# Труды по знаковым системам

# Töid märgisüsteemide alalt

## 33.2

University of Tartu

# Sign Systems Studies

## volume 33.2

Editors:  Peeter Torop
Mihhail Lotman
Kalevi Kull

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*Dinda L. Gorlée*

Van Alkemadelaan 806, NL–2597 BC
The Hague, The Netherlands
e-mail: gorlee@xs4all.nl

**Abstract**. Legal semiotics is an internationally proliferated subfield of general semiotics. The three-step principles of Peirce's semiotic logic are the three leading categories: firstness, secondness and thirdness, grounded on the reverse principles of logic: deduction, induction and — Peirce's discovery — abduction. Neither induction nor abduction can provide a weaker truth claim than deduction. Abduction occurs in intuitive conclusions regarding the possibility of backward reasoning, contrary to the system of law. Civil-law cultures possess an abstract deductive orientation, governed by the rigidity of previous written law, whereas the actual fragility of a common-law system with cases and precedents inclines to induction, orienting its habituality (habits) in moral time and space. Customary law gives credit to abductive values: relevant sentiments, beliefs and propositions are upgraded to valid reasoning. The decision-making by U.S. case law and English common-law is characterized as decision law with abductive undertones.

## Inquiry of analysis: Holmes and Peirce

The term "logic" was understood by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) in two senses: "In its narrow sense, it is the science of the necessary conditions of the attainment of truth" but in "its broader sense, it is the science of the necessary laws of thought, or, still better (thought always taking place by means of signs), it is general se-meiotic, treating not merely of truth, but also of the general conditions of signs being signs" (*CP*: 1.444). Metaphorically, the first sense is viewed as "cold", the second as both "cold" and "hot"; semiotically, Peirce spoke of "hard" and "soft" in his crucial article "How to make

our ideas clear" (*CP*: 5.403 = *W*: 3: 266 f.). If we discuss the language of the decisions and language of the law, we deal with written thought-signs, sign-events and sign-phenomena from a legal viewpoint, where the law is said to "treat of second intentions as applied to first" (*CP*: 1.559) and thereby dealing with semiotics and its finding and judging the facts of interpretation of experience and rules. Peirce stated that "the rules of logic hold good of any symbols, of those that are written or spoken as well as those which are thought" (*CP*: 1.559).

Legal semiotics discovers and analyzes fact and law in written laws, proceedings, tribunals, judges, and verdicts, bringing facts and law together "with a concern for procedure, a concern for rules, and a concern for legal categories" (Lempert 1988: 161, see 162–165). Legal semiotics embraces both the broad and the narrow sense of the "formal conditions of the truth of symbols" (*CP*: 1.559) where lawful and unlawful conclusions, exchanged between the parties, are derived from premises with varying success, as will be discussed in this article. Following Weston's division into a various subclasses or subregisters, the language of the law is "really a blanket term covering several varieties or subregisters" (Weston 1991: 14) in the following legal interactions:

(1) professional discussions between sollicitor or barrister and client (mode: spoken; functions: e.g. exposition, advice, sympathy; formality: neutral/formal);
(2) professional discussions between legal practitioners among themselves (mode: spoken; functions: various; formality: usually neutral or informal, maybe formal between junior and senior);
(3) judge giving judgment in court (mode: spoken or written-to-be-spoken; functions: information, exposition, possibly literary; formality: formal);
(4) advocate pleading in court (mode: spoken; functions: persuation, exposition, possibly flattery, provocation, etc.; formality: neutral/formal);
(5) legislation (mode: written; functions: regulation of conduct, injunction, archaism, etc.; formality: very formal). (Weston 1991: 14–15)

The kaleidoscopic variety in mode, formality, and functions of legal speech includes legal language in activities such as legislation,

courtroom activities, lawyer-client communications, legal literature, etc. influencing and determining the sense of the linguistic genre and style used by individuals of a particular legal status in the actual exercise of their role as such.

The concept and the external sign of the semiotics of law has no Peircean roots. Peirce, a polymath scientist, was no lawyer, but between 1870 and 1874 Peirce had jurists-friends in the *Metaphysical Club*, particularly the famous forefather of American law, Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes, jr. (1841–1935).[1] Holmes's legal theory aimed to provide a general view of the common law, offering a pragmatic account of criminal punishment and civil liability (Millar 1975, Valauri 1991). In his efforts to redact the new proposal in *The Common Law* (1881), his main oeuvre, Holmes was probably influenced by Peirce's standards of the 1870s, when Peirce wrote the celebrated articles "The Fixation of Belief" (*CP*: 5.358–5.387 = *W*: 3: 242–257) and "How To Make Our Ideas Clear" (*CP*: 5.388–5.410 = *W*: 3: 257–276; see Fisch 1986a: xxix–xxxvii) (in both articles in *W*: 3, the footnotes of CP, written later, are excluded). Whereas Peirce's standards go back to the underlying properties of the subject's behavior and then grow into the duty and obligation to the community, Holmes's legal rules are equally public (not private) and external (not internal) habits. The shifting senses of fundamental terms in our real world correspond to the changeable, moral or ethical properties of legal acts which eventually tend to develop order out of the "chaos" of legal behavior. This evolutionary change, advocated by Holmes, is the touchstone of later jurisprudence in common law, and agrees with ideas from Peircean semiotics. The community makes contact with social reality, but also distorts reality by the circumstances of the legal action (on reality and human "reality", see Gorlée 2004: 146, 224–225 note 1).

In contrast to "European" or Continental law, there is no general theory of liability in American law. The court needs to assess each specific case to evaluate which kinds of "bond of necessity exist between the wrongdoer and the remedy of the wrong" (*Black's* 1999: 925). The shifting and interactive senses of observation and

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[1]    See Fisch (1986a, 1986b) and Menand (2001) for the vital account of the intellectual meetings of Holmes and Peirce in the company of William James (1842–1920), John Dewey (1859–1952, who was twenty years younger than Peirce), and other associates of the *Metaphysical Club*.

experience (viewed in Peirce's view, the semiotic meanings) indicate different modes of reasoning, discussed by Holmes who asserted in the beginning of *The Common Law* that "The life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience", adding that the law finds its philosophy in "consideration of what is expedient for the community concerned" (after Menand 2001: 341). Following Holmes's doctrine of legal obligation or debts to pay to another or to society, enforceable negligence can be relevant or irrelevant, fixed or contingent (Gorlée 1999), depending on which doctrine of laws applies. To justify the nature of the criminal responsibility, Holmes's theory of legal liability requires the presence of a will before the act (or its omission: a defect of will). Holmes stated in *The Common Law* (1881) that "an act implies a choice, and that is felt to be impolitic and unjust to make a man answerable for harm, unless he might have chosen otherwise" (Holmes 1963: 46). This will to bridge a breach of trust does not come from valid logic but, rather, is a re-evaluation of the concept of Holmes's "felt necessities" (Holmes 1881: I, 35; see Pohlman 1984: 212). Holmes referred here to extralegal concepts: experience and feeling, integrated into legal decision-making, which will be discussed in this article.

According to the pragmatic interpretation, introduced by Peirce, law is created by single jurists (subjective law) but with its action belongs to communal property (objective law). Advised by observation and experience, law is created, as Holmes stated in the beginning of *The Common Law*:

> The life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience. The felt necessities of the time, the prevalent moral and political theories, intuitions of public policy, avowed or unconscious, even the prejudices which judges share with their fellow-men, have had a good deal more to do than the syllogism in determining the rules by which men should be governed. (Holmes 1881: I, 35, after Schwartz 1993: 191)

These words begin a new area of jurisprudence with "new logic", moving from the traditional process of deduction towards induction and some grounds of abduction — focusing on the terminology of nonrational and irrational elements of human reasoning. Holmes used new and radical words in legal science: "experience", "expediency", "necessity", and "life". From Holmes's proposal, the values of the experiences of the nation affect and stimulate further developments in

the nation. These values are phrased in the interactive framework of Peirce's laws of inference (discussed in this article). To build standards and legislation in American law, Holmes could derive from Peirce's pragmatic principles and his teleology of descriptive and analytical semiotics, and his ideas regarding legal realism. Peirce's teleology can be applied to Holmes's empirical legal science concerned with the "real" facts of the legal sign-situation, connecting the legal rules and standards as a necessarily objective reservoir of observation and experience of the community (Fisch 1986b).

The experience and the logic of a Peirce-linked inquiry in legal semiotics are beginning to influence legal semiotics and its future developments, which has become now an internationally proliferated subfield. The former International Association for the Semiotics of Law, now replaced by the International Roundtables for the Semiotics of Law, do mainly follow the semiotic school of Paris regarding Greimassian semiotics (Algirdas Julien Greimas 1917–1992). This legal direction follows the tradition of *Course of General Linguistics* by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), in which comparative methodology, verification-falsification process, diachronic and synchronic approaches, and the semiotic narrativity are deployed. The Peircean inquiry on legal semiotics was the life-work of Roberta Kevelson (1931–1998). She founded the Center for Semiotic Research in Law, Government and Economics at Pennsylvania State University in Reading, Pennsylvania. She considered in her prolific writings on legal semiotics that worldwide law is "really a system of signs — types of an iceberg whose bulk is eclipsed but assumed, or known to exist" (Kevelson 1982: 162). The approach to Peirce's legal semiotics is argued in Kevelson's books (1988; 1990; 1991; her articles 1986; 1982; 1993; and other work). Kevelson speaks here about Peirce's acuteness on three semiotic points: the real semiotic definition with inherent sign, inherent and extrinsic object(s), and extrinsic interpretant(s) resting on the philosophical categories, corresponding to the evolutionary inward-and-outward sequence of terms: firstness, secondness, and thirdness — in their semio-logical changes and exchanges. This semiotic tradition including an (in)determinate legal semiosis, will be followed further in this article.

## Peirce's three categories

Peirce stated that "First is the conception of being or existing independently of anything else; Second is the conception of being relative to, the conception of reaction with, something else; Third is the concept of mediation whereby a first and a second are brought into a relation" (*CP*: 6.32). Firstness is pure potentiality (*CP*: 1.422), which is "predominant in the ideas of freshness, life, spontaneity, freedom" (*CP*: 1.324). Firstness means instantaneous emotion, direct "suchness" of feeling, raising an elementary question with its direct "maybe" (or "maybe not") not dependent to nothing else beyond its own qualitative understanding of the possible meaning of the sign without thought. Firstness is undivided and undividable oneness, where thought is still absent, only the current instantaneous shiver of emotion ran through human life. Secondness is dynamic motion, orienting oneself in time and space, taking one's stand in the moment of "here and now", and maintaining one's moral place over time. Secondness thinks about the discrimination of good and evil of manysided actuality, it sents messages with action and reaction as a response to a stimulus which may cause a change of state from firstness to movement. Thirdness states the set of habits and habit-changing previously formed, which control the changing cognitive activity of human experience with respect to its response to stimulus.

Thirdness (Peirce's symbolicity) involves bringing states of firstness and events of secondness together in a mutual friendship of intellect. Whereas firstness rests on the idea of independence and secondness is the idea of oppositions, thirdness rests on the idea of the complexities of cognitive relationship (*CP*: 1.297). Among the categorial characters of thirdness are therefore mediation, thought, rules, habits, and law (the latter as general term, but also applied to legal studies) (*CP*: 1.345f, 1.405f). These symbolic-cultural terms are always infinite, borderless, and never fixed. Peirce argues the changing characters of thirdness, changing according to different convenience in human "reality". State of feeling can be changed, the (re)action can also be changed, and there we deal with a new sign and a new meaning. Semiosis or forceful sign-activity changes with time and space, and entertains successfully new doubts, new beliefs, and new persuasions. Under duress of moral time and space a new habit formation cycle is generated to fit back into the renewed semiotic

process. This relationship was experienced by Judge Holmes in his day when he defined liability not as our right, power nor liberty, but as its own "*vinculum juris* [which] is not one of mere duty or obligation; it pertains not to the sphere of *ought* but to that of *must*" (John Salmond quoted in *Black's* 1999: 925, emphasis as in the original) — as its own symbol in its own social, psychological, economic, ethical elements of experience, functioning in a changing legal semiosphere.

