changing worlds & signs of the times

Selected Proceedings
from the 10th International Conference
of the Hellenic Semiotics Society

EDITORS
Eleftheria Deltsou
Maria Papadopoulou

E-BOOK (PDF)
Changing Worlds & Signs of the Times /
Selected Proceedings
from the 10th International Conference
of the Hellenic Semiotics Society

EDITORS:
Eleftheria Deltsou
Maria Papadopoulou

DESIGN:
Yorgos Rimenidis

PUBLISHER:

The Hellenic Semiotics Society
Ελληνική Σημειωτική Εταιρία

© VOLOS, 2016
FOR THE EDITION
the publisher
FOR THE PROCEEDINGS
the authors

ISBN 978-618-82184-0-6

Changing Worlds & Signs of the Times

Selected Proceedings from the 10th International Conference of the Hellenic Semiotics Society

Contents

Preface 11
Introduction 12

PLENARY SPEECHES

Jean-Marie Klinkenberg *Thinking the Novelty* 16

Alexandros Ph. Lagopoulos *Continuities, discontinuities and ruptures in the history and theory of semiotics* 30

Farouk Y. Seif *Resilience and Chrysalis Reality: Navigating Through Diaphanous Space and Polychronic Time* 52

Göran Sonesson *The Eternal Return of the New. From Cultural Semiotics to Evolutionary Theory and Back Again* 68

Κάριν Μπόκλουντ-Λαγοπούλου *Γιατί η Σημειωτική;* 88

SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES

Mari-Liis Madisson, Andreas Ventsel *Analysis of Self-descriptions of Estonian Far Right in Hypermedia* 102

Joseph Michael Gratale *The 'War on Terror' and the re-codification of war* 112

Emile Tsekenis *'African modernity': Witchcraft, 'Autochthony', and transformations in the conceptualizations of 'individual' and 'collective identity' in Cameroon* 122

Sofia Kefalidou, Periklis Politis *Identity Construction in Greek TV News Real-Time Narratives on Greek Financial Crisis* 134

Anthony Smyrnaios *Discerning the Signs of the Times: The role of history in conspiracism* 144

Όλγα Παντούλη *Ο 'αριστερός' και ο 'ανατολίτης' σύζυγος στις αφηγήσεις γυναικών επιστημόνων: διαδικασίες επιτέλεσης του φύλου τους* 152

Μαριάννα Ψύλλα, Δημήτριος Σεραφής *Η ανάλυση ενός γεγονότος μέσα από τον πολυσημικό λόγο των εφημερίδων: Μία μεθοδολογική και πολιτική προσέγγιση του Δεκέμβρη του 2008* 160

Αλεξία Καπραβέλου *Ο ρατσισμός σήμερα μέσα από τη σημειωτική ανάλυση ρεπορτάζ εφημερίδων* 170

SPACE AND/IN SOCIETY

Eleftheria Deltsou *Salonica Other Ways – Otherwise': A Mirror-λ letter and heterotopias of an urban experiment* 186

Fotini Tsibiridou, Nikitas Palantzas *Becoming Istanbul: a dictionary of the problematics of a changing city; inside critique of significant cultural meanings* 196

Κώστας Γιαννακόπουλος *Αναφομοίωτες διαφορές, «εξευγενισμός» και πόλη* ... **206**
Ιορδάνης Στυλίδης *Η Βιτρίνα ως ελκυστής σημασίας* ... **216**
Δήμητρα Χατζησάββα *Αναδυόμενες έννοιες για τον χωρικό σχεδιασμό* ... **226**
Θεοδώρα Παπίδου *Μεταγραφές ψηφιακού υλικού στον αρχιτεκτονικό σχεδιασμό* ... **236**
Κωνσταντίνος Μωραΐτης *Τοπία σημαίνοντα* ... **248**
Νεφέλη Κυρκίτσου *Η ολίσθηση των σημασιών στην τοπική θεωρία του Jacques Lacan* ... **260**
Ανθία Βερυκίου *Τόποι απουσίας και Τοπολογικά τοπία* ... **270**

VISUAL CUTLURES

George Damaskinidis *Are University Students Followers of the World's Semiotic Turn to the Visual?* ... **284**
Dimitrios Koutsogiannis, Vassiliki Adampa, Stavroula Antonopoulou, Ioanna Hatzikyriakou, Maria Pavlidou *(Re)constructing Greek classroom space in changing times* ... **294**
Polyxeni Manoli *A multimodal approach to using comics in EFL classrooms* ... **308**
Αικατερίνη Τάτση, Μαρία Μακαρού *Πολυτροπικά πολιτισμικά παλίμψηστα: η περίπτωση ενός κόμικ* ... **318**
Αναστασία Φακίδου, Απόστολος Μαγουλιώτης *Σημεία και κώδικες: Πώς αντιλαμβάνονται τα παιδιά τη γλώσσα εικόνων που αναπαριστούν την παιδική ηλικία;* ... **332**
Έφη Παπαδημητρίου, Δήμητρα Μακρή *Πολυτροπική κοινωνική σημειωτική προσέγγιση στη δημιουργία νοημάτων-σημείων από μαθητές/τριες της πρωτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης* ... **346**
Θεοφάνης Ζάγουρας *Ο σχεδιασμός πολυτροπικών κειμένων για το γλωσσικό μάθημα στο Δημοτικό Σχολείο* ... **360**
Dimitra Christidou *Does pointing in the museum make a point? A social semiotic approach to the museum experience* ... **374**
Παρασκευή Κερτεμελίδου *Οι μετασχηματισμοί του μουσείου τέχνης στην εποχή της κατανάλωσης* ... **386**

