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Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts

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Abstract: In her article "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts" Cristina Peñamarín analyzes visual-verbal texts showing different ways of conceiving and representing the world, that in each case involves certain ways of reinforcing or challenging preconceptions about the object and ways of positioning author and addressee. Peñamarín's aim is to explore a method by which to ad-dress presupposed world visions in the texts and to ask how images and plurisemiotic texts are used to confirm, discuss, or expand the boundaries of systems of meaning. She raises the question of the possibilities of dialogue, hybridization*,* cultural translation, and the change of systems without losing sight that communication includes walls, barriers, and collectivities that see themselves as mutually incompatible, of discrimination and inability to dialogue. Peñamarín develops these problems by ana-lyzing examples of maps and other every-day visual-verbal texts in order to investigate the contribu-tions of these intermedial practices to common interpretive resources.

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 2 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
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Cristina PEÑAMARÍN

Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts

In scholarship, disciplines have proceeded by isolating and purifying their objects of study: words, images, and social practices each have their specialized discipline. In order to analyze intermedial, that is, plurisemiotic texts, this tradition should be reconsidered and transformed. I propose a strategy for approaching (inter)medial/plurisemiotic texts that raises some theoretical and methodological issues. My approach seeks to address the text as a form of communication from the viewpoint of interlocutive meaning. If Arno Gimber and Asunción López-Varela are right in pointing out that language and semiotic theories "have been important in conceptualizing the relation between subject and object, capturing the mutual construction of speaker and cultural system at the point of enunciation without resort to the freedom-determinism binary of ontologies that inscribe subjects and objects" (<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol12/iss3/15>) we should be able to show that this assertion is more than just a slogan, exposing mutual construction in the texts and addressing their implications for the conception of subject and cultural systems. Among the problems arising from this possible mutual construction, the assumption of an *ex novo* construction made entirely in each text or series of texts can be discarded for it would negate the prior competence of the subjects and any permanence of the individual and collective memory. Similarly, the assumption that these systems can completely determine what to think, appreciate or feel, thus making texts and practices to suggest new visions or to change traditions, can also be discarded. The question here is how to accept that humans depend on these systems to create meaning and, at the same time, that meaning systems may be used to enhance and limit interpretive resources. Of further relevance is how to understand the relationship between stability and instability of subjects, meanings and norms, between repetition and innovation in cultural systems and how these dynamics are involved in the processes of construction, consolidation, or destabilization of world views.

The perspective of the (de)stabilization of meaning systems directs the analysis of the (inter)medial — i.e., visual-verbal texts — to questions about the articulation of different genres and expressive substances. In Mikhail Bakhtin's conception, communication always happens on the ground of the other. From this perspective, a distance, a difference between the two sides of communication is assumed. Each subject is meant to try to capture meaning and value systems, as well as the interests and affections of the other to get as close as possible to them in his/her expression in order to try to reach the interest of the partner. When placed "on the ground of the other" the subject speaks from a place that is no longer "his/hers," or that was previously his/hers, but is strictly "in between" (see Bhabha). It is a place of temporary meeting and disagreement between the different systems of meaning and affection involved — a place that needs to be rebuilt and challenged again and again. The idea of distance between the participants in communication is also present in some views of rhetoric. For example, Michel Meyer defines rhetoric as the negotiation of the distance between the subjects on an issue, a problem (22). Each system of meaning involved in communicative interaction is cultural and located in an area of shared knowledge and meaning perceived as a semiosphere, a meaning environment distinct of others. It is impossible to describe a culture as if it were an entity (a set of habits, norms, skills) attributable to different subjects in different places and times, so it is preferred to use an adjective, "cultural" versus the noun "culture" (see, e.g., Appadurai; Volli). This operation shifts the problem to the description of cultural systems, which are socially acquired and shared, but now we think of them as something that is updated on a particular statement placed in an encounter. In any situation, each individual is in a particular intersection of various social and cultural circles in which she/he participates, as an inhabitant of our complex societies. Therefore, rather than the uniqueness of the subject (such as individualism wants) or culture (as culturalism likes), I consider the singularity of the encounter and the text in which it is performed as a point of departure. The text is a singularity, but it cannot fail to highlight the cultural systems that participants use to construct and interpret the meaning of communication, as well as the translation, approach, and negotiation processes that occur in mutual interpretation.

