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Questioning ourselves about the extreme

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Il significato che diamo al senso dell'estremo dipende dal divenire del linguaggio. A che punto siamo in questo divenire?

To reflect on impervious meaning is to consider the **transformation of languages, meaning, and interpretations** as we move toward the extreme. This is a trend that often manifested itself in the history of religious and ethical ideologies, but is taking on new connotations as conditions and communication technologies change. First step in grasping the traits of impervious meaning is therefore to **question ourselves about the extreme**, and its ideological version, extremism, as well as the polarizations it implies.

"**Extremism"** is a term and concept that does not designate a precise, determined and definitive position in the semiosphere (the abstract area in which a community produces, manages and circulates meaning). As the very etymology of the word suggests, **its meaning is inherently topological and relational**. Something can only be extreme by situating itself at the periphery of a spectrum, at the edge of an area of potentiality. The term and the corresponding concept, moreover, signal that this spectrum, as well as this area, are not arranged neutrally, but contain at least a dialectic and, consequently, a polarization. In other words, the term "extremism" implicitly refers to an axiology, which also includes the impossibility of not adopting a perspective, a point of view.

Therefore, when something is qualified as an expression of "extremism," this qualification inherently highlights that: (1) this something, be it a statement or behavior, **can be compared and measured against other similar events** in the semiosphere; (2) all such **events can be arranged along a spectrum**, in relation to the relevance that determines their commensurability; and (3) **those** who regard the statement or behavior as **extreme believe that they have the right to position themselves at the center of the spectrum, and simultaneously to place what they judge at either end of it**. The short text linked to this editorial investigates precisely the meaning of "extremism" in current communication, and its relation to the imperviousness of meaning it produces.

PERMALINK

https://magazine.fbk.eu/en/news/questioning-ourselves-about-the-extreme/

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