In Peirce's categorial scheme we characterize the final category of thirdness, semiotic symbolicity, referring to the plural variety of disciplinary terms used in general inquiry: representation, mediation, branching, cognition, synthetic consciousness, theory, processuality, habits, reason, transuasion, transaction, betweenness, continuity, regularity, evolution, as well as God. In the bizarre juxtaposition bridged by Peirce's thirdness, we perceive the generality of the law, as well as the language of the law. The different perspectives of rational thirdness can be explored from different angles chosen in the discussion of rational, nonrational and irrational elements of legal semiotics to create a human experience, the sociological and psychological secondness of life. Peirce's categoriology includes thirdness, but thirdness appears preceded by secondness and firstness, and includes the symbiosis between three categories. Semiosis (in the overall terms of thirdness) organizes and integrates the data of human experience: in legal terms, the human mind makes the formless universe into liveable objects and events, that is, it creates a structured dynamic, and never static, organ of law and lawfulness. The function of legal language is to guide and stimulate inquiry into human "reality", and make "reality" a structured and reasonable medium.

We see this phenomenon of inquiry in the structure and effect of the legal contract (on Peirce's contractuality, see Gorlée 1994: 197–223). As contractual agreement between interacting parties the contract implies a value through mutual consent. As third the contract is given a meaning with consequences in human experience: the meaning is not virtual but happens in actual life-experience (including no thirdness but secondness and even firstness). A contract is thereby an interpersonal conception of a bargain, considered as a process of maintaining a synergetic relationship. Peirce's basic entity of a first, the possible sign, the second, the semiotically real but no actually real object(s), and the third, the interpretant(s), roughly the meaning(s) of the sign-event, are all based on Peirce's categorial methodology, as

applied to law. Peirce's laboratory inquiry, solved by experiments leading to consistent, common-sense results in reality illustrates the collective habit in three interactive phases (discussed in Gorlée 2004).

## Semio-legal logic and truth

Legal logic and therefore legal thinking and language consist not of monolog, but of a secret or hidden dialog pronounced in silent and/or outspoken words of commands, geared toward a question/answer relation. The verbal speech creates what Peirce called the "fixation of belief" (*CP*: 5.358ff = *W*: 3: 242ff) and leads towards a performance in a future time. In Peirce's days, it inspired Holmes's prediction theory of law (Fisch 1986a; 1986b) involving a choice and possibility, changing from age to age. Peirce's theory of rational knowledge formation signifies a justified emendation of future actions. Legalese (the language of the law) has therefore a changing, contractual basis, corresponding as all semiotic processes to language as symbolic thirds, but based on cultural and linguistic signs. Legal logic offers legal acts, but is generally a social theory of logic dealing with complex linguistic signs — doctrines in both words, paraphrases, and definitions rooted in thought-signs, and interpreted variously by a community of inquirers, appealed to today and in the future. In semiotic terminology, the doctrines have become non-doctrines and are called vocabulary, phraseology, and textology (Gorlée 2004: 159, 197f). The legal parties (Peirce's inquirers) are not flesh-and-blood individuals but are either skilled legal brains — those of a legally trained individual — or unskilled legal brains — of legal illiterates, lacking formal training in legal studies, ostensibly fated to be a legally silent majority of potential "victims" of the law (Boasson 1966: 65ff; Gorlée 1999: 246).

Legal reasoning rests on a relatively closed set of legal premises that can be known and argued by human individuals with legal training. It is both an open and a closed system based on previous logical thought (thirdness), yet the system is infinite and has no finite, closet set of legal premises. The conclusions — or interpretant(s) of the legal inference — remain open and present unpredictable possibilities. This is the legal openness in Peirce's semiotic "dialogism" (*CP*: 3.172, 3.197, 3.623), meaning that the decisions and choice in

logical thought can give both predictable and impredictable senses of the interpretive results: namely, either adding to the law system or even jeopardizing it. This is contrary to the desired closeness of legal language, and would seem a negative perspective on the effects of legal language itself. It is also a positive point of view, because it produces relative openness for interpreters to consider and evolve new developments inside the present data. In this way, the legal rhetoric generates further with time and space into a legal pluralism, still rooted in the target: spontaneous order in society, as is the requirements in Peirce's final concept of community.

If we study legal semiotics according to Peirce's sign theory, thought-signs are indeed not entirely rational and logical. They also embrace practical and intuitive knowledge, constantly trying to integrate them into reason. Legal logic and language (thirdness) then attempts to integrate signs of fact or experience (secondness), based on signs of feeling or emotion (firstness). The fact and feeling are, however, invisible but still present in the discourse referring to absent — that is deleted, neglected, or abandoned — outside items. Reason is therefore relatively present in legalese, a reason that is still fixed and definite but despite its generality embedded in abductive thought. The practical feeling brings vagueness to reason, but eventually brings it eventually closer to the reality of truth (also called certainty within philosophy, as opposed to uncertainty) as humans like to live and survive by it. Peirce stated that

> The purpose of every sign is to express "fact", and by being joined with other signs, to approach as nearly as possible to determing an interpretant which would be the *perfect Truth*, the absolute Truth, and a such (at least, we may use this language) would be the very Universe. (*NEM*: 4: 239, Peirce's emphasis)

Yet legal truth does not exist, since cases after final ruling (verdict) can be appealed to a higher court and in this new proceeding for reversal are taken anew with the same of different circumstances. It means that "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" becomes a degree of non-truth.

Language, including legal language, is basically a third and formal, but engaged in the working process of its multiple "drive for reference" (Mertz, Weissbourd 1985: 262, 268, 276, 283). Language has a truth but has no absolute truth value. Given, moreover, that its

right thinking "depends unconditionally upon the relation of the fact inferred to the facts posited in the premisses" (*CP*: 5.270 = *W*: 2: 215), its truth is wholly a function of this relation, so that "as long as the premisses are true, however other facts may be, the conclusions will be true" (*CP*: 5.271 = *W*: 2: 215). For the argument here it is important that all the modes of reasoning, even truth-giving deduction, which is Peirce's first symbolic sign leading to valid mechanical reasoning, does not question the validity of the hypotheses contained in its own premisses; instead, it is simply taken for granted that they are correct because they represent our whole knowledge of the matter.

## Three modes of reasoning

Reasoning is the logical desire to reach the unknown through the known, organized by Peirce in his semio-logical method of inquiry (Rescher 1978), linked to the classical logical principles but transposed in other working forms (abstract and concrete shapes) in order to grasp and drive the dynamics of thought. Scientific inquiry is always inspired by intellectual curiosity and is based on reasonable thirds (thought-signs, conclusions) which need to have, however, seconds and firsts involved in them. A phenomenon, event, or fact, is interesting to a certain investigator, and becomes for him/her a semiotic sign-phenomenon challenging his/her inquirer's ingenuity. In order to explain and analyze the sign in its historical and present facts, and to make predictions about its future nature or behaviour, the sign-phenomenon is carefully seen, observed, and reflected upon. Man-as-a-scientist seeks to enhance the scientific value and the validity of the conclusion(s) of the laboratory inquiry, by adopting a policy in right thinking which is hoped to minimize the risk of subjectivity and provide maximum objectivity. To achieve this purpose of seeking truth, the data obtained of the sign-phenomenon are grounded by inferential reasoning. This is the three-step methods of reasoning, which is expected to yield true conclusions now or eventually.

The three-step principles fits of logic was traditionally either deductive or inductive reasoning. Peirce revolutionized the traditional dichotomy which he expanded and re-defined as a trichotomy by including his abduction (1867). Peirce's decision-making distinguished between explicatory (or analytic) reasoning — deduction — and

ampliative (or synthetic) reasoning — induction and Peirce's ab-duction. Explicatory (or analytic) reasoning corresponds to deductive inference, like in this example taken from Peirce's beanbag:

| Rule | All the beans from this bag are white. |
|------|----------------------------------------|
| Case | These beans are from this bag. |
| • Result | These beans are white. (*CP*: 2.623 = *W*: 3: 325) |

It simply substitutes for the facts presented in the premiss, what is implicit in them. Like inference from the known whole to the parts, it does not draw upon the unknown or the partially unknown. This makes deduction the only form of "necessary" (that is, explicatory) reasoning to reach truth in itself, since deduction forecloses critical (re)examination and (re)evaluation of its premises and does not engage in the introduction of new insights, nor in the rejection of hypotheses already adopted.

On the other hand, non-inductive (ampliative or synthetic) reasoning does not lead to necessary conclusions, but to conclusions which are probable or merely plausible. In Peirce's words, "Deduction proves that something *must be*", and "Induction shows that something *actually is* operative", yet "Abduction merely suggests that something *may be*" (*CP*: 5.171, Peirce's emphasis). Induction — the traditional reasoning about signs in reality — as well as abduction (also called hypothesis or retroduction by its "inventor" Peirce himself) — which is logic from the known parts to the unknown whole — are temporary guidepost to logic. Induction and abduction are "statistical inference" according to Peirce, who explained: "Out of a bag of black and white beans I take a few handfuls, and from this sample I can judge approximately the proportions of black and white in the whole" (*CP*: 5.349 = *W*: 2: 268).

The shift between a legal monolog (meaning a question: law, writ of summons, court decision, will, testimony, plea, oath, bank statement) to the intended dialog (meaning a answer and question relation: a request for advice, marriage settlement, interrogation report, police inquiry, cross-examination) requires the removal of explicatory arguments. Instead of arguing a verbal legal text we argue what is implied in it: decisions, commands or orders, and rules (Friedman 1977: 24). In a court case, we deal with mixed cases including authorative statements. A court case is provided with

defense, cross-examining a witness, a jury verdict, and similar items. In a court case, deduction is replaced by ampliative, or synthetic, arguments. Inductivist character of legal reasoning rests on what "actually is" (CP: 5.171), Peirce's signs of secondness:

| | |
|---|---|
| Rule | These beans are from this bag. |
| Case | These beans are white. |
| • Result | All the beans from this bag are white. (*CP*: 2.623 = *W*: 3: 325) |

Inductive inference gives "a course of experimental investigation" (*CP*: 5.168). It assumes that "what is true for a whole collection is true of a number of instances taken from it at random"(*CP*: 5.275 = *W*: 2: 217). Induction is, as said, a statistical argument, the sign points outside itself to the object referred to; it is a second, giving "a fragment torn away from the object, the two in their Existence being one whole or a part of such whole" (*CP*: 2.230). Induction establishes a clear cause-consequence relation between premiss and conclusion (between sign and interpretant) which requires the investigator to follow it "blindly". There can be no absolute certainty in induction, because the inquirer, spurred by intellectual curiosity (*CP*: 5.584) is in fact making predictions and thereby judging the unseen by the seen. New knowledge is inferred by extrapolating it from actual fact toward the unknown. Induction is therefore a "practical truth" (*CP*: 6.527), bringing the inquirer halfway the path which, in the Peircean view, must eventually lead him or her from interrogation and doubt to certainty and truth.