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 3 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

Ferdinand de Saussure described systems of meaning as endowed with a constitutive tension between stability and change (although this has not been recognized until recently). Saussure writes in his notes that "Even if we do it constantly, in linguistics we are forbidden to speak of 'a thing' from different points of view, or a thing in general, because it's just the point of view that makes the thing … try to define *equos* (equal) outside a certain point of view" (Saussure 201). The view referred to is that of the statement and the meaning relations that it creates. Thus, the terms have values specific to that particular statement, but also preserve the memory of other uses, namely that memory is deposited in the habit system and in the meaning structure of each language that speakers use creatively to communicate. The notion of the meaning system as a network of connections stabilized in the memory of an interpretive community — but in constant motion because of its adaptability to new contexts — can be applied to different cultural systems other than verbal language, which may enable us, as Saussure himself wanted, to study the life of signs within social life. These systems — linguistic and otherwise, always intertwined — can be understood as having a recognizable dynamic organization, because every communication and every text selects or creates within it certain new routes, so that it participates in the whole and affects it. As Umberto Eco has suggested, "a text is not just a communication device. It is a device that puts into question the existing systems of meaning, it often renews them, sometimes destroys them" (38; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are mine).

It is understood today that all cultures (whatever they are) are the result of contacts, appropriations and hybridizations with diversity to the point that it becomes difficult to describe them as stable entities. This appears consistent with a vision of communication as the exchange of meaning between different systems that become contaminated and hybridized by their interaction. However, cultural systems do not form a continuum in which all transfers are equally likely and all paths going in one way or another are possible. That is why I consider relevant the phenomenon or the space of frontier. Some cultural differences are treated as non-negotiable in the interaction. This type of barrier is interpreted as a conflict of identity, with even bloody manifestations. It is the barrier that establishes the difference identity/otherness. Another type of cultural barrier and that is prevalent in the texts analyzed here acts as the limit of the world view, outside of which there is nothing, for what is not perceived does not exist. It establishes the ontological difference existent/non existent, or, in semiotic terms, the difference meaning/ nonsense. For Juri Lotman, closure and translation are fundamental aspects of culture: cultural space is understood as a semiosphere when there is a closure, that is, the texts of other spheres or outside "nonsense" need to be translated to the languages of the semiosphere to acquire reality (see *La Semiosfera*, "On the Semiosphere") — as what happens in the world needs to be translated to the languages of types of information to enter in news media. Translation is almost synonymous with that change in cultural systems enabling the emergence of new world views. But this is not the case with all forms of translation. What is new is to see the processes of meaning from the point of view of the translation, that is, the mediation between systems as Charles S. Peirce suggests (on this, see, e.g., Paolucci). Claudio Paolucci argues that Peirce's pragmatism is the way to build a theory of semiosis whose aim is to reach a general theory of the formation of habit of thought and of the transformation of these regularities, for which concepts of belief and doubt are fundamental: "The action of thought is excited by the irritation of doubt, and ceases when belief is attained; so that the production of belief is the sole function of thought" (Peirce 5 394) and "Doubt is an uneasy and dissatisfied state from which we struggle to free ourselves and pass into the state of belief; while the latter is a calm and satisfactory state which we do not wish to avoid, or to change to a belief in anything else" (Pierce 5 372). This vision captures the emotional dimension of clinging to belief, the satisfaction produced by the stability of the world view and the difficulty of changing it. But by highlighting the emotional difference, the change may appear as a gap between two very different states, belief-calm and doubt-anxiety.

