

LETTER

NUMBER 7 (SPRING 2015) – FEBRUARY 2015

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Regular sections:

News

Upcoming academic
events

Please visit our webpage
nordicsemiotics.org/

The newsletter of NASS
appears twice a year
(Spring and Autumn).

To subscribe (for free), or
to contribute with content
(e.g. academic news,
upcoming events, country
report, subfield report)
write to

post@nordicsemiotics.org.

August 17-20, 2015
SUMMER  **SCHOOL**
of semiotics
hosting the IX Conference of Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies

innovation culture
dialogue mediation MEANING-MAKING mechanisms
artistic modelling explosion synthesis
habit **Semiotic (un-)predictability**
scientific transatability COGNITION creativity
ABDUCTION biological systems society
interaction REVOLUTION

Deadline for paper proposals (individual papers): March 2nd

Eight thematic sessions accepted

See pages 2–3 & 12–13

NASS IX (Tartu, August 17–20th 2015): Semiotic (un-)predictability



Deadline for individual abstract proposals: March 2nd 2015

All proposals and questions should be sent to semiotics@ut.ee.

For more information, see the Second Call For Papers (last two pages of this newsletter).

Registration is open – registration deadline 1/8; reduced rates until 1/6 (see [more information](#)).

See also the [conference website](#).

Thematic sessions (follow the links to see detailed description):

- [\(Un-\)predictability, probability and their relatives in semiotic analyses](#)
- [Intersemiosis: \(un\)predictability versus \(un\)translatability](#)
- [HABIT as regularity and irregularity: Peirce – beyond chance](#)
- [Cognitive semiotics meets biosemiotics / Biosemiotics meets cognitive semiotics](#)
- [Political semiotics: conceptualizing contingency](#)
- [The dialectics of predictable/unpredictable in cultural semiotic productions](#)
- [The study of future umwelten: umwelt futurology](#)
- [Interpretations of history of semiotics](#)

NASS graduate student support

The Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies (NASS) has allocated funds for two measures in relation to NASS IX:

- **Graduate student grants:** The participation of up to 10 graduate students will be supported financially by NASS, with 150 Euro each. Nominees for student grants will be selected shortly after abstract acceptance, and grant winners will be notified directly. Practicalities concerning transfer of the sum of 150 Euro will be discussed with each successful grant winner.
- **Graduate student prize:** A prize will be awarded for the best graduate student presentation at the conference. The prize winner will receive a symbolic premium along with a letter from NASS acknowledging the participant's merit.

Both measures will be decided on by a NASS committee counting the following members: Luis Emilio Bruni (President of NASS), Morten Tønnessen (Secretary of NASS), Sara Lenninger (Treasurer of NASS) and Inesa Sahakyan (NASS' Organisational Assistant).

NEWS

Nordic News



LUND UNIVERSITY

Doctoral student in Cognitive Semiotics

The University of Lund announces a job opening for a doctoral student in Cognitive Semiotics.

Type of employment: limit of tenure, maximum 4 years. Extent: 100 %

Location: Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund

First day of employment: 01 September 2015

The selection process will primarily take into account the applicants' ability to benefit from research studies.

This is assessed from the criteria quality, quantity, progression and relevance. **For further information please**

contact: Göran Sonesson, Professor, responsible for research and post-graduate studies in Cognitive Semiotics: 046-222 95 31; goran.sonesson@semiotik.lu.se For further information and online application visit the university [website](#).

Deadline for applications is March 2 2015.

NASS VII Follow-up

The participants in the 7th conference of the Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies held in 2011 in Lund (Sweden) who have sent in full-length papers are offered the possibility of having their paper published in the journal *Cognitive Semiotics* (Mouton de Gruyter). Accepted articles will not be published together, but will be scheduled in different issues, but with a mention of the conference as being the source.

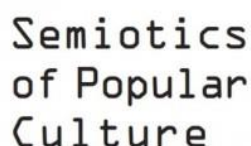
Participants interested in having their 2011 conference paper published in *Cognitive Semiotics* are invited to write to nass2011@semiotik.lu.se by **February 28, 2015**.

International News

SEMIOTIC PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

[Semiotics of Popular Culture by George Rossolatos](#)



Semiotics
of Popular
Culture

George Rossolatos

kassel
university
press

ISBN: 978-3-86219-556-5
Author: George Rossolatos
Release date: January 2015
Pages: 193

Available for purchase (paperback) [here](#). The Introduction and the Table of Contents can be [downloaded](#). Also, [download](#) sample chapter (A Dio: A Sociosemiotic/Phenomenological Account of the Formation of Collective Narrative Identity in the Context of a Rock Legend's Memorial).