This classification can be applied to the two prominent systems of law and to legal reasoning in the Western world, the latter now integrating the emerging ex-Communist legal world. Civil-law (originally the Latin *jus civile*) cultures possess a deductive orientation, governed by written laws, statutes, and constitutions imposed by the state through a parliamentary procedure (deriving from the sovereign), while a common-law system (derived from the Old French *commen ley*) is in itself "inarticulate until it is expressed in a judgment" (Patrick Devlin quoted in *Black's* 1999: 270). Common law consists of the interpretation of the judges whose formal decisions form precedents in respect of succeeding cases. Common law is a body of rules concerned with the authority of cases and precedents. The statutary law inclines to reasoning according to inductive thought.

Judicial decisions can overrule — that is: change — its binding codes in new statutes according to changing standards of time and space. By this strategy or power involving the strict judicial "oracles of the law" (Holmes 1897: 457), the judges leave a legacy to future ages.

Civil law emphasize a moderate standpoint of legal positivism and is ruled a judicial decisions rather than legislations. Civil law tends to give more prominence to the imperative idea to reasoning by a law-making organ than common law with their more legal realist and empirical orientations, is inclined to do. European law has a strong rigidity and stability, and offers through its written form some resistance to manipulation. The repeatable regularity in continental law is the conclusion of its deductive habit: its real logical syllogism goes from legal ideas to real ideas. Probable reasoning is the inductive syllogism, which moves from ideas to things, the latter are material (extralegal) things existing in human experience.

Anglo-American legal theory is today a mixture of two legal elements, not considering so-called "equity" (a third system of English law, responding to ideas of natural justice, now part of common law; see Williams 1982: 25–29, *Black's* 1999: 560): (1) the so-called common law, judicial law based on court decisions within the legal framework of cases and precedents, differing fundamentally from Roman law (filtered through Napoleon code) which governs most Western legal systems, and (2) statute written law, which is written law based on previously codified law. Common law, deriving its force through the rigidity of its reasonableness and truth, is more adaptable than the actual fragility of the fixed form of statute law, oriented to the changing needs to society. Peirce would call common law a system of habituality, a habit-transforming strategy, where new habits are constantly enforced (and denied). New habituality ensures a way to avoid conservatism and create new meanings in the law. Both statute law and common law are in fact rule-forming institutionalization rules and eventually — or as Peirce wrote: in the long run — proceed from induction (seconds) to deduction (thirds).

## Abductive beliefs

Every inquiry, scientific and practical, needs to formulate and adopt certain hypotheses on which to further build the argumentation. It uses instinctive reasoning, or hypotheses — also called abduction by the term's discoverer, Peirce himself [see Gorlée 1996 (English version), 2000 (rev. German version), 2004: 114–132 (2nd rev. English version)]. In the abductive inference, we catch a new "*case* from a *rule* and *result*" (*CP*: 2.623 = *W*: 3: 325, Peirce's emphasis). Peirce added: "On the table there is a handful of white beans; and, after some searching, I find one of the bags contains white beans only. I at once infer as probability, or as a fair guess, that this handful was taken out of that bag" (*CP*: 2.623 = *W*: 3: 325):

    Rule      All the beans from this bag are white.
    Case     These beans are white.
    • Result   These beans are from this bag. (*CP*: 2.623 = *W*: 3: 326)

Abductive mannerisms are contrasted with deduction and induction, and are backward reasoning. Abduction is based on hunches and guessing, and the emotional overtones build intuitive opportunities stating "may" and "maybe not". This gives through the abductive experience, new surprises and information.

Of the three modes of reasoning, abduction is the only to "open up new ground" (*NEM*: 3: 206) and to introduce novelty into the intellectual (or pseudo-intellectual) inquiry. Induction moves from ideas to things, whereas abduction is a reverse operation: abductive syllogism moves from things to ideas, from outside to inside. Inquiry seems to start from catching the inquirer's flavors, tastes, and expectancies until it reaches his or her hypotheses on the case. Weak as the absolute truth value of abduction may be and in fact is — at least when compared to the probative force of its stronger counterparts: deduction and induction — it is nevertheless the creative force breathing the air of originality into what would otherwise be a "reasonable" (*CP*: 5.174) but utterly rationalistic and, thereby, lifeless process.

Peirce relabeled a mode of thought, which for all his conjectural tentativeness, was often plausible. It suggests more than gratuitous guesswork, and is the lightning flash breaking through logical analysis to shed light on the underlying instinctual feeling. The tentative

explanation is iconically prefigured in the premises. The first premiss describes what the beans must be like to qualify as beans from this bag. The interpretant (the legal conclusion) of an abduction is an icon, here whiteness. The rest is guessing based on rational instinct, creating feeling. It is believed that abduction looks somehow into the unseen universe and tries to make some hypothesis concerning it. Abduction corresponds to Peirce's firstness, which is "represented" by the unthinkable (but feelable) iconic image, since it seems to stand for its object in virtue of its analogy with it.

The abductive overtones of logical reasoning is unsuited to legal systems and legal acts, because its judgment gives no certainty: the decisions are of an emotional nature and happen in the form of intuitive perceptions: "It seems to me that ..." Abductive judgments offer personal values and build the signs to acquire their genuine and collective meaning(s) through self-control and settling of doubts within, firstly, induction and subsequently, deduction. This is the evolution of Peirce's "fixation of belief" (mentioned before) and abductive beliefs are the first and essential steps further on the way toward final reasonableness. Abduction is not included in the cognitive laws and dispositions (such as common law and statute law, discussed above). Abductive forms are not (or not yet) inquiry but, rather, forms of inchoate questioning out of which legal discourses may possibly emerge in the long run of history. We speak here about the emotive, religious or political values, integrated into explicit law, but a "hidden" but real abductive rationale in common law and statute law, where feelings are mentioned or, as the case may be, unmentioned. Take, for instance, Peirce's and Holmes's "felt necessities", the social and individual intuitions, which are the seed of every growth of law. Take liability as a legal act, a human experience which implies a human choice, where man (woman) decides to make himself (or herself) answerable for harm or no.

The discovery of acceptable premises in abductive backward reasoning clearly occurs in non-written law, transmitted via oral tradition and through the power of memory. Non-written law includes religious-based or political-based sentiments, beliefs, or propositions (following the order of Peirce's categories). In European law systems we find the system of the law in four progressive terms: firstly in laws, secondly in treaties, thirdly in jurisdiction and fourthly in customary law. Laws belong primarily to deduction; treaties have a deductive-

inductive character; jurisdiction is primarily an upgraded inductive character. The latter, customary law is unwritten law, established by long use of local rules, which is still considered as a valid right affecting openly and clearly the inhabitants of districts or regions, and legally affecting the outsiders. These traditional rural rights, and their acts, perform a repeatable tendency toward a regularity in the existing legal situation. The local rules are probably the historical remains of traditional customs of trade and commerce in provincial regions, and do not come from central authority. Customary law gives credit to abductive values: relevant sentiments, beliefs and propositions are upgraded from a sense of customary rights to valid thought, probably due to practical and ethical circumstances in culture, geography, and climate. An example would be the Norwegian custom of *dugnad* ("community self-help" and "joint efforts"), meaning the voluntary and cooperative work carried by members of clubs, schools, and organizations for the purpose of helping the neighbours living in the isolated, mountainous countrylife in Norway. Despite coming from personal witnesses (notaries, police, noblemen, counselors, lay judges, elders, and wise men and women) testifying to the certain real existence of customary law, old customs have gained the status of written law in a particular area and have acquired a common acceptance.

Legal examples can be drawn from commerce in agriculture, cattle raising, fishery, forestry, and associate branches. In British case of law, in Wilson *v* Willes (1806), the tenants of a manor claimed the customary right to take as much turf as they needed for their lawns from the manorial commons. This was in legal terms held to be too vague, since there appeared to be no limit to the amount of turf which could be taken. In Mills *v* Corporation of Colchester (1867), it was held that a customary right to fish had no legal force where the right had always depended on the granting of a licence, even though such licences had traditionally been granted to local people on request. In (inter)national business cases, customary law mostly provides for irreconcilable grounds of decision-making. In a modern case, North and South Trust Co *v* Berkeley (1971), goods transported from Buenos Aires arriving in Asunción arrived in shortage. To settle the case of claim, the insurance with Lloyd's was inspected by the agent acting here for both parties. This long standing practice of Lloyd's — inspecting and defending both policies of insurance — raised issues of

impartiality and bad faith (in legal terms, fraud and non-disclosure). The custody of customary law used by insurance brokers worldwide remained unsuccessful in the Courts. Customary law is only exercised as of right when it is a clear and certain practice. The judicial decision in North and South Trust Co *v* Berkeley (1971) uses independent asessors to inspect the case for both parties; clearly breaking away from customary prerogatives or "privileges" toward the principles of valid morality of commercial law.

Enforceable law in Western and non-Western countries is also due to abductive differences in historical and cultural facts and phenomena. If we perceive the current classification of legal systems, which is neither biological nor geographical, but dogmatic and undogmatic (breaking out of the discussed pattern of inductive common-law and deductive statute law), we encounter a large variety of legal systems in which we see the triadic symbiosis of abductive, inductive, and deductive principles maintaining a synergetic relationship with one predominant element and the two subyacent elements. When the abductive element is the dominant idea, the result may be half-conscious and undeveloped, and hence a false problem-solving method — called "degeneracy" in Peirce's terminology; see further in this article and discussed in Gorlée (1990). The target of this process is, however, the formation of evolutionary law systems — Peirce's valid thirds — as right thinking now and in the future.

Practical examples would be like the disappearing socialist law — which sought to transform the legal community in accordance with the original Marxist-Leninist school of thought, based on state government, a classless society, and no right to individual property, since the right of legal rights (capital production) is replaced by common ownership by the state; Islamic law — based on doctrines of obligations called Sunna giving prophetic pronouncements and rules from Saria and Koran in which religion and law are one; the law system in Israel — a mixture of common law and the Hebrew Bible, the Torah, plus commentaries by rabbis plus the commentaries made of the Five Books of Moses, the Misnah and Talmud; the African law systems — based on principles of animism embodied in totems, shamans, idols, and awes of ancestor worship; as well as other mixed law systems in which room for intuitive judgments plays a legal role. Varieties of such archaic customs are also the main characteristics of the law of tribes inspired by African metaphysical thinking (abstracted

from the original French-oriented, and English-linked, statute law) as well as the "primitive" (but sophisticated) law of Saami people (formerly called Lapps), Australian aborigines, and Indian populations in Brazil, cultivating their own spiritual or sacred initial beliefs which are regarded to bring reasonableness, against the struggle with the authority. Local customs are an active juridical layer chiefly but safely spreading under the enforceable rights of the Norwegian, Australian, Brazilian, etc. official laws, where political and religious practices are considered a trusted belief of the entire national community.