ART

Eirini Danai Vlachou *The Beatles Paradigm. Transcending a collection of 'ropey', scrappy, multi-cultural breadcrumbs into a whole new semiosphere* ... **398**
Μαίη Κοκκίδου, Χριστίνα Τσίγκα *Η κουλτούρα των βιντεοκλίπ: η περίπτωση των μουσικών βιντεοκλίπ δια-τροπικής ακρόασης* ... **408**
Angeliki Avgitidou *Art imitating protest imitating art: performative practices in art and protest* ... **420**
Spiros Polimeris, Christine Calfoglou *Some thoughts on the semiotics of digital art* ... **430**
Χρύσανθος Βούτουνος, Ανδρέας Λανίτης *Η Σημειο-αισθητική προσέγγιση της Βυζαντινής τέχνης ως Εικονική Κληρονομιά* ... **440**
Άννα Μαρία Παράσχου *Τοπογραφία διάρρηξης: Φωτογραφικές απεικονίσεις πολέμου από τον Simon Norfolk, ως μια αφήγηση ανατροπής* ... **454**

Pirjo Kukkonen *Signs of times and places in Aki Kaurismäki's films. The existential subject and the semiotic modalities of being and doing* 466

Christina Adamou *Swarming with cops* 478

Yvonne Kosma *Picturing 'Otherness': Cinematic Representations of 'Greekness' in "My Big Greek Fat Wedding"* 488

Χρήστος Δερμεντζόπουλος, Θανάσης Βασιλείου *Προσεγγίζοντας μια αφαιρετική κινηματογραφική μορφή: "Το Δέντρο της Ζωής", του Terrence Malick* 498

Νίκος Τερζής *Η σημειωτική μέθοδος ανάλυσης μιας ταινίας* 508

Ηρώ Λάσκαρη *Σύστημα γενεσιουργής οπτικοακουστικής αφήγησης* 524

ADVERTISEMENT

Luiz Carlos Migliozzi Ferreira de Mello *Viagra: New Social Forms* 536

Nikos Barkas, Maria Papadopoulou *'The house of our dreams': A decade of advertisements in building magazines* 544

Stamatia Koutsoulelou *Advertising strategies in times of crisis: A semiotic analysis* 560

Περικλής Πολίτης, Ευάγγελος Κουρδής *Κοινωνιόλεκτοι σε ελληνικές τηλεοπτικές διαφημίσεις. Η περίπτωση της «γλώσσας των νέων»* 572

Ευριπίδης Ζαντίδης *Αναδυόμενες ταυτότητες και εθνικότητα σ' ένα φλιτζάνι κυπριακού καφέ* 588

Ελένη Συκιώτη, Γενοβέφα Ζαφειρίδου *Σημειωτικές παρατηρήσεις στη σύγχρονη διαφήμιση: Η περίπτωση της εμπορικής και της κοινωνικής διαφήμισης* 600

Βασιλική Κέλλα *Η διαφήμιση ως λεκτική πράξη* 612

LANGUAGE, TEXTS AND TEXTUALITIES

George Androulakis, Roula Kitsiou, Carolina Rakitzi, Emmanuel Zerai *Linguistic cityscape revisited: inscriptions and other signs in the streets of Volos* 622

María José Naranjo, Mercedes Rico, Gemma Delicado, Noelia Plaza *Constructing new identities around Languages and Media* 634

Ιωάννα Μωραΐτου, Ελευθερία Τσέλιου *Ανάλυση Λόγου και μεταμοντέρνες προσεγγίσεις στη συμβουλευτική / ψυχοθεραπεία: η «στροφή στο λόγο»* 642

Φίλιππος Τεντολούρης, Σωφρόνης Χατζησαββίδης *«Κατασκευάζοντας» το κείμενο και τον συγγραφέα: οριοθετημένα και μη-οριοθετημένα σημειωτικά πλαίσια της σχολικής γλωσσικής δημιουργίας* 652

Βάσια Τσάμη, Δημήτρης Παπαζαχαρίου, Άννα Φτερνιάτη, Αργύρης Αρχάκης *Η πρόσληψη της γλωσσικής ποικιλότητας σε κείμενα μαζικής κουλτούρας από μαθητές της Ε' και ΣΤ' Δημοτικού* 664

Αναστασία Χριστοδούλου, Ιφιγένεια Βαμβακίδου, Αργύρης Κυρίδης *'Lego-Legends of CHIMA'. Κοινωνιοσημειωτική ανάλυση της συναρμολόγησης του θρύλου* 676

Μαρίνα Σούνογλου, Αικατερίνη Μιχαλοπούλου *Η Σημειωτική στη διαμόρφωση της έννοιας του πολίτη στο νηπιαγωγείο* 686

BODIES & MINDS

Fotini Bonoti, Plousia Misailidi *Graphic signs of jealousy in children's human figure drawings* **700**

Eirini Papadaki *The Semiotics of Children Drawings, A Comparative Study of Art, Science and Children Drawing* **708**

Myrto Chronaki *Changing practices and representations of birth and birth-spaces in maternity clinics and at home* **720**

Athanasios Sakellariadis *Metaphor as a Hermeneutical Design of the Mental Phenomena: The role of narrative speech in the cognitive field of the Philosophy of Mind* **730**