Publication objectives

Cultural studies constitutes one of the most multi-perspectival research fields. Amidst a polyvocal theoretical landscape that spans different disciplines semiotics is of foundational value. In an attempt to effectively address the conceptual richness of the semiotic discipline, a wide roster of perspectives is evoked in this book against the background of a diverse set of cultural phenomena, including structuralist and poststructuralist semiotics, semiotically informed psychoanalysis, cultural semiotics, film semiotics, sociosemiotics, but also, to a lesser extent, music semiotics and more niche, but certainly promising perspectives, such as postmodern semiotics, ethnosemiotics, phenomenological semiotics and rhetorical semiotics. The recruitment of semiotic frameworks and concepts is enacted against the background of advances in cultural studies (thus reinstating the dialogue with

a discipline that took form by drawing on semiotics in the first place) and the various research streams that have become consolidated within the wider cultural studies territory, such as memory studies, celebrity studies, death studies, cultural geography, visual studies. At the same time, the offered readings engage dialogically with Consumer Culture Theory. As regards the diversity of cultural phenomena that constitute the empirical substratum of the offered analyses, music, cinema, new media, live-shows, branding, advertising and literature constitute the focal areas of concern. Under the aegis of a permeating textuality paradigm, the ubiquitously applicable tools of multimodal analysis, and time-hallowed qualitative research methods facilitated by advances in videography and archival research, the featured semiotic readings aim at scrutinizing the wider social implications and communicative functions of popular cultural artefacts, spectacles, processes and places, such as Lady Gaga's monstrosity, Dio's memorial, experiential consumption events, the ice-bucket challenge video meme.

JOURNALS

Biosemiotics

Editors-in-Chief: A. Sharov; T. Maran; M. Tønnessen

CFP – special issue: multi-level semiosis

The journal *Biosemiotics* (Springer) is preparing a special issue on “Multi-level semiosis: integrative approaches to biology, cognition and culture” **guest-edited by Luis Emilio Bruni and Franco Giorgi.**

In the last two decades there has been an increasing interest in communication processes and sign-systems at all levels of complexity, from the molecular-genetic level to the epigenetic (whole-cell) level, up to more systemic levels which include various types of communication systems such as nervous, immunologic, endocrine, ethological and ecological systems, including human cognition and culture. Many disciplines have declared and pursued an “integrative agenda” giving rise to sub-disciplines such as “systems biology”, “integrative biology”, “systems neuroscience” and “integrative neuroscience”. Common to all the integrative efforts has been the increasing importance given to the context and to the “interfaces” across different levels of organization, searching for a healthy balance between reductionism and holism. Biosemiotics as a discipline has been very active in this direction. The integrative agenda thus depends on the consideration of the embeddedness of semiotic systems and processes across levels.

The special issue welcomes theoretical works and empirical findings that highlight the biosemiotic perspective or implications in the modelling of multi-level and multi-scalar complex systems, complex networks, systems' architectures, hierarchical and heterarchical systems, emergence and embeddedness in biological, cognitive and cultural processes. It also welcomes contributions that from a biosemiotic perspective analyze the semiotic implications of emerging disciplines that by definition are linking different levels, such as psychoneuroimmunology, social signal transduction, systems biology, systems neuroscience, integrative neuroscience, and integrative biology.

This special issue will be the first or second issue of *Biosemiotics* in 2016.

Deadline for submissions: 15 September 2015.

Papers should be submitted directly to: Luis Emilio Bruni: leb@create.aau.dk and Franco Giorgi: giorgif@biomed.unipi.it **Instructions for authors are available [here](#).**

Chinese Semiotic Studies

Editor-in-chief: Yongxiang Wang

Chinese Semiotic Studies (CSS) is a peer-reviewed academic journal sponsored by the International Institute of Semiotic Studies of Nanjing Normal University and the Chinese Semiotic Research Centre of the Chinese Association of Linguistic Semiotics. CSS was first published in September 2009. Since 2014, CSS has been co-published by De Gruyter Mouton and Nanjing Normal University in four issues per year. Besides the regular sections for general semiotics, each issue contains three thematic sections: (i) Chinese Cultural Signs and Sign Theories, (ii) Western Cultural Signs and Sign Theories and (iii) Interactions between Chinese and Western semiotics.

