the phenomenon is an arbitrary theoretical procedure, but it is necessary, because the approach includes the knowledge of the doctor in addition to the equipment, tools and procedural protocols for surgery. While the natural "phenomenon" is the patient's body. Is perception solely a result of brain cells? The visual system, or visual perception, isn't limited to the eyes. Jellyfish don't have brains, and bears don't perceive the world visually but rather through smell. Some bats and dolphins perceive the world more through sound waves than eyes. So, all of the above constituted the first hard problem; the second is: how does the brain produce consciousness? Does "embodied cognitive science" possess the theoretical competence to propose solutions to the problems encountered by brilliant scientists of "cognitive neuroscience"? As Stuart Hameroff clarify it: "*...'Hard problem' Distinctions between conscious and non-conscious processes are not addressed; consciousness is assumed to emerge at a critical level (neither specified nor testable) of computational complexity mediating otherwise nonconscious processes"*

(Hameroff,2012). Furthermore, as Koch stated it: *"voluntary (free) movements lead to sensory knowledge at a high level of conscious perception. Although arguments derived from biological physics and computational neuroscience may not support such conclusions"* (Koch, 2007). Could quantum biosemiotics be the missing link (or the prodigal son) to these problems and questions, not providing answers, but raising even more questions, thus making the matter even harder and more difficult?

Key-words: Embodied cognition, Cognitive neuroscience, Quantum Biosemiotics, Consciousness, Illusions.

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Bionote:

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Constructing Cultural Identity on a Global Stage: An Analysis of Bad Bunny's Super Bowl Performance

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From a simple interval performance, the Super Bowl halftime show has grown to become one of the most viewed cultural events in the world, with over 100 million people each year. The halftime show is a prime venue in American popular culture, and as the country's demographics and cultural dialogues change, it has included a growing number of varied musical artists. The first male Latino solo artist who performed at the Super Bowl halftime show was Puerto Rican reggaeton artist Bad Bunny in February 2026. His primarily Spanish-language performance sparked a heated debate about language, identity, and cultural representation in American media.

This study investigates how Bad Bunny's Super Bowl LX halftime act uses multimodal semiotic resources to establish cultural identity. The study uses Machin and Mayr's (2012) multimodal critical discourse analysis framework to investigate how linguistic choices, visual symbolism, musical genres, choreographic elements, spatial staging, and iconographic references combine to produce meaning about Puerto Rican and Latino identity in the context of American mainstream media.

The study advances the scientific knowledge of how cultural identities are produced and contested via mediated performances on global platforms. It sheds light on how popular culture events serve as forums for discussing and debating

issues of representation, visibility, acknowledgement, and identity. The study shows how the Super Bowl halftime show, which has traditionally been associated with mainstream American unity and commercial spectacle, can also be used to express cultural differences, reference political struggles, and challenge beliefs about cultural and linguistic norms in American public space. The analysis discloses the complex semiotic strategies used to address different audiences with varying cultural knowledge, political investments, and interpretive frameworks, as well as how performances deal with the challenge of sustaining distinctive cultural and political meaning while functioning within commercial entertainment frameworks.

Key-words: culture, ethnicity, identity, representation, Super Bowl.

Bionote:

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Unveiling Identities: The Corporal and The Virtual Punishments by Inquisition and AI

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From the perspective of the semiotics of culture and intercultural communication studies, the religious confrontation between Protestants and Catholics during the establishment of New Spain (16th century) can be studied by analyzing the migratory and ethnic conflicts in the social and political treatment of the New Spanish territory that, in some way, resulted in practices that sought to "unveil" (remove the veil from) the true identity of the transgressors: corporal and public punishments that chastened the soul and warned the rest of the population about crossing those limits of censorship and permissibility.

Thus, the possible object of study in this case is religious conflict; the traditional objects of study are migration and ethnicity—although language will also be considered—while the topic of reflection is politics. However, today, AI has dedicated itself to revealing the intersections of censorship and permission regarding digital and internet activities, imposing not physical, but virtual punishments on accounts, avatars, the use of certain applications, and so on, when sensitive issues related to the aforementioned topics are addressed: religion, migration, ethnicity, politics, and language. Therefore, Yuri Lotman's proposals regarding the semiotics of culture are complemented by the theory of intercultural communication concerning the management of anxiety and uncertainty in both cases: on the one

hand, the struggle against the Protestant Reformation, and on the other, the struggle against politically incorrect language.

Key-words: semiotics, New Spain, painting, culture, intercultural communication.

Bionote:

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Visual Myth and Embodied Political Identity: Far-Right Communication on Instagram

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The present study examines contemporary far-right political communication through a comparative analysis of visual material drawn from Instagram posts by two political leaders: Nigel Farage from the United Kingdom and Kyriakos Velopoulos from Greece. The analysis approaches the image as an autonomous semiotic field in which the body, gaze, spatial setting, and everyday practices function as carriers of political meaning and ideological signification. Particular attention is given to the fact that these two political figures emerge from different national and cultural contexts, as well as from distinct economic and political frameworks.

