

A new approach to the multiple reality system of film

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1. Whenever we perceive an object out of the **ontological space**, what we actually perceive is not this **object a priori**, but already an **image of this object, filtered by our senses**. It seems that this filtering mechanism is universal, i.e. independent of different cultures. So, everyone pre-classifies, e.g., together with an object STONE already at least the following properties of this object: its **form**, its **structure** (or **gestalt**), and its (potential) **purpose**. We will call this the **pre-semiotic perception**.

Accordingly, most languages have different words for pebble, cobble, stone, boulder, rock, etc. While the bigger units may have structure or gestalt (e.g. the Shiprock in the NW of New Mexico), another group of them may have a certain use: So I can use a pebble, but not a rock in a catapult. I can make a hammer-like instrument out of a cobble, but not of a pebble. I may prefer using boulders and rocks in order to build up a wall against enemies, but hardly pebbles or cobbles.

2. However, besides universal or objective variables by which we filter our perception, we also use subjective ones which are based on our specific cultural backgrounds. We will call this the **disposable** or **obtainable perception**.

In the French ontological space, there is a basic difference between a forest of needle-wood (forêt) and of leaf-wood (bois). Widely known is it that in Hawaiian and Greenlandic there are a few dozens of expressions of rain and snow, respectively, the linguistics signs thus depicting meticulously the real objects but at the same time erecting a barrier for all those who are not familiar with those objects and events of the different ontological spaces which are mapped onto these signs.

3. The last step of perception is reached when we **declare an object a sign**. A sign is an object (or better: **meta-object**) by which an object of the ontological space is **substituted** with the purpose of **representing** it. While an object clearly influences a sign – due to the two-level system of objective and subjective variables

mentioned above -, a sign can never influence an object, at least not in a system for which two-valued Aristotelian logic is valid (**invariance principle**).

As much as I desire, once I have a photograph or a curl of hair of my girl-friend, it will never turn into the real person (and vice versa).

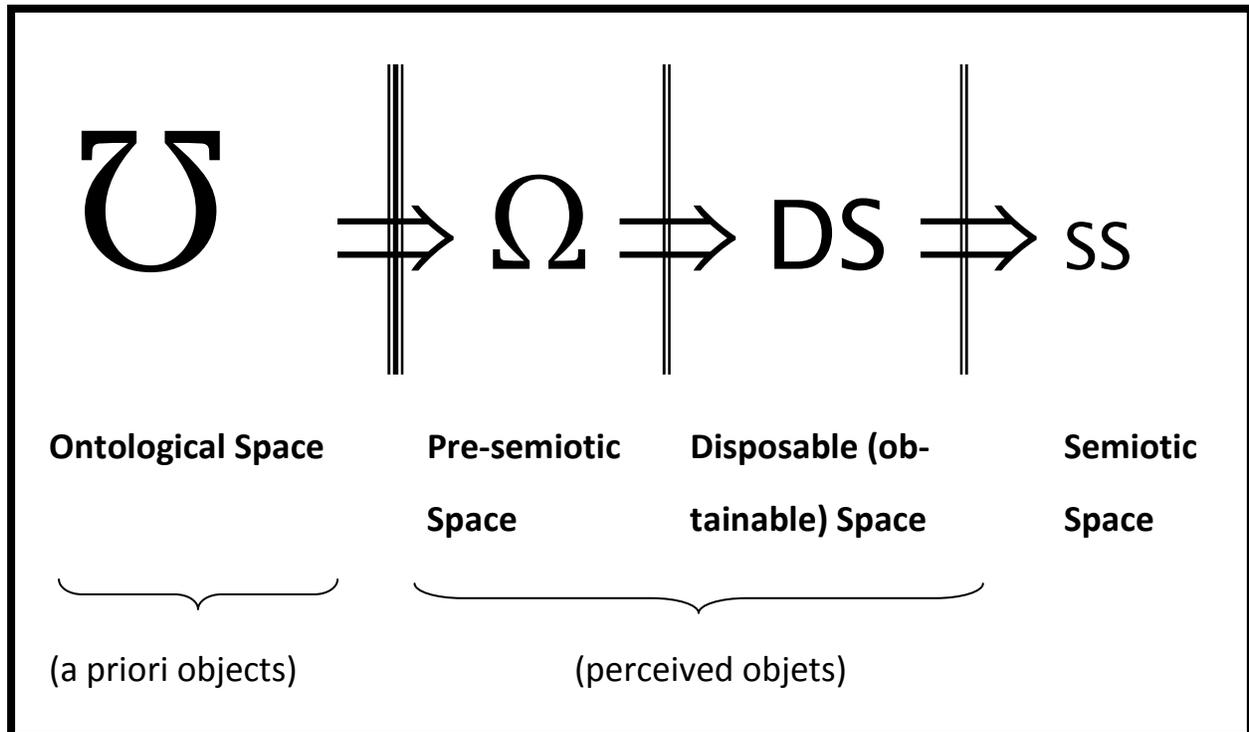
The substitution of an object by a sign works in a metaphysically most remarkable manner: Whenever an object is substituted by a sign, then we also automatically erect what is called a **contexture-border** between the sign and its object. A contexture-border, insofar different from a regular border, is a barrier between an area A and an area B **without return** as soon as the border between A and B is transgressed. And it is this contexture border which separates **two absolute spaces of logic**, insofar as the substituted object is let in a space which is from now on called the **Here** and the sign is put in a space which is from now on called the **Beyond**.