As the only semiotics journal in China appearing in English, CSS is a unique outlet for Chinese scholars to be heard in western academia, affording an expanded dialogue between Chinese and western semioticians. To this end, the journal publishes high quality articles from all branches of semiotics including general, existential, cognitive, cultural, dynamic, social semiotics, and biosemiotics. Also welcome are studies in the sign theories of classic foundational scholars such as Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. The content of articles may range from theory building to the application of semiotic theories, from microanalysis to macro studies, and may draw on such fields as linguistics, literary theory, philosophy, aesthetics, communication, media, cognitive sciences and biology. To guarantee the quality of articles, all contributions will undergo a very strict procedure of anonymous peer-review. Contributions to these specific sections are especially welcome. Articles should be submitted to cssnnu@163.com

Lexia n. 21 – Censorship

Editor: Massimo Leone

Lexia, the international, peer-reviewed, SCOPUS-indexed journal of CIRCE, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Communication of the University of Turin, Italy, invites contributions to be published in issue n. 21. The topic of the forthcoming issue is “Censorship”. **Download Complete Call for Papers [here](#).**

Deadline for contributions: June 15, 2015.

Ocula – Semiotic Eye on Media

Editors: Giorgio Coratelli; Francesco Galofaro; Federico Montanari

CFP. Special Issue: “Semiotics of Economic Discourse”

This special issue of Ocula would gather papers with the aim of outlining a first review on semiotic studies and analysis of economy. The call for paper is open to papers from different disciplines (such as economics, philosophy, history, sociology, anthropology) demonstrating an interdisciplinary approach with semiotics. The

argument is the economic discourse. The list of the three sections is made in which the semiotics of the economic discourse is divided – namely – 1) Analytics of the Economic Discourse; 2) Rhetorics of the Economic Discourse and 3) Ideology of the Economic Discourse.

Abstracts (in Italian, English and French) should be sent simultaneously to the editors: Giorgio Coratelli: giorgio.coratelli@live.com; Francesco Galofaro: semioatp@gmail.com; Federico Montanari: federico.mont@gmail.com

Abstract submission deadline is March 31, 2015.

IJMS – International Journal of Marketing Semiotics, vol. III

Editors: *Ana Côrte-Real, Angela Bargenda, Bent Sørensen*

CFP : The import of semiotics in the study of brands has been proliferating over the past twenty years, from academics and practitioners alike. By virtue of semiotics' ability to account for the processes whereby meaning is generated, it constitutes the discipline par excellence for addressing the issue of brand signification. With this CFP the journal aims to host state-of-the-art research with an emphasis on brand identity and brand image; advertising communications development and effectiveness; new product development; packaging design and retail branding. Both conceptual and applied semiotic approaches in the above fields of research are welcome. For further details see [the full CFP](#) for vol. III.

The closing date for submission is May 30th 2015.

Southern Semiotic Review – Issue 5 (1) (2015)

Editor: *Geoffrey Sykes*; Associate Editor: *Paul Ryder*

Issue 5 (1) 2015 of the Southern Semiotic Review is now published and available [online](#) with articles by Augusto Ponzio, Göran Sonesson, Susan Petrilli, Donna West, George Rossolatos, Nicoleta Blanariu, Benson Igboin and Oluchi Igili. This journal welcomes papers with general semiotic methodology and subject matter, as well as ones with special themes. For details on call for papers see the [site](#).

Submissions including preliminary abstracts can be sent to the editors to southernsemioticreview@gmail.com

UPCOMING ACADEMIC EVENTS

IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES INCLUDING ESTONIA¹

See also information on NASS IX (Tartu, August 17–20th 2015), see pages 2–3 & 12–13.

17–19 SEPTEMBER, 2015, STAVANGER, NORWAY

ANIMALS IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: HUMAN–ANIMAL RELATIONS IN A CHANGING SEMIOSPHERE

Organised by the Norwegian research group of the Norwegian-Estonian research project “Animals in Changing Environments: Cultural Mediation and Semiotic Analysis” (EEA Norway Grants/Norway Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 under project contract no. EMP151). The research project is carried out in cooperation between [University of Stavanger](#) (Norway) and [University of Tartu](#) (Estonia). For further information see the conference [web site](#).

Deadline for submission of abstracts (individual papers): March 1st 2015

Please submit your abstract (200–400 words) to anthropoceneanimals@uis.no.

