

INTRODUCTION

The Semiotics and Politics of Perspective

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ABSTRACT

In addition to providing an overview of the papers of this special issue, this introduction theorizes perspective as a semiotic, and thus political, phenomenon for sociocultural and linguistic anthropological study. As we argue, despite the term being closely linked to visualist and spatialist conceptions (if “extended” in capacious ways to diverse phenomena), perspective is best thought of as equally at play in all types of semiosis; as such, we ask how different modalities and media, from visual images in film to oral speech and written literature to face-to-face interaction and architecture, are underwritten by a common semiotics of perspective. Following Peirce and his uptake in linguistic anthropology, we distinguish and articulate perspective as an intrinsic function of the sign relation (as interpretant), as an emergent discourse-level precipitate (as entextualized), and as the result of inter-discursive processes of conventionalization and institutionalization (as enregistered). In doing so, we stress the capacity of perspective to itself become an object of reflexive focus, and thus of political action and authority (contestation, naturalization, reform). [Keywords: perspective, linguistic anthropology, semiotics, entextualization, enregisterment]

Looking Through

Meaning—and thus representation, value, desire—is situated, directed, embedded. It is perspectival. This is a truism in the study of human social activity. But what does it mean to “have” or “take on,” inhabit, impose or (be) refuse(d) a perspective? How does it happen? What does it do? And how are we to study this, and with what implications for social-scientific inquiry?

In English, *perspective* (from Latin, ‘looking [*specere*] through [*per-*]’) is a capacious term, linked to concepts—and ideologies—of vision and space, but encompassing much more. In our everyday and scholarly fashions of speaking, we talk of the ‘vantage’ of someone looking from some angle just as we talk of someone’s ‘point of view’ shaping how they ‘see’ (non-visual) things (i.e., interpret them, give them significance, value and desire them, and so on). Similarly, we speak of the perspective of a painting or a film, of a news article or novelistic passage, and even of a society, epoch, or culture (its “worldview”). Given this range of phenomena—involving perceptual judgments, discursive acts, and ideological frames and worldings—how might we theorize perspective as a unified dimension of social life across differences in modality, medium, and scale? And how can an ethnographic semiotic approach contribute to such an endeavor?

Scholars have long argued that perception is a semiotic process, one shot through with interpretation; to see is not something one simply does with one’s eyes, but also with the touch of the hands (Berkeley 1709), through inference and abduction (Peirce 1906), in a language game (Wittgenstein 1953) and within an historical and cultural context (Panofsky 1955 [1939]). And just as looking (or hearing or touching, smelling, etc.) is semiotic, so too is looking *through* (*per*-specting), be it via a camera lens or grammar, architecture or an algorithm or a philosophical episteme (Daston and Galison 2008, Foucault 1984).¹ Foundational works on perception and visual representation, for example, have pointed out the historical emergence of certain styles and strategies through which subjectivities and “worldviews” have come to be inscribed into and institutionalized in representational forms (such as quattrocento perspective in realist painting or photography; Gombrich 1972, Panofsky 1991[1927], Snyder 1980); similarly, work on literature and the novel (e.g., Bakhtin 1982, Vološinov 1986[1929]), as well as on film and other audio-visual media (e.g., Branigan 1984, 2006; Casetti 1986; Mulvey 2009[1975]; Pasolini 1988), have pointed to ways in which subjectivities are figured and offered