Anita Kasabova *A semiotic attempt to analyze delusions* **738**

LITERATURE

Miltos Frangopoulos *The Task of the Translator* **756**

Fitnat Cimşit Kos, Melahat Küçükarslan Emiroğlu *Reality as a Manner of Transformation* **766**

Angela Yannicopoulou, Elita Fokiali *Transmedia Narratives for Children and Young Adults* **778**

Ioanna Boura *The expression of worldviews through narratives and chronotopes of liquid times* **790**

Evgenia Sifaki *The "Poetic Subject" as "Subject of Semiosis" in C. P. Cavafy's "Going back Home from Greece"* **798**

Αγγελική Γιαννικοπούλου *Το εικονογραφημένο βιβλίο χωρίς λόγια* **808**

Μαρίνα Γρηγοροπούλου *Κόσμοι που συγκρούονται και σημεία των τεχνών: οι «Σκοτεινές Τέχνες» του Νίκου Κουνενή* **818**

Σοφία Ιακωβίδου *Εις τα περίχωρα της δυστοπίας: αφηγήσεις της κρίσης στη λογοτεχνία για νέους* **826**

Πέγκυ Καρπούζου *Το παιχνίδι και η ηθική της μετανεωτερικής συμβίωσης* **834**

Αγλαΐα Μπλιούμη *Ρευστοί καιροί και μεταφορές – Σημειωτικές προσεγγίσεις στη λογοτεχνία της ενωμένης Γερμανίας* **844**

Παναγιώτης Ξουπλίδης *Ένας οικείος δαίμονας: προς μια προσέγγιση του σημείου της λογοτεχνικής γάτας σε 7 κείμενα παιδικής λογοτεχνίας του Χρήστου Μπουλώτη* **856**

Conference Credits **868**

Thinking the Novelty

Jean-Marie Klinkenberg UNIVERSITY OF LIEGE jmklinkenberg@ulg.ac.be

Abstract

How can radically new phenomena be identified? How can we detect and measure objects which have never been described before? Semiotic theories that have developed in the structural stream find it difficult to describe novelty, as they have to fit the description of the evolution of semiotic systems into a diachronic framework. The study of novelty requires an embodied perspective. The production of novelty, as well as the decision to identify a pattern as new, are indeed pragmatic processes in which interpretative and rhetorical modules are working. This lecture will show an active principle present in both modules: mediation. This term (as used by Lévi-Strauss) designates the new conjunctions that can develop between the opposite terms of a structure. By questioning the oppositions which structure meaning and which therefore constitute the basis of encyclopaedias, all mediations in fact end up reorganising those encyclopaedias. This concept thus allows semiotics to be endowed with a dynamic and evolutionary aspect.

Keywords

novelty , **mediation** , **correlations**

A Fact: The Change

A congress gathering semioticians having chosen "Changing worlds and signs of the times" as a theme, has to take into account a methodological reflection about change and novelty. The question I would like to ask to open this congress is: how can our discipline think that change?

Answering that question is quite important. Indeed, on the one hand, metamorphosis is an obvious and inescapable data/datum of semiotic systems: right before our eyes, systems of thinking transform and innovate, scientific systems adjust or replace one another, cultural systems run into each other and fertilize one another, social systems collapse or take shape again... On the other hand, however, quite surprisingly, our discipline has not given itself the means to report these innovations.

There is more: semiotics has not cared a lot about the general phenomenon of variation. For evolution, change, transformation, metamorphosis are just other words for temporal variation. And this type of variation does not come alone: it is just a specific case of variation along with geographical, stylistic, and social variations. What can be called in technical terms diatopic, diaphasic, and diastratic variations.

Is Semiotics Condemned to Achrony?

The Establishment of Pattern, or Variation Being Put Aside...

One may easily understand why this disdain for variation has prevailed until now. All the objects that we care for – texts, images, shows, social practices – do not exist through our examination but as patterns. If the experiences that gave birth to these patterns vary, it is precisely this variation that the establishment of patterns must neutralize: the profusion of language accents, the abundance of the stylistic palette and modes of social interaction do not prevent the researcher from constituting these facts in unit and stable objects.

Living this dialectics between the diversity of the experience and the unit of the object of knowledge is not the monopoly of semiotics. Not only must all intellectual disciplines manage the apparent contradiction between what is fixed and what is variable, but this management is the bundle of all living beings. Their finitude, facing an infinite world, actually forces them to make it finite in order to be able to handle it; in other words, giving meaning to it through their practices. "Wherever we look in nature, biologist Ernst Mayr observes, diversity (...) is everywhere (...). How will the spirit (...) ever understand and master that huge and breathtakingly fast diversity?" It resorts to the process of categorization which consists in organizing the diversity of objects and phenomena within groups or classes (...)" (in Tort, 1996: 599-600).

This obligation where we must stem variation results, within intellectual processes, in the process of the establishment of patterns. However, the search for powerful operating patterns has been and still is one of the main concerns of semiotics. It is therefore comprehensible that semiotics has neglected to approach the variation aspect of its ob-

jects. Neglected? It is way more than that: It has firmly and consciously been put aside.

As a result, though, the discipline comes to deny implicitly the living aspect of its objects. And here we are witnessing a paradox which could be provokingly formulated as follows: if we avoid the rules, in principle there is no meaning anymore; but if we stick to the rules, then only tautology is possible. At best, the only possible semiotic actions would be the update of the potentialities of the grid, the explanation of the implicit.