Something similar to a radical incompatibility is also found in Lotman's reflections on the border between a semiosphere and what is perceived from it as non-culture. However, the boundaries and differences between semiospheres participate in the dynamism of texts and cultural exchange. This dynamism of semiotic diversity is essential but problematic and the intricate work of cultural translation can lead to conflicts and explosions. "[For Lotman], the untranslatable is a reserve of meaning to translate... is the opportunity for a creative explosion of metaphors" (Fabbri and Marrone 362). In

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 4 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

contrast, Bakhtin postulates that different languages can dialogue in our consciousness and in texts precisely because they carry different views about the world. Many changes in systems of meaning may require gradual procedures of infiltration or of mutual twist, rather than gaps, coexistence, and contamination. These are processes in which the games with the ambiguity in the subject position can be very important. Playful degradations, appreciative parodies, and sarcastic pleasantries are among Bakhtin's favourite examples. One of the problems that he is most concerned with is how appropriating and distancing herself/himself from the voices and systems of others, the subject constructs her position. Every statement shows that subjective way of marking the common languages. Looking at the interpretation of a text via the process of translation, the basic affective dispositions of the receiver are somewhere between the extremes of strangeness and familiarity, depending on the text presupposes systems of meaning that the receiver takes for granted or systems that are foreign to him. These perspectives may be illuminating when we try to focus in the analysis on the possibilities of "displacement, drift, invention or mediation, creating bonds that did not exist before" and amend the previous systems (Bruno Latour qtd. in Sánchez Leyva 350). To investigate how intermedial texts create new connections of feeling, imagination, and knowledge required to change the unquestioned assumptions from which humans think and act.

Analysis must take the perspective of the interpreter to understand what a text requires to communicate a meaning. However, I postulate that this view must be abandoned for another phase of analysis. For the interpreter, the most basic communicative exchange makes sense depending on the situation in which it occurs: "A situation is not just a state of affairs, or an intersubjective relationship that escapes history. It is defined and limited by the rules governing cultural and social arrangements in which it acquires its original meaning. In other words, a situation is an occurrence of a social practice" (Rastier 99). Thus, a cultural perspective on the analysis of an object or text implies that we put it in relation to memory and to the system of meaning in which it is embedded, but also to a world of social practices, rules, communicative trust-mistrust agreements that take shape in the set of genres and text types of a culture and are developed in its treasury of discourses, stories, and images. From this pragmatic perspective we understand that through communication, we act on the positions, feelings, and identities of the subjects, create obligations, celebrate, humiliate, give orders, and so on. But also act in other areas, renew, consolidate or create rules of conduct, meaning, and value systems, and social ties of the participating partners. Systems of meaning live in different contexts and drag the memory of practical and symbolic contexts and of practices that have created guidelines fluid but relatively stabilized and recognizable to the participants and the analyst.

This pragmatic perspective points to another fundamental aspect of the intermedial visual-verbal text. The meaning of a text is not captured as a sum of elements (images, words, etc.), but as a global communicative act oriented and endowed with intentionality. A text contains an interpretive hypothesis and provides that the recipient "fills the gaps" and that make possible an economy of meaning built on a flow of implicit assumptions. Thus, I try to describe the process of interpretation that every text implies, that is, those associations of meaning that the addressee must do to participate as a partner in the relationship which aims to establish with him/her the discourse. Or, what amounts to the same, what interpretive systems and operations the textual author counts on in order to communicate an overall meaning implying imaginative, cognitive and moral capacities. As memory connects the different senses involved in perception (we can remember the tone, gesture, the atmosphere that accompanied and framed a statement), the interpretation of visual-verbal texts moves the focus on different features of images and words, goes from the expression to the content and vice versa, so that the process allows hypotheses of lines of meaning and of the global sense of the text (on this, see, e.g., Lorusso) oriented by a question or problem. Thus, the first question for interpretation is this: "what is the point in this text?": every text raises a question, a problem, or, rather, meaning comes as a response to a question (see, e.g., Meyer). What is problematic and/or questionable of that response is implicit or presupposed and can only be opened as a problem by questioning such assumptions. Any object is always already mentioned and illuminated by what was said before about it and cannot be mentioned without commenting on those modes of understanding (see Bakhtin). About images, Gilles Deleuze suggests that the painter or artist always finds the cliché. The canvas or the page is not blank but it is full of clichés: everything that has been said and seen on the matter: "Any

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 5 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

intention points to a cliché. However, there is no painting without intention," that is, Cézanne does not have the same intention when he wants to paint an apple and when he wants to paint a woman (Deleuze 76).