Keynote speakers, with preliminary titles:

- Almo Farina (University of Urbino, Italy): “Animals in a noisy world”
- Gisela Kaplan (University of New England, Australia): “Don Quixote’s windmills: technology, conservation and animal cognition”
- Dominique Lestel (École normale supérieure, Paris, France): “Animality after animality: Challenge of the transpecies”
- David Rothenberg (New Jersey Institute of Technology, USA): “Listening for the oldest songs: The origins of music in the sounds of the more-than-human world”
- Bronislaw Szerszynski (Lancaster University, UK): “Out of the metazoic? Animals as a transitional form in planetary evolution”
- Louise Westling (University of Oregon, USA): “Dangerous intersubjectivities from Dionysos to Kanzi”

Theme sessions

The following theme sessions have been accepted:

- “Animals mediating the real and the imaginary in the past” (chairs: Siv Kristoffersen & Kristin Armstrong Oma, Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger, Norway)
- “Animal representations in popular culture and new media” (chairs: Kjersti Vik & Lene Bøe, University of Stavanger, Norway)

¹ This list of events, and the academic news presented above are indicative and do by no means pretend to be exhaustive. Therefore, our members are strongly encouraged to send their suggestions to be considered for further editions of the newsletter to the editors (at post@nordicsemiotics.org).

- “Animals, semiotics, and Actor-Network-Theory” (chairs: Silver Rattasepp & Timo Maran, University of Tartu, Estonia)
- “Global species” (chair: Morten Tønnessen, University of Stavanger, Norway)
- “Humans and other animals, between anthropology and phenomenologies” (chair: Annabelle Dufourcq, Charles University, Czech Republic)
- “Understanding the meaning of animals” (chairs: Forrest Clingerman, Ohio Northern University, USA & Martin Drenthen, Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands)
- “Wild animals in the era of humankind” (chair: Morten Tønnessen, University of Stavanger, Norway)

For description of theme sessions, see the [conference website](#).

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES & CALLS FOR PAPERS

7–10 MAY 2015, ISTANBUL

SEMIOTICS OF CULTURAL HERITAGES: FROM AUTHENTICITY TO INFORMATICS.

Semiotics of Cultural Heritages is an international research project founded by Professor Eero Tarasti two years ago. It is largely based upon his theory of existential semiotics. The project has now over 80 members, scholars from all over the world. It has already convened a.o. in Imatra, Kaunas, Rome and Sofia. The Istanbul symposium, hosted by the Department of Informatics & Fine Arts of the İstanbul University is now open for abstract submission. Detailed CFP will be available on the conference [web site](#).

Deadline for sending abstracts is 28 February 2015.

24–27 MAY 2015, LODZ, POLAND

Semiotica 2015 – International Semiotic Conference “Sign – Thought – Word – Work”

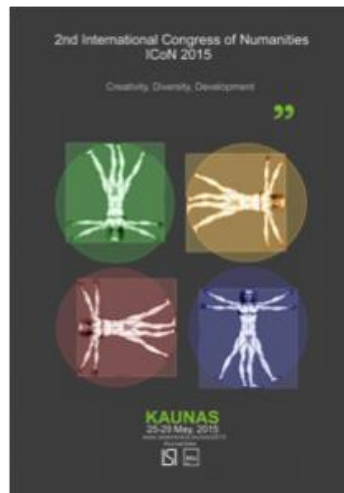
“The print does not always have the same shape as the body that impressed it, and it doesn’t always derive from the pressure of a body. At times it reproduces the impression a body has left in our mind: it is the print of an idea. The idea is a sign of things, and the image is a sign of the idea, the sign of a sign. But from the image I reconstruct, if not the body, the idea that others had of it.”

– Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*

The Department of Italian Studies of the University of Łódź, the Department of Pragmatics of the University of Łódź, the Interdisciplinary Center of Humanistic Sciences of the University of Łódź as well as the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Varsavia have the pleasure to announce the International Semiotic Conference SIGN – THOUGHT – WORD – WORK which will take place on 24-27 May 2015. The Guest of Honour at the conference will be Prof. Umberto Eco.

Abstracts of maximum 400 words should be sent to semiotica2015@uni.lodz.pl as a Word attachment to by **28 February 2015**. See [CFP](#) for details on submissions and registration.

25–29 MAY 2015, KAUNAS, LITHUANIA



Registration is now open for the 2nd International Congress on Humanities (ICoN) which will be organized by the International Semiotics Institute ISI and held in Kaunas, Lithuania, from the 25th to the 29th of May, 2015. The first deadline for registration is March 31, 2015. After this date, a surcharge will be applied.

The congress theme is “Creativity, Diversity, Development”. Moreover, as by tradition, ICoN is proud and honored to host SemTra2015, the 11th ISI Symposium on Semiotics and Translation.