## Abductive sign-action

Peirce, not a trained lawyer but a talented thinker, logician and scientist, did not expand the abductive idea for legal purposes, and its significance will require some interpretative extrapolation. In his reviews in *The Nation* (1869–1908), Peirce reviewed scientific and philosophical literature, and could use his reviews for exploring some intricate problems in many areas and disciplines, which in the 19th century were not so hyperspecialized as universities and colleges are today: a stroke of good fortune for the interdisciplinary (or trans-disciplinary) semiotician then and today. In a hidden paragraph (written in 1901), Peirce editorialized in his essentially negative, even alarmist review on the book on *Ethics: Descriptive and Explanatory* written by Sidney Edward Mezes, professor of philosophy at the University of Texas (*CTN*: 2: 149), as follows:

> A judge, let us suppose, has brought before him a case in which a case in which a man has suffered injury for which he claims damages of another. Whether damages ought to be paid in such a case is often, as we know, a delicate and puzzling question. We will follow Professor Mezes in using a much too simple illlustration, which ought to puzzle nobody. "Take", he says, "the case where A's cattle break out of their enclosure, in spite of A's having used all the care he reasonably could have used, or learned to use, and could learn to use, and destroy B's valuable crop in an adjoining field". This case (or rather another far more difficult) puzzles the judge, and he takes it under advisement. He naturally looks into the works on ethics, and, finding nothing pertinent in modern books, is driven to the scholastic treatises. Now, there is nothing in the whole scholastic logic more justly an object of derision for any modern thinker than its weak confusion of thought in its doctrine of causes; not in that whole doctrine is there any more manifest absurdity than the distinction between a *proximate* and a

*remote* cause. When we meet with an application of it in the scholastic commentary on the Sentences, it stands out as so much more nonsensical than the rest as to be comical; but that anybody should be made to suffer because of any consequence of such metaphysical jargon is outrageous flippancy. Yet it is just this outrage that the judge us driven to commit, or to pretend to commit, because the ethical writers have not expounded right and wrong in a sufficiently luminous and reasonable form.

Professor Mezes follows them. He maintains that A, the owner of the cattle, ought to reimburse B for the injury one by them to his crop, because A is the *proximate cause* of B's suffering. If he would not follow the decisions of Texas courts as the ultimate evidence concerning right and wrong; he could not fail to see that the real reason why the judge awards damages to B is that to allow a private person to undertake a business humanly sure in the long run to injure his neighbors (and all the more so if he "cannot learn to use" suitable preventive measures), and then allow him to pocket all the profits, and make his neighbors pay for incidental losses, would be to bring himself and his court into public contempt and into no little danger. That was the judge's real reason. But in days gone by (perhaps not yet in Texas) if a judge could decide a case justly, and yet by a process of metaphysical reasoning the less intelligible the better, he was regarded with awe by the vulgar; and that was one motive for his seizing upon that argument when he could get no modern light. (*CTN*: 3: 51–52, Peirce's emphasis)

It is significant that Peirce's problems in this scholarly review necessarily had to abstract from his own theory of signs and his doctrine of categories, both of which were unfamiliar to the audience of *The Nation* and unwelcome to the editor (Bernstein 1975; Gorlée 2004: 187, 230). Yet Peirce's example brought to life in his delicately farcical elaboration of the pragmatic adventures of legal ethics, as lessons in legal morality (Gorlée 2004: 187, 230) and approaches himself to Holmes' theory of liability, as described.

A sure sign of semiosis, "a sequence of inferences or a train of thought" (*CP*: 7.583), put into deliberation by the judge, words and re-words the action of a legal semiosis — including the triad of a sign, its object, and the interpretant — all of them providing clarity as well as a degree of vagueness to the case. The complex fate of the sign, which consists in Peirce's "puzzling" details or facts of the case, or otherwise requires someone's special attention suggesting it means something other than itself, or something more than itself, thereby inviting, even requiring some further information in the form of new information — here, no real but transworded, legal information — about the "real" sign-event. The sign-action still remains indeterminate and uncertain,

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and continues to "puzzle the judge", since two objects determine the sign and what happened to it. One object, the "immediate object" as it is represented by the sign and can be a quality, an existent, or a law (*PW*: 33). The immediate object is the object "inside" the sign at face value, whereas we also have to deal with the "dynamical object", absent in the immediate object and in the sign, but found in the real context of the sign relation. The dynamical object is "the Object outside the Sign [...]. The Sign must indicate it my a hint; and this hint, or its substance, is the Immediate Object" (*PW*: 83). The visible and invisible objects are suggested in Peirce's distinction between Peirce's "proximate" and a "remote" cause, both of them determining to blur the process of semiosis — suggested by a "hint". The differences between three interpretants — immediate, dynamical, and final interpretants — join the object in determining the modalities of the circumstances of the primary sign in its history, but the final effect of the case serves to illustrate a model of precedent cases in Peirce's "luminous and reasonable form". As stated by Ransdell:

> There are occasions when the dynamical interpretant — that is, the actually occurring interpretant — of a sign which is the law is not definitely identifiable because the law is to vague in the relevant respect: the facts of the case may be clear enough but the meaning of the law is not, and the judge must, as we say, exercise real judgment in the matter (which is to say that the judge must recognize something as being the relevant dynamical interpretant without benefit of recourse to any ascertainable basis in the immediate interpretant that would justify that recognition). The conscientious judge makes a guess, in effect, at what the final interpretant includes when he or she recognizes something as being a dynamical interpretant of that law at that time relative to that case. But it is the course of *future* legal interpretation of that law (in courts of appeal, in future juridical practice, and so on) that will determine whether the judge was or was not right in his or her attempt to anticipate the relevant content of the final interpretant — or, as we would ordinarily say, in the attempt to set a precedent that will be honored. (Ransdell 1986: 682–683, Ransdell's emphasis)

The at least partial indeterminacy of the possible meanings of the primary sign makes the sign relation a powerful but fallible instrument of logical discovery of familiar and unfamiliar elements of the facts related to the knowledge of the (un)criminal sign and its contextual meaning. Surprisingly, in the bastion of legal reason, the judge's speculations introduce to deduction and induction a sphere of abduction with hints and guesses, which are self-controlled to

discipline the rationality of its beliefs and give rise to discussions and debate.

## Judicial decisions

Decision law is seen as "organic" law with a human(ized) meaning (in common and non-legal terminology (Garner 1987: 395). Therefore, judicial decision law will have life and grow in diversity and individuality from outside inwards, and is far from dogmatic, but "skeptical" law. Judicial decisions are "self-multiplied, self-shaping and self-regulating", but with "shades of irritability and sensitivity" (Rottleuthner 1988). Their premises are not full grown, but can be revised, denied, changed, and overruled according to the corpus and qualities of the case law technique (Williams 1982: 67–96). Their life and growth, "set in motion by the emotion of surprise" trigger "violent response" (Kevelson 1985: 204), thereby adding mimetic and reproductive elements to the interpretation of the original sign (Mendell 1994: 629, note 25). The intermittent *mundus imaginalis* of judicial decisions are viewed not only in deduction and induction, but also in half-glimpsed abduction.

Decision law is a legal response to a claim, a reaction to an action, or a response to an answer. Technically, in the U.S. judges are said to write opinions to justify their decisions or (in English terminology) judgments in courts of law; they write decisions or judgments. The actual written judgments or opinions giving formal(ized) judgments in court are cold files or pieces of official writing in deductive form, kept for recordation in the U.S. judgment-book and English judgment-roll for appeal procedures and otherwise. The prior decisions are mental communications (formal messages) of an authoritative nature according to the size of the audience:

> Many commands, orders or warrants are issued directly to one person. The decision in a court case binds the immediate parties — two people, sometimes more — and a small circle of officials who may have to help carry it out. The indirect message, of course, runs to a wider group. Orders, warrants, and commands are usually less important than more general messages — doctrines, laws, principles, or rules. (Friedman 1977: 58)

The legal burden of proof are directed to Peirce's community, (re)affirming a "proposition whose falsity can never be discovered and [...] contains [...] upon our principle, absolutely no error" (*CP*: 5.311). The underlying decisions with its abstract deductive contents are preferred as having inductive forms. The inductive forms refer to the case suggesting the provisional (and questionable) intention in the light of judicial policy (William 1982: 97–111). William speaks of dealing with standard and "fringe" meaning, the context and "mischief" rule in the wording, the literal rule and room for differences of opinion, stating that "the literal rule is a rule against using intelligence in understanding language" (William 1982: 105), significantly adding that

> Anyone who in ordinary life interpreted words literally, being indifferent to what the speaker or writer meant, would be regarded as a pedant, a mischief-maker or an idiot. One practical reason for the literal rule is that judges are now deeply afraid of being accused of making political judgments at variance with the purpose of Parliament when it passes the Act. (Williams 1982: 105)

The inductive shapes obey the economic trends and social forces. The judicial meanings support their policy lines and instrument the judge's values. The pressure of this liberal and conservative "scaling" technique (Friedman 1977: 172), pinned on a "scale" of public opinion, is a commonly accepted and socially acknowledged technique in order to end the legal uncertainty and create a degree of order out of chaos (Ricoeur 2000: 127–132).

The abductive background of legal decisions serves as a trouble-saver in the coldness of the just solution. The right solution is manysided and may convey different interpretations, both usual and unusual meanings repeated as errors and crude mistakes, and hardly understood as existing power or force working in human reality or "reality". Are there tentative signs of emotive and emotional genres within verdicts and other legal decisions, where personal or ideological intuitions are acknowledged as being more than an open and secret space? Take the case (or maybe the vision) of the judge who decides by his or her feeling, and not by judgment or rationalization, conducted in a scientific and public debate of the "hunch" theory as a powerful feature of judicial reasoning and decisions; see Hutcheson (1929), Wasserstrom (1961), Mendell (1994). Recently, take the "puzzling" pronouncement of Posner (2001) about the presence of

emotion in law, suggesting Peirce's abduction within legal decision-making.

The abductive argumentation is claimed in the judgment pronounced, as opposed to the rationalization by the judge of the processes of his or her mind. After Peirce's death and in the last years of Holmes's life, Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr. (1879–1973), a friend of Dewey, wrote a playful but spectacular article on "The Judgment Intuitive: The Function of the 'Hunch' on Judicial Reasoning" (1929, see Mendell 1994: 627–629, note 17). In Hutcheson's pejorative words in his negative, even alarmist, essay on the judge's mental connection between question and decision, a few hunches or guesses

[…] were recognized in four kinds of judgments: first the cogative, of and by reflection and logomancy; second, aleatory, of and by the dice; third, intuitive, of and by feeling or "hunching"; and fourth, asisine, of and by an ass; and in that same youthful, scornful way I regarded the last three as only variants of each other, the results of processes all alien to good judges. (Hutcheson 1929: 275–276)

This leaves the intelligent speculation, deciding by feeling not by judgment, open for discussion in Hutcheson's article. Behind the hidden truth in hard cases, the judge "being merely on his way […] to find the just solution, will follow his hunch wherever it leads him, and when, following it, he meets the right solution face to face" (Hutcheson 1929: 278) and enable him to pronounce his judgment. A hunch is the

[…] tiptoe faculty of the mind which can feel and follow a hunch which makes not only the best gamblers, the best detectives, the best lawyers, the best judges, the materials of whose trades are the most chancey because most human, and, the results of whose activities are for the same reason the most subject to uncertainty and the best attained by approximation, but it is that same faculty which has guided and will continue to open hidden doors. (Hutcheson 1929: 179)

The hidden door is abductive thought, revealing "the soul of the fact" in a "flash of luminous hypothesis" (Hutcheson 1929: 281).

Without mentioning Peirce and Holmes, but briefly naming their theological friend in the law-dominated *Metaphysical Club*, William James (Hutcheson 1929: 282, Menand 2001: x- xi), Hutcheson characterizes intuition or imagination as a "lucky find" made at "apocalyptic moments" of professional life (Hutcheson 1929: 281). In contra-

distinction with the deductive and inductive models, the judge perceives abduction as "this sensitiveness to new ideas, this power to cast in ever widening circles to find a fresh scent, instead of standing baying where the track was lost" (Hutcheson 1929: 280). The judge trusts his or her own imaginative response to an idea and takes his knowledge for granted. This article exaggerates the high formality of the judge's status and applying to his mental posture the description of a tricky inventor to "trace the hidden equities of divine reward, and to catch sight through the darkness, of the fateful threads of woven fire which connect error with its retribution" (Hutcheson 1929: 288). Hutcheson's parody may be regarded as an unique combination of both creative and cognitive criticism, entertained with a bit of comic effect.