For each speaker or textual author addressing an object is to take a position on the commonplace, the categories and models from which it has been seen and it is being devised. For the analyst is also inevitable to address this issue. However, to recognize the commonplace is only possible from the knowledge of local encyclopaedias (on the semiotic concept of encyclopaedia, see Eco 132). Semioticians do not deal with visual texts without asking for the "reading grid" (see Greimas), the cultural system of categories which allow the interpreter to recognize a figure or a cliché, or stories and models that give them meaning. Here, the analysis leaves the interpreter's point of view in order to describe it. The description of a system of meaning is done from somewhere outside that system: an exercise in *exotopía* often need to perform members of social worlds. The analysis needs that distance to see how the issue has been framed. How the text presupposes a categorical and narrative framework in which the issue may be presented as evident. That distant place, that other system, is not given: the analysis must move from the obvious, as taken for granted in the foreseen interpretation, to view the issue as controversial or as a controversy resolved in favour of one of the positions at stake. Verbal-visual texts discussed here often try to raise an issue which requires to persuade recipients that it is a matter of their interest. The effort of the textual imagination is directed to mobilizing that feeling in the addressee. The issue is constructed on the ground of the addressees, so that they perceive and feel it as their own. It is possible to see in the texts the power struggle to define the issues, the conflicts and the actors who are affected by it and need to be informed. This means to define public affairs and even the public as political agency.
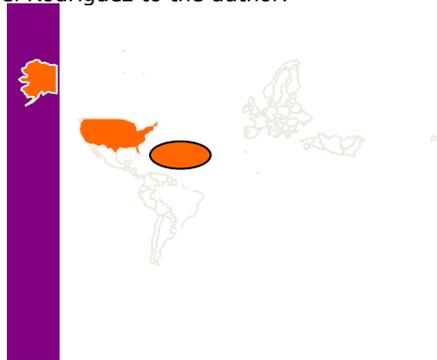
In order to develop my above reasoning, I present and discuss several examples. My first example is an advertising page in the magazine of the Brazilian airline Varig <http://www.rosariobarquin.com/Rosario%20Barquin%20English/RBarquin-WImage.html>.   More than half of the page is covered with the image of a hand holding in its fingertips a small globe of the earth of the size of a marble, highlighted on a very light background. Under this photo a blue band with the text: "O efeito da globalizaçâo para quem exporta pela Varig Cargo" ("this is the effect of globalization for whomever Varig Cargo exports") and "Varig Cargo, a trasportadora que deixa o mundo ao seu alcance" ("Varig Cargo, the carrier that leaves the world at your fingertips"). At the bottom of the page, we see another white box with the logo — VARIG CARGO — with some lines in small print. The image of the hand catches the attention and the mentioned text, immediately readable and thus "anchors" its meaning. The question is, therefore, globalization — rhetorically presented here as a child's play, a game of marbles. As often done in advertising, this text seeks to seduce and flatter the addressee. It addresses explicitly exporters, but may attract the interest of any recipient curious. The image of the large hand holding the small globe presents a model of globalization. The view proposed is that of an observer looking at his own hand up to his eyes holding the little earth. Earth represents both the planet where to travel or export to and all the problems it entails. All minimized to the power of my hand (the hand of a male giant off-screen, if I am a woman I understand that I am also part of that great male subject). As an observer I must assume the standpoint of self: "I can" handle this problem with the help of the advertised service. Both the image of earth as the issue of globalization are objects stressed referring to common knowledge. This text may be part of a series of images, for this representation of earth is often found, for example, in information media and in the presentation of television news programs where a miniaturized earth revolves, changes quickly scale, and merges with the name-brand logo, etc. And all of which is to suggest the power of the media company that, like the panopticon, observes, maps, and manages everything that happens on the planet (more on this, see Peñamarín). However, my interest here does not lie in identifying the coded figures of speech and representation: in the Varig advertisement the visual text translates the verbal metaphor "to have the world in their hands," but it is not a creative translation to displace cultural systems of meaning and propose a new point of view. That is, the hyperbolic and rhetoric image does not break, but reinforces the previous systems of meaning and value. The repetition of these topics is significant, because seeing too much is like not to see. The text takes the common image of earth and frames it in the same assumption that have made a translocal commonplace out of it, inserted in a