From this conception it follows that there is not only the (possibly best known) contexture-border between **Life and Death**, but between all pairs of absolute notions (so-called **dichotomies**): **Subject and Object, Day and Night, Representation and Presentation, I and Thou, Man and Woman, Sun and Moon**, etc. the basic dichotomy of all being that between **Sign and Object**. Therefore one has not to go until the threshold where Life turns into Death in order to experience a contexture-border: the simple impossibility for introspection of an I into a Thou reveals this experience. (And since by attempting of an I introspecting into itself the second I turns automatically into a Thou, one can even make this experience in oneself, since this introspection into oneself thus turns out to be impossible on the same principal reason called contexture-border.

4. We are now able to summarize the rough structure of the 4 levels of perception in the following figure. As we can see, there is not only 1, but 3 contexture borders between the ontological space to the left and the semiotic space to the right. It may be speculated that the contexture border between [Ü] and [Ω] is a much stronger one than the other 2 contexture borders, since we have basically no idea about the contents of the space [Ü], or, to put it

differently, about what information is getting lost in the transformation $[\mathcal{U}] \rightarrow [\Omega]$.

According to a quotation by Franz Kafka we would break down dead if we would be able to perceive all information streaming to us when we just open the door of our house. Therefore, the objective filter variables determining the transformation $[\mathcal{U}] \rightarrow [\Omega]$ have a reductive function which alone enables us to make elementary subconscious decisions, but not yet conscious choices, which are rendered only by the subjective filter variables in the later transformation $[\Omega] \rightarrow [DS]$.



5. Given the above **complete system of perception**, we can now determine that a **full semiotics** is a structure which fulfills the quadruple

$$\Sigma^4 = \langle \mathcal{U}, \Omega, DS, SS \rangle.$$

However, in reality, representations of all 4 spaces are hardly ever utilized. For example, the branches of semiotics which concern the lingual signs, linguistics and literature, are usually based on just 2:

$$\Sigma^2 = \langle \Omega, SS \rangle$$

Σ^2 describes, as Saussure stated, the mappings of signifiants to signifiés, i.e. of signs as elements of SS onto objects as elements of Ω .

Language comparison (etymology, typology), on the other hand, is primarily based on

$$\Sigma^2 = \langle DS, SS \rangle,$$

since linguistic signs as elements of SS are traced back to older (common) forms and meanings still present in DS.

If one compares now linguistics, the allegedly (according to Saussure and his followers) “most complex and intricate” system of signs, with architecture and film, then one sees that the latter two branches of semiotics need all 4 spaces since they both start in the ontological space, while linguistics and literature start only with the signs, i.e. on the second or third level. Therefore, on the basis of the above defined quadruple, the linguistic system of semiotics is rather poor in its epistemological complexity.

The 4 parameters [Ω], [DS] and [SS] we can now combine to complexes of features excluding of course the self-reflexive ones, so that we get 6 possible combinations of pairs:

$$[\Omega, \Omega]$$

$$[\Omega, DS] \quad [\Omega, SS]$$

$$[DS, DS] \quad [DS, SS] \quad [SS, SS]$$

These 6 pairs of features of the 4 spaces of perception thus indicate semiotic 2-tuples and thus the **minimal structures** of any semiotics. Concluding, we will try to ascribe to each of the 6 pairs an example out of known movies:

[\bar{O} , Ω]: Transformation from a priori into a posteriori space. Expl. Ready-made and object trouvé (Marcel Duchamp, "Entr'Acte" (1924), "Anémic Cinéma" (1926)).

[\bar{O} , DS]: Transformation from a priori into disposable space. Expl. Dadaism, Surrealism (Salvador Dali, Un chien andalou (1929)).

[\bar{O} , SS]: Transformation from a priori into semiotic space. Expl. David Lynch, Inland Empire (2006)).

[Ω , DS]: Transformation from a posteriori space into disposable space. Principally all detective stories (since DS contains especially traces), e.g. "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (1939)).

[Ω , SS]: All kinds of films, since $\Omega \rightarrow ZR$ is nothing else than the process of meta-objectivation, i.e. the thetic introduction of a sign.

[DS, SS]: Transformation from disposable into semiotic space. Since thus the objects are not directly available, i.e. from Ω , but only indirectly, pre-semiotically meditated from DS, we have here for expl. all kinds of movies that create more an ambiance or atmosphere than are strictly narrative, such as certain "experimental", "impressionistic", "avant-garde", "underground" etc. movies.

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