Hutcheson's mock-aesthetic illusion of 1929, however, prompted a valuable debate of self-expression among U.S. judges themselves. Later examples of the improvement in working practices to discover the truth, not the depleted truth but the real truth of emotion in law, include Richard Wasserstrom's *The Judicial Decision: Toward a Theory of Legal Justification* (1961: 84–117, part. 89–96). Wasserstrom characterized Hutcheson's intuitive comments as "rather mystical statements of approval" (1961: 184). Wasserstrom defuses the controversial issue of the hunch by suggesting that it involves a dual procedure: a process of justification and a process of discovery (1961: 27). A process of justification has non-intuitive, evidential, and utilitarian grounds specified as a bifurcation of deductive and non-deductive reasoning. For Wasserstrom, deductive reasoning means mechanical reasoning, while non-deductive reasoning means inductive reasoning (not explicitly mentioned by Wasserstrom). The process of discovery seems based on instinct, emotion, and custom — as discussed in Peirce's abductive reasoning used in law. Wasserstrom's two procedures of standard-and-rule are the elements of the "rational behavior" of a legal conclusion, building up the logic of right or wrong decisions (1961: 104–105). The process of discovery is the topic of the "talk about judicial hunches, emotions and personalities" (Wasserstrom 1961: 31) rather than publicizing serious scholarship.

The personal desire to integrate guesses into the decisions raises several points:

> To begin with a trivial one: it is probably correct that the judge *can* select any factors he wishes and determining the characterization of the fact situation

[...]. A more plausible interpretation of this thesis would construe it as asserting that there are no *grounds* upon which a given characterization may be criticized in other words, that there is no sense in which a particular classification could be termed "correct" or "incorrect", "reasonable" or "unreasonable". (Wasserstrom 1961: 33, his emphasis)

Deduction is the irrational fallacy (Wasserstrom 1961: 33), judged as a utopian strategy. A positive strategy adopted to solve hard cases with a reasonable classification (Holmes's and Peirce's terminology) suggests that "a judge *can* extract a *ratio decidendi* of almost any order of generality from a particular case" (Wasserstrom 1961: 35, his emphasis) in order to judge the "vague and imprecise" (1961: 35) circumstances in the case at hand. The judge uses his or her own intuition to make the meaning fit the court's opinion. This (ab)use of emotional tactics to reach formal reasoning means that "justice means the 'natural', 'individualistic', or 'discretionary' adjudication of each case as it arises" (Wasserstrom 1961: 85). Intuition is, for Wasserstrom, "the *most just* [decision] *for the particular case*" (Wasserstrom 1961: 86, Wasserstrom's emphasis).

Wasserstrom is a cautious writer, anxious not to be slaughtered himself. He defines intuition as "broader than ordinary philosophical usage" as "any process by which truth or correctness is *directly apprehended*" including "*emotional apprehension*" but excluding the "sense of justice" from a "sense of injustice:" "There may be differences between the two approaches, but for my purposes they can be treated as being essentially similar" (Wasserstrom 1961: 89, his emphasis). This distinction is true to the elements and truth-claim of Peirce's hypothesis of abduction, where in legal terms, decision is "the binding decision of the case" (Wasserstrom 1961: 92). The speculation is hoped to be free from the "biases, partialities, and like peculiarities of the judges who render decisions" (Wasserstrom 1961: 93). The personal decision corresponds to three characteristics:

First, under such procedures there should be certain independent criteria by which the one who makes a decision can evaluate the conclusion reached or the course of action decided upon. [...] The second, and perhaps more significant, requirement is that the justification for any proposal should be submitted to and should be able to withstand public examination. [...] The third requirement [...] stipulates that all the grounds or reasons for the decision be both revealed and evaluated. (Wasserstrom 19671: 94)

The three characteristics are also relevant for Peirce's abduction with its final "wisdom for the community", the final purpose of the critical inquirers, as discussed above (Wasserstrom 1961: 94). Wasserstrom cites Dewey's writings on the philosophy of law. Dewey's article "Logical method and law" (1924) has thrown a bright light on the topic of the external grounds of the legal conclusions:

Courts no only reach decisions; they expound them, and the exposition must state justifying reasons. [...] Exposition implies that a definitive solution is reached, that the situation is now determinate with respect to its legal implication. Its purpose is to set forth grounds for the decision reached so that it will not appear as an arbitrary dictum, and so that it will indicate a rule for dealing with similar cases in the future. It is highly probable that the need of justifying to others conclusions reached and decisions made has been the chief cause of the origin and development of logical operations in the precise sense; of abstraction, generalization, regard for consistency of implications. It is quite conceivable that if no one had ever had to account to others for his decisions, logical operations would have developed, but men would use exclusively methods of inarticulate intuition and impression, feeling; so that only after considerable experience in accounting for their decisions to others who demanded a reason, or exculpation, and were not satisfied till they got it, did men begin to give an account to themselves of the process of reaching a conclusion in a justified way. However this may be, it is certain that in judicial decisions the only alternative to arbitrary data, accepted by the parties to a controversy only because of the authority of prestige of the judge, is a rational statement which formulates grounds and exposes connecting or logical links. (Dewey 1924: 24 after Wasserstrom 1961: 95; see also Merrell 1994: 577, 624–626 and *passim*)

Intuitions are "private affairs ... difficult to obtain ... [and] even harder to repeat and thereby verify" (Wasserstrom 1961: 95). The external grounds "blur the divide between fantasy and fact, between wish and ideal" so that Wasserstrom needs to conclude that the "judges who think they have had infallible intuitions of particular justice" (1961: 96) are not to be trusted.

Recently, this tradition of the fallibility of decision-making and the role of emotion in law has been continued by Richard Posner, Chief Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and a distinguished legal scholar (1999, 2001). Originally a student of Holmes's skeptical legal scholarship (1992 and *passim*) and thereby of Peirce's methods of right thinking, Posner interprets the law as the effect of an economic and moral system. He believes that judges base

their decisions on guesses and personal ideology, hiding behind a veil of precedent. In *The Problems of Moral and Legal Theory* (1999), Posner briefly touches on the judges' moral intuitions with respect to the pain of the enforced punishment. What is the difference between three and four years spent in prison? The verdicts are not specific but general and social; they have "no fixed objects" and are "morally neutral" (1999: 38). Moral emotions on "numbers" in severe criminal punishments — one year's probation, six month in jail, ten years in the penitentiary, a $5,000 fine (Posner 1999: 38) — impose the emotional judgments of the judges, "influenced by experience, information, and imagination" and "disciplined by fact" (Posner 1999: 260).

Posner's *Frontiers in Legal Theory* (2001) does not mention Hutcheson (1929) and Wasserstrom (1961), but develops his own belief in emotivism, rooted in emotion *vs* "emotionalism" (2001: 28–29). Judges have no access to moral truth, their emotionalist attitude means that they tend to give "undue salience to one feature of the situation and its associated stimulus" (Posner 2001: 228). The legal decision to discern the real circumstances of the case becomes a deviated form of mental, moral or spiritual "blindness", where cognitive feeling regards feeling and emotion is secondary to what we expect of judges: real cognitive thought. Emotionalism depends on the discussed "hard" and "soft" qualities of the object. Take the cruel cases of "cold-blooded crimes", "crimes of passion", "hate crimes" as well as crimes dependent on a psychiatric illness or drug addiction, where the accused claims no legal responsibility or guilt, without "programming" the evidence of extenuating circumstances or a depraved will. According to Posner, "enhanced" punishment, imposed by the judges, would nicely accommodate the pressure of social interest groups or a personal ideology; it creates the barbarous kind of "we-they" thinking that "can lead to barbarous prison conditions, summary justice, and savage punishments" (2001: 235, 240). The emotional distress — transfigured by the direct affects of passion, fellow feeling and empathy — becomes "one-sided, short-sighted, sentimental" penal practices (Posner 2001: 234, 248). Translated into Peirce's semiotic terminology, it becomes raw emotion which generates false "degenerate signs". Degeneracy displays no token for regeneration into logical valid reasoning (as discussed in customary law, see Gorlée 1990, 2004: 119, 136, 183).

In dealing with the role of emotion in law, Posner (2001: 244–245 and 1988: 101–110) mentions William Shakespeare's moralistic-ethical play, *Measure for Measure* (performed in 1604, first printed in 1623) in which he wrestles with the solidarity with vice and the "measure" of punishment. The title *Measure for Measure* comes from Saint Matthew's account of Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7: 2) and alerts the reader and spectator to the heated power struggle for justice, experienced in the judges' conscience. In Shakespeare's tragicomedy, the virtuous heroine, Isabella, expresses what is morally and ethically good and bad, and in-between where good and bad mingle: "Ignominy in ransom and free pardon / Are of two houses lawful mercy / Is nothing kin to foul redemption" (1987: 800) exclaiming "O perilous mouths / bear in them one and the selfsame tongue / Either of condemnation or approof, / Bidding the law make curtsy to their will, / Hooking both right and wrong to th' appetite, / To follow as it draws" (Shakespeare 1987: 800). Law is rooted in the secret places in the soul, knocked or seeked or asked without committing errors in the emotional distance. Isabella turns the world upside down, reversing the moral maxims and devices of male judges who think that the purpose of life is to "get on" in strong formalism.

The temperaments of Posner's male and female conceptions of law (1988: 108), felt by judges, semiotically called "hot" and "cold" morality, create a moral space for the hidden pitfalls of judicial temperaments (Gorlée 2004: 210–211). Posner writes that in *Measure for Measure*, the legal terms

> [...] suggest ways of minimizing the human factor, minimizing discretion, and maximizing "ruledness" or "legalism". The emphasis is on professionalism, logic, strict rules, sharp distinctions, positive law, and "hard "cases (meaning, not as it has come to means, cases that are difficult, but cases that reach hard results, showing that head and heart are firmly separated); on abstracting from the specific circumstances of a case, from the tug of emotion, and from the personalities of the disputants. (Posner 1988: 107)

This passage is a mixture of the three modes of reasoning: deduction-induction-abduction. The judge, "though [he] errs like others" (Shakespeare 1987: 797), still appears to trust his own forceful energy and boundless pride, but both qualities seem to be disconnected from their basis in pure emotionalism. The judge produces strong, if in the long

run powerless, and fallible "quasi-signs", relying in his art and craft. Peirce trusted his own "assurance of Instinct; assurance of Experience; assurance of Form" (*CP*: 8.374). But one can never be "cocksure" (Peirce's key term) of a feeling, belief, or persuasion, as Peirce assured in his theory of fallibilism (Gorlée 2004: 211 and *passim*). Peirce adopted his maxim of the force of the community, "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again" (*CP*: 5.408 = *W*: 3: 274).

Posner has a strong appeal to Peirce's pragmatic thought and its reasoning of cases of doubt and his semiosic (in)determinacy — giving a tension with legal formalism. Posner only briefly mentions Peirce's abduction as a "mysterious process" (1990: 105) and states that "Peirce may have been on the right track in suggesting that we are able to choose promising hypotheses to test because of our minds, being themselves the products of nature, have an intuitive grasp of the principle" (1990: 116 note). Concerning the future of this inquiry, Uusitalo's article (1991) would suggest an abductive strain in our legal thinking, related to the reflexive rationality. Let us expect further clarification of the subject of abduction by other semiological defenders.