From that emphasis put on the establishment of patterns has stemmed an insufficiency of the instruments which should allow semiotics to consider the phenomenon of variation, and notably a certain insufficiency of its sociological thinking, in spite of the major contribution of Youri Lotman or Umberto Eco; but also an insufficiency of its historical thinking, to the extent that – as I am about to demonstrate – it has absorbed diachrony into what we can call achrony.

That insufficiency seems to be quite paradoxical if we consider the two following things.

This first one is that our discipline has focused on cultural phenomena that are obviously more affected by variation than natural phenomena (as Darwinism successfully studied them). The second one is that, by raising their birth certificate, Ferdinand de Saussure explicitly incorporated linguistics and semiology in the field of social psychology.

Textualism or the Salvage of Variation

In such a context, rejecting variation does not seem to be a bearable situation on the long term. Therefore, semiotics has developed another strategy to keep that dangerous variation away without actually denying it. I will call it "textualism".

That strategy has notably been developed when it wanted to make room, next to signs and statements, for the usual objects and scenarios of statements and objects (cf. Fontanille, 2008); that is to say when it has approached the practices: artistic practices, social practices, scientific practices...

Such practices obviously vary over time, space, and society, and it is problematic for those who analyze them: how to master that variation?

The answer of the dominant movements of semiotics was as follows; dealing with practices by driving them back inside a small part of their research area, the part they have best classified so far: that of discursive manifestations, of textual manifestations. As it is admitted by a representative of this movement, if the claimed object of the discipline is meaning, semiotics most of the time avoids asking the question about the nature of meaning in general, to endeavor to "the "appearance of meaning", concretely grasped in the speeches which express it and make it transmissible" (Bertrand, 2000: 7): semiotics will be interested in the variations within the texts that refer to it, in the same way as Barthes could only grasp the semiotic phenomenon of fashion through the texts which reported it.

That textualism certainly has advantages: as well as it pushes to strictness in the analysis of facts; it gives the means to intercept variation, especially diachronic varia-

tion. For instance, it does so by giving the studied texts or visual statements a summary or summative value.

That allows it to deal with the issue of diachrony, or time for change, an issue that has never been successfully mastered by structural linguistics.

More than once have I said the word "diachrony"... One will remember that Michel Arrivé, commenting on Saussure, made the distinction between "small diachrony" and "big diachrony". The latter is the "long time of transformation of systems and shapes into the use of language"; "small diachrony" is the short time of the use itself of the language, "the internal time of speech, of the deployment of the sentence and the statement".

That distinction allows to clearly perceive that European semiotics restricts its field of investigation to small diachrony: indeed, it considers narrative transformation as the main temporal form of variation.

This is how Fontanille justifies textualism, which allows to drive the practices back to narration: According to Fontanille, "if practices have a meaning, they must be able to be assimilated to a language" (2010: 10). However, he also says that units of the expression plan of the practices cannot – I quote – "be deducted retrospectively from a transformation noticed in the end", for the reason that a practice would be – and I quote again – "an open process, upstream and downstream, which therefore does not provide a basis for a confrontation between an initial and a final situation" (id.). And this would oppose it to "textualized action" (Fontanille, 2011: 132), thus to a narration, which, for its part, provides such a basis.

The textualist position therefore allows semiotics to maintain temporality inside statements, and to turn diachrony into achrony.

Temporary Conclusion

Semiotics put itself in a contradictory situation, focusing on changing phenomena and having only textualism to approach them.

The explanations of this contradiction where semiotics put itself are multiple. The main one is probably that semiotics has developed more as a science of description than as a science aiming at explanation. In this way, it has protected its objects from a dialectics of causes and effects which could have weakened its descriptive processes.

Because, in the second half of the twentieth century, the idea was born that internal coherence was enough for the description of a semiotics to be adequate to its object. Then, the theory was founded on an abstract and decorporalized rationality, concerned above all by the purity of its patterns, which had to be kept away from any referential contamination.

With an incontestable methodological relevance, structuralist thinking had indeed raised a real fortification in order to separate the semiotic systems on one side and the world and its actors on the other. But it was a purely instrumental, methodological, and temporary separation. Such a separation certainly allowed us to improve spectacularly

our knowledge about the statements and their internal operating mode. But turning that separation into essence would be an idealistic move; and what initially was a powerful engine eventually became a brake (cf. Klinkenberg, 2001, Groupe μ, 2015).

For immanentist and textualist positions may become dogmatic. We know that textualism inspired Greimas with his famous "outside the text, no salvation". Dogmatic formula, doubtlessly, modeled on Cyprian's "*Salus extra ecclesiam non est*" ("outside the Church, no salvation").

This position may paralyze the most generously imaginative of our colleagues. When Fontanille affirms that a practice is an "open process", which does not provide "any basis for a confrontation between an initial and a final situation", "unlike a textualized action", it is questionable: linguistic statements are as open as factitive processes. And their closing has not always been given: it is simply the product of methodological decisions at a given time; and these decisions have been so productive that they led us to attribute this closing to the object itself. But we can absolutely take the same types of decisions to describe adequately the practices and their evolution.

Semiotics has now become an adult. Thus, it is time for it to give itself the means to approach the phenomenon of variation, in its diachronic, diastratic, diatopic, and diaphasic dimensions. This phenomenon can certainly be satisfied with descriptive processes, but it calls for an explanatory perspective (cf. Groupe μ, 2011).