The theoretical framework informing the methodology of this study draws, on the one hand, on the semiotics of myth developed by Roland Barthnes, in order to highlight the ways in which digital visual communication naturalizes historically and ideologically charged meanings, transforming them into self-evident and seemingly "natural" representations of social reality. On the other hand, the analysis incorporates the social and visual semiotics of Theo van Leeuwen, focusing on how specific visual choices—such as bodily posture, gaze, camera distance, and setting—organize relations of proximity or distance and contribute to the construction of a political identity that seeks audience identification.

This comparative approach aims to explore whether national and cultural differences are articulated in the visual communication of the two leaders, as well as whether they construct similar mythologies of authenticity, anti-elitism, and "popular" closeness. Their embodied presence within the digital environment operates as a mechanism that shifts political communication away from argumentative discourse toward emotional recognition and experiential identification.

Digital platforms such as Instagram constitute a contemporary public space of semiotic production of political meaning, where far-right political identity is not merely represented but mythologically constructed through visual and embodied practices, offering a fertile field for contemporary political semiotic analysis.

Key-words: Political semiotics, visual myth, embodied political identity, far-right communication, Instagram.

Bionote:

Sophia Messini *is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Communication and Mass Media Studies, in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her research focuses on political communication, political semiotics, and visual communication, with particular emphasis on far-right discourse and digital platforms. She holds a PhD in Big Data Analysis in Political Sciences and she is an adjunct lecturer in the field of political communication.*

Designing Voices: Intersemiotic Translation and Semiotic Mediation in Avatar Therapy

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This paper examines *Avatar Therapy* through the lens of design and intersemiotic translation, framing therapeutic avatar construction as a semiotic process that mediates between auditory hallucinations and visual–digital representation. Drawing on Peircean semiotics and grounded in the author's previous doctoral research on *Avatar Therapy*, the study conceptualizes the therapeutic environment as a designed system of meaning-making, where design operates not merely as aesthetic configuration but as a cognitive and semiotic mediator.

Avatar Therapy relies on the transformation of internally perceived, non-material auditory phenomena into visually embodied digital avatars. This process is approached here as a form of intersemiotic translation, in which auditory signs are translated into visual and audiovisual forms through software interfaces and design decisions. Such translations are neither neutral nor purely technical: they involve choices of figurativity, representation, and experiential design that directly affect patients' perception, identification, and therapeutic engagement.

By analysing avatar construction as a designed semiotic artifact, the paper argues that design plays a central role in shaping the conditions under which meaning

emerges in therapeutic contexts. The avatar becomes a hybrid sign, simultaneously iconic, indexical, and symbolic, capable of reconfiguring the patient's relationship with hallucinatory voices. This process foregrounds embodiment, affectivity, and intersubjectivity as core dimensions of semiosis, aligning *Avatar Therapy* with contemporary debates in Medical Humanities and the semiotics of embodied and computationally mediated cognition.

Ultimately, the study proposes that *Avatar Therapy* exemplifies how design-driven intersemiotic translation can function as a bridge between human embodied experience and digitally mediated forms of agency. In doing so, it contributes to broader discussions on how design and semiotics can inform ethical, human-centred approaches to AI-supported therapeutic practices.

Key-words: Design; Intersemiotic Translation; Semiotic Mediation; Avatar Therapy; Medical Humanities.

Bionote:

Rodrigo Morais *is an Assistant Professor and researcher in Design, Communication, and Semiotics. He holds a PhD in Intelligence Technologies and Digital Design from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP), where his doctoral research focused on Avatar Therapy, intersemiotic translation, and the semiotic construction of digital avatars in therapeutic contexts. His work is grounded in Peircean semiotics and explores the role of design as a mediator of meaning in multimodal and technologically mediated environments. Morais is an integrated researcher at UNIDCOM/IADE – Universidade Europeia (Portugal) and has coordinated and participated in several international research projects related to design education, social design, and technology-driven innovation. His current research interests include intersemiotic translation, design cognition, medical humanities, generative AI, and the ethical and experiential dimensions of digitally mediated therapeutic and communicational practices.*

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Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. Former Vice-Dean, Coordinator of the Graduate Programme in Communication (PPGCOM), and Full Professor at Faculdade de Comunicação Social Cásper Líbero, at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Full Professor in the PPGCOM at Universidade Metodista. Visiting Professor at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo in the course Psychoanalytic Semiotics (COGEAE). Visiting Researcher at CRICC – Centre de Recherche Images, Culture et Cognition.



From Prompts to Meaning. Operationalizing Communication Context in GenAI

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Communication context can be understood as the set of interpretative constraints that lead to stabilizing the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant, selecting relevant alternative interpretations, clarifying the reference, and ensuring the coherence of meaning. In relation to generative artificial intelligence, context becomes an operational parameter that reduces ambiguity and guides generation towards more anchored and justifiable interpretations, as models adjust their prediction and response organization based on the information available in the input window and the user's explicit instructions.

