

PEETER TOROP. About analysability of culture

For each discipline studying culture, the problem of culture's analysability stems from disciplinary identity. One half of analysability consists of the culture's attitude and the ability of the methods of description and analysis of the discipline to render the culture analysable. The other half of analysability is shaped by the discipline's own adaptation to the characteristics of culture as the object of study and the development of a suitable descriptive language. The ontologisation and epistemologisation of culture as the subject of analysis is present in each culture-studying discipline or discipline complex. Culture analysts are therefore scholars with double responsibilities. Their professionalism is measured on the basis of their analytical capability and the ability to construct (imagine, define) the object of study. The analytical capability and the ability to construct the object of study also determine the parameters of analysability. Be the analyst an anthropologist or a culture semiotician, the analysability of culture depends on how the analyst chooses to conduct the dialogue between him/herself and his/her object of study.

Keywords: *analyse of culture, disciplinarity, anthropology, cultural semiotics, methodology, dialog.*

SILVER RATTASEPP. "Like the beads of a necklace": On time that does not move

Inquiry into the manner in which the relationship between time and the phenomena analysed using temporal categories is conceived, resulted in two widespread, yet contradictory explanations: time is either conceived as an abstract, eternal axis, in or on which discrete events take place, or it is conceived as an intrinsic property of things that only exists as long as things themselves actually change and endure. Time is thought of as either reversible, discrete and external, or as creative, cumulative and internal. The paper considers the various ways in which phenomena studied inquiry is manifested if one or the other view is adopted — how change and stability, linearity and cyclicity, diachrony and synchrony would be interpreted. It is concluded that by analysing culture and history under the abstract, chronological gaze, as is done in structuralist account, life in a society will appear as the life of a separate social entity, and change and development will be perceived

as an alternation of stable states with intermittent rapid transformations into a new stable state. Behind all this there is the “platonian backhand”, a conceptual inversion that establishes the simplified description, acquired during the inquiry, as the originary source of life’s diversity, thereby turning a description into a cause, a model into an agent.

Keywords: *time, temporality, philosophy of time, reversibility, irreversibility.*

TIIT REMM. “The beginning” and “the end” as a descriptive tools and aspects of city

The beginning or the end are concepts often associated with a city in common understanding, arts as well as in research. Although the beginning is something that has already occurred but the end has not, there still exists certain logical symmetry between them.

For Lotman (and Uspensky) *the beginning* and *the end* of a city (St. Petersburg) are strongly connected with the textualizing function of a frame. Description through categories of *the beginning* and *the end* gives a narrative dimension to a city and links it with its (self)validating activities — aspect clearly visible for example in various descriptions of Sillamäe.

Concepts the beginning and the end connect the realms of time, space and moral. The presence of those three aspects does not allow reducing *the beginning* and *the end* of a city to a simple linear historical-predictive narrative but needs semiotical mechanisms to deal with them — to mark or eliminate their presence.

Aside from artistic texts or common understanding, the concepts of the beginning and the end are also important in theoretical research. It appears that *the beginning* and *the end* are doubly modelling devices: the modelling devices of a modelling of a city as culture and thus doubly ideological and without independent existence. The beginning and the end as a descriptive device does not only indicate to the nature of a city but also to the nature of culture described through city.

Keywords: *city, the beginning and the end, time and space, Sillamäe, Tartu.*

KATRE VÄLI. Embodiment of poetry on the stage

This article discusses the different possibilities of presenting oral poetry, concentrating on the various sign systems that can be expressed with orality. Exemplary material (focusing on voice variations, different presenting styles and intonations used) is collected from both theatre and radio broadcasts. Theoretical chapters give an insight into the relationship of body and voice, showing how oral expression is more individual and subjective. It is especially important to pay attention to it in today's visual and computer-centred world.

The analysis of voice covers also the sacral dimension in oral speech and the sacral comprehension of oral poetry — many of the directors have said that presenting poetry is a magical ritual or a rite, a sort of purgatory. This can be connected also with the older traditional understanding of poetry presentation — a creation of community and boundaries of a special magic space for the participants. Furthermore, attention is given to the importance of the styles of presenting poetry in different periods in performance history. The oral presentation and the individual interpretation are of course related to the personality of the speaker. The issue of possible interference of famous actors and their previous roles in the impression given by the oral presentation is also seen to.

Keywords: *adaptation, auditive and visual sign, body, orality, sacral, voice, ways of presentation.*

ANDREAS VENTSEL, PEETER SELG. Towards a semiotic theory of hegemony: Lotman and Laclau

The paper discusses the relationship between the theory of hegemony as elaborated by Ernesto Laclau and the semiotics of culture of Juri Lotman. The discussion is not limited to a mere expository level, but tries to contribute to the theory of hegemony. We believe that there are several shortcomings — despite many apparent advantages — in Laclau's model and that some central insights of Lotman could be of service in overcoming them.