Re-categorization, Deep Structure of Innovation

The semiotician's object being meaning, his or her task will be to provide the patterns which will allow to describe and explain the evolution of the systems of thinking, knowledge and values.

We have seen that categories were finalized in order to organize the raw given of experience and to restrain its infinite variation; their stabilization in time, space and society ensure their efficiency while guaranteeing their plasticity (cf. Groupe μ, 2015). In spite of that solidity, categories can nevertheless turn out unsatisfactory to report certain experiences. These experiences are said to be new, as the categories which needs to be finalized to be reported. The process of innovation can therefore be described as a re-categorization of experience.

Modalities of Change: Small and Big Changes

The different modalities of re-categorization were well described by historians of science such as Bateson, Watzlawick, and especially Kuhn (1962). They make the distinction between "normal science" and "scientific revolution".

In so-called "normal" science, innovations certainly occur: but they are new applications of existing patterns. We call them "small changes". In these changes, the global system is not modified, and it is the same range of categories that is used to interpret

phenomena, practices, and statements. And it is thanks to these categories that we develop solutions to problems that might occur. For instance, when phenomena imperfectly described by these categories appear: then new phenomena are re-associated to known phenomena through an analogical move. In this regard, Lakoff's and Johnson's "metaphors" (1985) are just acquisitions of small changes, unlike poetic metaphors. Here, a novelty is nothing but an adjustment of the system.

On the contrary, big changes are revolutions. These epistemological revolutions can be compared with political revolutions, because they "aim at replacing institutions by processes that are forbidden by those very institutions" (Kuhn, 1962). Here is the advent of a new perspective, where all phenomena – former and new – are reframed. Thus, the great novelty is totalizing since it gives a new status to what was known and already had one.

Let's start by noticing that the quest for "big change" is incompatible with the conditions of development of the "small novelty".

The conditions of that "small novelty" are indeed the attachment to the routine as well as the refusal of the unexpected and catastrophe. The automatic interpretation of aerial pictures or images obtained by the safety feature in airports is possible because we were able to semanticize every setting of texture or density, and that a standardization allowed us to test the validity of each of these semantizations. The repertory of settings contains the complete list of locations or perceptible objects, and all that cannot be assimilated to an item of that list is considered as noise or artifact or indifferent. In this type of cognitive process, there is simultaneously the imposition of an order and the suppression or refusal of the non-compliant. In such conditions, we only see what we are ready to see.

Therefore, the question we ask ourselves is: how can we spot what is radically new? How can we detect, describe and even measure the objects or phenomena that have not been described yet?

Pragmatics of Re-categorization

Let's begin by observing that there is no change – whether small or big – per se. Change, is a status, a definition, or a decision: the decision made by the semiotic subject to assign the status of novelty to a process or any practice. In other words, the semiotic definition of change is submitted to a pragmatic decision or rather to a double decision.

The first decision consists in choosing to assign or not an index value to the unpredicted experience: facing an unexplained manifestation detected by an equipment (for instance, an aerial picture), we may reckon that it is just a simple artifact, or a dysfunction of the equipment; exposed to a totally unknown phenomenon, we may decide that we have been abused by our senses, or that they are the product of our imagination. But we may also venture the hypothesis that we are confronted to an unknown phenomenon. In other words, we can assign to the unexplained manifestation a referent that has produced it. That choice, however, is not reduced to an all-or-nothing approach: between the hypothe-

sis of the artifact and the one of a referent to be taken into account, there is a whole range of possibilities: the existence of a referent can be considered faintly or highly likely.

The second decision consists in assimilating or not that referent to a category which already exists. One may estimate that the referent is a phenomenon or an object close to those that are known. Thus, we are in the case of a "small change"; and, to name it, a metaphor – in the sense of Lakoff and Johnson – will be enough. But we can also estimate that our categories are not able to report the new fact in a satisfactory way and proceed to a "big change".

The different possible options can be summarized in the following table which shows, horizontally, the results of the first decision and, vertically, the results of the second one (cf. Groupe μ, 1996).

In the most frequent process of interpretation, we associate the pattern with its expected and updated manifestation. This congruence is based on a contract of confidence to which an interpretative instance subscribes without reserve. This box of the table can also be baptized "trust".

The second case is that of expectancy and a good example of it is provided by the hunter on the lookout. He is equipped with a grid, with pre-existing categories which channels the experience to be interpreted: a woodcock or a deer may appear but it is also possible that such a thing will not happen. His perceptive field is thus divided into two parts, one known for its lack of relevance (the sky, the grass), the other potentially filled with a given category: that of game (the hunter does not react if a magpie or a hedgehog passes because they do not belong to that category).

The small changes will be located in those two boxes.

The contemplation of an old wall, a pile of rags, clouds or inkblots from the Rorschach test may be neutral; but it can also lead to the contemplation of faces, palaces, forests. Nevertheless, the watcher is ready to admit that these faces are a pure projection and that they are not the sign of any reality.

Table 1. Typology of Interpretative Situations

Clue value / Preexistence of a type	absent	likely	certain
yes	***Projection***	***Expectancy*** *(hunter on the lookout...)*	***Routine*** *(ordinary reading...)*
no	*(clouds and old curtains...)*	***Discovery***	***process***

Only the "non-pre-existing type" and "index value" boxes match the discovery process, leading to big change.

