CALL FOR PAPERS

Digital Age in Semiotics and Communication

Vol. X (2027)



BETWEEN SELVES: HUMAN AND AI SUBJECTIVITY IN SEMIOTIC AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

Recent developments in generative artificial intelligence have reopened a fundamental question for semiotics and the humanities in general: **what does it mean to be a subject in a world where machines produce discourse, images, and narratives?**

In his recent book *Nati cyborg* (2025, Luca Sossella), **Claudio Paolucci** argues that generative AI does not simply challenge human intelligence but reveals something essential about it and about human subjectivity. From a semiotic perspective, subjectivity is not a stable inner property but an **effect of enunciation**, produced through the assemblage of heterogeneous discursive instances that linguistic systems make available to speakers.

Generative AI systems perform similar operations through their outputs and feedback, thereby producing the **effect of a speaking subject**, even in the absence of intentional consciousness, as well as "positions" for users.

However, if subjectivity is an effect of enunciation, what — if anything — distinguishes a human speaking subject from a machine that produces the same effect? How do everyday interactions with AI — conversation, co-writing, self-tracking, personas — reshape the ways we narrate, imagine, and recognize ourselves? Can the self be understood as a creative process, and what happens to it when this process is shared with artificial agents? What new forms of subjectivity might emerge in the expanding space between human and artificial selves?

Taking these insights as a starting point, the tenth issue of *Digital Age in Semiotics and Communication* — devoted to the theme **Between Selves: Human and AI Subjectivity**, and in continuity the debates of the XXX Early Fall School of Semiotics (Sozopol, 4-7 September 2026) —

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seeks to move beyond the now familiar debates about whether AI "understands" or "thinks", toward the **liminal zones where human and artificial subjectivities meet and co-produce one another**: the self as a **creative, hybrid, and digitally mediated process**.

Two primary directions frame the call:

1. **The self as a semiotic effect** — examining subjectivity not as a stable inner property but as an effect of enunciation, produced through assemblages of voices, norms, stereotypes, and institutional discourses, and asking how generative systems reproduce this effect.
2. **The hybrid self** — exploring how human selves are increasingly co-constructed with AI, as a digitally mediated process in which natural and artificial creativity intertwine in self-expression, self-narration, and self-reflection.

We welcome researchers and practitioners to address these questions through theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions, adopting both **theoretical-semiotic** and **applied**, **cross-disciplinary/cross-domain** perspectives. Contributions may draw on fields such as **media studies, anthropology, cognitive science, law, psychology, digital humanities, AI studies, art theory, and economics**, as well as from creative industry professionals. We particularly encourage work that helps advance a new semiotics of the hybrid self.

Contributions may address, but are not limited to, the following areas:

Theories of Human and Artificial Subjectivity

- Semiotic theories of human and artificial subjectivity
- Enunciation, voice, and agency in generative AI systems
- The self as an effect: assemblages of voices, norms, and institutional discourses

The Self as a Digitally Mediated Process

- Identity construction through platforms, algorithms, and AI interlocutors
- Datafied, quantified, and algorithmically profiled selves
- Memory, self-archiving, and digital afterlives

The Hybrid Self

- The hybridization of natural and artificial creativity in self-expression
- Co-authored selves: writing, imagining, and deciding with AI
- Cyborg subjectivity and the extended mind

Self-Narration and Self-Creation

- Autobiography, autofiction, and identity narratives produced with AI
- Stylistic imitation, "writing as someone else", and the plurality of voices
- Avatars, alter egos, and creative self-invention

Simulated Selves and Dialogue

- Simulated personalities, AI personas, and companion bots
- Psychotherapeutic and introspective dialogues with AI
- Irony, humor, and self-reflexivity in human–AI exchanges

Ethics, Law, and Society of Hybrid Selves

- Authorship, responsibility, and the legal status of hybrid agency
- Authenticity, trust, and manipulation in AI-mediated identity
- Education and the formation of the self in the age of AI

Deadline for the abstracts (200-300 words): **31 December 2026**

Deadline for full papers: **30 May 2027**

Deadline for the final revised papers: 1st October 2027

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For more information and submission of abstracts and papers: DigitASC@nbu.bg

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