

**book of abstracts**

## **The curious and the aberrant: notes on the collective passions between culture and law in the social and media narration of ‘the case of Erba’**

Giuditta Bassano

In a general research titled: “Italy, Erba and the others. Points of view and problems of the sociosemiotic discourse of judgment and punishment about some hyperfictioned murders of the last ten years”, I try to analyze those cultural textual files through which the social judgment circulates, looking especially to some murders cases hyperfictioned by national media in the last years. The collation between the mediatic narration and the juridical narration tales of these murders shows that there are two relevant aspects to consider. First, the cultural construction of identity, the way particular devices as narratives, actants, themes about cases as ‘Erba’ flows in the different italian cultural spheres. Secondly, the relation between the cultural -“informal” judgment of these murders, re-presented and re-discussed on newspapers, tabloids, television, radio and books, and the possible change of the juridical “formal” judgment and punishment. The second point is the one I try to articulate in the following article.

## **Passing over the field. Social exercises of rehabilitation to civil passions**

Pierluigi Basso Fossali

The purpose of this paper is to establish the stalemate that compromise the expression of social passions. Our working hypothesis is that media bind the public expression of civil passions to respect a double prescription: to comply with the front view of television representation and to recognize the larger representativeness of public opinion built up by statistical survey.

## **“Behold I make all things new” (Rev 21.5). The passion of the Gospel**

Alessandra Campo e Riccardo Finocchi

This research proposes a semiotic analysis of the Passion of Christ that we consider a sort of archetype of the possible discourses on passion. Referring to Greimas, Fontanille, Marin, this article aims to interpret the text of the Passion by using Fontanille’s Canonical Passional Schema which will help us to show the fundamental role played by the body within the passional discourse. The importance of the body lets us underline the relation between Semiotics and Aesthetics: The Passion of the Christ can influence and found a community because of his body’s exposition on the Cross. Since the people can see Christ’s body (von Balthasar), they can become the observers of a scene that opens a new horizon of sense.

## **A gay girl in Damascus? Semiotics and authenticity-divided between codes and digital signatures**

Stefano Carlucci

In the complex set of phenomena of dissent which have taken place in a significant part of the Islamic countries between Africa and the Middle East, can be mentioned for its uniqueness the story of a young Syrian woman, Amina Abdullah.

Amina was administrator of a blog called *A gay girl in Damascus*, in which she clearly declared her homosexuality and expressed a highly critical position towards the ruling regime of her country.

Finally, however, Amina turned out to be a liar: after a series of inferences about the true identity of the blogger was in fact discovered that behind the appearance of digital Amina was really concealed an American boy who, from the quiet of his room daily, had put on this “media theater”.

## **The capacity to aspire like politic passion: a case study from an Appadurai’s essay**

Nico Cattapan

The capacity to aspire - as described by Arjun Appadurai in his essay *The capacity to aspire: culture and the terms of recognition* - could be interpreted as a political semiotic passion, with a special regard to its interactive dimension among a plurality of subjects – that constitutes properly the political sphere. As a meta-capacity, aspiration represents the (political) power of the subject in its capacity to act and to empower its status, by a circular process of imagination and action. Aspiration is both the result of former actions and the source for new (innovative) ones: it is through this device, which connects being-action-passion, that the subject is involved in a continuous process of changing.

## **We are traffic! Critical Mass: fight and passion in mass ecology’s faded green**

Giulia Cecchelin

The increasing presence of environmentalist discourse in the media seems to have produced an impoverishment of its critical force. It is undeniable that today most expressions of ecological awareness have become inseparable from consumption initiatives. However, despite this situation of passionate stasis resulting from models of social representations conveyed by the mass media, the critical attitude of a significant group of ecologists may also be detected. There is a universe of ecologist activism which is anything but sluggish. My paper will mainly concentrate on the event known as Critical Mass: the gathering of cyclists that takes place in more than 300 cities all over the world every month. This particular practice is representative of one of the

most distinctive features in contemporary environmentalism: the construction of “utopian oasis”.

### **Theatres of the doubt. The passions in photography by Joan Fontcuberta**

Pierluigi Cervelli

Joan Fontcuberta is a Catalan photographer specialized in calling into question the indexical value of photography. In fact he produces mimetic images, that simulate and deceive, representing in a realistic and impeccable way animals and plants non-existent; constellations made from crushed insects on the windshield of the car; space exploration never happened yet, but also carefully removed from the collective history of the former Soviet Union (and more).