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 6 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

tale of conquest and domination of space, told here from its glorious final moment: humans dominate earth and can now enjoy the benefits they are entitled to. It individualizes these assumptions and associates them with a product able to "globalize" and "brand" it. In this sense it builds an euphoric discourse, which is implicitly in contrast with those other discourses which focus on the problems of globalization and the question of human relationship with earth.

My second example is the cover — entitled "America's World" — of *The Economist* of 23 October 1999. The cover is almost completely a world map, but it is peculiar in that the U.S. is of a huge size in relation to other territories. There are a few words dotted on the map — "huntin'," "surfin'," "fishin'," fightin'," "exploitin'" — with vectors pointing indexically to places in that represented world. This map constructs a form of visual discourse suggesting a humorous interpretation from its title "America's World," a meta-text that provides the key to its reading. It foresees an addressee whose cultural memory, as well as the ability to understand maps and associate them with the territories they represent, is used to establish relations of meaning between the order of the visible and the meanings and values, here particularly in relation to the dimensions: large (as powerful, relevant, valuable) vs. small (insignificant, irrelevant, worthless). In addition, the text is an echo of the old jokes about the national character of either country. With these common resources, the text offers a curious game with the point of view. The disproportionate map — the U.S. as a hypertrophy in relation to the rest of the world — is understandable from the title as the world seen by US-Americans (or, more precisely, the average US-American) — indicated by the colloquial spelling of the words on the map (it is of note that *The Economist* always refers to the U.S. as "America" when in fact America is a continent with several cultures and countries and thus the use of "America" when referring to the U.S. is cultural and hegemonial appropriation [see, e.g., McClennen]). This ironic discourse simulates the adoption of a point of view and shows that it is not assumed by the speaker as his/her own, for he/she does not share its presuppositions. The reader notes the irony when, as the intended addressee, associates the discourse with a meaning that is not only cognitive but also ethical for it shows the values involved in this statement position: that a country considers the world as worthless, that their inhabitants value it only in certain places because of their activities based on them is not something that can be held openly and publicly although it is implied that within the U.S. it can be taken for granted. Thus, this vision does not understand the rest of the world as an equal implies an ethical and political attitude. The "author," whether an individual or a collective constructs the text dialogically with the addressees' systems of meaning including presupposed meanings that are associated with the objects as they are proposed rhetorically in the text and in the images of their subjects.

My third example is a map of Puerto Rico:

Figure 1: "Puerto Rico Information Map," Rodríguez, Israel. *La colonización de la mirada. Un análisis de la información internacional en la prensa de Puerto Rico*. Madrid: Complutense U, 2010: 68. Copyright release by Israel Rodríguez to the author.