4–5 JUNE 2015, PARIS



SEMIOFEST

A CELEBRATION OF SEMIOTIC THINKING

Semiofest is a team of semioticians with a mix of ages, genders and nationalities who come together every year to make Semiofest happen in a new city. So far they have been to London, Barcelona, Shanghai, and this year Semiofest team has chosen Paris to celebrate semiotic thinking. The conference theme and venue details can be downloaded as a PDF [here](#).

1–4 OCTOBER 2015, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA



The 40th Anniversary Annual Meeting of the Semiotic Society of America will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on October 1–4, 2015. The theme of the Meeting is: **“Evolutionary Love: Relations and Identities in a Virtual World”** The “Call for Papers”, venues, deadlines, and other pertinent information will be available in late February on [the SSA website](#).

Invitation to be listed on NASS webpage

At the General Assembly of the Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies (NASS) in Aarhus, Denmark, on May 30th 2013, it was suggested that the NASS webpage should be used to list the contact info etc. of the association’s members (for those who want such info to appear on <http://nordicsemiotics.org>). So far three members have sent their info – you can see it [here](#).

Member info may include:

- Contact info
- A brief bio-note
- A brief overview of relevant publications (with links where applicable)

If you wish to be listed on the NASS webpage, write to post@nordicsemiotics.org using the subject line “Re: Invitation to be listed on NASS webpage”.

SEMIOTIC (UN-)PREDICTABILITY

Second Call for Papers

The paradoxical co-presence of predictability and unpredictability is a fundamental aspect of the dynamics of the semiotic world. Abduction, **habit**, explosion, (artistic) modelling, code, interaction, meaning-making, signification, **innovation**, uncertainty, change, order and disorder, entropy, translation, interpretation – there are numerous concepts that reflect this tension in different kinds of semiotic systems and processes.

Predictability and unpredictability are processual notions that have been used for the description and analysis of different forms of **creativity** and freedom on both the psychological and the social level. They were also key concepts for Juri Lotman. He considered every act of communication and understanding as involving elements of unpredictability, and every dialogue as being not only about language use, but involving language creation as well. From the perspective of cultural dynamics, every revolution, but also every new fact or event within culture and society is an **explosion** – a tension between predictability and unpredictability. Underlying these conceptions is an understanding of predictability and unpredictability as it pertains to the different models we use for conceiving and changing reality: scientific as well as artistic. In order to sustain itself, every society needs both.

Tartu Summer School 2015 is four-day event taking place in Tartu, Estonia, that will explore the functioning of semiotic mechanisms that mediate order and change in cultural, social, and biological systems from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. (Un-)predictability is also of utmost practical value in **cognition** – for simpler forms of life, for human everyday life, for scientific inquiry, and in practically oriented applications of semiotics.

Submission and deadlines

We invite proposals that investigate the processes and structures that facilitate predictability and unpredictability in **meaning-making**, their particular forms, mechanisms and functions, as well as the role, value and nature of (scientific) predictability in the object domain and disciplinary tasks of semiotics.

Paper proposals can be related to an already suggested thematic session or to other aspects of the general topic of the summer school - “Semiotic (un-)predictability”.

The preliminary list of **proposed sessions** that will be updated according to paper proposals:

- » (Un-)predictability, probability and their relatives in semiotic analyses
- » Intersemiosis: (un)predictability versus (un)translatability
- » HABIT as regularity and irregularity: Peirce – beyond chance
- » Cognitive semiotics meets biosemiotics / Biosemiotics meets cognitive semiotics
- » Political semiotics: conceptualizing contingency
- » The dialectics of predictable/unpredictable in cultural semiotic productions
- » The study of future umwelten: umwelt futurology
- » Interpretations of history of semiotics
- » ... and sessions on other forms and aspects of semiotic (un-)predictability

Deadline for 300-600 word proposals for **individual papers** by **March 2, 2015**.

Decisions regarding acceptance will be made by **April, 2015**.

Contacts and additional information

All proposals and questions should be sent to semiotics@ut.ee

Postal address:

Tartu Summer School of Semiotics
Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu
Jakobi 2
Tartu 51014
Estonia

For more information, see our homepage:

http://www.flfi.ut.ee/summer_school/

Tartu Summer School of Semiotics is a series of gatherings that brings together representatives of semiotics and related disciplines with the aim to provide an environment to converse about core issues in semiotics that are of disciplinary as well as transdisciplinary relevance. It revives the **tradition of Kääriku Summer Schools of Semiotics** held by **Tartu-Moscow School of Semiotics**. As its forerunner, the Tartu Summer School of Semiotics is a gathering that aspires to promote dialogue between scholars and synthesis between approaches.