Fontcuberta's work is based on a careful use of the argumentative strategies of the scientific discourse, of his ability to build his own truth through the known and the unknown. This artistic process allows us to reflect on the limits of plausibility and credibility-building strategies, and it is useful for examining the doubt. Besides the fact that it is the effect of passion that characterizes the visit of many visitors during the exhibition (it is also the case of the writer), but also the view of the works reproduced, the relevance of the work of this artist is to reflect on doubt certainly seems feasible for reasons relating to the relationship between types of speeches. Fontcuberta's photography overturns the outcome of a discourse, the one of science, which, at least in the disclosure, it is commonly represented as a speech unveiling the truth, and of refutation of the false assumptions, that is of dissolution of the doubt itself.

### **See-doing strategies in propaganda film**

Giorgio Coratelli

In this paper I analyze the conditions of visibility in the cinema, particularly in the propaganda film in the Nazi Cinema. First I propose a textual approach, opposed to two approach on communication and on culture, and I explain how to recognize a propaganda film. Then I study three Nazi movies to identify the strategies to show, considering the construction of values and the determination of the position of the viewer.

### ***The complexo do vira-lata. Life, death, miracles of a Brazilian passion***

Paolo Demuru

The aim of this paper is to analyze the production, discursivisation and sedimentation of the so-called *complexo do vira-lata*, that is a collective passion which have started to be discussed in Brazil in the mid-fifties. Tackling on the one hand the relationships it has forged with the models of Brazilian culture emerged after the abolition of slavery and, on the other hand, the role

that the success of Afro-Brazilians players have had in the process of its destruction, we will seek to understand how this feeling has helped accelerating and strengthening the process of elevation of the mestizaje to a new form of national life.

### **Emotions and adjustement strategies through the *Specchio Segreto* by Nanni Loy**

Mariacristina Falco e Vincenzo Vasco

Interest in affections has lead several researchers to wonder about the cognitive mechanisms underlying them together with the social and semiotic role they play.

The expression of emotions and attitudes makes possible for the co-specifics to regulate their own behaviour in relation to other one, reinforcing relationships and favouring the setting of adjustment strategies. Here we are going to analyze some extracts from Nanni Loy's *Specchio segreto*. The selected case allows us to assess the spontaneous reactions of actors facing an emergency of sense. We will try to describe how the discursive strategies implemented by Loy and the other participants are able to create passions and empathetic mechanisms, identifiable by acoustic and lexical indicators.

### **Panic, please. Semiotic margins of pubblic affection**

Giacomo Festi

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This essay approaches a borderline passion of collectivities, the mass panic, which is today one of the most studied and documented affective configurations in sociological literature, due at least to the institutional interest in managing accidents and catastrophes. From a semiotic point of view, collective panic permits to examine the conversion of a plurality of actors into a collective body, that last being able to present proper affective dynamics even if there is a substantial difference - here explored - between the individual and the collective body. In the second part of the article, a contrastive characterization of two specific dynamics of mass panic is suggested, involving exploding and imploding processes, grounded on a reinterpretation of some examples taken in the existing literature. In the conclusions, an interpretation of the relationships between panic enunciation and contemporary media landscape is proposed.

### **Are they born or become Slavs? The constitution of the Subject in “Ritorneranno” by G. Stuparich**

Francesco Galofaro

The constitution of the Subject in the novel “Ritorneranno” by G. Stuparich. The article analyzes the passional routes of two characters during the first

world war in Trieste: Berta, the slovenian servant, and Angela, the owners' daughter. Berta becomes aware of her nationality and enters in conflict with Angela only after a superposition of passionnal states, entangled with Angela's ones. The collapse of the passionnal entanglement coincides with their constitution as a Subject and an Anti-Subject. Thus we can criticize the canonical passionnal route and phenomenological idea of an independent positive subject that precedes his own passions.

### **The 15M movement: contained indignation and passionnal representations**

Rayco Gonzalez e Gabriele Roccheggiani

The passions of *Indignados*, or even better *15M*, are established in compliance with a double point of view, inside and outside, in every possible relation between them: from inside to inside and from outside to inside (as the representations that from inside they have about the passions preserving outsiders' cohesiveness and how they represent from inside the image the outsiders have about insiders). Starting from this hypothesis and describing the relation between all these points of view, we outline how the passion of indignation, initially punctual, becomes durative (*contained indignation*) with the aim of maintaining alive the movement itself. The relation between these analytical points, moreover, allows us to understand that the *15M* organizes outside space in a distinguished form, and the inside one through a form of paradoxical "means without purpose" following the rhythm of the succession of permanent micro-explosions.