up to readers or viewers in ways that situate them in some field, from some vantage or other. A special but consequential instance of this, as philosophers of knowledge and others (Baudry 1986[1975]) have emphasized, is the erasure of perspective in producing an “objective” “view from nowhere” (Nagel 1986, see Gal, this issue) from the onset of the modern period. Anthropology has also long moved in this epistemic space, vacillating and straddling desires and anxieties concerning universality and the scientific objectivity of the analyst amidst the fact of relativity and the importance of “grasping the native’s point of view” (Geertz 1974, Keane 2008, Malinowski 1922:24). This point was emphasized in the field-shifting problematization of the culture concept in the 1980s, a moment in sociocultural anthropology which, by focusing on the “poetics and politics” of ethnographic representation (Clifford and Marcus 1986), opened up the question of perspective in complex ways. This rejection of any unified notion of “the” “worldview” of “a” “culture” or “people” pointed up the contested, emergent, and uneven nature of social life (i.e., there was no “the native” and thus no single point of view to “grasp”) as well as making explicit space for the anthropologist’s own perspective in the text (and new literary ways of representing it).

For its part, work in linguistic anthropology—the field within which the articles of this issue are situated—has drawn on, and extended, the concept of perspective as a discursive process linked to the indexical flow of events of embodied activity (Goodwin 1994; Hanks 2005; Nakassis 2019, forthcoming)—what scholars have theorized as *entextualization*, the making, bounding, and precipitation of “texts” in real-time communication (Silverstein and Urban 1996)—as mediated by local ideologies and regimes of value.² Gal and Irvine (2019), for example, have theorized the question of language ideologies—socially situated beliefs about language and related semiotic phenomena (Woolard 1998)—as perspectives on semiosis, bundles of abductions (or conjectures) that take the world of experience as meaningful in some way or other. While such “bundles” have an event specificity, Gal and Irvine point out that they also historically come together across events, stabilizing into perduring forms, conventionalized (or enregistered) in language as “ways of speaking” (i.e., speech registers), but also in visual media as “ways of seeing” (Berger 1972), in institutional life as forms of “professional vision” (Goodwin 1994), materialized into the built environment (see Russell, this issue), and so on.

Traversing the question of perspective in perception, discourse, and ideology, the articles of this special issue explore the ethnographic semiotics of perspective across differences in modality (vision, audition), medium (architecture and space, cinema, verbal interaction, literature), and scale (from face-to-face interaction to nationalist movements and supranational institutions). Not just with its semiotics, however, the articles are also particularly concerned with the *politics of perspective*, with how the perspectival nature of semiosis, meaning-making, and valuation—and the way in which perspectives can themselves become objects of reflexive attention—implicate political processes of various sorts, including our own academic concepts and methods.

Why Perspective?

Despite being a central feature of semiosis, linguistic (and sociocultural) anthropology has perhaps not reflected enough on the question of perspective as communicative process, outcome, and object—at least, not on those terms. Questions of linguistic relativity (Boas 1889, Whorf 1956), ideology as situated position (Woolard 1998), and acts of voicing, stance, and footing (Agha 2005, Goffman 1979) have certainly been key, abiding concerns of linguistic anthropologists.³ But while the first has typically focused on structural features of denotational codes, the second questions on beliefs about language (and communication more widely), and the third on discursive acts within face-to-face interaction, the analytic concept of perspective invites us to move across all three, and beyond, by asking after the common semiotic relations and processes that subtend and articulate them. In doing so, the notion of perspective also invites anthropologists to dialogue with disciplines for whom perspective has long been a central concern and term: art history, the psychology and phenomenology of perception, continental semiotics, and media studies, among other fields. It also pushes us to further expand our objects and methods of analysis—for linguistic anthropologists in particular, beyond speech and language.

Through the lens of perspective, thus, we hope to introduce a catachresis to cut across traditional divisions of perception (in particular, vision) and communication (in particular, language) so as to ask after the semiotic processes that underlie the diverse empirical phenomena discussed in this issue's articles: from (in)visibility and movement in hospitality rituals

in Oman (Russell, this issue) and seeing/being-seen in documentary filmmaking in “Roma” Bulgaria (Canut), to political “re-education” in mid-century communist Vietnam (Sidnell), novelistic representations of the “dangerous,” and later “endangered,” nature of Gaelic (Costa), and institutional practices (such as mechanical tests and standardization) and contestations of authorization, objectivity, and expertise in (early) modern and contemporary Europe and the United States (Gal).