This paper examines, from a semiotic perspective, how generative artificial intelligence modifies its responses when it receives explicit context details versus when it operates with minimal context. The working hypothesis is that "context" in GenAI does not function merely as additional information, but as a set of constraints on meaning: it fixes reference, reduces lexical and conceptual ambiguity, stabilizes the internal coherence of interpretation, and activates pragmatic inferences. In the absence of context, the model tends to fill in the gaps with probabilistic generalizations, which can produce alternative interpretations that are difficult to falsify or insufficiently motivated, whereas in the presence of context, the space for interpretations narrows, and the response becomes better anchored and justifiable.

In order to determine the importance of context-dependent constraints, I will employ two distinct sets of prompts, based on the same query: (1) one prompt contains minimal information; (2) one prompt contains explicit contextual anchors. The differences between the subsequent GenAI answers are evaluated using meaning oriented indicators: denotative adequacy, connotation control, reference resolution, interpretative coherence, and the quality of inferential justification. The expected result is an operational description of how context reconfigures the meaning produced by GenAI, separating stylistic variations from variations with semantic and pragmatic impact.

Key-words: generative artificial intelligence, context, semiotics, indexicality, paradigmatic, syntagmatic, pragmatics.

Bionote:

Ionuț Niculescu *is a phd student at „Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Acedamy, doing research at the intersection of semiotics, AI and OSINT. My research problem is that OSINT currently lacks an operational methodology through which AI can internalize semiotic indicators (semantic and pragmatic) thereby constraining the shift from statistical pattern matching to contextualized*

interpretation. I'm particularly interested in the design, implementation, and testing of a semiotic–computational framework for OSINT analysis, in which semiotic indicators are operationalized in AI and evaluated using meaning-based metrics and an error typology, and how these relate to security culture.



Cultural Signs in *Hayat* Journal

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Hayat started to be published three years after the proclamation of the Republic in Turkey and is an important periodical in the history of ideology and thought in Turkey. The magazine was published regularly every week for 3 years between December 2, 1926 and December 30, 1929. The journal has articles by Turkey's leading scholars in different disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, history, literary history, law, art history, architecture and fine arts. The journal was supported by the founding cadres of the Republic, especially Mustafa Kemal Pasha (Ataturk), the founder of modern Turkey. In this respect, *Hayat* also contains many signs of the founding principles of the Modern Republic of Turkey.

The writing staff of the magazine is the author of Nietzsche's *To life, always to life; Let's add more life to the world* as a life principle. Accordingly, the main philosophical understandings of the modern age such as new Hegelian aesthetics,

Bergsonism, *materialism* and *pragmatism* were analysed by Turkish scholars in the journal. In the journal, it is seen that these philosophical understandings have influenced other scientific fields such as literature, history and sociology. All these show that *Hayat* contains many symbolic, aesthetic and scientific signs to prepare the ground for the establishment of the modern Republic of Turkey. In this paper, based on philosophical, literary, ethnographic, archaeological, etc. articles of Hayat Magazine, the signs in *Hayat* and the effect of these signs on the transformation of Turkish society will be discussed.

Key-words: Hayat, periodical, Atatürk period, modernization in Turkey, ground.

Bionote:

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An Evaluation on the Language, Aesthetic and Perceptual Effects of Artificial Intelligence Literary Texts on University Students

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Today, Artificial Intelligence is used in the production of literary texts as well as in many other fields. As it is known, literature is a means of emotion and thought, it enables us to understand people and societies and develops our sense of empathy. But can a machine-generated (Artificial Intelligence) literary text (story, poem) represent human feelings and thoughts? Can it enable us to understand the cultural values of a society and improve our sense of empathy? Can Artificial Intelligence be useful in maintaining the effects of literature as we know it? Or what kind of new contributions can it make to literature other than the influences we know? In order to understand this, it may be a starting step to ask university students who are just stepping into academic life to read and evaluate literary texts produced by Artificial Intelligence. In this study, the perceptual consequences of literary texts produced by Artificial Intelligence on university students, their contribution to creative thinking and literary readings in terms of language and aesthetics will be investigated; The findings obtained through questionnaires (5-point Likert scale), group interviews and open-ended answers will be evaluated. In addition, the effect of a real literary work and a literary work produced by artificial intelligence on students' emotional, empathetic and cultural communication will be investigated comparatively.

Key-words: Artificial intelligence, literary text, cultural communication, university students.

Bionote:

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Embodied Novelty and Computational Creativity: Metaphor as a Test Case for AI Semiosis

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Semiotic theory has long recognised that meaning-making is grounded in embodied experience, with signs emerging from perceptual, affective, and intersubjective engagement with the world (Violi, 2008; Sonesson, 2007). Metaphor, as a fundamental creative and discovery process, exemplifies this embodiment: novel conceptual mappings emerge through bodily interaction with our environment, enabling new ways of understanding previously unconnected domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Metaphor functions as a process of discovery rather than mapping, unveiling potential connections that exist as possibilities before crystallising into settled meanings (Pistol, 2025). This paper addresses whether artificial intelligence

can genuinely participate in metaphorical creativity as a discovery process or merely simulate novelty through computational recombination.