## Abductive flashes and glimpses

In his pragmatistic article "The path of law" (1897), Holmes argued that

> When we study law we are not studying a mystery but a well known profession. We are studying what we shall want in order to appear before judges, or to advise people in such a way as to keep them out of court. The reason why it is a profession, why people will pay lawyers to argue for them or to advise them, is that in societies like ours the commance of the public force is intrusted to the judges in certain cases, and the whole power of the state will be put forth, if necessary, to carry out their judgments and decrees. People want to know under what circumstances and how far they will run the risk of coming against what is much stronger than themselves, and hence it becomes a business to find out when this danger is to be feared. The Object of our study, then, is prediction, the prediction of the incidence of the public force through the instrumentality of the courts. (Holmes 1897: 457)

To "demystify" the fearful body of decisions of judges, I demonstrated the salience of Peirce's three-step semiotics to the understanding of the ridigity and flexibility of the systems of law. Our

modern, inductive patters of thought have made us concentrate inescapably upon reaching the deductive universe as the only object we can claim to reach. Legal activity is not entirely logical, it has strong links to personal beliefs and interpersonal communication, introducing abductive vagueness and slippery creativity in forms of national and international judicial reasoning. In situations of conflict and dispute, we fully realize that the legal norm is not just valid logic, but a variety of judgments variously linked to Peirce's three categories, limiting and expanding the utilization of the law. Judicial decisions is not founded on inmutable abstract principles, but revealed the intermittent vision, seen in flashes and glimpses, of backward reasoning: abduction. This article revealed some of the semio-logical sources of this *pia fraus*, translated as pious frauds, "a symbol not a sign of justice" (Boasson 1966: 68–69).

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## Подсказки и догадки:
### правовые формы семио-логической аргументации

Юридическая семиотика является быстроразвивающимся подразделом общей семиотики. Трехступенчатые принципы семиотической логики Пирса представляют собой три ключевые категории Первичности, Вторичности и Третичности, основанные на противоположенных методах логики: дедукции, индукции и открытой Пирсом абдукции. Ни дедукция, ни абдукция не могут претендовать на истинность больше, чем дедукция. В противоположность правовой системе, абдукция имеет место быть в интуитивных умозаключениях, которые касаются возможности т.н. обратной аргументации.

Правовые культуры континентального права характеризуются установкой на абстрактно-дедуктивный подход, который диктуется писаным правом, в то время как фактическая хрупкость системы англо-американского права, чьи судебные решения и прецеденты опираются на индукцию, переносит свои обычаи в моральное пространство и время. Правовые системы так называемого "обычного" права предпочитают абдуктивные понятия: авторитетные мнения, убеждения и утверждения в этой системе подняты на уровень юридически действительной аргументации. Юридическое принятие решений в англо-американском праве характеризуется как принятие решений с абдуктивными оттенками.

## Vihjed ja oletused: semio-loogikalise
### argumentatsiooni õiguslikud vormid

Juriidiline semiootika on üldsemiootika kiiresti arenev allharu. Peirce'i semiootilise loogika kolmeastmelised põhimõtted kujutavad endast kolme võtmekategooriat (esmasus, teisesus, kolmasus), mis põhinevad vastavatel

loogika meetoditel: deduktsioonil, induktsioonil ja Peirce'i avastatud abduktsioonil. Ei deduktsioon ega ka abduktsioon ei saa pretendeerida tõesusele rohkem kui induktsioon. Vastupidiselt õigussüsteemile on abduktsioon omal kohal intuitiivsetes järeldustes, mis puudutavad nn tagasimineva argumentatsiooni võimalust.

Kontinentaalõigusruumi kultuure iseloomustab suunitlus deduktiivabstraktsele lähenemisele, mida dikteerib kirjutatud õigus, samas kui angloameerika õigussüsteemi faktiline haprus, kus kohtulahendid ja kohtupretsedendid tuginevad induktsioonil, orienteerub harjumuslikult moraali aegruumile. Nn "tavaõiguse" juriidilised süsteemid eelistavad abduktiivseid mõisteid: autoriteetsed arvamused, veendumused ja väited on selles süsteemis tõstetud tegeliku juriidilise argumentatsiooni staatusesse. Juriidiliste otsuste vastuvõttu anglo-ameerika õiguses iseloomustab abduktiivsete varjunditega otsuste vastuvõtt.

# Crossing over with the Angel

*Alexander V. Kozin*

Freie Universität Berlin
Altensteinstrasse 2-4, D-14195 Berlin, Germany
e-mail: alex.kozin@gmx.net

**Abstract**. This essay is an analytical extension of Roland Barthes' structural analysis of an excerpt from the Old Testament (Genesis 32: 22–32), known as "The Struggle with the Angel". It thus continues the search for "the third meaning" of this enigmatic passage. In this essay, "The Struggle with the Angel" is undertaken in the phenomenological (xenological) register which situates it in the liminal sphere at the crossing of disclosure and concealment. Subsequent semiotic analyses of three visual renditions of Genesis 32: 22–32, Rembrandt's "Jacob's Struggle with the Angel", Sir Jacob Epstein's "Jacob and the Angel", and Marc Chagall's "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel", show the "third meaning" of the passage to be predicated on the foundational relation between naming and facing, pointing to the understanding of "The Struggle" as the face-to-face relationship of love and responsibility grounded in ethics.

> *A little East of Jordan,*
> *Evangelists record,*
> *A Gymnast and an Angel*
> *Did wrestle long and hard —*
>
> Emily Dickinson,
> "A Little East of Jordan" (Fr145B)

This essay considers an excerpt from the Old Testament, "Genesis 32: 22–32", known as the Struggle with the Angel. This excerpt exudes powerful allure, prompting many scholarly attempts at giving this complex passage exegetic sense.[1] Among them we find Roland Barthes' structural analysis that dissociates itself from theosophic

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[1] For a list of scholars who attempted an interpretation of "Genesis 32: 22–32", see Desroche (1973).

Biblical interpretations in an attempt to show that the extraordinary potency of the Bible lies beyond its religious import and is grounded instead in the primordial connection to the semiotic universe. As an archetypal text, the Bible discloses the transcendental dimension in its pure uncontaminated state. At the same time, the Bible does not confer this state to the single origin; no singularity should or can emerge from its reading. Its textual purity, notes Derrida, is but a condensate formed by many layers of mythological material of diverse origins.[2] This is to say that the Bible itself is a semiotic universe par excellence. It thus can lead outside of its telos and into the realm of signitive becoming.

This would-be place of pre-formed possibilities can also be understood as the liminal world. I take liminality in the Husserlian sense, as *Zwischen*, or new logos, an organization that features connecting nodes but lacks centralization.[3] Liminality is therefore a paradoxical phenomenon. Importantly, this paradox is not logical but phenomenological, for it is firmly grounded in the living world. We discover limit phenomena in such empirical modalities as children, animals, etc. In addition to life forms, limit phenomena extend to mythical figures, such as spirits and demons. The encounter with limit phenomena is both meaning-creative and self-altering. I therefore suggest that we co-join phenomenology and semiotics in order to investigate Jacob's "Encounter with the Angel" as a limit phenomenon. For this examination, Barthes' analysis provides a conceptual frame that I expand and texture with further material and analyses. The essay's design reflects these intentions. First, I present the excerpt. I continue by giving a condensed summary of Barthes' method as well as his findings. Then, I introduce the phenomenological structure of the alien, explain the alien typology and outline xenology as method. After a methodological orientation is set, I proceed with the analysis based on three artistic renditions of the Genesis episode, Rembrandt's "Jacob's Struggle with the Angel", Sir Jacob Epstein's "Jacob and the Angel", and Marc Chagall's "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel". I end by evaluating the findings from the perspective of semioethics.

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[2]   Derrida argues for the plurivocity of the Bible from the translation perspective in his 1992 article "Des tours de Babel".

[3]   For an investigation of the in-between of known orders, see Waldenfels (1995).

(22) And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. (23) And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. (24) And Jacob was alone; and there he wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. (25) And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. (26) And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. (27) And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. (28) And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. (29) And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. (30) And Jacob called the name of the place Penuel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. (31) And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. (32) Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank. (Genesis 32: 22–32)

Barthes (1977: 127) begins to analyze this passage with the following goals in mind: "show how the text is unmade, how it disseminates — by what coded paths it goes off". The name of this analysis is indicial. This is to say, it is a form of sequential analysis that pursues the ways of metacategories through their sequential production. The search for meta-categories begins with two kinds of units: the state of the character (i.e., *indice*) and the state of their actions (i.e., *epithet*). The correspondence between the two produces meta-meaning. Barthes' main focus is not the metacategories themselves, however, but their disseminating potential. From this perspective, his analysis proceeds progressively, that is, it seeks to identify those sequential positions and content categories that are responsible for "the abrasive frictions, the breaks, the discontinuities," in sum, various ambiguities of interpretation (Barthes 1977: 140).

For the key sequences in this passage Barthes takes: (1) the Crossing, (2) the Struggle, (3) the Namings. A close examination of Sequence (1) produces the first indetermination. Correctly, Barthes points out that the passage does not tell us whether the encounter with the Angel began before or after the crossing. This determination is essential, however, for the reading of the text: the character's position means that the struggle could be either for the right of passage or as the price for passage: "(23) And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. (24) And Jacob was alone; and there

he wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day". The friction between the two meanings creates structural ambiguity, puts the text in suspension. The second sequence, The Struggle, is equally ambiguous. The personal pronoun "he" is placed in the text in such a way as to refer to both the Angel and Jacob: "(25) And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him". The position is remarkable in its narrative potency: observing fighting men, can we say for sure who dealt what blow to whom? The movement is chaotic, it changes the course too quickly for an ordinary eye to understand. Would this opacity not be exacerbated manifold in the case of an omnipotent entity such as God? But, then, again, can we say for sure that it was God? Or, rather, was it God in the Angel's body, or was it the Angel who represented God? This ambiguity is crucial for the understanding of the extent of Jacob's strength and therefore his ability to win.

According to Barthes (1977: 135), the markings might explain God's or Angel's pseudo weakness, for it was employed as an item of exchange for what follows, the Namings: "The mark is a creative of meaning." And not only meanings, we might add, but new subjectivities. God marks Jacob so that he knew that he was chosen, submitting Jacob to his league. Importantly, the touch of God had no violence in it: God's marking should not be confused with branding. God only touches to bless. But, the blessing came before Jacob had requested for it. What he received instead was a new name: "What is in question in each naming is a change — of place, parental line, name, alimentary rite [...] a transgression of the rules of meaning" (Barthes 1977: 136). It is there, in the detachment of meaning from its signified that Barthes finds the text's *signifiance*. The frictions, the breaks, the discontinuities — they are all paramount to the text as they make for the combinatory effect of binding. For us, the realm of *significance* serves as the point of departure into the realm of xenology. My task for what follows is to connect the disseminations of *significance* with the ethics of liminality.

## Xenology

> *There are problems emerging here of creating concrete understanding and mutual understanding — to somehow accomplish a making home of the alien, as if it were home. Of course, there is also the question of the limits of such knowledge and the question of justifying the idea of complete understanding.*

E. Husserl (1973: 625)

No doubt, the term xenology is cumbersome. It is made of two equally loaded components, *xenos* and *logos*, and each of these components carries much historio-philosophical weight. For now, I would only like to state that *xenos* refers to the unfamiliar and unknown, in short, — the alien, while *logos* to word as in speech but also in reason. One may say that xenology deals with the *experience of the alien*. I thus approach the issue of the alien, the encounter with the alien being, and the ethics of being-with-the-alien in the phenomenological register. Below, I would like to explain xenology in terms of its philosophical roots first and then in terms of its methodological implications.

