ABSTRACT
This article starts from the concept of event brought by Greimas, which gave rise to two
trends: Landowski’s sociosemiotics, which debates the interaction and meaning regimes
without privileging the event, and tensive semiotics, by Zilberberg and Fontanille,
which operates with the concept of events based on tensivity. We will examine the
theses presented against the use of the concept and deepen the theory of events using
the theory of Alain Badiou. This allows us to think about such transformations brought
about by the event considering the role of the body, the subject, truth, and antagonism
from interaction and tension regimes and how new communicational processes can be
engendered in the post-event.
Keywords: Event, antagonism, interaction regimes

RESUMO
Este artigo parte do conceito de acontecimento de Greimas, que originou duas tendências:
a da sociosemiótica de Landowski, que debate os regimes de interação e sentido sem
privilegiar o acontecimento, e a da semiótica tensiva de Zilberberg e Fontanille, que opera
com o conceito de acontecimento a partir da tensividade. Examinaremos as teses
apresentadas contra o uso do conceito e aprofundaremos a teoria do acontecimento
recorrendo à teoria de Alain Badiou. Isso permite pensarmos tais transformações
trazidas pelo acontecimento considerando o papel do corpo, do sujeito, da verdade e
do antagonismo, a partir dos regimes de interação e da tensividade, e como podem ser
engendrados novos processos comunicacionais no pós-acontecimento.
Palavras-chave: Acontecimento, antagonismo, regimes de interação

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.11606/issn.1982-8160.v16i1p35-58
V.16 - Nº 1  jan./abr. 2022  São Paulo - Brasil  JOSÉ LUIZ AIDAR PRADO p. 35-58
In the field of communication, the theme of the event has allowed the examination of processes from numerous theories, such as Vera França’s pragmatism at GRIS (França & Oliveira, 2012), Ciro Marcondes Filho’s (2010) new theory of communication, and others related to cinema, to journalism with numerous authors, such as Vogel et al. (2013), to name just a few. The aim of the present text is not to depart from this state of the art, although that would be an extremely fruitful path; the aim here is to examine the theory of the event as we thematize the discursive regimes of interaction in French semiotics.

For this, before entering this debate, we will recall the sources of the theory of the event and how this theme historically emerged within French semiotics. The theme of the event is dear to French thought. Deleuze approached it in *Logic of Sense* in 1969. Badiou published *Being and Event* in 1985. Heidegger’s hermeneutics approaches it from the meditation of the *Ereignis*, between us translated as *appropriative event*.

Our intention is not to connect all these meanings of event but to focus our attention on the internal debate of Greimasian semiotics. Greimas arrived late on this subject. In this text, I will follow the confrontation that takes place in Greimasian semiotics in relation to the interpretation of the concept of event, introduced by Greimas in 1987 in the book *De l’Imperfection* (2002). With this, it will be possible to extract the differences between two conceptions of event that derived from this book by Greimas. We will see how these differences will be important to situate the category of interaction, which is fundamental for discussing the political dimensions of communication and sociability. Finally, we will propose a conception of event closer to Alain Badiou’s theory but crossed by discussion with works by Landowski and Fontanille.

The old semiotic models of narrativity do not allow us to understand the current communicational processes that permeate society in all its magnitude and have given way to research on forms of life, body and meaning, event and discourse, and interaction and affection regimes. This did not happen only due to an internal process of the theory but mainly due to processes of cultural transformation. On the one hand, the economic production of sign-value penetrates the construction of all types of capital, from the financial to the capital of the self, based on the performance and enjoyment criteria of neoliberalism and biopolitics (Dardot & Laval, 2016). On the other hand, the transition from the culture of production to the culture of consumption of communicational capitalism (Dean, 2005; Fontenelle, 2017; Prado & Prates, 2017) gave rise to changes in the circulation of texts at all levels and practices, causing the old analyses of texts as closed in themselves.
(there is no salvation outside the text, semioticians used to say) gave way to analyses of objects under construction, affected by the ups and downs of the meanings in social fields; it was also necessary to face the fact that communications began to appeal not only to the intelligible, but increasingly to the sensitive of bodies. It is also necessary to emphasize that, in addition to these two spheres, there is the fact that traditional truth regimes have been under political attack, for example, against the models which characterize our activity in the social sciences.

What is an object under construction? Paolo Demuru (2019) says: “everything that is part of the field of pertinence necessary for its constitution as an object of meaning” (p. 82). This goes for texts and practices. Demuru does not start from Merleau-Ponty’s assertion that we are doomed to meaning nor of the change proposed by Landowski: we are condemned to construct meaning. The proposal becomes: “we are not condemned either to meaning, nor to building meaning, but rather to rebuild meaning” (p. 83). But is condemnation a good figure for this current situation of the hypermedia society in which the senses circulate vertiginously based on summons? Condemnation recalls the movement of Sisyphus, who was punished by the gods to incessantly carry a stone to the top of the mountain but the stone rolls downhill and he has to start the climb again. Are we, like Sisyphus, condemned to ceaselessly carry the stone of meaning? Or is there another way of asking about the incessant task of marking the world that produces meanings? When studying the messages circulating on the networks, we must necessarily face this reconstruction of meaning but not as a condemnation.