One might wonder if perspective—a strongly visual and spatial term—is the right concept to capture such a diversity of phenomena, and whether using it risks distorting our analyses by “metaphorically” extending a visual and spatial term for phenomena that are not “literally” visual or spatial. Might a more “neutral” term be better? Paradoxically perhaps, despite—or we should say, because of—both its visualist and spatialist moorings, we find in perspective a useful tool to ask after semiotic processes and relations *across* (and thus beyond) medium and modality. The deconstructive challenge, in short, is—as the essays in this issue variously demonstrate—to see(!) how perspective is a non-modality and non-medium specific aspect of semiosis; or put otherwise, always a multi-modal, multi-medial process—not only visual or linguistic, but also sonic (Feld 2025, Larkin 2014), tactile (Edwards 2024), proprioceptive (Rutherford 2025), and so on—that is present in all forms of perception and meaning-making, *not* as a metaphor or “extension” of its prototypic visualist, spatialist sense but as a constitutive aspect of semiotic process *tout court*. Might perspective in vision, film images, paintings, song, dance, face-to-face interaction, political discourse, and literature be productively studied together *not* because we can analogize one (vision) to the others but because each differentially actualizes something common to them all?⁴

Perspective, Three Ways

The articles of this special issue start from two coordinated propositions. First, that perspective is a semiotic achievement: perspective emerges from/as an effect of communicative activity; and second, that semiosis itself is perspectival: perspectives regiment communicative activity. These two propositions come together in the philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce’s notion of a sign process as involving a “genuine” (i.e., irreducibly) triadic relation between (1) a *representamen* (some palpable phenomenon, a sign-vehicle) that stands for (2) some *object* (that it represents

and is determined by in some respect) only by being mediated by (3) an *interpretant* that construes, and thus constitutes, that standing-for relation (or *ground*).⁵ The interpretant is itself a sign-vehicle that takes as its object that ground (and thus represents the object in its own way). It is thus both the germ of a next-sign (it emerges out of semiosis) and also a meta-sign (it is about another sign process). For our purposes, what is important is that for Peirce the sign is intrinsically perspectival in both senses noted above, for it is only constituted through the *particular* way in which an interpretant mediates the process of which it is a part (which is constantly self-differing, changing, growing).

Scholars of language have noted how elements of communicative activity make manifest this intrinsically perspectival quality of semiosis, most obviously in deictic elements of language (Hanks 1990, Silverstein 1976). Deictics—like demonstratives (*this, that*), tense (non-past, past), adverbs (*here, there; now, then*), and other linguistic forms (e.g., evidentials, verbs of motion like *come, go*)—are intelligible only relative to a contextualized perspective that they project on the states of affairs they refer-and-predicate about. (This anchoring point is what Karl Bühler [1990(1934)] called the *origo*, or “zero-point,” in relation to which the referent of a deictic is determined.) But not simply perspectival at the level of their structural sense and reference, such denotational indexes—as William Hanks (2005) has most powerfully shown—are always also embedded within a socio-culturally organized, phenomenological “field” (also see Russell, this issue).⁶ Following Jack Sidnell’s article in this issue, we can call this dimension, or scale, of perspective, *utterance (or sign-)perspective*.

A critical point is that utterance perspective is a function of the *indexicality* of sign processes. *Indexicality* denotes that aspect of meaning (or *ground*) that is determined, and varies, relative to some event, or “context,” of enunciation (Benveniste 1971, Nakassis 2020, Silverstein 1976). Yet every such context is itself comprised of other signs: no sign is an island. As indexical, each such sign contributes—sketches, we might say—its own perspective on its universe of discourse (i.e., is situated from some *origo* or other) even as its meaning is mediated by those other signs that co-occur with it.⁷ In other words, every utterance (sign-level) perspective is a part of a larger textual whole that co(n)textualizes it, variously refracting, amplifying, or erasing it. To continue our metaphor: sign-perspectives are the strokes that, drawn together on the plane of semiosis, make up

textual pictures in time-and-space; these images themselves cumulate into and figurate (higher-order) perspectives.

