

Acta Semiotica Estica XIII

Tartu 2016

ABSTRACTS

MARI-LIIS MADISSON. Reflecting on the Snowden scandal in Estonian media: the construction of threats and fear

This study concentrates on the discourse of e-Estonia, which is one of the most significant cornerstones of contemporary Estonian identity. The discourse of e-Estonia is articulated in Estonian official self-descriptions, but it also has an important role in the self-understanding of various peripheral spheres. The aim of this article is to explain how the leakages concerning details of the top secret United States government mass surveillance program PRISM were contextualised in various dimensions of the Estonian public informational sphere and how it was related to techno-optimistic identity-discourse.

The analysis indicates that the reflection of Snowden's leaks is dominated by a discourse of fear which connects PRISM to instant threats but also to more abstract dangers. I outline three dominant sub-types of that discourse: (1) Phobophobia – the fear of fear, (2) the fear that surveillance technology may directly cause harm to a) global democracy and/or b) the human rights of individual citizens, and (3) the fear that PRISM is a sign of NWO conspiracy. PRISM's reception demonstrates that in many aspects, the techno-utopian sphere of meaning is inverted and replaced with a dystopian one. Perceiving the significance of the social impacts of information and communication technologies remains relatively constant in both cases, but the positive charge of meaning is transformed into a negative one. For example, the important keywords of the e-success story (e.g., NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre, e-healthcare system, paper-free bureaucracy) start to signify hidden danger. The constituent topics of the discourse of e-democracy (e.g., horizontal power-relations, freedom of expression and transparent governing) are, in many cases, replaced with the images that are familiar from the description of totalitarian regimes or NWO conspiracy theories.

Keywords: *PRISM, e-Estonia, technological determinism, identity creation, semiotics of fear, conspiracy theory*

JAANIKA ANDERSON, MARIA-KRISTIINA LOTMAN. Intrasemiotic translation in the emulations of ancient art (On the example of the collections of the University of Tartu Art Museum)

Problems concerning the relationship between the original, copy and

imitation in ancient art and its reception have been the subject of many discussions and have attracted researchers from different disciplines. Where is the end of imitation and the beginning of an original? Can we in these cases even speak of copies in their usual meaning? There are scholars who distinguish between original works and true copies; others prefer to use the term 'free copy', some speak of imitation, some even of new originals. But where are the boundaries of these phenomena, and what is the nature of their interrelationship? The paper proposes to study these questions using the theoretical framework offered by Gideon Toury and Umberto Eco. The copies in the collections of the University of Tartu Art Museum will be approached as intrasemiotic translations, their features will be described and their most important subtypes will be distinguished.

Keywords: *intrasemiotic translation, UT art museum, original and copy, ancient art, cast collection, reproductions of ancient art*

TRIINU UPKIN. Representations of nationalities in Classical Ballets

Classical ballets are performances created in the Russian Empire during the second half of the 19th century, many of which are still performed all over the world. This article studies how different nationalities are represented in these performances. My hypothesis is that the imperialistic and orientalist views on representing nationalities present in classical ballets do not derive from the narratives created in the 19th century as much as they come from the physical forms of ballet itself. I argue that those stereotypes in representing nationalities have not only become fixed in the forms of classical ballet but, furthermore, the physical form of the genre and the declaration of the superiority of white Mid-Europeans develop hand in hand. The more beautiful the white ballerina, the dumber looks the moor beside her.

I examine the genre of ballet, the performances and their elements as texts and approach them with the method of textual analysis. To study the representations of nationalities, I explain the essence of ballet's means of expressions and their historical evolution: languages of movement, dancing body, music and choreography are being observed separately. Thereafter, I analyse six classical ballets in which the representations of characters' nationalities are important („Don Quijote”, „La Bayadere”, „Corsair”, „Raymonda”, „Swan Lake”, „The

Nutcracker”) and present a short summary of their librettos. The article is based on my master’s thesis *Representations of Nationalities in Classical Narrative Ballets* (Tallinn University’s School of Humanities 2015, supervisor prof. Mihhail Lotman).

Keywords: *semiotics of ballet, ballet, orientalism, representations of nationalities, national stereotypes, representations of gender*

ANDRES LUURE. The Idiot's Love

To analyse love, two ways of loving are distinguished in this essay. By gracious loving, the lover is keen to give love to the beloved who misses it. By loving-in-love, the lover is keen to receive love that she misses from her beloved who has it in abundance. Gracious love is similar to God's love towards the human; loving-in-love is similar to the human's love towards God. The gracious lover doesn't admit to himself that his love is inadequate and that she needs love. The lover-in-love doesn't admit to herself that she wants to love and that the other's love is the way it is. In order for love to be integral, loving-in-love is to be built on the foundation of gracious love, and gracious love is to be built on the ground of loving-in-love. The hypostatic union of Jesus Christ's divine nature and human nature in which His natures undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation are interpreted as the foundation of the integrity of the love between God and the human being, which can incompletely be imitated by the love between men. Then it is probable that Jesus Christ realises or perhaps transcends the perfect love as described above; however, it seems that there is no description of it in the gospels. Prince Myshkin in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel „The Idiot”, who is often conceived as an embodiment of Jesus Christ, seems to love Nastasya Filippovna with gracious love and Aglaya with love-in-love, being unable to realise the integral love.

Keywords: *love, semiotics, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, hypostatic union*

KATRE PÄRN. The place of semiotics among modelling systems: notes towards the creative and play-type modelling in human sciences

The issue of modelling has been extensively studied in the context of natural sciences yet considerably less so in human sciences. The current article presents an attempt to do so with the help of the Tartu–Moscow School’s modelling systems theory. One of the motivations behind the article was an observation made while reading Lotman’s article „The place of art among other modeling systems” that there is certain similarity between his conception of artistic modelling and certain practices and ways of thinking in contemporary human sciences.

To make some preliminary observations about the type of modelling in the human sciences, I study Lotman’s grounds for differentiating between scientific, play-type and artistic modelling. For that aim, I give first an overview of Lotman’s and the Tartu–Moscow School’s view on modelling systems, to bring forth features I consider to be central: understanding modelling systems in a cognitive and activity theoretical framework, the agency of modelling systems, the pragmatics of modelling activity, modelling as translation, attitude toward the conditionality of modelling as well as the multi-layeredness of modelling.

Approaching modelling as translation opens up a perspective to elaborate on the nature of the creative modelling central to art. The attitude towards the conditionality of modelling, in turn, differentiates between scientific and play-type modelling. If we analyse Lotman’s distinction between two layers of semiotics – cultural and metasemiotics – from that perspective, his views on the role of scientific modelling in semiotics (and the human sciences more generally) can be inferred, more specifically the acknowledged need for another type of modelling besides scientific.

On these grounds, I build the hypothesis that the modelling specific to the human sciences is a unique combination of scientific, creative and play-type modelling. While the issues of scientific modelling and creative modelling in the sciences have already found some attention, Lotman’s approach offers perspective for the study of play-type modelling in the human sciences.

Keywords: *modelling systems, Lotman, semiotics, human sciences, cognition, creativity, conditionality*