**AESTHESIA AND EVENT**

*De l’Imperfection* (1987/2002) is the last book by Greimas, without considering the ones he co-authored. In this book, he takes a turn in his semiotic theory, which had been centered on narrativity. He begins his analysis with Michel Tournier’s (1967/2014) 1967 book, *Friday or the Limbs of the Pacific*, in which the protagonist (Robinson) ordered his life “according to the rhythm of the drops of water that fell one by one of an improvised clepsydra (water clock)” (Greimas, 1987/2002, p. 23) but suddenly found himself “awakened by the unusual silence that revealed to him the noise of the last drop falling into the copper basin” (Greimas, 1987/2002, p. 23). “He then found that the next drop, ‘resolutely refusing to fall,’ even ‘outlined a reversal of the course of time’” (Greimas, 1987/2002, p. 23). A wonder involved him with this suspension of time. It is an aesthetic event, an exceptional event.
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aesthetic apprehension, which shakes Robinson to the point where his body falters and he has to lean against a threshold. Greimas (1987/2002) says: “The apprehension itself is conceived as a particular relationship established, in the actantial framework, between a subject and an object of value” (p. 25). It is not a natural relation:

its primary condition is the stop in time, figuratively marked by the silence that abruptly follows everyday time, represented as a rhythmic noise. This silence corresponds to a sudden stop of all movement in space, an immobilization of the world-object, of the world of things that hitherto did not cease “inclining . . . towards its use – and its usury” . . . The suspension of time and the petrification of space are marked twice by the word “suddenly” [soudain], which underlines an unpredictable punctuality, which creates a discontinuity in the discourse and a rupture in the represented life. (Greimas, 1987/2002, pp. 25-26)

The subject had been following a habit, a disposition, attached to certain self-identities linked to discourses until a sudden event allows him to see something different about himself and the world. There is a rupture: a gap appears, a change in the regime of expectations and dispositions, something of the order of the sensitive of the body, not just of the intelligible, of the idea.

Greimas performs several analyses of aesthetic events of this type in the book, which we will not detail. What interests us is Landowski’s reading of the directions taken by semiotics after this book by Greimas. For Landowski (2017), after this book, it was possible to overcome the sensible-intelligible dualism:

Just as the sensible not only “feels” (by definition) but also has, or rather makes sense, inversely what “understands” – the intelligible, the sense itself – in itself embodies the sensible. This means that the meaning, in a way, would already be present in what the senses allow us to feel or perceive. (p. 105)

According to Fontanille (2019), this book by Greimas inaugurated the possibility of

writing semiotics in another way, not at a distance, after objectification and through the screen of metalanguage, but in a way in immersion in the object of analysis, an immersion that allows rediscovering the sensitive experience from which an interpretation is possible. (p. 157)

Beividas (2016) also addresses this shift in semiotics:
The text was replaced first by the subject of the enunciative praxis, subject in action, subject in situation, and then by an ascension movement towards the source, by the body itself as the first instance of the pre-conditions of emergence of perception and, therefore, of the sense, as a place of necessary mediation in the passage “from states of affairs” to “states of the soul” in a significant world. In short, it is the (definitive?) entry of a body of flesh in the corpus of discourse (or in its replacement?). (para. 5)

In our reading, the novelty of De l’Imperfection (1987/2002) is a kind of late post-structuralization of Greimasian semiotics, a change of focus, which had been placed in a fixed structure, and shifts to the event, which has the consequence of softening the structures (the semiotic square), which Jameson (1975) had called the “prison-house of language.” The abstract enunciator becomes incarnated, in this new phase of theory, in a perceptual body, which demands that semioticians start to experiment phenomenological approaches, without which it would be difficult to try to overcome the sensitive-intelligible dualism.

INTERACTION REGIMES

Landowski (2017) builds his interpretation of De l’Imperfection (1987/2002) through the theory of interaction regimes and criticizes the other strand, which he calls “catastrophist”, in which the appearance of the aesthetic would have the status of an “accidental event” (p. 106). Let us see how he synthesizes this current:

it all starts with the appearance of an actant-subject characterized by the state of “need” in which he finds himself. It is anchored in the “daily routines” and, without him noticing it clearly, it lacks something that he would hardly know how to define, but which, in opposition to the “prosaic” aspect of what he is experiencing, can only be conceived as something “dazzling.” Only some unexpected event would be capable of making him suddenly apprehend, “under the guise of things,” another, more authentic sense: a sense that would give him access to “another” world, in which, finally, he would be able to recognize himself. Once the state of “waiting for the unexpected” is installed in the hero’s soul in this way, the event, the so-called accident itself, can occur. It is this irruption that will constitute the nucleus of the following sequence, that is, of the decisive scene. (p. 107)

After this emergence, this allegedly mistaken theoretical current (by Fontanille and Zilberberg) would consider that the event would fade and
begin what Landowski (2017) calls “a retrogradation” to a state similar to the first, “either because the subject cannot withstand the force of the occurred,” or because “the glow has vanished by itself” (p. 107). It would return the subject to an everyday life that is more de-semanticized than the initial one. Let us see: “the only thing that the hero of this adventure will ultimately gain will be nostalgia or the ‘aftertaste’ of the sensitive presence of meaning, glimpsed only for an instant” (p. 107). For Landowski, this model lacks explanatory value, as it does not bring to understanding the modes of articulation between the three states and the corresponding forms of apprehension of meaning, and, as a consequence, reinforces the dualism that it intends to overcome. According to him, this vision – which he calls accidental – seems romantic, but in fact it is “unionistic:” “on the one hand, the days of work and routine, the everyday; on the other hand, rare ‘out of the ordinary’ moments: the so-called escapes, moments of bliss that, breaking the continuity of the prosaic, would encourage the worker to face another week…” (p. 108).

Then he asks: “What meaning should we assign, in this context, to the vocabulary felt?” (Landowski, 2017, p. 109). Is the meaning “which ‘reveals’ in ecstasy the same as that which is presupposed when talking about its ‘wear,’ and that which allows itself to be captured thanks to the ‘shudder’ produced by contact with certain sensitive qualities of the world?” (Landowski, 2017, p. 109).

