

ABSTRACTS

PEETER TOROP. *Text in intersemiotic space*

One parameter of studying culture as an intersemiotic space has been metacommunicative aspect. Each cultural artefact can be surrounded by a whole array of texts of different media and discourses that are all metatexts in relation to it. The theory of metatexts has tried to approach this situation by typologising metatexts; theories proceeding from intertextuality consider textual relations in intertextual communities more important. In the meeting point of intertextuality and metatextuality both post- and precommunicative processuality become important.

On the one hand, culture is an endless perception and reception. The possibility for one artefact to appear in different materials, e.g. as a novel, film, ballet or a symphony, shifts the ontological borders of the artefact and makes it into an intricate and dynamic mental whole. But besides this also the processes of creation of artefacts have entered culture and culture has begun to resemble a writer's worksheet, covered with unrelated phrases, drawings, but also coherent thoughts. What is important is not their existence as such but their location on a sheet of paper that makes it possible to recreate the force field of thinking, to see an intricate whole in these fragments.

Thus the creative process itself becomes an explicit part of culture and the receiver can communicate with not just a completed text but also with a possible world in which the text as it is has developed and in which also other kinds of developments could have taken place. A film in the cinema and on DVD can be of different lengths; a DVD can contain omitted shots and sequences, screen tests etc. Creative process has become a part of marketing and the text is diffused in media already before it is completed. Thus the traditional status of the original text or the prototext disappears and new means have to be found to carry out a holistic analysis. Not all texts are located in culture as wholes with definite borders and the diffuse creative process often merges with the diffuse receptive process before the text itself is recognized as an immanent whole in culture. It is the change in proportions of explicit and implicit properties of cultural artefacts that, in turn, presupposes the capability of the scholar analysing culture to respond to the new situation with new research strategies.

Keywords: *culture, (creole) text, intersemiotic space, process(u)ality, rough draft.*

MIHHAIL LOTMAN. Poetry as Art of War

The article has a twofold aim: on the one hand, it is an analysis of verse structure with semiotic methods; on the other hand, it describes an archetype of poetic language that so far has not received much attention. Semiotically, poetic language is a multifaceted heterogeneous structure; it is a system that in fact consists of several corresponding languages. These languages have their own semantic peculiarities: thus, meter and rhythm emphasize the temporal dimension, while rhetorical structure is connected foremost with spatiality and visuality.

There is a certain motif that runs through the history of different poetic cultures: the connectedness of the art of verse with the military. This connection is observable also in the modern era, and it is noteworthy that each cultural epoch creates its own models that are realized both in the military as well as in verse composition. During classicism when troops were lined up in columns, the most important genre in Russian poetry was the ode with its form of numbered identical stanzas, associating with parading troops. In the romantic era when Napoleon broke off the traditions of building up the troops, elegies written in heterometrical iambi and poems written in free rhyme became the dominant poetic pattern in Russian poetry. The avant-garde destroyed the integrity of a verse line. Analogous processes can also be observed in the military: the term 'dispersed chain' was used both as a poetic and as a military term. How this motif is realised in a text is exemplified by two poems written in different epochs: Pushkin's *A Small House in Kolomna* (1830) and Mayakovski's *150,000,000* (1918).

Keywords: *semiotics of poetry, Russian poetry, metaphor, ottava rima, avant-garde.*

MARINA GRIŠAKOVA. On some semiotic models in film and fiction: mirrors and doubles

The article examines the models of the "double identity" in film and fiction. W. Iser's reworking of the Lacanian theory is used to describe different historical paradigms of the "doubling". The two dominant models serve as a basis for the description: the "*split personality*" and the "*shared personality*". In the first case, the split between the two aspects of the ambivalent personality leads to extrapolation: an aspect is hypostatized into physical *presence* or a personified narrative agent. In the second case, the "shared" or "invaded self" involves the other's virtual presence perceived as real, which may result in further serial splittings and displacements.

