ANTI RANDVIIR. Modelling Communication: On the General Principles

The life of contemporary people and communities is made meaningful and also created more and more through communication and its products. At the same time, the meaning and essence of communication itself has become fuzzier in many aspects: who are the parties of communication, what is communicated, what is the environment of communication in the first place. The importance of communication in the description of the life and behaviour of people, culture, biological beings has been noticed long ago. To facilitate the relevant research, several models have been proposed mostly during the past hundred years, and those models are still in use today. The present article highlights that we should here take into account the rapid and often irregular developments in contemporary semiotic reality and communicative techniques and technologies. Thus we must first specify what exactly is the field of communication under inspection, and what are the parties and particles of communication. It is possible that the popular models of communi-cation worked out and used until now must be redefined, and their contents re-established in terms of both agency and matter.

Keywords: *communication, model of communication, semiosis, agency, referential reality*

MARLEEN MIHHAILOVA. Nostalgia as a Semiotic Process: An Analytical Approach to Meaning-Making and Memory

This article explores nostalgia as a semiotic phenomenon where the conscious awareness of temporal irreversibility becomes a meaningful sign. The aim is to demonstrate how 'nostalgia' can function as a productive analytical tool in contemporary cultural, memory, and heritage studies. I propose one possible approach by aligning Fred Davis's three-stage model of nostalgia with Aleida Assmann's categories of memory forms, and Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's concept of the symbolic universe, thereby conceptualizing nostalgia as a process of meaning-making.

Keywords: *nostalgia, social memory, cultural memory, symbolic universe, knowledge*

RENE KIIS. About the Text and Spirit of Tartu

The first part of the article discusses the concept of the city as a cultural text as it was conceptualized in the works of the Tartu–Moscow School of Semiotics, particularly in Vladimir Toporov's interpretation of the "Petersburg text". Building on this, the article outlines the specific features of Tartu, derived primarily from the writings of Estonian academics and thinkers. The second part of the article is devoted to an analysis of the database "Tartu in Fiction", highlighting Tartu's most frequently referenced physical locations, its prevalent motifs, and the representation of different city districts in literary works. The article aims to describe and conceptualize the Tartu text.

HELEN ARUSOO. The Semantic Fields and Semiotic Shifts of Wolf Stones

This study demonstrates the coexistence of different discourses surrounding human-animal relationships in contemporary Germany using the example of monuments dedicated to wolves: wolf stones (*Wolfssteine*). Two discourses manifest themselves by interpreting historical wolf stones: the contemporary one dedicated to biodiversity and the other expressing anthropocentric views on human-predator relationship. Historical wolf stones can be seen as representatives of the older discourse, yet new interpretations are beginning to emerge, casting these stones as warnings against speciecism. Moreover, while a new discourse has emerged, the historical stones still stand in the landscape – a situation which creates a potential for semiocrisis. The semiotic field of the wolf stones has expanded and newly erected wolf stones – commemorating the return of wolves to Germany – function as dialogical counter-monuments. They engage in an implicit dialogue with the historical stones, thereby providing critical commentary on earlier commemorative narratives. This suggests the existence of a transitional phase, which may converge toward a more unified reading of these stones – whether as antimonumental stones or as celebrating the past triumphs.

NELLY MÄEKIVI. Interpreting the Welfare and Agency of Big Cats in the Estonian Context

This article explores the interpretation of the welfare of big cats in various holding environments in Estonia, including zoos, animal rescue organizations, and private households. The study is framed within a semiotic perspective, where welfare is understood as a dynamic, embodied process shaped through animal agency, spatial practices, and communicative interactions. The empirical analysis is based on nine in-depth interviews conducted with zoo staff, veterinarians, animal welfare specialists, representatives of animal rescue organizations, and private owners of big cats. The findings reveal that welfare is a flexible process influenced by the animal's ability to structure their environment, select interaction forms, and regulate spatial distances. Welfare assessments are shown to vary significantly depending on institutional norms and subjective interpretations. The analysis also emphasizes that the existing legal framework in Estonia does not fully account for the behavioral and environmental needs of these animals, stressing the need for semiotic and behaviorally sensitive evaluation models. The article advocates for the development of more effective and meaningful care practices that consider animal agency and interpretation processes, as well as promoting collaboration between different institutions.