

United for the IASS / AIS

A Collective Semiotic Ambition

We are committed to continuing and strengthening the actions carried out by the previous team in the following areas:

- 1 To optimize *fundraising* and income-generating activities with partner organizations, through the creation of a list of institutions, companies and political administrations potentially interested in collaborating, and, to motivate them, build a remarkable analysis archive in several languages, illustrating the different skills of our profession.
- 2 To develop *the IASS's presence on social networks*, by opening profiles of the Association on LinkedIn and Instagram and by making short films on concepts, themes and tools of common interest.
- 3 To create on the IASS website a database *of major international* semiotic research projects, distinguished by subjects either carried out, in progress, or in the process of emerging.
- 4 To encourage the organization and *development of semiotics in the continents* where it could improve its visibility, particularly in Africa and in the countries of Southeast Asia.
- 5 To support and increase, for the benefit of young researchers, *opportunities for participation in research and collective publications*, by opening a page on the IASS website dedicated to either ongoing research, or doctoral

and post-doctoral applications and proposals.

- 6 To establish *partnerships with international* academic and non-academic organizations, either to promote the teaching of semiotics in other countries, or to disseminating opportunities for consulting activities in companies.
- 7 To increase *the flow of internal communications* to members, starting by updating the current address list.
- 8 To maintain and strengthen the favorable conditions obtained in *the partnership with De Gruyter*, by offering the publisher and editorial staff of *Semiotica* the translation of books and articles considered very important for the discipline.
- 9 To clarify and stabilize *all the processes that democratically ensure the life of our association* : electoral processes, decision-making processes, methods of choosing teams and sites organizing congresses. To achieve this sustainably, *Internal Regulations of the IASS will be established*, written and submitted to the Executive Committee for a vote.
- 10 To continue all the provisions concerning *publications under the aegis of the IASS-AIS*.

Our Commitments

Our team is committed to improving *the dissemination of information and especially the topics to be discussed*, by relying on the blog already attached to the IASS-AIS website, and by reconfiguring it to increase the number of exchanges and debates.

It will also endeavour to *distribute among all the members of the Bureau the responsibility for specific projects concerning, in particular, international partnerships, the careers of young researchers, but also the complementarity between the various methodologies and semiotic theories*, in order to address in optimal conditions the contemporary themes where the future of our planet and our societies are at stake.

Paul Cobby and Kristian Bankov propose to *create and support Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and to develop the IASS network of young researchers*.

Our team will support more particularly SIGs which will address *the problems of the contemporary world, the major societal and existential questions of our time*. SIGs could thus be open to the more or less exciting advances of digital technologies, to the significance of today's armed conflicts, to that of the difficulties of living together, and discrimination of all kinds, as well as to global migrations.

This new orientation of SIG would have direct consequences *in the development of the careers of young researchers in semiotics*. Open semiotics must allow new semioticians to find work in all institutional places where the future of our planet, our societies and our civilizations are at stake. *In universities and research organizations, of course, but well beyond, in all the institutions and organizations that participate in decisions and public policies concerning our collective future*.

In all these major contemporary and current issues, peace and war, health, education, environment, aging of populations, migrations, socio-economic and identity-related conflicts, the various uses and effects of social networks and generative AI, the share of the humanities and social sciences is increasing significantly, and that of semiotics is still too modest.

To enhance semiotic skills, we propose to devote a part of SIGs to *major social, human or environmental challenges*. It is *an invitation to think about the future of human and non-human civilizations and cultures from the point of view of semiotics, and not only the future of semiotics*.

Furthermore, it is essential today that the approach to these major challenges, as well as its semiotic results, focus on diversity and territorial and continental specificities.

A strategic orientation

This orientation is *of a strategic nature* because it concerns most of the concrete and organizational subjects of the IASS-AIS: *(1) the choice of our international partners*, including NGOs and companies, *(2) support for interdisciplinary arrangements* in which semiotics would take part, *(3) the professional future of young semioticians*, (4) the in-depth reflection that we should carry out both *on the maintenance of the diversity of semiotics*, and on their articulation around a small number of common issues.

Regarding the future of young researchers, professional opportunities in universities and research organizations are only part of the available solutions. When a research discipline is very active and attractive, it necessarily trains many more PhDs than are necessary for generational renewal in the research and teaching professions. It cannot therefore escape *the obligation to define and prepare for the integration of a large proportion of its PhDs into non-academic but high-level professional missions*.

Finally, from the perspective of the major contemporary societal issues, the other disciplines with which semiotics would have to deal, in multidisciplinary consortia, are not the disciplines closest to semiotics, quite the contrary. In the dialogue with them, belonging to this or that semiotic paradigm is of little importance: the only thing that matters is the ability to solve the problems posed, the ability to vary points of view, angles of approach and scales of observation. This openness to great contemporary causes therefore requires us *to maintain our theoretical and methodological diversity*. It follows that, in such an orientation, *semiotics must be plural to be relevant and effective in problem solving*.