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 7 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

   This map displays some results of a media study of state-wide newspapers in Puerto Rico in se-
lected periods in 2010 (see Rodríguez). The study shows something that occurs in Puerto Rico as
elsewhere: the media in each country or region can be different, but they surely share a way to place
their audience in the centre of attention. Media places most attention towards "domestic" issues (in
red color on the map) with attention to countries close or neighbours (in white color), not in the geo-
graphical sense but in the cognitive and affective one (Appadurai), with occasional attention to macro
events that occur in other places of "the world," for example references to large number of deaths
because of disasters. This image is an invention that allows us to see the unseen. Omission on the
world map territories we know makes visible what is invisible in the discourses of information which
supposedly give us information about what "relevant" matters occur in the world. At a glance, it con-
tradicts the assumptions which underlie our understanding of news media. The meaning of this image
is attached to a work of documentation and analysis, without which it would be just a bizarre occur-
rence. Thus the map suggests analytical discourse. With its translation in the form of the map at hand,
analytic discourse provides a meaningful perceptual experience. The addressee is located simultane-
ously within the news discourse of the state of Puerto Rico and outside of it, thus "seeing" the places
that that discourse privileges and/or omits. This extends the cognitive and evaluative resources of the
recipients, their competence in understanding public information, and puts them in a position from
which to compare all the information they receive and react to it. It makes visible the constructed
nature of identity and otherness, self and foreign. What is absent and who do not exist for us is some-
thing that must be so carefully constructed and repeated as the locality itself. Informative discourses
without fail meet this fundamental discipline of placing their addressee as an "us" endowed with refer-
ences common to members of their community. They build a community of meaning at the cognitive,
emotional, ethical, and political levels. The map suggest questions about local visions of the global:
what common world views are shaped today when each country or place is ignored by all others, ex-
cept for the small group of its "close" to it.
   My fourth example is a United Nations environment map of CO2 emissions ("Kick the Habit"
<http://www.unep.org/pdf/ourplanet/OP_WEDMAY08.pdf>). This map is another case of translation of
data used as display. On the map Japan is much bigger than Australia, for example. On the map we
read that "Country size is proportionate to national carbon dioxide emissions in 2004" and headed by
the text of "Total CO2 emissions. From fossil-fuel burning, cement production and gas flaring." By
translating the amount of CO2 emissions to the relative size of the countries on the map intends to
add an imaginative dimension to the knowledge of an aspect of the world. Some of the inequalities
between the countries of the world can now be perceived at a glance. As in example 3, this image is
part of scientific discourse and without such lacks value and clarity. We understand that the title refers
to such data allowing the reader an approximate reading without consulting the study and assuming
that the reader would expect the calculations that justify it are well done and that the visible propor-
tions correctly translate reliable data. The scientific discourse implied on the map puts us in a dialogi-
cal relationship different from the one proposed in the examples 1 and 2 (i.e., scientific discourse is
addressed to fellow scientists in their field and provides them with sufficient information so that either
of them can check and discuss their results). However, it is not just a scientific discourse. UNEP re-
ports are based on serious scientific research, but also seek an informative effect, addressed to recipi-
ents larger than that formed by the scientific community of scholars. Further, scientific discourse is
hybridized with informative and persuasive discourse in this text (see Fonseca). And the break in dis-
cursive boundaries — which also affects the frontiers between potential recipients and the effects it
can achieve on them — is obtained in this case with a common image, a world map, and a frequent
rhetorical device in pictures, thus changing dimensions of knowledge perception. With these resources
it allows the recipient to perceive and understand both the fragility of the planet's environment and
the contribution of each country to its deterioration. The recipient becomes a member of the commu-
nity of people who are aware of an issue that concerns them.
   My fifth example is about discourses about every-day life: the "Greenpeace Grasshopper"
(<http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/greenpeace_grasshopper?size=_original>). In a black verti-
cal rectangle, a zone of light occupies the lower third with the image of a grasshopper whose body is