Keywords: *film, literature, semiotic models, mirrors, doubles*

BERK VAHER. Exploiting and expanding exotica: George Psalmanazar and his Formosa

Traditionally, exotica has been regarded as an umbrella term for predominantly colonialist fads of the faraway — merely camp at their best, downright degrading at their worst. As a postmodern concept, however, exotica has come to signify imagining and constructing a fictitious culture as a lifestyle — a utopia which is idiosyncratic by nature yet likely to meet some demand on the global market for identity.

George Psalmanazar, the early 18th century “Formosan” sensation in Britain and the Continent, might very well have been the first creative person of any significance to sport a full-fledged fictitious exotic identity mainly just for the thrill of it. Indeed, all the charms and complications of postmodern exotica seem to be embedded in his brief yet vivid career as a curiosity (which ranged from scary savage stories and professed cannibalism to fabrication of a grammar and an alphabet which fascinated many a linguist of his time).

This article studies the complex character of Psalmanazar’s creation which exploited a current *chinoiserie* craze and the public (mis)understanding of the Orient but also remarkably expanded the concept of exotica as a literary genre and as an act of autopoiesis.

Keywords: *cultural studies, postcolonialism, postmodernism, exotica studies, ethnography.*

URVE ESLAS. The language of the Other: dialog without communication

Jaan Undusk in his article “Levinasi mittemärgiline nägu” (*The non-sign face of Levinas*) discusses Levinas as an anti-semiotics thinker who sees semiotics as violence (Undusk 2003: 7). The present article has two main objectives. First, if semiotics can be seen as a science of violence then what are the criteria that allow semiotics to be described thus? Another issue of importance rising is that if Levinas’ discussion of *me* and *other* can be described as sign system, does Levinas’ sign theory then differ from the criteria which allow semiotics to be described as a science of violence?

The present article attains the following opinion: what can be seen as Levinas’ antagonism to semiotics, which can also be called a semiotic peculiarity of Levinas, is based on an alternative approach of semiotics, in which a sign is not seen as a substitute of what is lost, but as a sign of the unexperienced; in which the signifying process is not seen as an endless semiosis but as a ceaseless re-signifying; and communication is not seen

as exchange of information, but as a dialogue of three parts that, besides to the *said* and exchange of information, includes *saying* and *re-saying*.

Keywords: *Emmanuel Levinas, otherness, communication, dialogue.*

ANDREAS VENTSEL. The construction of the concept of *we* in political rhetoric of Soviet Estonia in 1940–1941

The years 1940–1941 mark one of the most crucial periods in Estonian recent history. The establishment of Soviet power was not carried out using only violent means. The power had to legitimate itself and to justify the change of the situation to the masses. Here, the basis of legitimisation — the construction of *we* or *people* or *people's will* — obtains primary importance. This basic concept of cultural identity, *we*, together with the second member of opposition, *they*, forms the central axis of cultural description that defines and delimits the relationship between the self-description of culture (organised space) and another culture (unorganised space). The material for the analysis consists of speeches of the new political elite of the time (Vares-Barbarus, Lauristin, Kruus, etc.).

The first year of Soviet power in Estonia can be roughly divided into two periods: the period in 1940 from June 21st to "July elections", and the period since "July elections" of 1940 until July 1941. In political rhetoric, the new political elite tried to create a monolithic subject, a unity between themselves and people (*people's will*) by emphasizing activity and freedom of self-determination. However, since "July elections", especially since the "acceptance" of the Soviet Republic of Estonia into Soviet Union, there can be detected a change in the *we*-concept, a transition from an active subject to merely a passive recipient. From that time on *people's will* was envisaged as entirely determined by Marxist-Leninist ideology and the Party.

From the viewpoint of the pragmatic value of speeches, the transition was manifested in depicting the opposition of *we-they* through oppositions new-old, right-wrong. Rhetoric devices characterizing these oppositions were widely used in speeches and the description of reality was therefore entirely emotionally evaluative.

Keywords: *soviet, rhetoric, pragmatics; ideology, identity, psychology of persuasion.*

ANDRES KÖNNO. Towards culture-oriented semiotics of media

The article discusses the question how to study the quality of communication that takes place in the public space between media and audience.

