

ACTES SEMIOTIQUES

V. Doğan GÜNAY, *Semiotics in 21st century*, Daisy Science Publishing, Istanbul, 2020

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The book was written by V. Doğan Günay, whose specialties are semiotics, discourse analysis, enunciation theory, and text theories. In addition to over 20 books and over 150 articles he published, Günay also wrote his work in the light of current developments and provided a well-equipped resource to the audience that aims to make academic studies in this field.

Semiotics is an interdisciplinary field in relation to semantics, linguistics, cultural anthropology, epistemology, psychoanalysis and many other disciplines. In today's world where everything consists of signs, semiotics is a very comprehensive field that will contribute to science in every field. Günay says "today's man is not even aware that he is surrounded by signs and that every hour passes by making sense of them...". As can be understood from his discourse, the century we are in is the age of signs and it is shaped by meaning. This science, which has a very large background, does not hesitate to cooperate with different branches of science every day. Today, many different semiotics are mentioned in terms of handling the formation process of meaning and signification in every field: biosemiotics, theatrical semiotics, social semiotics, zoo semiotics etc.

Günay also mentions the dual development of semiotics. This science turns into a more universal and coherent field by creating its own theory. Different researchers discuss the signification process in their field and put forward new approaches in the context of semiotics.

In the preface of the book, the author explains the purpose of the book in a very plain language. He gives clues to the reader about the book with his question of "Which purposes will semiotics serve in the future?". It should be noted here that the author emphasizes the limitlessness of knowledge in this field, but his main goal is to pave the way for new research areas. The book has been presented as a basic work at the point of revealing new ideas as well as providing satisfactory information on which areas semiotics can be a road map in the 21st century. In this context, the main purpose of the book is to provide solutions to some needs in the field and to fill the current gap.

Composed of 176 pages, the work consists of six chapters, including the introduction. In the introduction part of the book, the author mentions the evolutionary process of man and the "human-sign" interaction and describes our age as the "age of visual narration". The author, who includes different expert views on the future of humanity, confronts the readers with a number of questions. These questions concern whether there is a need for semiotics today and in the future. For example, the author looks for an answer to the question of "What will be left of the Greimasian semiotics in the future?" and he states that semiotics is moving towards the future with very sure steps. Such questions

have been asked to the reader in various places in the book. The answers are of the kind that can be answered while reading different chapters in the book.

In the first chapter (p. 15-26), the author mentions about human's reading and comprehension processes. He describes the emergence of the theory of meaning and touches on the "sign-object" relationship and different perspectives in the historical process. He points out that depending on the development process of humanity, methods of *analysis* and *interpretation* will be needed more than before. As is known, the concept of "narrativity" exists in the relationship between subject-object. The subject is separate from or associated with its object. These processes are put forward functionally in a narrative.

In the second part of the book (p. 27-36), the author presents the brief history of semiotics to the reader chronologically. He points out the semiotics theories of Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand De Saussure in the continuation of the section where he lists the pioneers of semiotics. He explains the tendencies of semiotics towards the end of the 20th century and the discussed presumptions for the future.

The third chapter, European Based Semiotics and Algirdas-Julien Greimas (p. 37-54), is shaped on the axis of European-based semiotics schools and Greimasian semiotics. The author meticulously conveys the semiotic structures of Greimas and scrutinizes the controversial aspects of these structures. In this section, he argues that semiotics is *constative* in principle, but will be in a *constitutive* position in the future process.

The author devotes the fourth chapter (p. 55-84) to theoretical information. After mentioning the main lines of general semiotics, he broaches various sub-semiotics fields that are digging into it, and leads for researchers who want to advance in this field. According to the author, semiotics which research interest is *signification*, is a field of human science. It has been emphasized that *interdisciplinarity* is very essential in today's scientific studies. Moreover, the importance of the concepts of *multi-disciplinarity* and *trans-disciplinarity* has been pointed out. In the relevant chapter, it is stated that semiotics has a method that can be applied to social sciences and humanities is also an interdisciplinary approach.

The fifth chapter titled "Open Sesame" (p. 85-157) enables us to look at semiotics from a different perspective. This section is devoted to the fields of semiotics such as visual semiotics, design semiotics, space semiotics, urban semiotics, architectural semiotics, passion semiotics, culture semiotics, social semiotics, legal semiotics, which are widely known today. Touching on the significance of other sub-semiotics fields, the author argues that "semiotics has no clear boundaries".

The sixth and last part of the book (p.158-164) consists of conclusions and suggestions. He draws attention to the necessity of opening a Turkish Semiotics Department in the future with the question of "Is it possible to constitute a Turkish-based semiotics?". The author, who believes that a virtual-real life waits for humanity in the future, encourages the audience to think about what to do in the name of semiotics in such a world.

As a result, we can say that V. Doğan Günay's book in question is among the first books in the world to be a guide in the field of semiotics in the 21st century. This work, which can be considered as a basis for those who want to do more comprehensive research in the field, contains stimulating directions to researchers. When the language of the book is evaluated in general, it is seen that a detailed,

understandable, academic and scientific language is used. Günay pursues the developments in this field both in Turkey and in the world meticulously. The author provides the reader a comprehensive perspective and conveys his predictions about the future in a fluent language. It is clear that the book, which contains satisfactory information, will be among the few works that will contribute to academic studies. This work will lead the way on grounding in and developing of semiotics in Turkey. There is a very rich bibliography at the end of the book. It is possible to say that this book is an important work which sheds light on today's semiotics and the future of semiotics in this context, using the sources recently released in Europe.

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