In our view Laclau represents one of the most far-reaching perspectives in the post-structural tradition of political philosophy that tries to avoid any essentialist theorizing of society and power. Especially fruitful is his notion of “empty signifier” as the central

category for defining a hegemonic relation. But the main problem with his theory is that it is basically a social ontology that gives almost no clues for how to formulate research questions for studying power relations in concrete social formations. We believe that the problem is not merely factual, but follows partly from the very logic of his categories. In his latter works he uses the psychoanalytic notion of affect in explaining mechanisms that make it possible for a hegemonic relation to emerge. We believe that this development closes many doors for empirical social research and try to substitute the problem of affect in the theory of hegemony with the problem of translation between different cultural coding systems. And that is where Juri Lotman becomes the central figure.

The ground for believing this incorporation of the two thinkers to be successful is the very apparent theoretical congeniality between them. Both belong to the Saussurean ontological terrain. The main functions that Lotman attributes to semiosphere (asymmetry, boundedness, binarism, and heterogeneity among others) bare the same functional roles as do Laclau's central categories when he specifies his notion of discourse. In our concrete analysis we use the discourse of "the Singing Revolution" as an example of hegemonic discourse.

Keywords: *political semiotics, discourse, recoding, Singing Revolution, identity.*

LINNAR PRIIMÄGI. The artistic structure of group portrait and Velázquez's *sacra conversazione* "Las Meninas"

There are 3 degrees of likeness in portraiture: (F1) the type (the exponent of a social group — Arturo Martini's "Sitting boy"), (F2) the character (the exponent of a psychological group — Guido Reni's "Ecce homo"), (F3) the individuality (the unique person with a proper name — Velázquez's "Innocent X").

There are 4 degrees of homogeneity of the internal space in the work of art, created by 5 kinds of activity: (H0) individual activities in separate spaces [ill. 1], (H1) parallel activities (human ornament [2, 3]), (H2) distantly combined activities creating loci (event areas) and marked compositions [4–6], (H3) common activities of participants in an integrative atmospheric and compositional locus [7, 13], (H4) joint activities as the mutual situational physical dependence.

The group portrait in the European painting developed through spacial association of singular type and character portraits of Christian saints (H1 → H2). The *sacra conversazione* was the first completed form of it. It is a spacial assemblage of certain religious characters united by some collective parallel psychological activity (Latin *conversari* means ‘to deal with somebody’) and with vague loci boundaries (H1/H2). The best known example of it is the San Zaccaria altar piece by Giovanni Bellini [ill. 11]. The later development of *sacra conversazione* resulted in more and more homogeneous pictorial space [12, 13] and — because of the aesthetical antagonism between the portraiture and the grouping — ended in the retreat of individual portrait [F3 → (F2/F1)] in the genre painting [14].

Velázquez’s painting “Las Meninas” highlights the border between the collective loneliness of a *sacra conversazione* group (H1/H2) and its distantly combined activities in a concrete genre interior, a shared pictorial space (H3) with blurred loci borders in it. The depicted persons also tend to be more characterized than individualized. Thus, the artistic structure of “Las Meninas” could be described as:

$$H3 \{[(H1/H2) \leftrightarrow H2] + [F3 \rightarrow (F2/F1)]\}.$$

It is impossible to analyze “Las Meninas” as a genre painting because it is not. It is a splendid example of *sacra conversazione* in the post-renaissance European art.

Keywords: *group portrait, artistic space, sacra conversazione, Velázquez, “Las Meninas”.*

KATRE PÄRN. The development of the model of cinematic language during the structural period of semiology of cinema

The paper studies the development of the model of cinematic language during the period of classical structuralist semiology of cinema (from 1960s until early 1970s). Central to this overview are the works of Christian Metz, who is regarded as the founder of semiology of cinema, and those of whom had influence on his approach.

Although Metz started his semiological research arguing that cinema is a language without a language system, *langage sans langue*, he later concluded that the language of cinema too entails a formation equivalent to language system (i.e. cinematic codes). Furthermore,

instead of contrasting language to language system, he later separated language from speech in the study of cinema — the language of cinema from film as textual system. These shifts can be viewed as transition from a theoretical concept to a semiological model of the language of cinema.

The article concentrates on the underlying productive as well as on counter-productive influences of this shift, on the reasons why the semiology of cinema at first struggled with adopting the Saussurean model of language, and on the developments that finally made it possible. Thus, the author examines the issues pertaining to the object of study taken as a result of specific approaches and methods, and relates to the differentiation of cinema and film as central and perhaps one of the most important contributions to the semiology of cinema.

Keywords: *cinema and film, semiology of cinema, language of cinema, language model, structuralism, code, textual system.*