The Role of Hypothesis

How can this radical novelty be approached? Here, we must remember the general law according to which a fact can only be reached through its pattern. Here, it is the reservoir of categories that must be completed or modified. However, revising a system cannot be suggested differently than under the form of the hypothesis that is to say through an act of imagination, and thus in a fictional process. And this is the case whether it is the world of daily life or the world of science.

The discovery process is not the monopoly of scientific process. It is also the bundle of activities such as dream and poetry (and it is even a common place, largely frequented by aesthetics). This is clear evidence that the reading of a text produced by an avant-garde foils the trust and, thus, we can talk about a distance between the manifestation and the expectations. But here, we can deal with that distance in two different ways. The first one is in compliance with the pattern of the scientific process: the distance is therefore reputed to be the product of a new reality which it allows to discover (for example, "the surreality", another world that can only be discovered by dreaming…). The second one consists in acting on the instance itself, by suggesting a new interpretative paradigm (cf. Klinkenberg, 1996: 16-24).

But before describing in details this heuristic process – which I will do in the fifth paragraph of my presentation – we must certainly ask ourselves a question which has remained implicit until now: why do we have to innovate?

Why Change? The Quest for Balance

The reasons of evolutions are not mysterious: they are the same that explain the plurality of categorizations.

If categories answer a need for efficiency – the one that pushes us to domesticate the infinite variation of experience – they must themselves remain plural. Because indeed, the subject has various needs: surviving and ensuring its subsistence is one of these needs, but understanding the world is another. And that plurality is even more spectacular when we deal with evolved living beings. The trout can be satisfied with only one pair of categories: edible insects vs the rest of the world, but the human being needs more complex encyclopedias.

As a result, the universes of categories, far from being hermetic, overlap and compete, and this may happen for one same individual. For a cook, a tomato belongs to the vegetable category whereas for a botanist it belongs to that of fruits: but one can be both a cook and a botanist at the same time. These overlaps and competitions become even more obvious as soon as we consider the social interaction occurring in the communication between individuals.

We may also give details of this by pointing out that re-categorization can be described as the search for a new balance between competing categories.

Indeed, the higher a being is placed in the scale of evolution, the more semiotic chains are likely to get longer and to produce what we call thinking. But, as it has been superabundantly demonstrated by Piaget (*apud* Apostel, Mandelbrot, Piaget, 1957), thinking itself transforms, during the individual development, and reaches, at the end of a series of adaptations, a state of balance (which, as we will see, is unavoidably temporary; and therefore is actually a pseudo-balance).

Piaget, seeking to point out the notion of balance, suggests a rather breathtakingly fast summary by devising a pattern which works for both perceptive mechanisms and thinking.

He explains that, on the one hand, the mechanisms of that thinking seem to get close to those of formal logics (and besides they are only their emanation), and that, on the other hand, organisms modify accordingly with the famous Weber's law. Thus, there would be a parallel in the search for balance.

But Piaget's remarks must be corrected on two perspectives.

He seems to suggest that during the evolution, the efficiency of acquired mechanisms is not called into question anymore; therefore the process would be governed by a sort of worrying teleology. However, a state of balance is nothing but a necessarily temporary stop in a process which, per se, does not end. Indeed, this balance is only the result of a calculation which takes into account the cost of semiotic processes and the advantage expected from it by the subject. Nevertheless, this assessment will inevitably vary, and notably when new stimulations occur. Léo Apostel – one of the main researchers who tried to connect exact science, science of nature, and humanities – describes biological evolution as "a set of transformations which allow the organism to return to a state of balance temporarily troubled by the external world" (1957: 120). Thus, there is no such thing as a unique and perfect balance but only possible balances and cycles of unbalance and re-balancing.

Not only is balance temporary but it is also relative. The Weber-Fechner formula is only relevant for a range of values related to specific perceptive organs (I cannot carry a ton and neither can I evaluate a difference of one microgram: the law only applies to a part of experience located between the two extremes). A categorization is therefore always at the scale of a subject, determined by the needs and constraints that are exerted on the subject.

An Ever Relative Novelty

Let's get back to the way radical innovation is handled. In that re-categorization process, we must always compare the experience of a yet non-described phenomenon with the experience of known referents.

Let's consider the case of scientific process. What happens when we notice in the observed facts differences from what we would expect if the referent had to be in compliance with a familiar pattern? That difference cannot be attributed to the observer, since, hypothetically, the relation between him or her and the facts is reputed to be under control: its instruments are calibrated. Thus, the observed difference can only be assigned to an unknown referent. But if an ordinary phenomenon can be detected by existing equipment, it is because that phenomenon shares at least one common aspect with those usually approached by that piece of equipment. So, we have two parts in the new experience: the first one is controllable thanks to existing grids, the second one is not. The novelty will therefore be the reduction of that residue through the production of a new category (cf. Groupe μ, 1996).

Even in the case of a great novelty, the discovery process could not be radical. Let's take a concrete example: that of the duck-billed platypus, which became famous thanks to Umberto Eco (1997). The explorer who discovered it had to establish a series of categorizing movements. First, he had to segregate the mysterious object and its environment. And this is not difficult inasmuch as the so-called environment, as to it, is already known. Ipso facto, by segregating it, he attributed category features to it. Indeed, the simple fact that this segregation works on visual stimuli is per se a categorization: the "visible" feature is assigned to the object. Such a macro-category is added to others such as "endowed with movements" or "met in nature". All those processes allow us to think about a known category, as a hypothesis. Here, the "animal" category. And it is only from the creation of that hypothesis that two solutions emerge: either enlarging an existing sub-category in order to incorporate the new object, or creating a new sub-category. In both cases, there is a re-categorization.