He goes on to say:

In the same way that the subject defines itself as an empty place in which two states totally alien to each other are manifested each in its turn, the notion of meaning also presents itself devoid of fixed content since, as we have observed, it refers alternately to two ways of meaning that have nothing in common. (Landowski, 2017, p. 109)

For Landowski (2017), the event is understood as an instantaneous happening in which there is a rupture of a state linked to

a purely “denotative” signification regime in relation to a “flattened” life, which would explain why, paradoxically, in Greimas’ terms, the meaning is considered de-semanticized – while the alternative regime, the one in which it makes possible the advent of an “other” meaning, is described as full of “dazzling” content, the apprehension of which would allow one to glimpse, in addition to the appear, the very being of things. (Landowski, 2017, p. 110)

For him, this is a “decidedly flattened;” “substantially catastrophic,” “formally catastrophic” conception, “not only of life, but also of poetry and of aesthetics
itself” (Landowski, 2017, p. 110). He claims not to fall into the dualism pointed out in this reading (the theory of the event in the way of Zilberberg, 2011) and seeks to think of meaning in a constructivist way, emphasizing intentionality (opposing the randomness of the accident) and progressiveness (opposing the punctuality of the event). In this Landowskian reading, meaning will no longer be sought only in the punctual moment of ecstasy, of intensity, but in “everyday behavior” (Landowski, 2017, p. 111). The subject is no longer waiting for the unexpected but starts to “actively exercise a practice aimed at approaching this objective” (Landowski, 2017, p. 111). It is committed to an aesthetic action, in terms of what is lived, choosing its actions in order to build an object of value. This sought-after aesthetic value is no longer something providentially given to the subject, but a construction to be carried out, to be constructed. He appeals to the second part of *De l’Imperfection* (1987/2002), in which Greimas proposes something “more motivating, another adventure, less spectacular than that of someone who realizes – or loses – in the esthesia understood as an ecstatic experience, but also less conventional” (Landowski, 2017, p. 113). This would be, according to Landowski (2017), “a path out of all sentimentality and away from any transcendence, a positive path that points to the methodical construction of the aesthetic sense” (p. 113). In this way, *De l’ Imperfection* (1987/2002) would bring us the development of “an intelligence of the sensitive” (p. 116). He says:

more concretely, we are witnessing a work of edification, or even semiotic education: a kind of self-learning that aims at a better mastery of the latent competence that each one has to feel the presence of the other (in any of its possible ways) while apprehending what makes sense in this way. (Landowski, 2017, p. 116)

**INTERACTIONS**

In Landowski (2017), interaction is always linked to meaning, based on four types of regimes: programming, manipulation, accident, and adjustment. The previous narrative semiotics thematized the junction regime, in which intersubjective relations are mediated by objects of value, “with which one must enter into conjunction or disjunction” (p. 116). Both logics are inscribed in an existential constellation that Landowski defines as the constellation of prudence, that is, in a universe where the risk of unexpected, new, and unusual meanings arising (from interactional processes) is circumscribed and can be relatively controlled (risk minimum in the case of programming and limited in the case of manipulation). (Demuru, 2019, p. 85)
In that first phase of semiotics, two types of interaction were differentiated: that based on programmed actions, in which regularity is exercised, and that based on strategic manipulation, in which there is a relationship between subjects who try to reach an agreement about something in the world, in which intentionality dominates (cf. Landowski, 2014, p. 19). Landowski (2014) introduces two other regimes based on the logic of union: that of adjustment, based on the sensibility of interactants, and that of accident, linked to chance. Let us see how he characterizes each of these regimes. The programming regime is based on making being:

an electronic device, for example, has a “program,” an animal has its instincts . . . so many other thematic roles that not only semantically delimit particular spheres of action, but which, in certain contexts, will allow us to anticipate even in the smallest details the behaviors of actors (human or not) who are invested in them. . . . From the factory or the laboratory to the kitchen, it is in this way by programming operations that consist in taking advantage of behavioral regularities – in other words, virtual programs – characteristic of objects taken as raw material, that we build new objects every day of all kinds, starting with modest soups. (Landowski, 2014, pp. 22-23)

However, when two subjects have to negotiate the meanings of a given situation, when one has to make the other do what he wants, then the regime is one of manipulation. The certainties of the programming regime give rise to relative uncertainty: “From recording interactions based on one or another of the principles of regularity – causal or social – that all programming presupposes, we now move to another regime, of a manipulative (or strategic) type, based on a principle of intentionality” (Landowski, 2014, p. 25). It is the territory of doing things: an agent can tempt the interlocutor, promise reward, argue, flatter, provoke, etc. “Whatever it is, the manipulator always proposes to the other one form or another of exchange – economic bargaining or blackmail on honor, or at least on self-love” (Landowski, 2014, p. 27). To achieve his ends, he can be tempting, overbearing, threatening, flattering, seductive or provocative. Both are subjects but their thematic roles are, as Landowski (2014) says, “specialized functions, whose characteristic consists in not communicating directly with each other” (p. 28). We are still in a strategy regime but no longer in the program order, involving a type of communication in which there are movements from one party or another to direct the behavior and action of the other. There is still no adjustment, communicative action based on understanding and considering the movements of the other understood as an intentional otherness. Landowski explains:
Suppose that, caught at fault on the road, I find no arguments to objectively justify my conduct. What kind of persuasion strategy to adopt in a situation like this so that the angry policeman . . . turns a blind eye? Try to seduce him? Too risky. Trying to threaten him? Flatter him? . . . As we can see, every strategic choice essentially expresses the way the manipulator builds the competence (volitional, deontic, cognitive, epistemic, etc.) of the other and the way he locates the sensible points, flaws or critical zones, susceptible, in their eyes, to make their interlocutor manipulated. (pp. 29-30)

If, in the programming regime, subjects are limited to “following to the letter the routes and narrative programs pre-established by some enunciator-recipient” (Demuru, 2019, p. 84), be it leader, teacher, priest, auditor, government or coach, in the manipulation regime we see “a sender who seeks to lead an interlocutor to want or to do something and act according to his plans” (Demuru, 2019, p. 85). If this interlocutor accepts the proposed contract, he/she must engage “as a subject, in a certain narrative program, then acquiring modal-type competences (being able to do, knowing how to do)” (Demuru, 2019, p. 85).