Consider two examples: “voicing” effects in literature such as free-indirect discourse—where we enter the first-person subjectivity of a character through the third-person voice of a narrator—and “point of view” (POV) shots in the cinema—where we see and (then) see-with a character. Both are the emergent effect of the evenemential *juxtaposition* and *superposition* of sign-perspectives (e.g., deictics, tense, verbs of speech-and-thought in the former; camera position and angle and eye gaze in the latter) as they come together in particular textual configurations. Such configurations give rise to *discursive (or text-level) perspectives* that are made up of but exceed the sign-perspectives they comprise. In the canonical point-of-view (or “subjective”) shot in film, for example, we first see a shot of someone looking (from a “third-person,” “objective” position), followed by a cut to a shot from an iconically congruent angle to the angle of the person’s gaze in the previous shot, located in the same *mise-en-scène* and soundscape, and so on (Branigan 1984); the result is that the second shot is construed as the eponymous “point of view” of the subject shown looking in the first shot. Yet it’s clear that the very notion of a so-called “subjective” (POV) *shot* is a misnomer (an ideological metonymization, in fact), since the effect of seeing from the character’s “point of view” is the result of a *montage* of shots (Eisenstein 1943). Without either shot framing the other, the effect disappears (cf. Agha 2005 on non-detachability in voicing effects). Perspectives, seen from this angle and at this level, are cumulative precipitates of signs apposed and unfolding in time. Not simply “in” or “of” the sign (*viz.* utterance perspectives), here perspectives function at the level of the textured relations between signs, emergent from a process of *entextualization* (Silverstein and Urban 1996), the real-time unfolding of signs as they resonate and interact with each other to precipitate “texts(-in-context).”⁸ Put simply, here, perspectives are projected by a text, made up of the utterance perspectives that cumulate and cohere to inscribe, figurate, and invite a particular vantage.

Yet as earlier noted, every such event of entextualization, every such text, is itself part of a historical envelope of other events and texts, embedded in institutional and other social and ideological formations. (Which is also to say, every such historical envelope is emergent across processes of entextualization.) Texts wherein perspectives are entextualized, after all, can be iterated—indeed, are themselves, in some way or other, iterations

of other texts, other norms, and other perspectives. Perspectives, in other words, are dialogic (Bakhtin 1982, Vološinov 1986[1929]), intertextual, *enregistered* (Chumley 2016; Nakassis 2023, forthcoming; Sidnell, this issue).

Linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists use the term *enregisterment* to denote the historical process whereby repertoires of signs are zoned off (from contrastive repertoires) and conventionalized in their enactable social (indexical) meaning (Agha 2007, Gal 2018); enregisterment, in other words, is the process through which speech registers (or registers of communication, more broadly)—dialects, slangs and argots, occupational jargons, and other socially recognized ways of speaking—arise and circulate in social space and time. Typically understood by their speakers as “different ways of saying the same thing,” speech registers are cultural (ideological) models for ‘hearing’ pragmatic variation in events of discourse, that is, for entextualizing discourse as pragmatically (indexically) significant (e.g., in indexing speaker identity or other social stereotypes of context; Silverstein 2022).