When Husserl refers to the concept of the alien in his 1931–1933 manuscripts, he introduces it through two senses: (a) as transcendental structure, and (b) as empirical modality. Since Husserl's own writings on the intersubjective dimension of the alien are sketchy and unsystematic, interpretations are required. According to Steinbock (1995), the structure of "alienworld/homeworld" is one of the three transcendental structures, that is, it is foundational for the constitution of all experience. The other two mentioned by Husserl in various later texts are "earth-as-ground," "world-as-horizon." Although the three structures are intimately connected and can be considered co-determinate, the explicitly intersubjective dimension of the alien as well as the physical limitations of my investigation force me to focus on the last structure. Briefly, the relationship between the homeworld and the alienworld is a relationship between what belongs to the recognizable "home" or sphere of ownness and the experience of the unrecognizable "alien" that encompasses everything that is constituted by a world other than my homeworld. The homeworld is therefore a parallel structure that

co-constitutes the alienworld, and it is through this co-structure that normatively significant lifeworlds are constituted. In sum, the structure alienworld/homeworld is transcendental and non-foundational, which makes the relationship between the home and the alien an overreaching model for understanding the genesis of all, but especially social experience.

The socio-symbolic dimension of the alien is embodied symbolically in alien cultures and empirically in the Alien being.[4] For Husserl, the original category Alien is comprised of children, foreigners, and animals. In this list he sometimes includes the savage and the madman. All these types are abnormal in a sense that they respond to the paradoxical mode of givenness: the alien is "accessible in genuine inaccessibility, in the mode of incomprehensibility" (Husserl 1973: 631). This makes us experience the Alien as a heterogeneous being, that is, completely on its own, reflectively outside of our constitutive comprehension. Unlike rational and culturally familiar adults, Alien types prevent incorporation into the sphere of ownness. We no longer experience the world as children; nor can we experience it as the insane do before actually having got mad; likewise, foreign modes of constitution irrevocably separate us from other cultural subjects. Coming from and with a world of their own that is delimited from our own world, Alien types are shadowy or, to put it in phenomenological terms, liminal phenomena. It is for this reason that Husserl calls them *Limes-Subjekte*. Limit-Subjects help us co-generate our world as always already evolving. One way to understand our experiences of these generative encounters, we bring them out as narratives. According to Steinbock (1996: 219), "mythical narratives attempt to give an account of a 'genesis' that is genetically impossible to know, but generatively possible to experience in the generative density of a tradition."

It is at this point that we can usher the figure of the Angel into the Husserlian typology. As a Biblical personage, the Angel can be experienced as both the liminal subject and liminality itself. Together with other alien types, it is equally incomprehensible and inaccessible. This is not to say that the Angel is in/significant. In the Bible, a lot of times, the Angel performs as a harbinger of God's will, a messenger.

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[4]   To be consistent with the common convention used to distinguish Other and other, I consider Alien (with a capital "A") to be the alien person. The use of alien (with a lower case "a") refers to alienness generally.

In this respect, the etymology of the term "angel" in instructive: the Hebrew word for angel is *mala'ak*; its meaning is analogous to the Greek *angelos*. In both Hebrew and Greek, the term means "the one announcing a message". There are other terms and functions for "angel" in the Old Testament, however: "Seraphim", "Cherub", and "the son of God". In Hebrew, Seraph means "flame." The term is rare: we encounter it only in Isaiah 6:2 and 6. From this definition, we can derive the meaning of angel to be the designator for the possibility of speech, its comprehensibility. In the phenomenological terms, the Angel would be the givenness of speaking for a reason.

The second meaning of angel is more common. A wide variety of cultural products accept Cherub to be an angel who is a living being. The cherubs that Ezekiel saw in his vision had four wings and faces like lions, bulls, eagles and human beings. They had human hands, but their feet were like hooves. In general, cherubs are described as "strange to look at" (Ezekiel 1: 4–14). They too, like those Isaiah saw, "shone brightly, like burnished bronze" (Revelation 4: 4–8). The third term that is generally thought to refer to angels is found in only a handful of places. It is usually — though not always — translated as "the sons of God". How to understand the term is a topic of great controversy, especially in Genesis 6: 1–4, where the sons of God had sex with the daughters of men begetting the Nephilim who, although deprived of immortality, had prolonged lives; they were considered to be wise and powerful heroes of the ancient breed. This kind of an angel is an archetypal hero, the embodiment of goodness and the defender of faith.

As an imaginary entity, the angel necessarily features a set of attributes that stabilize its being for us. In turn, these attributes are derived from the corresponding functions. If we reduce the already reductive angel typology to a set of most basic features, we will have: *strange*; *god-like*; *erotic*. All these attributes are connected to the Angel's relation to the inhuman world. For the sake of conceptual consistency, I will call this world the angel world. The relationship between the angel/alien-world and the human/home-world is based on the communicative encounter. After all, the Angel's job is to announce God's will. Yet, the ways of announcing the holy words defies the human language. The Angel speaks but it speaks the language of symbolism that codes out innermost experiences, the ones that can be called pre-subjective, or, following the Husserlian terminology,

primordial. The Angel thus joins the paradox of original non-origi-nality: it speaks but none can understand the language. The Angel's speaking is inaccessible to our comprehension except, as the Christian tradition goes, in the mode of utter belief and revelation. If we want to understand this mode in the phenomenological terms, we might want to solicit help of Giorgio Agamben (2003: 114), who called *glossolalia* an *aporia* of an absolute desubjectification and "barbarization" of the event of language, in which the speaking subject gives way to another subject, a child, angel, or barbarian who speaks "into the air." At the same time, despite the Angel's inaccessibility, the asym-metrical relationship between the two co-joint worlds remains co-foundational: the Angel needs the encounter with Jacob as much as Jacob needs it. At this juncture we can ask a phenomenological question, *Shall we not try and understand what the encounter with the Angel means by examining the how of this encounter?* In the following two sections I suggest that we answer this question by first in-vestigating an encounter with the alien and then turning to the imaginative representations of Jacob and the Angel.

## Encountering the Alien

Phenomenologically speaking, the encounter with the alienworld occurs first on the threshold, at the boundaries, or in-between the normative and, therefore, familiar experience, and the experience that comes as a wave of incomprehension, overpowering us too quickly and too deeply to make it possible to distinguish amidst all this alienness a specific Alien. In the wake of this experiential conflict, the Alien cannot be singled out even in reflecting back. In vain one will be identifying the features that could turn the Alien being into an object of investigation. The experience of an Alien being is only pos-sible in and through the experience of alienness that extends beyond a particular physical form or a specific, although non-recognizable (at first) behavioral pattern. No extrapolation of the alien from the alienworld is possible without losing the alien in the homeworld as the experiential base. "Limits of a home emerge through the appropriation of a home, and the alien is liminally encountered as such by being delimited from the home as alien" (Steinbock 1995: 180).

Yet, despite the level of its absorption in a radically different culture, the alien is never completely dissolved. It stays in us: "...we, as home, are already becoming alien through liminal encounters without having to take 'foreign qualities'" (Waldenfels 1996: 254). Always murky, the alien lurks in the shadow, between what is completely familiar and what is completely unfamiliar. This non-specific world of liminal givenness is non-recognizable; however, it is not dark either. It glimmers as a beacon, cutting through the space that, out of fright, we commonly fill with nothingness, or endow with the power of negation. However, this space of the in-between is never fully filled. It comes from the darkness of the absolutely alien but never reaches the light of the same, remaining at the edge of darkness, crepuscule, or twilight. The twilight, as a place of meeting the unfamiliar, has its own order: "We encounter the alien as something that can not be said or done within our order. The extraordinary makes its appearance as an order existing elsewhere" (Waldenfels 1996: 115).

Although indeterminate as an order, the alienworld can be experienced in its empirical modalities. We therefore encounter it first as those modalities, although in a radically different way that if we would have encountered our home-comrades. According to Depraz (2001: 169), "infants, animals, the insane, and aliens are subjects in the full sense because they are from the very beginning always already intersubjective subjects". The overreaching concept for the alien types is asymmetry: the relationship with the alien is irreversible. The inaccessibility to full understanding puts the alien on the side under the homeworld not unlike the way the slash sign separates and unites the two concepts: home/alien. Since the homeworld holds ontological priority over the alien world, it provides the base for the understanding of what comes "next". In turn, this asymmetry results from the process of self-differentiation: the self or soul as a home that begins from the radical difference. The alien constitutes itself by self-differentiation, that is, the alien arises from the process of self-alienation. "Alienness then does not proceed from a division but consists in a division" (Waldenfels 1990: 21).

Depraz (2001: 172) argues that the intimate nature of the home/alien asymmetry allows for empathetic understanding of the Alien. Lived empathy is "grounded in a much more passive and primal experience lying in our lived bodies." Thus, through intercorporeal coupling, the alien is connected to the home. The way of coupling is

different for the four aforementioned types, however. The child with his or her pre-formed way of connecting to the world is also pre-subjective. According to Depraz (2001: 175), "it is a passive, latent, driven, affective and blind intentionality." In other words, infancy is a condition of indeterminacy. It comes from the overwhelming experience of firstness. It also opens a way into vulnerability. The same opening is exacerbated in the case of the animal. It evokes the original touch, so to speak of, the experience before it turns into a sedimentation evoked and then confirmed in reflection. In contrast to the child, the animal is inter-animal. Reflection is not given to an animal. This allows the animal to connect to other animals completely.

The same characteristic prevents an animal from connecting to human beings. It is separated from the humanworld completely. This might also explain the non-subjective status of the animal. This is why, Waldenfels separated the animal from other Alien categories and put it "in the shadow". In Husserl's words, "the animal is most wondrous". If the child and the animal are characterized by embodied passive association, the insane is self-divided. Its temporal inchoate being produces "a paradoxical closing-up effect, as a kind of radical solipsism" (Waldenfels 1996: 177). This fact brings the insane *au contraire* to both the child and the animal. It is the most imaginative case of the Alien. In an empathetic move, we can imagine becoming insane; a lot of times, we think we are. Yet, once we become one, we can no longer connect to others. This is why the insane alien is the most inaccessible. The foreigner is closest to us as his/her alienness is communal, historical, communicative. They are, according to Husserl (1973: 13), "a generative unity, and thus, a primordial language unity/unity of language and language customs."

At this point, we might want to ask, *What consequences does the encounter with the alien has for our experience?* The answer to this question brings us to ethics. If we cannot respond to someone in a manner that yields an expected response back, we must resort to a transgression: not only we need to transgress our own world, we must transgress the world of the Other. The end-result of this ethics would be to let our "normativity to be disturbed by the abnormal all the time" (Waldenfels 1996: 122). Staying at home and hosting the alien would mean to take the alien as the alien, appropriate it in the image of the same. In contrast, transgression is grounded in responsivity, a turning-toward. This type of resistance is non-violent, non-separatist, non-unifying, and, in that sense,

non-appropriative. It paves a route that reaches the alien by "crossing over from within" (Waldenfels 1996: 49).

When we insert an alien original inside our modes of communicating with it, we respond for the Alien and not toward. To respond to the Alien from within means to recognize the one-sided origin of our normative world, and, using this acknowledgement as a point of departure, respond to the Alien in-between the comprehensible and the incomprehensible. In performing the response, the respondent enters the process of alien-becoming, with all Alien facets engaged. The vulnerability of a child, the sound and the fury of the madman, the uprightness of the foreigner, and the shadowy figure of the animal, all these alien qualities come to stipulate the encounter as a whole. Empathetic embodied passivity and subjective asymmetry allow for the encounter to take place.