Let us now consider the two other regimes that characterize the logic of union: adjustment and accident. In these cases, interaction and meaning no longer depend on the mediation of objects of value but “are built through direct contact, contagion, body to body and sensible co-presence – immediate between one subject and another, either this other a human subject in flesh and blood, an object, a space etc.” (Demuru, 2019, p. 85). Here we have the constellation of adventure, no longer of prudence. The accident regime presents a high level of risk, being characterized as nonsense, in which “chance breaks out in its purest form, as in the case of earthquakes and other natural disasters, leaving us stunned and astonished” (Demuru, 2019, p. 85). But a subject can accept this risk, “electing it as the north of their daily lives and interactions, as in the case of those who practice extreme sports in contemporary cities” (Demuru, 2019, p. 85).

In the adjustment regime, there are greater perspectives for creating meaning in the interaction itself, according to Landowski (2014):

An interaction is of a programmatic order when, to reach its ends, it is sufficient for the actor to rely on certain preexisting, stable and knowable determinations of the behavior of the other. Now, in interactions that depend on adjustment, the actor with whom one interacts is characterized . . . by the fact that its behavior obeys its own dynamic, but this dynamic . . . is not reducible, as in the previous case,
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the pre-established and objective laws. It is, on the contrary, in the interaction itself, depending on what each of the participants finds and, more precisely, feels in the way their partner or opponent acts, that the principles of interaction gradually emerge. (p. 48)

In this case, actors are not limited to a thematic role but have an open action to which the other adjusts as the interaction takes place. Demuru (2019) differentiates two types of adjustment. In the first one, which he calls interaction between equals, “interacting subjects build, from their aesthetic competences, by feeling each other, a relationship that can lead to mutual realization” (p. 86). The example here is that of a dance: “one can dance following pre-established steps (programming), or seeking to impose a style on the partner” (manipulation); or one can dance “adjusting oneself sensitively to the partner, seeking to be realized not independently of the other but only ‘through the realization of the other dancer’” (p. 86). Demuru speaks of a second type of adjustment, understood as a subject’s response to attempts to program and manipulate his existence:

In this case, we are no longer facing an interaction between equals, but between subjects situated in different positions of power. Here, there is resistance, through progressive adjustments, from one subject to another subject who intends and tends to dominate him (another subject in flesh and blood, a city, a situation, but also a government or a period of political and democratic crisis like the one we are experiencing today in Brazil). It is a style of conduct – and of life – that Landowski compares to Sun Tzu’s art of war, to the Russian general Kutuzov’s inertia before the Napoleonic army, and to the Afghan guerrilla that destabilized the US armada, in other words, to a military practice, which consists in “letting, as far as possible, the other follow his own propensity in order to take advantage of it, precisely adjusting to his or her movements.” (p. 86)

In Landowski, these four regimes shift: we can go from a programming regime, based on regularity, seeking security against risk, to a regime of adjustment, based on sensitivity and aesthetic competence, more insecure, whose regime of meaning is to make to feel, and finally to a regime of accident, based on randomness, with pure risk, and with a regime of meaning of folly. Another possible path is to move from the accident regime to manipulation, based on modal competence and intentionality, with a meaning regime with limited risk, and finally to programming.
TENSIVITY

The other current of semiotics that opened from De l’Imperfection (1987/2002) is tensive semiotics, which is the path called “catastrophist” by Landowski. I will appeal to a text by Fontanille (2019) in which he synthesizes this theory – we have already dealt with this in previous texts (Prado, 2015, 2017). Fontanille’s first step in this text is to locate it already in Structural Semantics (1973) by Greimas a reduced way of dealing with affections. There, perception was the non-linguistic place in which the apprehension of meaning took place. Fontanille (2019) says:

Greimas does not speak of affect, but the phenomenological anchoring of his taking a position, under the authority of Merleau-Ponty, implies that the significant discontinuities are the product of our perceptive activity, that is, of the way we experience the “world of sensible qualities.” In principle, this experience is indivisible: the apprehension of discontinuities is, therefore, inseparable from the affection it arouses. One could even consider that affection is really this apprehension. (p. 139)

According to Fontanille, in De l’Imperfection (2002), Greimas changes the term: instead of perception, he speaks of esthesia. In the Semiotics of Passions (1993), which Greimas signed with Fontanille, “the analysis of passions, which implies proprioperception and thymia, and, therefore, the role of the body in semiosis and its enunciation, exerts a critical pressure on the principle of methodological objectification” (Greimas & Fontanille, 1993, p. 137). In this work, tensivity becomes a correlate of phoric dimension:

the meeting of the two allows, then, to advance the concept of tensive-phoric space, in which the pre-conditions of meaning would be defined and where the minimal feeling would be located. If since Structural Semantics, perception is the non-linguistic place where discontinuities of meaning are apprehended, feeling will be from the Semiotics of the Passions, the non-linguistic (or pre-semiotic) place where these discontinuities are initially experienced as tensions of meaning. (Greimas & Fontanille, 1993, p. 138)

If in the old narrative semiotics, the enunciator was disembodied, tensive semiotics addresses the perceptions of a subject who is bodily in the center of the field of presence. We do not start from the discontinuities of the text but from the tensions of meaning, which cross this sensible body in the pre-semiotic perceptual space. Tensity has two components: intensity and extensivity. The first concerns

According to Pistori (2010), the phoric dimension expresses the ways in which a being reacts to his environment; euphoria is the positive reaction, dysphoria, the negative.
strength, energy, affection. “The other is extension: quantity, unfolding, space and time, cognition” (Fontanille, 2019, p. 145). Tensions emerge with varying intensity, smaller or greater, and spread over the extensiveness of the field of presence, reaching other subjects.

