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Centro Internazionale di Studi Umanistici "Umberto Eco"

Ciclo di incontri "Temi echiani"

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**Sull'iconismo. Tra Charles S. Peirce e
Umberto Eco**

Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen, Eco, Fiction and Paradisiacal Graphs

The apparent inconsistency presented by fiction is that there are things true-in-fiction yet false-in-the-world. This has been grappled by many, including J. Woods and U. Eco. The latter's earnest answer to whether the slip of paper in *Foucault's Pendulum* was indeed a grocery list – "I don't know" (cf. Auxier 2017) – reveals another option: fiction, orthogonal to the real possibilities of the world, doesn't permit authors to decide upon such matters, even if they were fully determinate. So how do we deal with logic and reasoning when fiction is at issue? What are the semantic domains, values and representations? This paper discusses the potential of Peirce's existential graphs to undertake such tasks. In the light of those possibilities, Eco's dismissal of icons and logical graphs might have been premature: they may be suitable for reasoning about fictions after all, as soon as values are generalized from truth and falsity to "(un)scriptibility" and would start off from highly limited, paradisiacal cases.

Frederik Stjernfelt, *Iconicities*

Iconicity has been something of an apple of discord in modern semiotics. Structuralists claimed it (almost) did not exist; Umberto Eco famously changed his mind in "Kant and the Platypus". This talk reviews the issues, going back to the original discussions in Peirce and Morris, arguing that the core of the problem lies in *similarity* as definition of iconicity. Similarity is devious because visual resemblance seems so easy to understand and process to human beings – while a more general, species-independent understanding of the term is not necessarily easy.

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