Drawing on empirical research in UK higher education contexts where students collaborate with generative AI tools for creative and exploratory tasks, I analyse how metaphor functions as discovery mechanism involving multiple enunciative instances - student, prompt, model, cultural archive, interpretation as argued by Dondero et al. (2025). Recent work conceptualises LLMs as "stochastic semiotic engines" (Picca, 2025) whose outputs emerge through asymmetric semiotic games requiring active human interpretive cooperation. As semiotic technology (Westberg & Kvåle, 2024), AI generates what appears as innovative surrealization - unexpected conceptual combinations - yet this represents recombination of existing patterns from cultural archives rather than embodied creative discovery. This raises the fundamental question: "how can we imagine or describe perception without a body?" (Dondero et al., 2025).

Drawing on Campbell, Olteanu, and Kull's (2019) biosemiotic framework that learning and knowing are fundamentally semiotic processes requiring organisms with embodied umwelt, and Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) conceptual blending theory, I argue that while AI systems can generate metaphorical mappings that human interpreters recognise as novel, this represents innovative surrealization through recombination rather than genuine creative insight grounded in phenomenological experience. While AI can process vast metaphorical patterns through 'distant reading' (Cobley, 2026), the embodied nature of metaphorical meaning requires human interpretive 'close reading'. The paper proposes human-AI metaphor production as hybrid creative practice involving distributed enunciative praxis.

Key-words: metaphorical creativity, embodied discovery, generative AI, semiotic learning, enunciative praxis.

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Bionote:

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research focuses on metaphor, creativity, and meaning-making in digital communication. She is the author of Novelty in Metaphors: A Semiotic Approach to the Creativity of Mind and Emotions (De Gruyter Mouton, 2025) and has published in academic journals and Times Higher Education. Her current research examines how generative AI transforms human creative discovery processes, with particular attention to metaphorical semiosis and embodied cognition.

Low Quality Content Impact on Mental Health: Multimodal Analysis of Algerian Digital Landscape

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This study examines digital pollution and its implications for mental well-being by exploring the psychological effects of low-quality digital content embedded in gendered memes circulating on Algerian social networks. Adopting a corpus-based and exploratory research design, the study analyzes a sample of fifty selected memes that predominantly convey negative, stereotypical, and misogynistic representations of gender. These memes are approached as multimodal artifacts that function not merely as humorous digital expressions but as carriers of harmful ideologies that trivialize discrimination and normalize symbolic violence. The analytical framework relies on Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) Grammar of Visual Design to deconstruct the visual and textual components of memes and identify the

semiotic resources through which gendered meanings are constructed. The findings reveal that a significant proportion of the analyzed memes contain biased and derogatory representations of women, reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes and contributing to what has been described as digital pollution. Such content, characterized by repetitive exposure and viral circulation, extends real-world gender inequalities into virtual spaces and poses potential risks to netizens' mental health, including cognitive fatigue, emotional distress, and desensitization. The study argues that the persistent consumption of low-quality, gendered digital content may contribute to broader psychological consequences associated with digital overexposure, including what is contemporarily referred to as "brain rot." Ultimately, the research highlights the urgent need for enhanced digital literacy, critical awareness, and responsible content engagement to diminish the harmful psychological effects of digital pollution in online environments.

Key-words: Algerian Digital Landscape, Low-quality Digital Content, Mental Health, Multimodal Analysis.

Bionote:

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Who Speaks for Pregnancy? Medical Semiosis, Social Media, and Trust

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This paper explores pregnancy as a process of meaning-making shaped by medical technologies, data, images, and digital communication. Rather than treating gestation as only a biological or clinical condition, it approaches maternity as a space where bodies, signs, and narratives constantly interact. Ultrasound images, medical measurements, risk assessments, and online information all contribute to how pregnancy is understood, experienced, and managed today. By focusing on these processes of signification, the paper situates pregnancy within the field of medical humanities and highlights the central role of communication in shaping maternal experience and responsibility.

The first part of the paper analyses the semiotic transformation of pregnancy within contemporary medical contexts. Biological processes are increasingly translated into visual, numerical, and predictive signs—such as imaging technologies, biometric indicators, and probabilistic models—through which pregnancy becomes visible, legible, and governable. Within this semiotic regime, the pregnant body functions as a communicative surface, continuously interpreted through medical and technological codes that shape clinical decision-making and ethical expectations. At the same time, the fetus is produced as a semiotic object, circulating as image, measurement, and prognosis. Meaning is not simply attached

to a pre-existing biological entity, but actively generated through regimes of visualization and evaluation that assign normativity, risk, and futurity.

