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Category: Academic Meeting

Title: The Nanjing 11th World Congress of Semiotics

Description: Modern semiotic theories can be traced back to four theoretical sources originating in the beginning of the 20th century: Saussurean structural linguistics, Peircean pragmatism, Husserlian phenomenology and analytical philosophy. Since then a variety of semiotic theories in various fields of European and American human and social sciences have developed in addition to philosophical ways of reasoning. Semiotic theorization is typically interdisciplinary in nature, indicating a pluralization of scientific thinking about mankind. This pluralized theoretical tendency has been further strengthened by the unprecedented progress of current semiotic sciences since the end of the Second World War. Current semiotics has become a major impetus for structural reform efforts in the human sciences.

After its hundred years of modernization contemporary semiotics has arrived at another turning point at the beginning of the 21st century: the globalization of semiotics, or cross-cultural semiotic expansion. Cross-cultural semiotics is the natural development and extension of the interdisciplinary humanities of the West in our times. Unlike the natural and social sciences, human sciences, including their semiotic epistemology and methodology, deal with both horizontal and diachronic phenomena in human history. That means semiotics, as a constitutive part of human sciences, is fated to be confronted with the most difficult as well as the most significant challenges arising from human conditions.

Semiotics is popularly called the logic or general semantics of culture. So it implicitly includes cultural-academic globalization and cross-civilization communication. In light of comparative scholarship, this new-century semiotics signifies a comprehensive interaction between European-American and non-European-American intellectual sources, characterized by its strength in doing general-semantic analysis in respect to linguistic-expressive, behavior-communicative and institutional-compositional levels. In this sense, semiotic work, necessarily interdisciplinary, must be converged with the modern theoretical practice of all human sciences still partly suffering from its traditional semantically ambiguous composition. The typology of the scientific and the rational practices would thus be more relevantly adjusted to accommodate different historical realities. Semiotics, functioning as a universal semantic denominator, will promote intellectual communication among different civilizations, cultures and disciplines.

The Nanjing 11th World Congress of Semiotics will be the first IASS forum in history to be held outside Europe or the Americas. Substantially and symbolically it will provide semiotic scholars from all over the world with a suitable dialogic context for exploring the new orientation of global semiotics. In conjunction with the 11th IASS Congress, whose program will basically follow the rules and procedures established in the past IASS congresses, there will be also a parallel conference in Nanjing, the First China Semiotics Forum, which will provide additional opportunities for comparative-semiotic communication.

Date: 04/10/2012 to 08/10/2012

Place: Nanjing Normal University, China

Link: Conference home page

Keywords: Semiotics, Semeiotic