



Semiotics Of Culture: The Concept And The Formation In The Western Thought

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Introduction

The postmodern phase was full of cognitive shifting, it drawn concepts and abandoned others, and in which the western ideological mobility had produced a huge stream of knowledge that cannot be left behind, this stream arose in three paths, each path had its own experimentand a special trend. But it is possible to speak about a trend in the semiotic community which had leaders and intellectual perspectives, here we speak about the semiotics of culture which represents one of the western ideological orientations, and we might say:they are regarded as a civilizational element came from the cultural mobility elements of the western countries because many of the movements, approaches, and creative works remained in the historical memory, but they, and without historical progression, were able to bring the mechanisms and draw specific features. They regard the cultural phenomena as communicative subjects and semantic formats, so without communicative relations, the social relations cannot appear. Culture is a cognitive space in which the news are organized in thehumanitarian community, thus it is cultural mechanism where chaos turns into order, and returning to semiotics of culture paths, we can find these paths as schools such as :

First: The Russian School

The seeds planted and grew in the semiotic of culture belong to The Tartu–Moscow Schools, it is mentioned that the intellectual orientations of the two schools varied in the beginning, and this variation might be derived from the history of the Russian culture in the presence of two poles, to dominate the cultural hegemony, but these contrasting witnessed a cultural marriage which gave birth to a special newborn, that is the foundation of the Tartu–Moscow School.This integration denoted to the cognitive value of the two schools because they inspired each other and the advantage they got form each other projects is spite of their differences. This difference was not a barrier and never prevented the influence and impact relationships.

The variation of the two schools reflected intheir concerns, Moscow school took a place at the lingual field, whereas Tartu school went through the literary theory field. The semiotics of culture is the special thing that distinguishesTartu–Moscow school from the other semiotic schools, and the culture according to this school is ((system of relationships between the world and the human, which organizes the human behavior on one hand, and determines the way by which it can structure the world on the other hand, and since the system of the relationships between the world and the human differs in terms of cultures, this means the signs come to us from the world have never been looked at or valued in the same way of other cultures))(2), human person, as a social being, takes a place in a system of relationswith the world, these relations do not

stop fighting back the plagues of the misunderstanding of culture, no information is confirmed as long as differences are found in from onecommunal culture to another. This school was considered as an open protestfield that is about the insistence on the oneexplanation of culture, that means , the essential thing in one community, is worthless and cannot gain prominence, but rather it is marginal elsewhere.

About what is related to the connection between language and culture –in terms of Tartu school views- the relation of the language with culture can be found as continent relationship, the cultural phenomena were ((secondary systems formed according to models, which can refer to their etymological nature in their relation with the normal language and ancestry)). (3)

The two schools regard the cultural phenomena as communicative subjects, and semantic formats, and looking at the culture can be performed from two corners: one is internal and the other one is external, the internal corner can be represented by the close connection between culture and non-culture. Culture is described as the space in where information are structured and organized in human society, the other corner is the disorder, we get the meeting between culture and nature (4), in other words, culture in the internal corner does not respond, but rather intersects with all activities whose functions are not believed in. The cornerstone of knowing the activity outside cultural frameworks is the culture itself, what comes outside its cognitive domain will be considered non-cultural domain, and what is under its knowledge environment, is in the heart of the cultural attitudes.

What is related to the external side of looking at culture, ((culture and non-culture seem to be two systems that are conditioned upon each other, since the mechanism of culture is represented of being a tool that turns the external domain into internal, in other words, disorder into order, entropy into determined and clear information, and also turns barbarism into civilization))(5), this means culture and non-culture are linked to each other, and each one of them needs and determines the other, and is completed with it. Culture creates non-culture and constantly comprehends it. (6)

Some researchers have tried to summarize the most important thoughts in terms of the Russian school concerns, as follows :

- 1 . The separated semiotic systems cannot do their functions separately, but rather if they unite and support one another, in spite of having substantial organic structures, but these systems do not have the mechanism that makes each one of them able to do the cultural functions.
- 2 . Several cultures can form a structural or functional unit, that is by a wider contextual perspective such as race and geography or any other context.
- 3 . the term text is used in determined semiotic meaning, which makes it apply not only to the letters in the normal lingual meaning, but also to any holder of an integrated textual meaning.
- 4 . The text might be treated as an integrated mark, or as a set of successive marks.
- 5 . The grammar matter of the sender and consignee while the cultural communication acquires special attention.

6 . From the viewpoint of semiotics, it is possible, to consider culture as a set of special progressive semiotic regulations. Culture can also be considered as from the texts linked to chain of functions, or a special mechanism that generates the texts.

7 . The participants of the communication process do not create the texts only, these texts contain and involve culture, therefore, when a specific culture accommodates texts from another culture, this leads to spread out some of behavior patterns.