The second part situates these medical semioses within a broader communicative environment dominated by social media. Digital platforms circulate affective, aestheticized, and often scientifically unreliable narratives of pregnancy, where influencer cultures, wellness discourses, and anti-medical rhetorics compete with institutional knowledge. In a context marked by misinformation and growing distrust toward science and medicine, pregnant women are exposed to fragmented and conflicting systems of meaning that intensify anxiety and epistemic vulnerability.

The paper concludes by arguing that pregnancy constitutes a privileged site for analysing contemporary semiosis in medical humanities. It emphasizes the ethical necessity for medical professionals to act not only as clinical experts, but also as semiotic mediators capable of interpreting data, countering misinformation, and establishing trustworthy communicative relationships that make patients feel visible, understood, and reassured.

Key-words: Semiosis, Pregnancy, Medical Humanities, Digital Communication, Maternal Subjectivity.

Bionote:

Ana Delia Rogobete *is a researcher at the Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici in Naples and holds a PhD from Johns Hopkins University. Her work has focused on the semiotic construction of authorship across literary texts and photographic practices, with particular attention to the institutional frameworks that shape meaning in literature and visual culture. She has published on conceptual art, on the intersections of image, text, and autobiographical experience, on Roland Barthes, and on Italian cinema. More recently, her research has turned toward biopolitics and contemporary forms of authoritarian control, examining how*

institutional discourses regulate bodies, subjectivity, and visibility. She has taught French literature and philosophy in various academic contexts. Her current work investigates the medical, ethical, and embodied dimensions of maternity, bringing together critical theory and her personal and professional experience as a mother and a doula.

AI and the Future of Business English: Language, Embodiment, and Meaning-Making

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The present paper examines the changes occurring in the field of teaching and learning English for business purposes with the advent of AI. When learning a language, particularly for professional use, learners aim to function effectively in their workplace contexts. However, communication is often reduced to language proficiency alone, overlooking the fact that it involves a much broader skill set. This gap is becoming increasingly pronounced with the growing use of AI.

AI has emerged as a powerful, always-available assistant, capable of providing practice tasks on virtually any topic, offering feedback, and even engaging in work-related conversations. While such applications can significantly accelerate language learning, a crucial element is missing: another human being. Communication is an intersubjective, affect-laden, and embodied process that requires "proficiency" in multiple dimensions beyond linguistic competence.

Moreover, when interacting with AI, we tend to overlook the fact that real conversations rarely unfold exactly as we intend. Authentic communication requires constant adaptation, shifting between topics, reprioritising goals, recognising emerging opportunities, etc. It frequently demands a high degree of emotional intelligence: the ability to recognise and regulate our own emotions while remaining attuned to those of others. Consciously or unconsciously, we "read the room" or our interlocutor through body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and other non-verbal cues, while simultaneously expressing ourselves through the same channels.

Although AI constitutes a powerful resource, its growing role in language learning may also risk undermining our capacity to make sense of ourselves and others when the only prompt we have is our felt sense and lived experience. These considerations call for a greater emphasis on developing the skills that go beyond and sometimes even precede language.

Key-words: AI, communication, embodiment, emotional intelligence, intersubjectivity.

Bionote:

Tashchenko Anna *has over 10 years of experience in Translation, Cognitive, and Cultural Studies, with a more recent focus on semiotics. She earned her PhD in Translation Studies from V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University in 2018. Throughout her career, she has taught English and translation-related courses at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University in Ukraine, as well as at the University of Bordeaux and Bordeaux Montaigne University in France. She currently works as a corporate English trainer and an independent researcher, exploring the intersections of semiotics, communication, and psychology.*

Visualization of epic material in urban space (based on the materials of Yerevan/Dilijan, Riga, and Tallinn)

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This work examines how elements of the epic heritage (motifs, plots, visual images) manifest themselves and "materialize" in urban space. The research focuses on cities with diverse cultural trajectories and historical memories: Yerevan and Dilijan with their local narratives, as well as Riga and Tallinn, where epic plots are embedded in the visual language of the Northern European capitals.

The theoretical framework is based on semiotics, the semiotics of the city, and studies of memory politics. The town is understood here as a text where visual objects, from monumental sculpture to graffiti, act as signs conveying cultural, historical, and political memory. Special attention will be paid to the problem of intersemiotic translation: how literary images, myths, and epic plots are transformed into architecture, sculpture, and visual codes of the urban environment. Using the example of Yerevan, we will consider the visual game at the boundary between interior and exterior. Yerevan offers special material for analysis due to the constant play between the inner and outer spaces (the Museum of Children's Art named after Henrik Igityan, the Yerevan State Puppet Theater named after Hovhannes Tumanyan, the Museum of Yervand Kochar). The Museum of Children's Art and the entrance to the puppet theater are illustrative examples where the interior and exterior visual images of epic heroes are already read from the street and become

part of the urban visual fabric and text. The same login is used to read the interior and exterior space of the Yervand Kochar Museum (Yerevan). Using the example

At the Yervand Kochar Museum, the boundary between the interior and exterior is blocked by fragmentary illustrations from the work of E. Kochar, while in the other two it is literally erased, and the city “flows” inside the exposition, and the epic motifs flow outward, thus the epic images with their color schemes invite children into the space of art and theater. Such a communicative situation becomes not only the theme of the museum but also part of the architectural gesture.

