



CONCEPTUALISING, MODELLING AND IMAGINING THE FUTURE IN AND THROUGH SEMIOTICS

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR THE SPECIAL ISSUE OF HORTUS SEMIOTICUS

As argued by the Dutch sociologist Frederik L. Polak (1972), a society with no positive images of the future indicated a society in decline. Although the context of Polak's work focused on the mid-twentieth century as being unique in largely possessing negative images of the future (Hicks 2004), in the context of globalisation and rapid technological development, the relevance of exploring, questioning, and envisioning diverse futures cannot be overstated.

What, furthermore, is the link between past, present, and future(s)? This ubiquitous question is not new to semiotics, but still has the potential to make us rethink its development as a discipline born 'ahead' of its own epoch. What is more, it makes us envision a semiotics-driven Anthropocene where sciences and humanities could ethically go hand in hand. In the words of John Deely, "we need to have an awareness of the trajectory of semiotic development [...] against the backdrop of philosophical modernity" (2010: 75).

As a prelude to the 2023 Tartu Summer School of Semiotics, this special issue of Hortus Semioticus aims to resume the dialogue between different branches of semiotics as a community that explores change in a diversity of ways and perspectives. Accordingly, we invite participation from bachelor, master, and Ph.D. students to submit their contributions on the various ways humans and other animals make sense of the future(s). The upcoming special issue of Hortus Semioticus focuses on of the following themes:

- Speculative futures: modelling the future
- The future of semiotics as a discipline
- The structures of futureisms: how "the future" is conceptualised in various discourses

The angles or topics for exploring these questions may include:

- The changing meanings of intersubjective bonds (e.g., family, romance, friendship, pets)
- The future(s) of consumption and waste
- Possible future(s) of shared and hybrid environments
- Future perspectives for human-alloanimal communication in changing environments
- Semiotic analysis of futuristic aesthetics
- **Meaning-making and futures narratives in times of crises** (e.g., conflicts, pandemics, revolutions)
- The future of subfields of semiotics
- Exploring new concepts and visions (e.g., semioethics, semicide)
- New tools and methods in/for semiotics
- Stability, statics, sameness: retaining stability in times of change and uncertainty
- Doctrine of recollection: how has the future been constituted in philosophy?
- Creating nostalgia: reflecting on the past and/or present
- Comparisons of biosemiotic memory structures
- Semiotic mediation in anticipation
- The functional side(s) of biosemiotic anticipation
- Premediation as a form of modeling the future and anticipation as a model-based activity
- Cultural explosion and the creation of future(s)

About papers and formats:

Please submit your article by the 13th of April 2023 to hortus.semioticus@semiootika.ee or katarina.damcevic@ut.ee. When composing your articles, please follow the guidelines for authors. The papers can be written in English or Estonian. For any additional questions, problems, concerns, please write to the email addresses above.

References:

- Deely, John 2010. Realism and Epistemology. In: Copley, Paul (Ed.). *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics*. USA and Canada: Routledge.
- Hicks, David. 2004. Teaching for tomorrow: how can futures studies contribute to peace education? *Journal of Peace Education* 1(2): 165-178.
- Polak, Fred. 1972. *The Image of the Future*. San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass/Elsevier.