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### **When a wall rises. The shame (and the fear) in contemporary societies: the case of Berlin**

Laura Guttilla

This paper focuses on Berlin Wall which was called *Wall of Shame* by Berliners during DDR era. Why they used this passion to rename the Wall? From a semiotic point of view, the shame is a double passion: according to Francesco Marsciani assumptions we try to explain the development of this passion using Fontanille's and Lotman's considerations.

### **City as a Text: Towards a Reading of Ahmet Ümit's *Istanbul Hatırası* [Memories of Istanbul]**

Hakan Karahan

*Istanbul Hatırası* is a novel that is about seven murders in the city. The novel begins with a murder. Someone has been killed in front of Ataturk statue, in Sarayburnu. In the palm of the dead body, police officers found a coin of King Byzas. Throughout the novel, police find coins in other victims' palm too. As a result, the relationship between coins and killings puzzles Nevzat, the chief

commissioner, about the reason of these killings. Whilst Nevzat is trying to find the assassin(s), he finds himself in a puzzle that there is a relationship between killings and history of Istanbul.

The paper, then, takes the city of Istanbul as a text and reads the novel through its history and Nevzat as a *flâneur*. Who is/are the victim(s)? The ones who have been killed? Or, the people who live in Istanbul now? These questions are some of the questions that the novel asks while Nevzat 'reads' the city by looking at the traces. The paper will analyze the novel through reading the city of Istanbul and take Nevzat, narrator of the story, as a *flâneur*, and argues that Istanbul is the 'real' protagonist of the novel.

### **Passione: when the television manufactures passions**

Loredana Limoli e Ana Paula Mendonça

Among several successful soap operas recently broadcasted in Brazil, we have chosen *Passione*, by Silvio de Abreu, to show how this fiction genre establishes the contract of audience and mainly the viewer's dependence on it, by creating pathemic effects on the televiwer. With the aim of using the television pedagogical potential, particularly while teaching the Portuguese language, a semiotic analysis of the romance between the two leading characters was proposed. The analysis seeks to show the influence from the location (the Tuscan region) on the constitution of the affection and passions, inside and out of the fiction.

### **No country for old man: radiography of a mutation**

Michele Martini

This article aim to analyze the movie "*No country for old man*" (Joel Coen, Ethan Coen 2007) in a semiotic point of view. As we shall see in this movie an important shift from a standard western *cliché* to a new set of interaction between different actors occurs. This piece of work's topic is the shattering coming of a new kind of subject and a new way of act inside the a traditional legal state system. In the last ten years the perception of a "epoch-making" at different levels (technology, society, culture, etc.) urge artists and filmmakers to produce a huge number of works. The narrative and semantic analysis of "*No country for old man*" allow us to detect some dynamics of an almost unknown and maybe still incomprehensible concept of humanity.

### **Vintage Ideologies. Around the phenomenon of jugonostalgija in the Web**

Francesco Mazzucchelli

The violent disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia led to the birth of new nations

and new nationalisms, but what is left of the feeling of belonging to the Yugoslavia identity (political and cultural) after more than a decade after the final demise of Yugoslavia? What forms of survival and transformation of those memories, in relation to the disappearance of the material traces of the old *memorystapes*? And what are, however, the passional effects generated by the risk of acceleration of the oblivion caused by the destruction of those traces?

The processes of (re-) invention and (re-) construction of a survived Yugoslav collective memory will be investigated through an analysis of the so-called phenomenon of *jugonostalgija*, a term used to indicate precisely the widespread attitude of nostalgia for the Yugoslav past. How to explain this provision almost of regret to a past characterized by the presence of what is often regarded to as an authoritarian and repressive regime? Or rather, how to account for the entrenchment of a nostalgic “emotional dominant” in a collective memory that has suffered sudden and violent changes, as in the case of former Yugoslavia? And what patemic traits assumes that provision, since the “jugonostalgia” seems to aim more at certain aspects of “culture” of the Yugoslav semiosphere (music, movies, television, consumer products)?

From a corpus of analysis consisting primarily of explicitly “jugonostalgic” web-sites or that focus on the socialist past of countries arisen from the ashes of Yugoslavia, we will try to investigate from the perspective of a semiotics of culture some of semiotic mechanisms of the “ideological passions of the memory”.