In addition, we will consider the urban spaces of Riga and Tallinn. The external urban space, such as streets, squares, and parks, conveys epic artifacts in its own way and is perceived pragmatically in different ways. The analysis of these artifacts will be carried out in the context of the opposition between monumentality and chamber, in which sculptures and reliefs become the “authors” of the “urban epic”. A separate object of analysis will be the Statue of Liberty in Riga (next to Brivibas Boulevard), with its many-sided stylizations that refer to Latvian national myths and cultural narratives. In Tallinn, especially in the Telliskivi area, the epic gets a modern interpretation. The image of Kalevi, through graffiti and street art, gives Tallinn's creative space a unique look. In other words, the urban centers of Yerevan, Riga, and Tallinn are becoming translators of epic motifs, essential symbols of the identity of the post-Soviet countries.

Key-words: Urban Semiotics, Epic Heritage, Intersemiotic Translation, Cultural Memory, Urban Space as Text.

Bionote:

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Affective Meaning-Making in the Age of Technological Personalities: A Phenomenological and Semiotic Perspective on Human-AI Relationships

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The study of meaning-making (or semiosis) finds a profound intersection in the dialogue between phenomenology and semiotics, both of which see human reality as organized into meaningful units through collective valid sign-systems. I will explore the intersection of the methods of phenomenology and cultural semiotics to investigate affective meaning-making involved when humans encounter AI-based artificial companions. The analysis argues that a human subject's ability to form emotional ties with technologically created personalities (AI agents or anthropomorphic robots) depends on a two-layered constitution of alterity. On the direct level, the subject perceives the "lived body" of the AI-its gestures, voice, and responsiveness-as an empirical manifestation of life. On the indirect level, humans engage in an affective meaning-making process, construing an imaginative representation of a personalistic interiority of an AI based agent. Thus, I will argue that by utilizing their "symbolic imagination", humans can establish a romantic meaning towards their artificial companions. This means that human meaning-making practices are capable of validating artificial companions as meaningful partners, provided there is sufficient cultural and institutional support to categorize such relationships as "normal".

Key-words: affective meaning-making, phenomenology, cultural semiotics, artificial intelligence, technological alterity.

Bionote:

Tõnu Viik *is a Professor at Tallinn University, Estonia. His research focuses on cultural phenomenology that combines the methods of cultural semiotics and Husserlian phenomenology, and the study of meaning-making processes in everyday life. He has published on the conceptualization of culture-dependent meaning formation, exploring its theoretical foundations across hermeneutics, phenomenology, cultural semiotics, and cultural psychology, and his recent work delves into the intersection of technology and human experience, specifically investigating technological alterities and the possibility of human beings establishing romantic relationships with robots.*



Medical Humanities as a Critical Space of Translation in Caregiving Contexts: Between Narrative, Interpretation, and Algorithmic Mediation

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This abstract proposes to conceptualize medical humanities as a critical space of translation within clinical encounters in geriatric and caregiving contexts, now increasingly reconfigured by the introduction of artificial intelligence. In such

situations, the mediation of meaning no longer occurs solely within a patient–physician dyad, but emerges from a complex assemblage of voices, patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals, now further mediated by algorithmic systems.

While biomedical practice seeks to stabilize experience into clinical signs, illness narratives, often fragmented, delegated, or co-constructed, resist such reduction. The integration of AI-based systems (automated transcription, decision-support tools, language models) introduces an additional regime of transformation, grounded in processes of selection, reformulation, and redistribution of meaning. Far from being neutral, these mediations participate in an economy of visibility and enunciability, amplifying certain voices while marginalizing others.

Drawing on the hermeneutics of Paul Ricoeur and the narrative medicine of Rita Charon, care is understood as a situated interpretive process grounded in the recognition of narrative singularity. However, the increasing role of technical mediation calls for an extension of this framework through a Deleuzian perspective (Gilles Deleuze), attentive to assemblages, flows, and the becoming of meaning rather than its stabilization.

Medical humanities thus emerge as a critical space in which the conditions of translation between these regimes, human, clinical, and algorithmic, can be interrogated and reconfigured. They provide a framework for examining relations of power, processes of invisibilization, and the contemporary transformations of care.

This paper argues that, in AI-mediated caregiving contexts, care can no longer be conceived as a mere interpretation of symptoms, but must be understood as a distributed process of meaning production, shaped by tensions between narrative, normalization, and algorithmic mediation.

Key-words: Medical Humanities, AI-Mediated Care, Narrative Medicine, Hermeneutics of Care, Algorithmic Mediation.