To speak of the enregisterment of perspective, thus, is to speak of the emergence of perduring, conventionalized ways of entextualizing perspectives: ways of seeing, ways of hearing (Inoue 2006) and knowing through listening (Feld 2025), interpretive habituses, and the like. Such processes render contingently emergent perspectives—both sign- and text-level perspectives—stable and iterable (if also dynamic and self-differing), both in how they draw up perspectives and link them with social stereotypes of various kinds.⁹ At the level of discursive (text) perspective, consider how point-of-view shots are a conventional and long-standing part of the “grammar” of realist narrative cinema; further consider the way such shot types have historically inscribed (i.e., enregistered) stereotyped ways of seeing that are gendered (Mulvey 2009[1975]), classed (Hansen 1994), and racialized (hooks 1992). Similarly, think of the emergence, dissemination, and conventionalization of free-indirect discourse as part of the emergence of genres of the modern novel, linked to new forms of “modern” subjectivity and ideological imaginaries (Bakhtin 1982, Vološinov 1986[1929]), as well as sociopolitical projects like the nation-state (Anderson 1983, Lee 1997; cf. Sidnell, this issue).

Such processes of enregisterment do not only mediate the text-perspectives which they comprise. They also thereby mediate sign-perspectives (which those text-level perspectives themselves comprise), imbuing

them with a seemingly intrinsic perspective at the level of their isolable form. Consider how larger-scale political processes in the United States, and elsewhere, have in recent times enregistered shibboleths of speech like “MAGA” or “fake news” with particular perspectives; or, to take an example from Canut’s paper in this issue, how ethnic labels like “Roma” (or “Cigani”; Canut 2019) are vested with a performative power. To use such terms is not simply to denote, nor even to signal a social identity or relation—it is to take a perspective on what is denoted and signaled in a political field. As such, perspectives are also collective. The topology of such political fields is a structure of perspectives (on perspectives): in the digitally mediated contemporary, one composed of what media commentators call “silos” and “echo chambers” (Slotta 2019), carved out and mediated by complex economies of attention and algorithmic curation (Murphy 2023) that are, in effect, political economies of mediatized perspectives.

Every such shibboleth (every such sign-perspective) and every such enregistered perspective, of course, only lives through the contextualized events of activity in which they are deployed, that is, through the discursive perspectives they participate in entextualizing in novel, singular contexts.¹⁰ As such, through the mediating gateway of discourse, every such perspective can be redrawn, resignified, re-enregistered. After all, the scare quotes “...” around MAGA in the above example (the example itself being a genred citational frame) do their own perspectival work to generate a meta-perspective in the instance (just as do characterizations of their media ecologies as involving “silos” and the like), an ironic stance that partially resignifies what it puts into play (Nakassis 2013), if only for a moment.

We can call the genuine, dialectical relationship between these three dimensions of perspective (utterance/sign, entextualized/discursive, enregistered) the *total semiotic fact of perspective*.¹¹

Multiplicity, Reflexivity, and the Politics of Perspective

Perspectives emerge out of and within other perspectives. They are built out of each other, in dialogic relation and as parts within larger encompassing wholes. A novel or a film weaves multiple voices or “looks” together in inscribing its own perspective while also offering up one for its reader or spectator. Similarly, perspectives that manifest in diverse communicative acts and signs can be scaled to named person-types

(like “revolutionary” and “bourgeois” in Sidnell’s paper on twentieth-century Vietnamese communist politics). At their most encompassing, perspectives are, to take a cue from Russell’s paper in this issue, a virtual order of possible actualizations (token-perspectives, we might say), a structured field through which positions and paths can be taken, points of view inhabited or taken into account, interpretations made. We might think of perspective here as a structured horizon of possibilities for orientation and attention, movement and action, of expectations created (and frustrated) within singular events, across sedimented habits, and in the wider environment (in Russell’s case, e.g., architectural paths and fields of visibility in mediating social gatherings in rural Oman).

In all such cases, perspectives are always plural, parts of ordered multiplicities in continual interaction; importantly, perspectives continually take each other (and themselves or their parts) as their semiotic objects. In other words, perspectives are *recursive* and *reflexive*. They are not simply constitutive of communicative activity but may be the very object of communicative activity itself (as our examples above already suggest). As such, they are *political*.