As a solution, it is proposed to focus on the process of formation of topics that appear in public space. This does not concern the classical problem of the sender-receiver. From the present viewpoint, the relationship studied is the one between public-private. The article discusses how to define topics accepted in social reality as a research object and how it is possible to make generalizations concerning both the media as well the public sphere designed by the media.

Keywords: *media, semiotics, media semiotics, mass communication.*

TIMO MARAN. On mimicry in the context of communication between species

Analysis of mimicry as an act of communication opens up new perspectives for the study of phenomena of mimicry, but it can also widen our understanding of communication. The present article takes a look at the theory of communication specifically from the viewpoint of this unusual object of study. First, the author gives a short introduction into communication theory and after that focuses on two topics: possibilities for communication between members of different species and differences between participants' intentions in phenomena of mimicry.

Keywords: *biocommunication, intentions, models of communication, theory of communication, communication between species, mimesis, mimicry, feedback.*

DARIO MARTINELLI. Introducing anthropological zoosemiotics. A semiotic approach to the human-other animal relationship

Zoosemiotics is more than forty years old. It was 1963, when Thomas Sebeok established its birth and, partly, definition. As most persons in their forties, zoosemiotics, too, seems to be driven by a desire to reflect about its life, identity and experiences.

Most of the competencies so far collected on non human animals have been specialistic, punctual, 'microscopic', and thus not so open and interdisciplinary. Looking carefully, the discussion on non-human animals, in terms of philosophical questions (i.e., macroscopic issues), is much more indefinite and incomplete. We feel now an urge to doubt, when discussing about other animals. We feel the urge to define and refine them, as concepts, and as subject in relation to us. In fact, who is 'us'? Most of our identity, as humans, is constructed through the relation with other animals. This relation, most definitely, is of semiotic type, and therefore must be considered as part of the zoosemiotic study. It is about commu-

nication and signification, understanding and misunderstanding, interaction and representation.

Aim of the present article is to introduce a novel (although largely anticipated by Sebeok himself) and important branch in its domain: anthropological zoosemiotics, i.e., the study of the semiotic relationship between humans and other animals.

Keywords: *zoosemiotics, anthropocentrism, human-animal relationship, signification.*

AULI KÜTT. Behavioural norms related to sacred trees and groves of native Estonians

This article focuses on the traditional behaviour of native Estonians as related to natural sacred places, in particular sacred trees and groves. The material used for research is composed mainly of folkloric archive texts written down during 1870–1970. In the present paper, “sacred place” is used as a term to refer to natural places (such as hills, forests, lakes) and to natural or human-made objects (e.g., tree, stone, fence, ruins) that folkloric material refers to as “sacred” or with which sacral behaviour (e.g., praying, sacrificing) can be associated. This article focuses on sacred places the central object of which is a tree or a bush or a group of these (grove).

Traditionally, human influence on sacred places has been kept to a minimum. Many kinds of interfering activities are forbidden completely (e.g., cutting down a tree, breaking a twig). In some places it is forbidden to pick up fallen twigs; in other places it is allowed, but the natural residue has to be burnt on the spot. Domestic animals are not allowed to enter a sacred place, and therefore such places have often been surrounded by a fence. Ploughing and digging are not allowed as well. In general, no agricultural activities are allowed in sacred places. The sacredness of the place extends also to the ground. If the flora has for some reason been destroyed, the place is still considered sacred and it is not allowed to carry out any agricultural activities there.

It can be concluded that Estonia's sacred groves have never been a place for agricultural activity, neither have they been shaped or re-shaped according to landscaping rules. Sacred groves are rather similar to virgin forests, except for minimal human influence.

Keywords: *sacred groves, sacred trees, native Estonians, sacred places, customs, behavioural norms (behaviour, norms), landscaping (landscape architecture).*

KRISTI JÕESTE. Kihnu skirt as an object of semiotics

The article consists of two parts: the first part briefly introduces ethnosemiotics as a not very well known discipline in Estonia; the second part analyzes the paradigm of Kihnu skirts (*kihnu kört*), the traditional clothing that is still used by Kihnu women.