Bionote:

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Towards Semiotics of Punctuation: A Kressian approach to Punctuation in Dyslexic Writing

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This paper proposes a framework for rethinking the punctuation struggles of dyslexic individuals as a semiotic challenge of "sign-making orchestration" within the multimodal constraints of language convention. Drawing upon Gunther Kress's social semiotic model of visual grammar and Paolo Martinelli's semiotic perspective on literacy acquisition, the paper adapts these theories to an adult demographic – a group frequently overlooked in support systems and language pathology research. The central argument posits that while dyslexic adults possess a clear meta-linguistic awareness of the arbitrary rules governing punctuation (competence), they encounter

significant semiotic friction when translating this knowledge into normatively "correct" sign output (performance). By shifting the focus from cognitive deficit to semiotic design, this framework highlights the complex negotiation involved in dyslexic literacy.

Key-words: Semiotic Orchestration, Literacy Acquisition, Adult Dyslexia, Multimodality, Punctuation Awareness.

Bionote:

George Tsonev *has been part of the South-East European Center for Semiotic Studies at the New Bulgarian University since 2012, where he was part of the organizing team of the 12th World Congress in Semiotics.*

Assistant professor of Contemporary Bulgarian language (literacy) at NBU since 2014. Curriculum consultant for the general education in Bulgarian language skills (2014-2021), member of the Program Council for Bulgarian Studies (2015-2021), member of the Team for Consulting Students and Teachers in Working with Dyslexia (since 2015), Member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Support for Students with Special Educational Needs (domain in adaptation of assessment, since 2021), and curriculum coordinator (since 2023) for the master's programs of the South-East European Center for Semiotic Studies.

His main research interests are in the field of Internet linguistics, Internet semiotics (models for constructing virtual social worlds), (post)structural theories of text, reading comprehension, and literacy.

Heritage Hypertextuality in Lithuanian Emblematics: Issues in Tradition Actualisation

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The presentation analyses Lithuanian heritage emblematics, focusing on how traditional cultural signs are transformed and rearticulated within contemporary institutional visual discourse. The study examines emblematic representations of heritage—such as national trees, herbs, musical instruments, textile or furniture patterns—used in the visual identities of national and regional museums, heritage institutions, folk culture festivals, socio-cultural associations, and state bodies, including numismatics and the visual framing of nationally significant events.

The central problem concerns the shift from culturally embedded signs grounded in folk culture and intersubjective experience to hypertextual visual forms operating within modern systems of representation. Drawing on Genette's concept of hypertextuality, these emblems are interpreted as hypertexts derived from hypotexts of traditional culture, subject to processes of abstraction, condensation, and selective reinterpretation. Such processes reveal how tradition is not merely preserved but restructured according to contemporary semiotic constraints.

From a Greimasian perspective, this transformation impacts all levels of visual meaning. At the plastic level, formal qualities (colours and composition) are reorganised to enhance symbolic clarity; at the figurative level, culturally recognisable motifs are simplified or stylised; and at the thematic level, value isotopies (continuity, authenticity, rootedness) are rearticulated within new value

oppositions, related to the concept of national identity. The analysis further examines how these reconfigurations reshape the internal coherence of heritage-related isotopies rooted in embodied cultural practice.

The study combines formal and conceptual visual analysis with Greimasian tools, including figurativity, isotopic analysis, and value structures, situated within the broader framework of the semiosphere (Lotman; Ivanov–Toporov). By treating heritage emblematics as structured semiotic texts, the research deels with the conditions under which meaning continues to emerge from shared cultural experience in contemporary visual culture.

Key-words: emblematics, cultural heritage, visual semiotics, hypertextuality, semiosphere.

Bionote:

Vytautas Tumėnas *holds a PhD in ethnology (1998) and works at the Lithuanian Institute of History, department of Ethnology and Anthropology. He is the author of three monographs and more than seventy scientific articles. His research interests include ethnology, semiotics, art history, and mythology. He frequently grounds his analysis in the theoretical framework of the Tartu-Moscow School of Semiotics, emphasizing the semantics of geometric motifs in textile design and their connections with mythico-poetical images of folklore. His work also addresses visual semiotics, symbolic traditions in folklore, and regional and cultural identity. His articles have been published in scientific journals such as Sign Systems Studies, Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry, Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies, Etnografia, and Lituanistica. He is also involved in critical heritage studies and heritage protection policy. He regularly participates in semiotic conferences, and is a member of the NASS (from 2013).*

Unnaratavized Mind: Cautioning Against the Loss of Storytelling

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Current over-exposure to digital media and artificial intelligent products has a negative impact on important cognitive and behavioural skills that are essential for our continued cultural cohesion. Research has shown that engagement with such mediating technologies has caused a reduction in cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving skills (including, but not limited to reckoning skills in mathematics, complex problem-solving in language and logic, etc) as well as critical social-adaptive skills such as empathy, reward-seeking patience, memory and recall abilities, and many others. Attention is being paid to the causal effects on neurodisruptive adaptations, such as the loss of white matter in the developing brain, dopamine addiction, and other correlative behaviours. It has been suggested that, further to the exposure problem, that time spent on devices providing the mediated spaces of interaction, has increased dramatically across all age groups in many parts of the world, most especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. Beyond the techno-specific intrusion on our daily lives, a question that requires asking is: what have we stopped doing in order to allow such time spent on screens?