The Italian School

The other fulcrum of the semiotics of culture is the Italian school, the school that carries an expressive language of a criticism temper different from the Russian one, and makes to its critical writings a uniqueness style that can, from its point of view, completely represent the critical view. Two of the most members of this school are Umberto Eco and Rossi Landi, Umberto Eco is ((one of the most famous semioticians, not only in Italy, but rather worldwide. He was of various interests and diverse concerns, and he was philosopher, semiotician, cultural critic, political and social commentator, and novelist)) (8), the value of Eco came from the various knowledge interests that made him pass the local and become indispensable global name in semiotics field.

The semiotic perception for Umberto Eco can reflect in the way he used to look at things, he ((does not look at thing in their independence, but in their connections to the programmed behaviors by persons, hence, any communicative pattern can function)) (9), Eco firmly believes in connecting things with events around them, since the connector and the icon of their function is the one who represents the center of the communicative operations management.

One of the most important issues, that were raised in semiotics of culture by Umberto Eco, was the interference between the semiotic unit, and the cultural one which represents for him ((a concrete unit that can be handled, it is felt because it is reflected in a culture field through interpreter: written words, paint, definition, a special action or behavior that would be turned into semiotic entities by customary)) (10). What we react to any mark is cognitive fragments tell us about the cultural unit, and speaking about the functioning of this unit, we can find that it centers on solving the rational entanglement among the contradictions, Eco mentioned some examples of this entanglement :

-The naive realism, which is important in attempting between a physical matter and some mark.

-Behavior current that matches the mark with a specific behavior, and this matter prevents defining the marks that do not fit any testable behavior. The one, which refers to a noticeable behavior when it is wrongly interpreted, is like the one that was deliberately completed, (11)

- Mental tendency which sees the mark, described as meaning ,matches with untestable unit like thoughts and the states of consciousness. (12)

As it is told, Eco had developed a semiotic communicational model, and this what made him ((divide the indicative signs into two parts : intentional signs, and unintentional signs, Eco listed the intentional ones in eighteenth formats about the written and natural languages, the spoken and written formats ,and ethics reaching to the movements of bodies and the olfactory marks)) (13)

The other sight of semiotics of culture is by Rossi Landi who linked the semiotics of culture to the ideological aspect, and he produced two important points : organization and programming which represent important pillars in the social phenomena within community, and reduces the production processes and their groups. He crystallized his semiotic perceptions, which belong to the organization, as followed(14): production patterns, which represent the production forces and the production relations network.

Ideologies : refer to the social organizations which can establish a public social system inside community.

outreach programs: the program that includes the verbal and non-verbal communication, hence, Landi links the cultural semiotics to the ideological aspect, through his associative relation between human behavior and the idealism, which is considered to be a system that is used by societies to plan the lifestyle, Landi's goal was to expose the behavioral traits of the individual and to strip them down, in spite of the idealism which was disappeared under their cover.

Margins

*After the decline of the modernist methods and the emergence of the postmodernism, some concepts, which used to be a central issue in the critical studies, were dismantled. Formalism, immanence explanations, and the closed text all disappeared, and new concepts such as: cultural criticism appeared in the criticism field and semiotics of culture, showed up. These theories resulted from the linking of the text to its surrounding.

**Speaking of the seriousness of this orientation is laid down by (culture), which a new and distinguished presence, semiology had presence in two heritages: Arabic and Western, and we can find it in many of what reached us.

*** Even though the concerns of Moscow school were lingual, but the applied field of it witnessed a literary presence through the literary texts which were a field of application.

- (1) See: The Tartu Moscow School and the Semiotics of Culture and Significant Systems, Abdelkader Bouzida, World of Thought, Vol. 35, No. 3, 2007, 185.
- (2) Tartu Moscow School and Semiotics of Culture Significant Systems, 106.
- (3) On the semiotic mechanism of culture, Yuri Lotman, Uspensky, in the book System of Signs Introduction to Semiotics, supervised by Siza Kassem, and Nasr Hamid, 297.
- (4) Tartu of Moscow, Semiotics of Culture and Significant Systems, 187.
- (5) Tartu Moscow, Semiotics of Culture and Significant Systems, 187.
- (6) See: Introduction to Semiotics by Sabza Qassem and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Volume 2, 156.
- (7) The Narrative and the Allamah Study in the Trilogy of Abd al-Haman Munif, Faisal Ghazi al-Qusabi, 227, 228, 229, 230
- (8) A Dictionary of Semiotics, Faisal Al-Ahmar, 100.
- (9) Ibid
- (10) The Mark Analyzing the Concept and Its History, Umberto Eco, 173.
- (11) Ibid, 173
- (12) Analyzing the Concept and Its History, 173
- (13) Semimism of the Title, Bassam Qatous, 21.

(14) See: Dictionary of Semiotics, Faisal Al-Ahmar, 100. See: Semiotic trends, trends and semiotic schools in Arab culture, Jamil Hamdawi, 38.