If Zilberberg started from the assumption that intensity governed extensivity, Fontanille (2019) asks: “in the name of which the sensible and the affect depend only on the intensity?” (p. 147). Fontanille resorts to J. F. Bordron, to affirm that, in perception, there is an apprehension of something that “can be either a set of discontinuous parts-entities or a set of force-flows to be regulated, or, more often, both at the same time” (p. 148). From then on, Fontanille proposes that intensive forces should not be placed first, on detriment of extensive ones, but that varied compositions of the two modes of sensible apprehension of the underlying ontologies should be considered. Fontanille says:

It would be possible to imagine a future semiotics that . . . would make no previous ontological choice, but which would instead be interested in the establishment of multiple and complex ontologies, created in cohabitation, by competition or collusion between the two modes of structuring and of composition: that of discontinuous quantities and mereological compositions; and that of continuous, energetic and flowing quantities? (p. 149)

Put more simply: on one hand we have texts and practices that can be read, as Landowski says, as inscription surfaces covered with signs to decipher, meanings to understand (the discontinuous quantities of semiotics), and, on the other hand, sensible qualities that reach our body not as signs to be deciphered but as what we feel, affecting us tensively, with more or less force. For Fontanille (2019), we should not make the ontological choice between one direction and the other:

the articulation between these two ways of apprehending meaning, and with some others that, no doubt, will yet be discovered, is one of the main tasks of a semiotics that wishes to be really “general.” And, looking for these articulations, whether they are oppositions or tensions, triages or mixtures, we would arrive, as Landowski does, patiently constructing their regimes of meaning, at a properly structural vision of the modes of existence that shape the different types of worlds in which semiosis is produced. (p. 150)

Fontanille arrives at a proposal summarized in the following tensive diagram:
According to Fontanille (2019), semiotic structuring modes start from the modes of sensitive apprehension: “the semiotic construction does not choose between two apprehension modes (the perception of intensive forces or the perception of extensive discontinuities), it succeeds them, collects the results, and gives them shape” (p. 148). Zilberberg had made the choice for intensity as conductor, where living is affection and intensity, with regard to the perception of meaning, but Fontanille does not follow this ontological choice, preferring to speak of establishing “multiple and complex ontologies created by cohabitation, by the competition or collusion between the two modes of structuring and composition: that of discontinuous quantities and mereological compositions; and that of continuous, energetic, and flowing quantities” (p. 149). Zilberberg’s option for the descending chart favors maximum intensity for absolute values, at the price of weak extension; on the contrary, in the case of universe values, we have maximum extent and weak intensity. But Fontanille thinks of semiotic situations that would not be included in this chart, such as low intensity values and restricted diffusion or universal values with high collective adherence. Fontanille says:

the model thus reduced does not foresee, therefore, no place for fragile and individual adhesions, let us say “marginal,” nor for massive and intense adhesions. For example, there would be no place in this model for the Indignados movement in Spain or for the large demonstrations that took place in France after the terrorist attacks. (p. 150)
In the previous figure we have two possibilities of relation between absolute and universal values. In the descending curve, absolutes are, for example, those related to situations in which a social group builds belonging to the group excluding those who do not share these values; sharing values, on the other hand, operate through the inclusion of those who were initially not included in the group. At first, absolute values dominate; to the extent that there is adherence to the values of sharing, there is a spread across the field of presence, intensity drops and the diffusion of sharing increases. In the ascending curve, we have the other situations mentioned by Fontanille (2019), excluded from the Zilberberg model. This proposal also allows for individual and fragile, massive and intense adhesions (given in the ascending line), which had no place in the Zilberberg model (in which there was only the descending curve). This results in two types of universal values: “on the one hand, universal values, with strong and massive adherence, and, on the other hand, simple sharing values, widely spread but weakly assumed” (p. 151). In this diagram, the affective intensity of a force can be reiterated, that is, amplified by extensiveness, duration, and repetition (number of occurrences). “Duration and frequency are even here indications of the potency and depth of affection” (p. 151).