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 8 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

made up of green beans. In the upper right corner there is a small text: "Do you know what you eat? The DNA of genetically modified plants may contain the genes of insects, animals or even viruses. These products may potentially cause harm to your health. Look for a 'GMO free' sign on the package. Greenpeace." This image is not difficult to understand without the accompanying verbal text. It is readable as representing a hybrid of insect and plant, which we assume to be imaginary, at least for now. Without presenting an image of the world, the text aims to change the image of the world we live in: make us see how what is seemingly irrelevant is loaded with dangerous consequences and it aims to address aesthetic, emotional, and intelligible levels of interpretation. This is because the composition of the black background on which the figure of the grasshopper under light occupies a small space at the bottom, thus producing a dysphoric effect. But it is especially when placed in the context of the issue of GMOs referred to in the verbal text that the grasshopper acquires a meaning of menace. After reading the statements, the image can be understood as representing one of the possible hybrid beings that can populate the planet and on our plate. The image can represent a worrying today and a disturbing future: the assumed borders stabilized between the natural and the social — controlled common foods — have already been destroyed. Genetic mutation has already taken place and can be found in the beans we eat, thus suggesting that humans can be mutants. The overall meaning of the text presupposes a conception of human consumers, insects, plants, researchers, laboratories, and companies that sell genetically modified seeds, and so on, as part of an interdependent and fragile ecosystem. Human subjects addressed in this text have become familiar with the impact of their style of consumption which implies the moral question of whether or not to take responsibility for the consequences of their acts.

My sixth and last example is "Amnesty International Signature" <http://www.metacafe.com/watch/728017/amnesty_international_signature/>). This text combines photography, drawing, and verbal statement: photo of the corner, floor, and ceiling of an empty and not very clean room. Near the corner there is a man sitting on the floor with his back against the wall and his head resting on folded arms on one knee bent. On the wall behind him an open door is drawn with signatures on it. There is only a short note written at the bottom of the image: "A signature is more powerful than you think." Here, the image is perceived differently after reading the accompanying verbal text. Our visual perception comes first combining similar elements in a "stain" whose form we recognize as the iconic image of an open door (on this, see also Groupe μ 67). Only in a second stage of interpretation do we disassociate the components of the door and perceive the many different signatures that compose it. Only after making an assumption about the overall meaning of the text — when looking in the image for the signature referred to in the verbal statement — this element is identified in the image and found significant by the receiver with regard to the meaning of the text. Seeing the door drawn on the photo surface becomes clear that there is really not a door in the room photographed and thus we interpret it as a prison or place of confinement (in the absence of that suggestion, the space lacks features that characterize it as a prison). This leads to other associations of meaning, for a prison where a person is confined and has no window or furniture (bed, sink, etc.) is a place where prisoners have no rights. Thus, we are confronted by the implicit and explicit postulate as to why Amnesty International is asking for signatures: to free prisoners treated unjustly. The text contradicts some previous ideas of the addressee on the power of individual action in order to change a state of affairs. The imaginative leap suggested is framed by the promise of a great result for little effort: once the individual joins others with the help of the organization, mediator, and manager of the signature contributions (see Saiz Echezaretta). This is a dramatic story about one aspect of the world with a possible happy ending if/when the reader/recipient accepts the proposal to act. But it clearly shifts the concept of power, for the agency takes here the form of a swarm, a cloud, a collective agency driven by a common goal.

In conclusion, it is not easy to find persuasive ways to change our thinking, feeling, and acting. Or to introduce a question, as some of the intermedial texts examined here try to do. The texts analyzed suggest situated practices which, in turn, propose a meaningful interpretive experience, a vision of the object that implicitly or explicitly dialogues with other views and other forms of organization of meaning systems. In the particular combination of words and images conceptions of the world are chal-

Cristina Peñamarín, "Dialogue between Meaning Systems in Intermedial Texts"   page 9 of 9
CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.3 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/9>
Thematic issue *New Perspectives on Material Culture and Intermedial Practice*.
Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Asunción López-Varela, Haun Saussy, and Jan Mieszkowski

lenged or promoted. The (inter)medial strategy for a plurality of receivers makes relevant some associations in the wealth of anonymous virtual memory with cognitive, imaginative, and emotional records. This type of focus may open the question of how intermedial texts are involved creatively in understanding and discussing issues which concern our world.

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