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- Author:** Andacht, Fernando
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- Abstract:** The text considers a globalized media phenomenon, namely, the Reality Show, through its format of 24/7 surveillance (Big Brother), and adopts a qualitative and semiotic approach to study it. The consumption of this format is multiplied through many media platforms (open television, cable television, internet, smart phones, fanzines). This kind of TV show is based mostly on the offer of proliferating involuntary signs, indices according to the classification of logician C. S. Peirce. They are the signs that are closest to the body, and thereby they are the ones that human beings can control the least. What the text describes as semiotic perspiration generated by the exhibition of emotional symptoms is much appreciated by publics all over the world as being a reliable and transparent physiological window which can reveal what is most authentic in human beings: the soul or psyche. In the different examples discussed in the text, we observe that this phenomenon has reached beyond the realm of entertainment, and it is to be found nowadays in politics, and in what used to be traditional serious information TV genres. In all these areas of cultural and social activity, we come across the emergence of indexical signs or index appeal, which is typically produced by the manifestation of humors, such as tears, in the mediatized performance of the confession of anonymous people or in the unheard of media access to the intimacy of politicians. That semiotic and media strategy has become, according to our study, one of the favorite spectacular forms for revealing the secrets of the soul in the 21st century.
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