**EVENT IN BADIOU**

The question that we will discuss next, based on Alain Badiou’s theory of the event, is: should Landowski’s thesis that the event implies a return to the de-semanticized routine be maintained? Our thesis is that the semiotic education proposed by Landowski is not enough to build a democratic world. Societies are crossed by antagonisms that make real changes difficult, such as those involved in confronting prejudice, in the domain of patriarchy, in feminicide, in militia activities, in the growth of neo-fascisms, in overcoming the permanence of the effects of the colonial world, in the consequences of slavery etc. Routine can mean, for a large part of the population, the continuation of police persecution, growing poverty, unemployment, persistence of prejudice, etc. How to think about the logic of change? Changing interaction regimes alone is insufficient to alter these logics that govern the southern worlds. So, let us discuss the types of changes to consider. For this, let us start by defining world, change, singularity, and transcendental of a world. *World* for Badiou has a precise sense, of a field of visibility in which the appearances of beings there take place, according to a so-called transcendent logic, that is, an order, a regime of visibility that constitutes the structure of this world. Says Badiou (2008):
The transcendental that will be dealt with in this book is well prior to any subjective constitution, since it is an immanent fact of situations, whatever they may be. It is . . . what imposes on all situated multiplicity the constriction of a logic, which is also the law of its appearing, or the rule by which the “there” of being-there makes the multiple arise as essentially linked. The fact that everyone has a singular transcendental organization here supposes that, since thought alone cannot explain its manifestation, it is necessary that certain immanent operations make the intelligibility of this manifestation possible. Transcendental is the name of these operations. (p. 123)

Badiou (2008) thinks of the world as the sum of its modifications. Modification is not change (p. 400). Being, as being, is pure multiplicity and therefore immobile. For Badiou, being is not one. It only becomes one from the activities of presentation and representation, when the elements are organized in sets, these being considered one. On the other hand, the appearance of a being in a world is not linked to real change. For Badiou, real change is one “that imposes an effective discontinuity in the world in which it occurs” (p. 397). There are several types of change. One of them is the singularity, which designates “an entity whose thought cannot be reduced to that of its mundane context” (p. 397). What does that mean? That a real change understood as a singularity cannot take place based on the coordinates of what is there, the data, the status quo. In Badiou “a singularity is what a thought begins with. But if this beginning is a mere consequence of the logical laws of a world, it only appears in its place and nothing starts” (p. 397).

The appearance of an entity in the world is the same, says Badiou (2008), “that its modifications in this world, without requiring any discontinuity and, ultimately, no singularity for the development of these modifications” (p. 398). Each world has its logical identity, which Badiou calls the transcendental indexing of a multiplicity. Badiou gives an example:

If we identify a demonstration in the Republic Square as “world”, we think of the coming of the crowd, from its initial meeting to its slow dispersion along the lines of police cars. The intensity of objects and relationships are measured according to a singular temporal transcendental, which aims in these appearing multiplicities such as “the standing firm from beginning to end of a group of anarchists,” or “the organizing role of the railway workers union,” or “the growing isolation of the Kurdish communists” and so on. In other words, the object absorbs, as elements of the multiplicity that it is, the modifications that include it in the

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7 Here we are adopting Boaventura Sousa Santos’ (2007) idea that there is a division between the theories of the social sciences of the North and the South: “Our first problem for those who live in the South is that the theories are out of place: they do not really fit our social realities. It has always been necessary for us to ask how the theory fits our reality” (p. 19). See also Sousa Santos and Meneses (2010).
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time of the world, through which it “changes” only insofar as this “change” is its appearing-in-a-world. (p. 399)

It is the modifications themselves that place an object in the world as a multiplicity. If a world is nothing more than the set of its modifications, the variations are read from the transcendental that sustains this world: “these variations are nothing other than the immanent movement of appearing as the transcendental prescribes its possible intensities and its breadth” (Badiou, 2008, p. 399). From there, we can define the modification more precisely in order to arrive at the concept of event later on.

We will call “modification” the appearing ruled by the intensive variations that a transcendental authorizes in the world of which it is the transcendental. Modification is not change. Or is it nothing more than its transcendental absorption, the part of becoming that is constitutive of all being-there. . . . A change, if it is a singularity and not a simple consequence – a modification – cannot happen either according to the mathematical order that founds the thought of the multiple, nor according to the transcendental regulation that rules the coherence of appearing. Certainly there is nothing more than the being-there of multiples. But it is possible that the multiple-being, support of objects, rises “in person” to the surface of objectivity. It is possible that there is a mixture of being multiple and appearing. For this, it is enough that a multiple aspires to appear referred to itself, its own transcendental indexation. In short, it is enough for a multiple to play, in a world in which it appears, a double role. On the one hand, it is objectified by the transcendental indexation of its elements. On the other hand, it aims at, figuring among its own elements and being captured, thus, in the transcendental indexation of which it supports being. The mundane objectification makes this multiple the synthesis between the objectifying (multiple support and referential of a phenomenon) and the objectified (belonging to the phenomenon). We call such a paradoxical entity a site. (Badiou, 2008, p. 400)

The change, which is more than mere modification, is neither being nor appearing. This exceptional entity appears there, which is the site, which sustains the change. But for this to sustain real and strong changes, the site must have a high degree of appearance, otherwise the changes induced by it would be limited or non-existent. There are, therefore, two requirements to arrive from a simple change to the event, which is a much more intense change: the ontological (self-ownership of this place) and the logic (intensity of existence and extension of the consequences)⁸. The site is a multiple that supports its own apparition:

⁸ Note here the similarity with tensive semiotics, which attributes to a semiotic quantity at this tensive level the valences of intensity and extensivity.
“a site is a being that happens to exist by itself” (Badiou, 2008, p. 403), even if in a precarious way. The site, by appearing in this way, transgresses the laws of being, “it is the instant revelation of the emptiness that inhabits the multiplicities, through the transitory nullification that operates from the distance between being and being-there” (Badiou, 2008, p. 409). The site appears and disappears quickly, or, as Badiou (2008) says, “the site is an ontological figure of the instant” (p. 409) and is capable of producing event effects beyond a simple change. If we want to speak of duration, we have to consider these effects, not the fleeting site that allowed their intensive emergence; the site is the instantaneous emergence of the paradoxical multiple (self-belonging) and its logic concerns “the distribution of intensities around this vanished point that is the site” (p. 411). But not every site has event power, only those with maximum existence value. Says Badiou:

