

The status of humanities vis-a-vis the exact sciences has been copiously debated, though no generally accepted conclusion seems to have been reached. (L. Hjelmslev, H.J. Uldall, Outline of Glossematics, 1957)

The theoretical foundations of Semiotics as a science

In 1957 Hjelmslev and Uldall took note that, despite many efforts, the theoretical foundations of so-called *Humanities* remained uncertain. It is the same uncertainty that, even today, seems to characterize discussions on Semiotics (which is part of the *Humanities*) as a discipline and that threatens to undermine its credibility.

The 2012-2013 edition of the Seminar (which, in fact, it's devoted to "fundamentals" of Semiotics) would like to help stimulate debate around the question: what is the status of Semiotics as a science? From such a question something more inevitably ensues: what meaning of the concept of science is relevant for Semiotics? What conditions Semiotics must satisfy to be considered as a science? And, in addition, which role could play paradigms based on a primacy of perception and / or of explanation for Semiotics considered as a science?

Each of these questions must obviously deal with a discussion on the fundamental problem of the construction of objectivity (that is to say to what in phenomenological tradition is designated as "regional ontology") and entails *at the same time* the definition of a subjective instance that fits properly. Which metalanguage do we need? Which method? Which epistemology?