Perspective is political in two senses. First, in the sense that *who* can speak/see/hear/touch/interpret *what* from *which* perspectives is always linked to questions of power and desire (Canut, this issue), authority and expertise (Gal), and thus subject to contestations and naturalizations of various kinds (Costa, Sidnell). Not only is to inhabit a perspective to take a stance—a political act; but the very field within which one does so is itself organized unevenly (Russell). Second, by implication, by being collective, perspectives can become the reflexive object of political action. By being enregistered and conventionalized, perspectives (or, at least, some partial dimensions of them) can be talked about, contemplated, and formalized; they can even become the named object of reform (as with the Vietnamese re-education camps discussed by Sidnell in this issue), the focus of experimentation and deconstruction (as in the documentary film production in a “Roma” ghetto discussed by Canut in this issue), but also the pivot of institutional projects and organizational structures of various kinds (as with the rise of scientific regimes of objectivity and standardization in Western Europe, discussed by Gal in this issue).¹² This reflexivity cuts across the scales of perspective noted above, playing out not only at historical scales of enregisterment (political projects to institutionalize perspectives), but also within particular events (the politics

of entextualizing perspective in social interactions of various kinds) and as metonymized within particular signs (which thus take on a performative perspectival charge). To the question *what is perspective?*, we cannot provide an answer except by deferring the question to the political, as a question not simply asked by us as analysts about the discourse or worlds of others but also as a question asked by all those party to semiosis. That is, to ask after what a perspective *is* is to ask what it *does* (or can be made to do) in some social arena or other, including in our own work.

Indeed, a final theme of this set of papers is that what is true for our objects of analysis is just as true for our analyses; we, too, always take perspectives in our research, and do so by dialogically convoking multiple points of view within a historical and political field of knowledge and power (Clifford and Marcus 1986). Canut's anthropographic filmmaking, as discussed in her article, is a testament to the complex work of coordinating multiple perspectives in the decade-plus process of making a film and in so doing diffracting and dilating those historical perspectives sedimented in ethnographic and filmmaking practices themselves. Similarly, Costa's reflections on the shift from "dangerous" to "endangered" languages in nineteenth-century Scotland (and the status of Gaelic in the context of English domination) remind us of the perspectival histories that infuse our own scholarly concepts (viz. "endangered" languages) within histories of colonialism and conquest.

Conclusion

We hope this special issue encourages more consideration of the complex ways that semiosis is structured perspectivally, and vice versa—the ways that perspectives are structured semiotically; and further, how both are structured politically. Further, we hope that a turn to perspective—as a capacious term that encompasses multiple types of phenomena across modality and media, and that does so from an ideological perch and within a particular history (the visual, the spatialist fashion of speaking noted at the outset)—might allow us to create new ways of conceiving what our objects of analyses are and might be. We hope that a turn to perspective can push us to move beyond received divisions of speech and (visual) images, interpretation and perception, while helping us keep in mind the work of our own ideologies, our own perspectives in ordering what we see, sense, expect, understand, interpret, and do. ■

Endnotes:

¹Here, one is reminded of Saussure's (1983[1916]:8) foundational observation that, in linguistics, it is the "viewpoint adopted which creates the object" (viz. "language"), not the object, in its pre-giveness, which various perspectives (differentially) represent; cf. Viveiros de Castro 2004.

²The notion of *entextualization* itself emerged, among other things, as an engaged critique with Geertz's call to study "symbol systems," not simply hermeneutically but semiotically (with attention to real-time processes of discourse; Silverstein and Urban 1996), just as the notion of *ideology* critically engaged the "culture" concept (Woolard 1998). We might see both concepts as responses to the challenges of the *Writing Culture* moment, taking heed of its deconstructive critiques (as pointing to processes of emergence, contestation, and the political within semiosis as object for study) without abandoning the subfield's social-scientific and semiotic-realist stance, that is, without throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

³While notions of *stance*, *footing*, and *voicing* as used by linguistic anthropologists overlap with that of perspective, for us the latter pushes us to something less fleeting, more historical (interdiscursive) than the former, which highlight turn-by-turn, event-internal processes. (That is, perspective pushes us to think of processes of enregisterment.) Perspective also encourages us to think about perceptibility and non-linguistic media in ways that stance, footing, voicing, and enregisterment typically have not. (That is, perspective pushes us to think of enregisterment in relationship to ways of perceiving, imaging, etc. See, e.g., Chumley 2016, Goodwin 1994, Nakassis 2023.)