Only an integral power to exist differentiates a site from the simple network of modifications in which the law of the world persists. A site that does not exist maximally is just a fact. Although ontologically identifiable, it is not, in appearing, logically singular. We call modification the simple becoming of a world, seen from the point of an object in that world. Internal to established transcendental correlations, the modification does not name any site. We call singularity a site whose intensity of existence is maximum. Here we have three distinct degrees of change: modification, ontologically neutral and transcendentally regular; the fact, ontologically supernumerary, but existentially (and, at the limit, logically) weak; the singularity, ontologically supernumerary and of maximum apparition – existence – value. (p. 413)

Badiou (2008) gives the example of the Paris Commune, which was repressed by the forces of Versailles, constituted by “propaganda that systematically de-singularizes the Commune, to present it as a monstrous set of facts that must enter (by force) into the normal order of modification” (p. 413). In this sense, regulating a singularity is bringing it to the order of the facts, lowering the intensity of its emergence, treating its consequences as if they were appropriable under the transcendental measure of modifications. An event is a strong singularity, in relation to the intense appearing.

The event, instantaneous or procedural, in this theory is not necessarily of the order of catastrophe, nor does it inevitably take bodies backward, once again subjected to the discourses that constituted them or that constituted an oppressive or disconcerting sociability. Nor is it any accident, as we have seen. The event can open up the possibility of a new micropolitics, of a new love, in which new subjects invest in the direction of the forces of change, characterizing a process
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of truth, as defined by Badiou. For this, it is not enough that the event has emerged, it is necessary that there is a strong singularity, which provides a new appearance, and for this, subjects have to emerge supporting the process of truth that they glimpsed in the emerging intensity of this event. Thus, the event in Badiou is not a catastrophe, but a strong singularity that has the consequence of leading subjects to a maximum existence, which did not exist before the event. It disorganizes the present and introduces a process, if there are subjects faithful to it, towards a new truth to be built. This can happen in art, love, science and politics (not in religion, because there one starts from the idea that there is One).

In Badiou (2008) one must see how a truth subverts the logic of a world, by transforming the rules that regulate, generate the way in which things appear - the way in which different elements of a world appear as less or more intense and visible. A new truth appears in a world causing the old norms of appearance to become inconsistent. For Badiou, fidelity to the event is required to enable a representation of this inconsistency to be the basis for a new configuration of a world. This can lead to a new logic of apparition, to the appearance of what previously had zero degree of existence and visibility.

Here we speak, therefore, of a logic of appearing in which things can appear with less or more intensity, in gradients, from less to more, as in tensive semiotics, which also works with the concept of event (Prado, 2013, 2015, 2017; Zilberberg, 2011). But what differentiates fact, singularity and event is the degree of change in the status quo of the situation, in the intensity of the novelty. We are not talking here about small events, linked to the tastes of each one, to the pleasures and anxieties of consumption, but to changes in the transcendental structure of a world, with regard to what appears in it or does not have a degree of existence. Events, like truths, are exceptional occurrences in Badiou; they constitute the beginning of a process that allows for a complete reassessment of the transcendental evaluations that govern the way things appear in a world. This is not just an accident or just contingency. It triggers a process through which what used to appear as nothing starts to appear as something, as something more or as everything, tensively.

It is also worth examining the logic of event in Massumi (2020), for whom it is not enough to reform, in the way of social engineering, the coordinates of the world. If we think, for example, of a future of capitalism in which the surplus value of life is not reduced to the economic surplus value, it is impossible not to give importance to intense changes. To think about post-capitalism under these conditions, it is necessary to imagine ethical ways of revaluing value. Affection is thought of in this perspective as a set of factors external to the market but which leave marks on market dynamics, that is, as an immanent
outside of the market. What drives the economic system is the potential to derive, from an amount of money in the present, a greater amount in the future. This potential is qualitative and moves the economic system, and for that it needs to activate the immanent force: Surplus-value is the “continuous potential of deriving in the future an excess over a present quantity. This and not equitable exchange or the fair value for money is the engine of the economy” (p. 41). Capitalism captures the future of vitality, the qualitatively-in-process of life, its potential. That’s why Massumi considers it an ontopower, which transforms the vital activity into an economy.

How to make an alter-economic alternative? Quality of life in this sense can only be thought of as an event. “To claim it means to double back the non-chronological time of capital in the event of the qualitative in-process in life” (p. 57). There needs to be a real change in the systems of sayability, visibility, interaction etc., or, in Massumi’s case, in valuation, so as not to reduce more-life value to more economic-value.

**POST-EVENT AND INTERACTION**

Landowski’s understanding of the event is different from Badiou’s, as we have seen. For Badiou, an event is something that can become a renovator of worlds, changing the logic of appearance, the visibility regimes; only *a posteriori* can an event be recognized if subjects capable of language and action have emerged and would have invested their bodies and their discourses in sustaining this process, giving rise to a world in which the new logics of apparition alters the *status quo*; such subjects sustain this process in the face of reactive or obscure subjects, who would have risen before the event, considering it perhaps catastrophic and demanding a return to the previous world and, in the case of the obscure subject, returning to a mythical world, more conservative than the previous situation, sought by reactives.