Thus, novelty is only novelty from a certain hierarchical level: it is not global.

Nevertheless, we know that this hierarchy, which we also know under the name of articulation, is important for the description of semiotics. Here, we find another utility for it: it constitutes a guarantee against radical otherness.

Modalities of the Work of Re-categorization: Mediation

Re-categorization may take various forms. It may be suggested in an explorative way, in activities such as game or arts for example, or deeply affect our encyclopedias. It may occur in instantaneousness (a phenomenon which bears many names: intuition, discovery, conversion...), but it may also occur in the long time of History.

In order to think all those modalities, we can resort to the concept of mediation (cf. Klinkenberg, 2000). Here, the word must be understood in the sense that Claude Lévi-Strauss gives it. For him, it indicates new conjunctions that can be created between the contradictory terms of a structure.

Approach of the Mediation Phenomenon

Every semiotician knows that the significations elaborated by cultures give structure to the universe in antinomic networks: up vs down, life vs death nature vs culture… But we can go beyond that polarity and make the relation between semiotic units dynamic. Lévi-Strauss' assertion about that process remains famous: "Mythical thought derives from the awareness of certain oppositions and tends to their progressive mediation" (1958: 248).

We may illustrate the mechanism with one of these examples of "mythical thought" that the anthropologist calls up. It is a two-phased mechanism. The first movement consists in making two disjointed terms *a* and *b* match with *a* pair of *a'* and *b'* equivalents. Let us consider, for instance, the implacably opposite categories "death" and "life". We can match a pair of less general equivalents, such as war and agriculture. These are specific activities that correspond with one another like death and life: agriculture allows to eat and, consequently, to produce life, war consisting in vanquishing by producing death. If it is true that reconciling death and life is difficult, it is easier to mediate the subordinate categories agriculture and war. Thus, the second phase of the mediation will consist in exploring the meeting points of these two terms. However, agriculture and war have at least one intermediary: the hunt, for instance, activity consisting in killing in order to eat.

We understand why cultures sanctify processes such as hunting, coitus, and libation: they allow us to recover oppositions that are felt to be fundamental… When he flies, a man undergoes the sky, but, just like Icarus, he is confronted to it in order to fit into it; the game is an activity which comprises both hazard and rules which introduce order into chaos. Even isolated objects – and not processes anymore – can fulfill that mediatory function, inasmuch as those objects send back to processes. We may think of the tree which, thanks to its will of verticality, galvanizes the opposition between the ground and the air.

Typology of Mediations

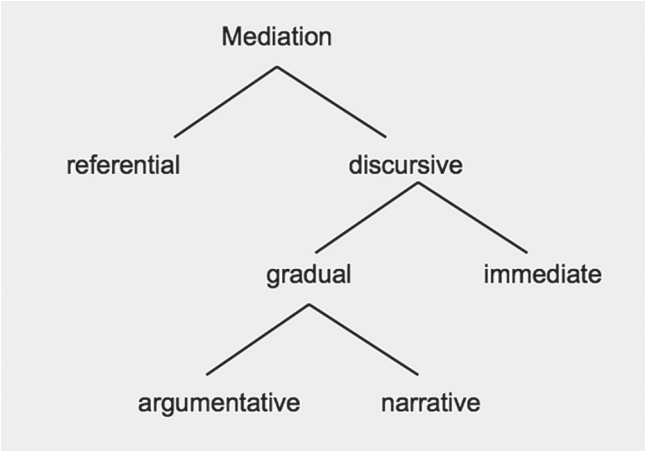
Further to Lévi-Strauss, we consider these first mediations as mythical, symbolic or archetypical. I would rather call them referential mediations: indeed they consist in mobilizing explicitly in a statement signs referring to processes and object to which a culture has imparted a mediatory value.

In the second family of mediations, mediatory dynamism is not assigned to a referent anymore but is produced by the textual device itself. Therefore, it is the result of a semiotic action (expression that I use to generalize the phrase "speech act").

But here again, a distinction must be pointed out. The disjunction may be seen in the statement and be progressively solved within the so-called statement; in that case, we will refer to it as a gradual discursive mediation. But the statement may also establish the disjunction and solve it at the same time; consequently, we are dealing with an immediate discursive mediation. As to gradual discursive mediation, it can be obtained in two different ways: thanks to an argumentation or a plot.

All in all, we have four mediatory techniques, organized in the following diagram:

Table 2. System of Mediations



Scientific speech is a good example of discursive mediation through argumentation. Indeed, this type of speech establishes that entities that so far had been disjointed, can be, from now on, jointed thanks to a new interpretation that is given to it, or, conversely, that two entities belonging to the same category may be disjointed. For instance, biology had to set out arguments to get people to admit that men and animals, two categories that had been opposed until then, could be gathered in the same one; and Einstein's physics gave a pattern allowing to grasp simultaneously energy and matter, which are disjointed in Newtonian physics.

The marvelous tale, of which the press and television offer us new versions every day, is an example of discursive mediation through narration. Originally, this type of narration always displays an opposition which is eventually solved. Let's take the opposition between "poverty" and "wealth", which is one of the most solid founding principles of our society: it seems that its relevance becomes weakened if the plot reveals that the poor one is actually the king's son who had been abducted in his childhood, or if an individual, in compliance with Andy Warhol's wish, can be propelled towards glory thanks a simple wave of a mediatory wand (on that subject, see Groupe μ, 1970, pp. 110-124, 1981). According to some theoreticians, as we have seen, narrativity is at the core of any semiotic activity. Here, we see that its role in re-categorization is no less crucial.