⁴That is, our everyday fashion of speaking about perspective most elaborates (and literalizes) the general semiotic problem of perspective in only one of its peculiar manifestations (spatialized vision) while recognizing (by analogizing) its presence, and wider significance, in other domains.

⁵Such a relation for Peirce is "genuine" insofar as there is no sign without all three elements in relation to each other. While the representamen and the object may have an existence, as entities, independent of each other and of the interpretant (though not vice versa, note), they do not function as such outside of an interpretant that so relates them, and thus constitutes them (and itself) as parts of the sign. It is in this sense that the interpretant constitutes the sign as a sign, and the representamen and object as having those functional roles in relationship to each other and the interpretant.

⁶Of course, these properties also extend to non-referential indexes (Silverstein 1976), which also radially sketch a topological relation of origo to indexical target, as discussed in the main text below.

⁷Here, we are noting two types of indexicality that are constitutively related to the question of perspective (among other things): (1) an indexical relation between a representamen and its object (as with deictics that 'point to' some element of their context of use); (2) an indexical relationship between signs in co-textual relations. Further, these two indexicalities are not exclusive of each other; they imply each other. (Indeed, the second is a special case of the first, wherein co-occurring signs take, as one of their objects, each other.)

⁸And since every sign-perspective is embedded in some text-in-context, every such sign-perspective implies, and is mediated by, a text-perspective, and vice versa.

⁹Such stereotypes are themselves perspectival, of course; they are higher-order meta-perspectives (cf. Silverstein 2003 on "indexical orders") that may be linked to subject positions (cf. Inoue 2006 on "listening subjects").

¹⁰Put otherwise, every sign-perspective and every enregistered perspective (as two orders of virtuality, one a possibility/Firstness, the other a generality/Thirdness) must be instantiated (realized) in some event of usage which co(n)textualizes it. The event of entextualization (as moment of Secondness), thus, is the pivot through which perspectives emerge, stabilize, and change and disappear.

¹¹Here, we use the phrase *total semiotic fact of perspective* to denote the non-resolving bi-directional dialectic wherein sign-perspectives (perspectives projected by particular signs) contribute to, by being part of, the emergence of discursive perspectives (perspectives figured by texts-in-context) which, in turn, contribute to the enregisterment of perspectives (as inter-textual norms), which at the same time regiment the entextualizing of perspectives in particular events (discursive perspectives) and, via this, the metonymic sedimentation of perspectives at the level of particular signs. On total semiotic facts, see Nakassis 2016; cf. Silverstein 1985.

¹²Notice that within these histories of enregistering perspective, the semiotics of perspective itself has become an ethnometapragmatic object of reflexive focus, even generating "lexations" (Whorf 1956)—viz. "perspective," "point of view," "worldview," "vantage point," et cetera—that are parts of particular fashion of speaking, themselves enregistered with particular perspectives(!). See Gal (this issue) on enregistered meta-perspectives on subjectivism and objectivism in post-Enlightenment Europe or Sidnell (this issue) on "subjectivism" and "revolutionary" perspectives in mid-century Vietnam, terms in both cases already voiced from a particular (objectivist, revolutionary) perspective.

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Foreign Language Translations:

Introduction: The Semiotics and Politics of Perspective

Introdução: A Semiótica e a Política da Perspectiva

Введение: семиотика и политика перспективы

导论：视角的符号学与政治

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