In a first reading, there is an opposition between the views of Badiou and Landowski, who does not accept the concept of event. If, however, we consider that the post-event implies the spreading of the evental intensity extensively throughout the field of presence, it would be the case to consider, with Landowski, that the meanings of the event are present in the immediate of the sensible, that is, it is discursivized as semiosis and as a sensible practice of the world, penetrating everyday communications: “it arises from bodies in interaction and co-construction and, more precisely, from the capacity of these bodies to transmit meaning effects by *contagion* (intercorporal)” (Fontanille, 2019, p. 154). It is, as we have seen, the regime of
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union: “the configuration of union presupposes, in the sensible experience, a global and, in principle, bodily interaction. Union implies, as a mode of semiosis, the contagion of meaning, and it adopts, as a form of the process . . . the adjustment between actants” (Fontanille, 2019, p. 154). In the post-event, in daily communications, discursive political disputes occur, involving not only ideas, but the experimenting of bodies, the feeling, which brings into play the faithful, reactive and obscure subjects facing each other around the consequences of the event, in terms of the changes in the world caused by it.

At this point, we need to operate with the type 2 adjustment Demuru speaks about, as such struggles involve antagonisms, as in the cases of recognition struggles (Honneth, 2011), which require confronting the colonial-capitalistic unconscious (expression by Rolnik, 2018). Such adjustments crave for conceptual detailing, as they would be involved in the oscillation between a logic of difference and a logic of equivalence (Laclau & Mouffe, 2015), which unites different subject positions to face power blocks. In this type of political-discursive disputes, it is necessary to face the real from antagonism and negativity; in the daily life of these struggles, bodies adjust themselves so as to collectively sustain the processes and regimes of truth linked to the event. However, it is essential to link this equivalence and logic of adjustment to the issue of antagonism, outlined but not further developed in the aforementioned text by Demuru (2019).

From the point of view of theory, it is necessary to consider how this meeting of actant-bodies takes place in the daily post-event process. Fontanille touches on this point, talking especially about the regime of adjustment, which marks the bodies:

In this process of co-construction of actants, bodies receive marks from each other, which allow us to inscribe the process in time and in the aspect (punctual, duration, iterative etc.) of the interactions. In the long run, they contribute to the establishment in both of them of lasting dispositions and habitus, brought about by the sensible body. In short, in the adjustment processes, it is necessary to compose the regulation of flows and forces with the structuring of the parts into wholes. (p. 154)

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Landowski (2019), however, does not consider the possible continuity between the event and the post-event moments. It sounds strange to speak of continuity as they are totally different intensive stages of affect, as we have seen. Continuity is here thought of as fidelity to the meanings of rupture arising...
from the event. For Landowski “an experience, one that has an aesthetic value, is defined as the mere negation of the other, that is, tautologically, as the opposite of a previous anesthesia” (p. 154). More simply, for Landowski there is an incongruity between the two states: that of the event and the subsequent one, insofar as there is a punctuality at the moment of the event, which denies the durative continuity. And then there is a step back. In Badiou, the emergence of events entails a transformation of the world, something that requires a process of sustaining the truth that is announced at the event. Let us see the case of love, for example, in Badiou’s speech:

I distinguish three main conceptions of love. First, the romantic conception, focused on the ecstasy of the encounter. Then, . . . the commercial or legal conception . . ., according to which love would be a contract. A contract between two free individuals declaring that they love each other, but paying attention to the equality of the relationship, to the system of reciprocal benefits, etc. There is, furthermore, a skeptical conception that considers love an illusion. What I try to say in my own philosophy is that love is not reduced to any of them, it is a construction of truth, . . . on a very specific aspect, namely: what is the world, examined, practiced and experienced from difference rather than identity? (Badiou & Truong, 2013, p. 20)

The evental emergence of love is not romantic ecstasy but the encounter in difference: it is about living the experience of love through the prism of difference. Love is not exhausted at this moment of the encounter. It initiates a process that has to be sustained by the fidelity of the subject (the Two) who emerged and decided to pursue this process. The subject of the process is not each one of the two involved, but this Two of the difference. In another book, Badiou (2018) explains better what this encounter is in the Two of love, in the Two of difference:

The thesis I will maintain here is that love makes the difference as such . . . It tells the truth of the other in the element of the same. That is, in its temporal labyrinth, the loving work: the irreducibility of difference is shared in the same – the same Two – by which there is, indefinitely, and in myself, the other. (p. 611)

This idea of love as a substitute is explained by Lacan’s thesis that there is no sexual relationship, the proportion, the fit between the sexes:

the sexual does not unite, it separates. A person being naked, glued to the other, is an image, an imaginary representation. The reality is that jouissance takes us far,
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far away from the other. Reality is narcissistic, the bond is imaginary. . . . If there is no sexual relationship in sexuality, it is love that makes up for the lack of sexual relationship. What he says is that there is no sexual relationship and that love is what appears in place of this non-relationship. . . . In love, the subject goes beyond himself, beyond narcissism. In sex, he is ultimately in relationship with himself, with the mediation of the other. (Badiou & Truong, 2013, p. 18)

Therefore, the event does not imply a return to the de-semanticized routine, it does not constitute a flattened vision, a return to a retrogradation situation. It is not a pure accident of intensity, an accident, that once this magical moment has passed, everything goes back to the way it was. It is necessary to think about the post-event treatment from a theory of interaction regimes and a theory of tensivities (which connects with psychoanalysis through the drive), in order to imagine, to fable how the consequences of the event can be sustained, in terms of strong world change, in which new communication processes can be sustained. As post-event communications materialize in the new post-event world, with its tensivities, intensity is distributed throughout the field of presence and the consequences of the event begin to be discursivized.

REFERENCES


12Unlike Ciro Marcondes Filho (2010), I argue that when the emergency event takes place, communication is extinguished and bodies are taken by an extreme kind of sensitiveness. To state that “communication is extinguished” is to claim that the event makes the world’s rules fall apart and create a state of rupture. Unfortunately, this article lacks the space for us to detail this statement; it deserves another full article.
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Article received on January 30th and approved on September 21st, 2021.