

Special Issue of *Semiotica*:

Semiotics of Bodily Movements in Sports, Games, and Physical Education

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Traditional games and sports constitute a remarkable semiotic field. Playing sports and games, such as *tag*, *dodgeball*, and basketball, generates bodily experiences whose motor interactions trigger many tactical and relational meanings that participants must interpret, here and now, through intense semiotic activity. This is also true as far as coaches or physical education teachers are concerned, when they consider bodily movements and behaviours as meaningful phenomena whose decoding is at the heart of their interventions. Moreover, games and sports like *quatre-coins*, *british bulldogs*, and baseball are cultural, historical phenomena too, no to forget their economic value, and their meanings and interpretation range from most local, in relation to the regions or terroirs they come from, to most global, as related to worldwide phenomena like the Olympic games.

The notions *ethnomotricity* and *semiotricity* refer to these two complementary poles of semiotic analysis and understanding of games and sports. “Ethnomotricity” is presented as a sort of *external* semiotic analysis: “Field and nature of motor situations considered from the angle of their relationship to the culture and the social environment in which they developed” (Parlebas, 1981, 64). It aims to examine the relationship between internal aspects of games and the values that individuals, institutions, and cultures associate with these games. Structurally speaking, that is from the point of view of the communication and interaction networks involved, sport appears to be a subset of all games that can be listed around the world (Parlebas, 2020), but all *sporting games* as a whole, traditional or hyper-institutionalized, can be considered true signs of their time. As original systems of rules, the relationships they impose on space, objects, time, and co-participants reflect and illustrate the anthropological and social values of the cultures to which they belong (Caillois, 1958; Guttmann, 1978; Allison & Lueschen, 1979; Elias & Dunning, 1984; Giulianotti & Robertson, 2004; Darbon, 2010).

This mode of analysis of physical practices can be completed by an *internal* semiotic analysis. It is then a matter of “semiotricity”: «Field and nature of the motor situations considered from the perspective of their bringing into play systems of signs directly associated with the motor conducts of the participants» (1981, p. 209). Motor communication is indeed built on codes of bodily signs that allow both understanding and deception, cooperation and opposition. These mechanisms refer both to the relations between players as signs of mediation and interpretation, but also to activities confronting the agents with the physical environment, requiring in any case a continuous semantic adjustment of their decisions to the characteristics of the milieu of action. This *internal* semiotic perspective, very rarely considered, gives rise in fact to numerous studies (Parlebas, 1981; Song, 2003; Richard and Dugas, 2014; Nefil and Boutalbi, 2020; Bordes, 2020).

In collaboration with the International Association of Motor Praxeology, we are pleased to invite you to contribute to this special issue of *Semiotica*, the Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies / Revue de l'Association Internationale de Sémiotique, aiming at studying the semiotic foundations of games and sport. Any contribution looking into the meaning production processes of game-playing are most welcome, as well as those trying to connect the internal and external logics of games and sports. The following list includes, without limiting, some of the possible topics:

- Semiotics of motor interaction in games and sports
- Signs and meaning of motor communication in games and sports
- Semiotics of deception in game-playing
- Signs and meaning in artistic sports
- The semiotics of outdoor pursuits
- Sports practices and the meaning of sport
- Rules, signs, and meaning in games and sports
- Semiotics and physical education
- Movement, bodies, and game-playing

This special issue is expected to be published in the year 2022. Please take note of the following deadlines:

31 st March, 2021	Submission of abstracts
30 th April, 2021	Acceptance of proposals
31 th August, 2021	Submission of full papers
15 th January, 2022	Final acceptance of papers
First semester, 2022	Production and publication

Abstracts —written in English or French— must be 300-500 words long and include a bibliography of about 5 to 10 references. Abstracts can be sent to Raúl Martínez-Santos (raul.martinezsantos@ehu.es) or Pascal Bordes (pascal.bordes@u-paris.fr), to whom any inquiry can also be addressed.

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