Ethnosemiotics is a special domain of social and/or cultural semiotics which deals with sign systems and their functions from the viewpoint of ethnographic approaches. The analysis of Kihnu skirts is based upon the basic views of American semiotician Charles Morris (1901–1979) who in retrospect has been considered one of the founders of ethnosemiotics. According to his viewpoint it should be possible to reconstruct *syntactical*, *semantical*, and *pragmatical* dimensions in every semiotic object.

Syntactics: in the present context we can talk about how Kihnu skirts are combined with other items of clothing, and also about how the stripes of each skirt are combined to express a certain meaning to the interpreter.

Semantics: in the case of Kihnu skirts this dimension is expressed in colour symbolics.

Pragmatics: one skirt can have different meanings, depending on the context.

Nowadays there are 5 kinds of skirts that are used in Kihnu island, and at first it seemed reasonable to examine them in the context of the above-mentioned dimensions. According to Morris, syntactics, semantics and pragmatics are three inseparable qualities of one phenomenon that can be isolated only in theory. However, by the end of the article it became clear that in the case of Kihnu skirts such distinction is artificial even theoretically, especially in the case of semantics and pragmatics. The meanings of the skirts that are expressed by colour symbolics do not exist apart from their users.

Keywords: *Kihnu skirt, ethnosemiotics, syntactics, semantics, pragmatics.*

KAIE KOTOV. Culture, identity and self-description

In my paper I will focus on the semiotic mechanisms of identity formation and the relationships between identity and cultural self-descriptions. The process of identity formation and cultural self-descriptions that manifest and reify some aspects of identity, are inseparably intertwined, yet it is methodologically important to draw a heuristic distinction between the two. This distinction implies a further differentiation of individual and collective identity on the one hand and actual and declared

identity on the other hand. Collective identity that is manifest in cultural self-descriptions can be understood as an instrument that serves to organize both diachronic and synchronic dimensions of cultural reality. In this context, identity formation can be reformulated in terms of semiotic modelling.

Keywords: *culture, identity, semiotic modelling, semiotics of culture.*

TIIT REMM. On representing the city on postcards

The article discusses aspects of city picture postcards and explains their functioning. Making distinctions on the basis of appearance I have discussed *cityscape postcards* and *postcards without cityscapes* and the usage and types of texts on postcards. Those visual elements become important in the process of using postcards for communication. Although communication takes place between subjects, I have studied how the image of the city (as a part of larger semiotic reality) is modified in communication. As postcards are widely used in society, it is not just an individual but to a large extent also a social phenomenon that has considerable influence on the creation of social reality. A postcard has its influence firstly as an individual whole with its own message and secondly as a part of a multitude of postcards that together combine into a system of representing the city. Following the visual appearance I sketched a typology of different ways of representing the city by means of postcards. To analyse postcards taking into account their actual usage, I made distinctions between different stages in the process of creating and using the cards and respective stages of artefactual postcards. The process is divided into the creation of material card; transforming the card into letter and using the received card. The analysis is mostly concerned with the first stage, as it is in this stage, compared to the next ones, that the function of representing the city is more primary.

Keywords: *social semiotics, visual semiotics, postcards, representations, image of the city, reality construction.*

JELENA GRIGORJEVA. Post Soviet persuasion: 10 years of advertising

The study of changes that have taken place in advertising techniques and content during a decade (1993–2003) allows us also to register shifts in cultural mentality. The changes may be generalized as moving from ironic erotic suspense towards ironic black horror suspense. The main focus of my studies is on the problem of means of persuasion (“argu-

ments" of persuasion). In the case of advertising techniques, there can be distinguished a whole set of such arguments, resembling V. Propp's fairy tale functions. Art and its devices are considered to be one of the most powerful arguments in the process of persuasion. Especially interesting for my analysis are cases when nationalist content is pretending to be artistic or erotic. Sometimes this national pathos even replaces the initial task of consummation, so advertisement loses its commercial fixation and is transformed back into political propaganda. Still there is no big difference between advertisement and propaganda, both work for economic profit, and both work for it not directly but through an attractive substitution.

Keywords: *Theory of persuasion and propaganda; structure of advertisement as artistic text; post-soviet propaganda.*