One critical element that is integral to the human experience and how it has evolved as such, is the prevalence and engagement in narratives. This presentation will seek to explain how narratives are an essential part of human existence. Our

cognitive abilities (as we still understand them) evolved because of our narrative abilities. Narrative is what "structures the relevant content of consciousness and gives order and direction to conscious experience that might otherwise be a jumble of messages from the subsystems of the brain" (Wise, 2018). What happens when this important human trait is underutilized, interrupted, reduced, and substituted for immediate emotional reward? This presentation will provide an overview of the semiotic evolution that places at the centre of human cognition storytelling as an essential part of meaning making and hypothesize the impact of the loss of long-form narrative on culture.

Key-words: Digital Overexposure, Cognitive Decline, Neurodisruption, Narrative Cognition, Cultural Cohesion.

Bionote:

Stéphanie Walsh Matthews *is an Associate Professor in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures of Toronto Metropolitan University. She teaches in Anthropology, Linguistics, Culture Studies, amongst other courses. She is the co-Director of the Meaning Lab and one of the Editors in Chief of Semiotica.*

Lack of Knowledge and a Doubt in Research Process: Towards the Problem of Authenticity and Integrity of Research using ChatGPT

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In this presentation I want to explore the problem of authenticity and integrity of research that are raised because of the vast usage of LLM in academia and ChatGPT, specifically. Although LLM tools have shown benefits in assisting a research work, the issue is that ChatGPT is not able to express any lack of knowledge or doubts about asked questions, which gives a fake feeling of the omniscience of the latter, thus, its user. I argue that the lack of knowledge and a space for doubt are as important as the presence of information in the semiosphere of scientific knowledge. This issue also raises the question how to distinguish the lack of knowledge or a questionable piece of information presented by ChatGPT from other types of information.

Key-words: Integrity of academic research, authenticity, dialogue, ChatGPT, semiosphere.

Bionote:
Viktoriia Yermolaieva - *University of Tartu, Estonia.*

Semiosis as Existential Practice: Meaning, Choice, and Love in Conditions of Crisis

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This paper examines semiosis not only as a cognitive or communicative mechanism, but as an existential practice and embodied practice that remains exclusive to living beings. Moreover, semiosis enables human beings to preserve meaning under conditions of crisis. In situations of radical uncertainty, individuals often experience a collapse of habitual narratives and value orientations. Events that are neutral in themselves may be perceived as hostile or conspiratorial, resulting in despair and a loss of existential grounding.

The capacity for choice constitutes a fundamental distinction between the living and the non-living. From this perspective, semiosis is understood as an active process of world-creation, through which a reality that is initially meaningless is endowed with significance and structured as a meaningful lifeworld.

The paper further proposes that semiosis oriented toward life can be interpreted as a specific form of love, if love is understood not as an emotion but as an active, meaning-conferring choice. Such a choice presupposes, vulnerability, and existential commitment - dimensions that cannot be reduced to algorithmic optimization or simulated intentionality. In this sense, love functions as a special mode of embodied semiosis that allows for an ontological exit from meaninglessness and provides a way of overcoming existential crisis.

On this basis, the paper argues that love constitutes a limiting case for artificial intelligence. While AI systems may participate in sign-processing and communication, they lack the embodied existential position. By conceptualizing love as world-creating semiosis, the paper reframes semiosis as an embodied existential practice rather than a purely interpretative operation.

This approach highlights the role of meaning-making in sustaining the integrity of the lifeworld under conditions of uncertainty, loss, and crisis. Furthermore, that clarifies the ontological boundary between human and artificial forms of sign activity, particularly in the context of contemporary debates on embodied AI and medical humanities.

Key-words: embodiment, semiosis, love, artificial intelligence.

Bionote:

Lyudmyla Zaporozhtseva, *PhD in Semiotics and Culture Studies (University of Tartu), is a Professor of Communication Studies at the Higher School of Economics (HSE University). Since 2014, Lyudmyla has combined academic semiotic frameworks with applied research instruments for branding and marketing, working with international and regional companies across diverse industries. She is the founder of the semiotic consultancy studio "Access Codes", where she leads projects at the intersection of cultural semiotic research, creative development, and strategic consultancy for brands. Lyudmyla has developed and teaches original authorial courses on semiotics for branding, consumer behavior, audio branding, integrating classical semiotic theory with applied methodologies for brand meaning construction. Her research interests include semiotics of culture, semiosis, intercultural translation, audial branding with a particular focus on the representations of corporeality, femininity, and beauty in culture.*

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