### **Envy and jealousy reviewed by the ancient tragedy: semantic and semiotic analysis of the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides**

Karine Meshoub

If envy and jealousy are problematic concepts in French because of their semantic propinquity, they remain equally problematic in ancient Greek. Based on a study relating Greek Tragedy in the fifth century BC and in its evolution, therefore in the remaining writings of each of the three playwrights of that time: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, our aim will be to unveil the treatment of envy and jealousy. What matters to us is how these concepts appear, throughout the study of this enclosed and historical genre, both in terms of semantics and semiotics, and what we would like to show is that beyond the simple textual display of words expected to embrace the concepts of envy and jealousy in our tragedies, appears a syntactic form of passion, a peculiar configuration. Envy and jealousy, in ancient Greek, do not appear just by the use of a specific vocabulary, *phthonos*/*φθόνος* e *zelos*/*ζηλος*, which are meant to embrace both concepts, but in the tangle of attitudes that each of the three playwrights, with a personal approach, precisely described.

### **The challenge of solidarity. The strategic use of passions in the advertising of 5 per thousand**

Paolo Peverini

A discursive genre strictly linked to the theme of collective passions, instruments of semiotic strategies that aim to trigger a broad public reaction, is represented by 5 per thousand communication campaigns. Here the pathemic investment prefigure a spring into action, a concrete commitment to financial aid. Every year the competition among numerous organizations, which recourse to the mechanism of 5 per thousand donations to gain economic support, is transformed in a hard communication strategy challenge. It becomes a match played on the balance among the passion evoked by the campaign, the credibility of the promoter and the communication tactics, which is essential to involve the destinatary and stimulate his participation.

In social advertising, the ability of subjects of enunciation to appeal to different representations of passion (compassion, indignation, sympathy, fear, sense of justice...) is hence crucial to give a shape to the solidarity, intended as a meaning effect.

### **The passion of seeing**

Romana Rutelli

We mean to take into consideration the representation of the adolescent unhappiness in mediatic fictions, its problems and reasons, and ways of manifestation. A context of it will be its often dramatic consequences, possibly inclined to produce other disphorical sceneries. A comparison will be made between two movies: *Les Quatre Cents Coups* by Truffaut (1959) and *Le Gamin Au Vélo* by Jean Pierre e Luc Dardenne (2011). Both are planned to stir up conventional “passion reactions” such as sentiments of *pietas*, but a difference is clear in the ways of awaking them.

### **Between reason and emotion. The civic networks and the generation of civil passion**

Antonio Santangelo

The article analyzes some aspects of the electoral campaign that saw Giuliano Pisapia contending to Letizia Moratti the chair of Milano's major in 2011. It studies the way citizens used the media, starting from the evaluation of PartecipaMi's environment, a website created by the Fondazione Reti Civiche di Milano to help people participating to the democratic life of their town.

As far as the elections in Milan gave birth to a very remarkable civil passion, which became visible in the mass jubilee manifestations that followed Pisapia's victory, the aim was to understand if and how the usage of personal media and social networking spaces favored these phenomena.

The thesis is that social media rely on mass media contents, as people make use of mass media contents to build their own social identity and to construct some collectively shared visions of the world. This mechanism, which is entirely settled inside a media system that must be seen as a social space, generates the collective passions that nowadays grow up around politics.

### **After the September 11, 2001: The construction of fear by Antoni Muntadas**

Carla Subrizi

The construction of fear by Antoni Muntadas explores fear as a “collective passion”, the components and the social and cultural strategies that determine the affective state to identify the effects of fear in the stories and life forms. The artistic project of Muntadas starts with a reflection on the frontiers, borders and in particular the geographical situation between Mexico and the United States (in the first phase) and then, in the Strait of Gibraltar (in the second phase), the issue of fear and the way it is built, become not an investigation on immigration but on the ways of cultural and collective construction of fear through the media.

In recent times, just after the September 11, 2001 the United States acknowledges a vulnerability that was not so explicit. A security strategy is distributed internationally between fear of terrorism and anxiety of being surprised with new attacks. In this paper we will analyze how cultural strategies focused on fear are born, are built and spread, even in the media, and we will investigate as art, moreover, can not intervene to “represent” but to investigate and testify to certain collective affective motions by particular historical circumstances.

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### **In case of effectiveness. Open bodies and passions in front of the picture**

Silvia Viti

During the 90s, the fortune of happenings and performances contribute to re-define the artist and the audience role since they are bodily involved in somatic experiences coming from the use of rituality codes; performances and happenings are events built through the interaction. The purpose is to investigate the success of an analytic category, that of *symbolic efficacy*, that was formulated by anthropologist Lévi-Strauss and than adopted in semiotic without reserve to explain phenomena with a complex and collective passion device. Nowadays contemporary art codes are based on body to body interactions which challenge the junctive logic of greimasian standard narrativity. *Omniprésence* is the 7th surgical performance by artist Orlan and it offers us the chance for a critical thinking on alternative semiotic proposals to the old concept of efficacy.