Reflections on Signs and Language

Series directed by Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio

This book series proposes themes that are generally associated with the so-called language and sign sciences, in the first place semiotics, linguistics and philosophy of language, inclusive of literary language. It also focuses on problems that interest the communication sciences, including mass-medial communication and the question of translation. However, the perspective is not limited to any one of these disciplinary spheres.

Moreover, the series intends to propose a vision that is critical, open and dialogic, which means to say developed in terms of interdisciplinary dialogue. Such an approach is proficuous if it is not limited to encounter among specific disciplines, competencies and interests at a scientific level alone.

In fact, a priority characterising this series is to create the conditions for encounter between the sciences of signs, language and communication, on the one hand, and the problems of everyday life which are closely involved, indeed are engendered in them, on the other. We live in a world where life overall as much as the life of each one of us depends increasingly on signs, language and communication. But there’s more: not only human life, but life in general, as biosemiotics now evidences unequivocally, consists of communication and is made of signs.

We are looking forward to receiving contributions from all over the world, mindful of the series’ interdisciplinary orientation, characteristics and interests. Submissions should be written in English and will be peer-reviewed by the relevant specialists.

Susan Petrilli

The Global World and Its Manifold Faces

Otherness as the Basis of Communication


The Global World is a pivotal formula in present-day «Newspeak». The book’s leitmotif – if it is true that the faces of today’s global world are manifold – is that language opens to the other, that the word’s boundaries are the multiple boundaries of the relation to others, of encounter among differences. Otherness logic is in language and life. The aim is to evidence how, contrary to implications of the newspeak order, new worlds are possible, critical linguistic consciousness is possible – a «word revolution» and pathway to social change. The method is «linguistic» and concerns the language and communication sciences. But to avoid that the limits of the latter influence our perspective on «the global world and its manifold faces», this method is located at the intersection of different scientific perspectives. As such it pertains to «philosophy of language», but in dialogue with the science of verbal and nonverbal signs, today «global semiotics», therefore it is also «semiotic». And given that how to understand «the global world» is not just a theoretical issue, but concerns how we relate to others, to differences in all their forms and aspects, the method proposed with this book is also «semioethic».

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