Finally, discursive mediation may be immediate as well. It happens in a locution such as "dark brightness", where the statement solves the opposition as soon as it establishes it. Thus, it is here that the figure of speech occurs. Therefore, we will not be surprised about the strong profitability of figures in numerous families of speech, which goes from the language of poetry to that of religious rites and to the speech of the press, and from an advertising image to psychoanalysis (cf. Groupe μ, 1977, 1981).

Calling into question the oppositions that organize meaning and establish encyclopedias, all mediations lead to a re-organization of these encyclopedias. Thus, the concept allows to endow semiotics with a dynamic and progressive component.

Conclusion. Immanence or Externality? A New Dynamics

In conclusion, I must come back to the causes of change. Whether its causes are the birth of new needs or the irruption of new phenomena, semiotics will only be able to describe and think the change if the correlations between two series of phenomena are highlighted. For instance, between an artistic innovation and a social mutation, between a metamorphosis of family relations and an economic crisis, between a new scientific paradigm and the development of new detecting instruments.

Nevertheless, here we are obviously out of the epistemological postulate of immanentism and textualist methodology. And that leads us to the last question I would like to ask: if externality is unavoidable, what should its role be? Does not it put the discipline in danger? That externality could cause a loss of descriptive solidity, which was conquered thanks to the sidelining of variation that I discussed at the beginning of this presentation.

This is not happening, for three reasons.

1) The first one is that descriptive strictness remains necessary in order to guide the identification of the correlation, a correlation which leads to a better clarification of the relevance of the variables selected in the description.

2) It would be false to say that if we correlate two series of phenomena, we would have a series which would be truly semiotic and another one which would not be: for example, a phonetic evolution, which is obviously a fact of semiotic nature, and the accession to power of a social group, a fact which is not. Actually, we can consider social mutations, economic crisis, and the adjustment of new tools as semiotic objects. In all cases, these phenomena are practices; practices that imply subjects which give meaning to them, and not only in structured speech, like textualism would want it. And here we reach the core of our discipline: the science of meaning. Would not confining meaning to its only textual manifestations be decreasing its interest?

3) As a result – and this is the third interest of externalism – this perspective requires the adjustment of new descriptive instruments, which constitutes a powerful stimulant for our discipline.

We know that scientific objects are not given but built, and that disciplinary fields are not fates. Thus, a re-adjustment of the field of semiotics, allowing these correlations to fall within it, is not the end of the discipline, but rather a way for it to answer questions that have been continuously asked to it.

References

Apostel. L., Mandelbrot, B., & Piaget, J. (Eds), (1957). *Logique et équilibre*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France (=Bibliothèque scientifique internationale, Études d'épistémologie génétique).

Bertrand, D. (2000). *Précis de sémiotique littéraire*. Paris: Nathan université (= Fac. Linguistique).

Eco, U. (1997). *Kant e l'ornitorinco.* Milano: Bompiani.

Fontanille, J. (2008). P*ratiques sémiotiques*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Fontanille, J. (2010). L'analyse des pratiques: le cours du sens. *Protée, 38*(2) (special issue *Répétitions et habitudes dans les pratiques quotidiennes*), 9-19.

Fontanille, J. (2011). L'analyse du cours d'action: des pratiques et des corps, *Semen, 32* (special issue *Épistémologie et éthique de la valeur: du sémiotique au rhétorique et retour*), 131-158.

Groupe μ, (1970). Rhétoriques particulières (Figure de l'argot, Titres de films, La clé des songes, Les biographies de Paris-Match). *Communications, 16* (special issue Recherches rhétoriques), 70-124, paperback. Paris, Le Seuil, 1994.

Groupe μ, (1977). *Rhétorique de la poésie. Lecture linéaire, lecture tabulaire*. Brussels: Complexe, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, paperback. Paris, Le Seuil, 1990.

Groupe μ, (1981). *A General Rhetoric*. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Groupe μ, (1996). The Scientific Image, *Images from afar. Scientific visualization. An anthology*. In A. Michelsen & F. Stjernfeld (Eds), s.l. [Copenhague], Akademisk Forlag: pp. 205-217.

Groupe μ, (2011). Pourquoi y a-t-il du sens plutôt que rien? Abrégé de sémiogénétique, *Signata. Annales des sémiotiques. Annal of Semiotics, 2*, 281-313.

Groupe μ, (2015). *Principia semiotica. Aux sources du sens*. Brussels: Les Impressions nouvelles.

Klinkenberg, J.-M. (1996). *Sept leçons de sémiotique et de rhétorique*. Toronto: GREF.

Klinkenberg, J.-M. (2000). *Précis de sémiotique générale*. Paris: Le Seuil.

Klinkenberg, J.-M. (2001). Pour une sémiotique cognitive. *Linx, 44* (special issue Spécificité et histoire des discours sémiotiques), 133-147.

Klinkenberg, J.-M. (2015), The Impact of an Embodied Theory of Meaning on the Epistemology of Semiotics. *Cognitive Semiotic, 8*, 1, 39-52 .

Kuhn, T. S. (1962). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980), *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lévi-Strauss, C.(1958). *Anthropologie structurale*. Paris: Plon.