Now, we can return to the analysis of Genesis with a new map and direction. The new focus is on the encounter with the angel as the alien. Phenomenologically speaking, what the Angel does is in how it appears or is made appear. As an Alien type, the Angel is passive, yet seductive; vulnerable, yet powerful; incomprehensible, yet exceedingly clear. This internal asymmetry reflects the external one: the Angel always hovers over, and it always stands under. Although the Angel is not substitutable for a man, coming from the twilight together with other alien types allows the Angel to assume a familiar form. As something that has no recourse to what has happened, an imaginary event of encountering the Angel emerges and develops in the shadow of our experience. The shadow gives the event, including its main content, and, at the same time, it hides or obscures this very event in the texture of what seemingly does not belong to it. This dual function, that of concealment and that of disclosure, makes the mode of angelic appearance most significant.

This mode of appearance is defined by Barthes as "the third meaning". For Barthes, the third meaning gestates outside of the obvious symbolic gesture, in *signifiance*. Barthes calls this meaning obtuse; it is a meaning that prays on uncertainty. Ambiguity is its mode of showing: "The characteristic of the third meaning is to blur the limit separating expression from disguise, but also to allow that oscillation succinct demonstration — an elliptic emphasis, if one can put it like that, a complex and extremely artful disposition (for it involves a temporality of signification)" (Barthes 1977: 55–56).

Another way of putting it: the obtuse meaning is the signifier without signified. Therefore it is located outside of language. However, by showing itself in a particular textual field the third meaning enunciates. The work of enunciation becomes particularly strong in the case of intersemiotic translation, in other words, when the third meaning travels from the original field into another semiotic system, such as visual imagery.

In his analysis of filmic and photographic image, Barthes locates the third meaning on the periphery of the forwarded imagery, what he calls metonymic montage. Eisenstein's black and white films are perfect examples of forwarded content. They announce meaningful symbols as they advance one after another like condensed projectiles, accumulating into a critical mass of a single conotatum: "greed", "pain", "now is the time". In contrast to the obvious symbolics, obtuse meaning disperses the metalinguistic (critical) interpretation that offers itself for a quick consumption into broken shards of meaning. These shards no longer define the whole but arise from it carrying their own interpretative weight. With the film that happens as an unrolling stream of imagery, one can barely discern their work. Once taken out, stopped, however, those stills reveal their independence: a barely discernable fly on the face of the tyrant," a pair of hastily repaired glasses on the face of the running woman, these details are in fact inaccessible accessibilities.

In the following analyses I attempt to discern the third meaning in visual representations of "Genesis 32: 22–32". Three artistic works figure in the analyses: Rembrandt's "Jacob's Struggle with the Angel," Sir Jacob Epstein's "Jacob and the Angel," and Marc Chagall's "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel." The selection is not haphazard: from a number of visual interpretations of this passage, the selected three "stills" are singled out because they deviate from traditional renditions of what has happened at Jabbok.[5] In addition, the focus of all three works is The Struggle, the central sequence in Barthes' typology. The question that I pursue here is, *How is the struggle with the Angel given as the encounter with the alien?* In view of the phenomenological nature of this question, in my interpretations I will rely heavily on the description of both the encounter with the artistic work and the encounter as a theme of this work.

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[5]    Other well-known interpretations come from Moreau, Gauguin, and Redon (for more, see Singletary, 2004).

## "Jacob's Struggle with the Angel" by Rembrandt

The Staatsgalerie in Berlin gives the piece (Fig. 1) a prominent position. It is hanging in the Hall No. 5 next to two other Rembrandts and some other Baroque art. The painting's placement is significant in at least two respects: first, it is being given as a period piece; second, it contrasts with the neighboring full-size pieces. As a fragment, Rembrandt's depiction is a perfect still. It is thus extremely selective and economical as to the represented details. A master of psychological portrait, Rembrandt found his artistic fame in the humanist approach to his subjects. The eyes, the face, the hands, all these attributes of human personification were the node of his utmost attention. The unflattering realism with which he portrayed his wife Saskia testifies to this uncompromising preference. It was so strong at times that he would be accused of moral turpitude and proliferation of the abominable. His Biblical paintings are especially notable in this regard. Few of them are stylized to the point of disguising both the contemporariness of the exhibition and the individualization of the character. This dual tendency is exhibited in the choice of the costumes, lighting, background, and figure arrangement.

In his fragment of the struggle, Rembrandt uses the same realistic signature. Rembrandt's strokes are not fine and miniscule but deep, saturated, and broad. His characters reflect the techniques: they are as strongly and as broadly outlined. Assisting each other, form and content produce a singular image that nonetheless allows multiple interpretations. In the painting, we don't see Jacob's legs, but he appears to be wearing a peasant shirt. A closer examination shows that his shirt is in fact a robe, a traditional garb of the housemaster. Judging by the way Rembrandt depicts his body, Jacob is very strong. His physique exhibits inhuman strain. The direction of Jacob's force creates a contradiction, however. At first, it appears that Jacob is straining under the weight of the Angel, but this is only if the Angel has any weight. On the contrary, he does not seem to have any mass; nor is he struggling. He appears to be suspended, in repose. The Angel does not seem to be engaged in combat. He is a subtle and graceful creature, so, his hold on Jacob is light, almost effortless. His facial expression is that of tenderness and sadness. It appears as if while Jacob is struggling with the Angel, the latter is being supported by Jacob, who is expected to carry him some place safe.

*Figure 1.* "Jacob's Struggle with the Angel" by Rembrandt.

Yet, it would be a mistake to confuse the Angel's grace with a lack of power. His power, however, is entirely different from Jacob's powerful embrace. While Jacob is being busy with his struggle, looking away, the Angel is looking at the Man with adoration. The Angel's leg that curls around the man's waist is not hurting Jacob, it is caressing him. So are the Angel's hands. The Angel's touch reveals itself as *caress*. The power of caress comes from Eros. The contrast between the non-struggling erotic Angel and Jacob creates an uncanny and marvelous impression, or *face*. It also reformulates the asymmetry in the relationship between the Angel and Jacob. What the Angel gives to Jacob is love. Love is not given without struggle. The struggle has nothing to do with earning love, however: its significance is not that far removed from the embodied realm, and we discover it in the next work.

## "Jacob and the Angel" by Sir Jacob Epstein

This monumental statue (Fig. 2) stands in the middle of the Gregorian Hall on the second floor of the Old Tate Gallery in London. It took Sir Jacob two years to carve this man-size sculpture from a block of alabaster. When it was moved to Tate, the decision was made to have it as a central piece in the connecting rotunda. The statue's placement has an obvious pragmatic side, for it allows for multiple perspectives; the statue's position as a symbol bears a different significance. At the site of the museum, the work sits in the center as if to gather other pieces together. It is a node in a system of visual and aesthetic relations. A visitor encounters the piece in the mode of dissociation while in travel from one hall to another. Even if it may not intend to take the traveler by surprise, it does so. It therefore satisfies and emphasizes the textual reference. It appears right at the time when one is about to break her connection to the aesthetic and sink back into the mundane attitude, thus re-experiencing a return to the ordinary. Is it when he was crossing the river, carrying with him the narrative of hardship that Jacob was surprised by the Angel? And when the Angel appeared, did he offer an introduction? The Biblical narrative brings the reader straight to the struggle, without previewing it by the scene of appearing. We cannot tell from the text where the Angel came from. This apparent omission is not an omission, however. Angels do not appear. They reveal themselves. We may suggest then that the struggle begins at the moment of revelation. Cut off from the moment of its initiation, it is reduced to a specific binary configuration: Jacob — Angel. This single configuration forms a still. Sir Jacob's artistic creation manifests it. At this point, we might want to examine the still, the statue itself.
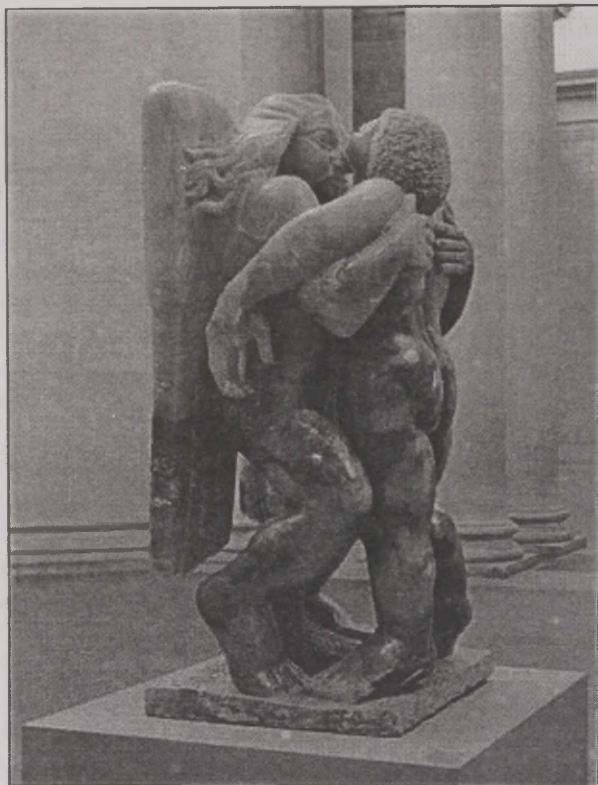
*Figure 2.* "Jacob and the Angel" by Sir Jacob Epstein.

The statue clearly depicts a struggle. As a still, it captures the struggle under way in a moment of its fading. The frozen moment discloses itself as *embrace*, and, as in any embrace, the two people hold each other, or one can hold the other. In "Jacob and the Angel" the Angel is holding Jacob. Not just holding but keeping him from falling down. Jacob's body is limp, lifeless. His right leg is wounded from the Angel's touch. Without the Angel supporting him, he would fall down for sure. A giant next to Jacob, the Angel lowers himself to Jacob's height. In doing so, he contorts his powerful body to straighten Jacob's impassive one. In this position the Angel is revealed as *Zwischen*, the in-between, or liminality itself. Standing face-to-face with Jacob, the Angel is protected by his wings attached to his back

like two slabs or two halves of a door. What door, we might ask? Could it be a door to Heaven? The Angel has his back, his wings, the divine gift, in the way. Could it be so that the Angel was about to open the door for Jacob? The wings are the vulnerable spot for the Angel: "The Angel dies when you break the Angel's wings," wrote Brecht. The Angel's wings as the site of vulnerability re-introduce the theme of crossing over as the theme of the opening/ closing. The wings are the Angel's retreat: *"let me go, for the day breaketh."* He comes as light; he goes with light. The struggle has ended: Jacob has earned his passage by submitting to the vulnerability of the Angel, his *face*, his *embrace* and his *care*. While, the Angel is looking straight at Jacob, the man is looking up, searching for God. Frozen in the moment of Embrace, the artistic still arrives at an interpretative singularity: wrestling with the angel was not about resisting; it was rather about submitting and falling into the hands of God. The embrace redefines the asymmetry of the encounter: Jacob's crossing is falling, and the Angel is there to catch him. At this point, we are entitled to ask, *What is the Angel doing by caressing Jacob in his powerful embrace?*

## "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel" by Mark Chagall

Chagall's painting (Fig. 3) is hanging on the walls of Museé national Message Biblique Marc Chagall in Nice next to other paintings by Chagall, some of which also depict angels. There we find "the Fallen Angel" and "Jacob's Ladder". "The Struggle with the Angel" therefore comes not as a single piece but comes connected with other Biblical paintings through the artist's style given in variation and through a thematic unity. In the context of the museum, it suggests a consistent reading that takes the reader outside of the painting itself. The colors, the composition, and the history of Chagall's work connect it to both Russian expressionism and French cubism. His association with Delaunay and Modigliani becomes transparent once the reader of his works is given an opportunity of visiting other halls in the museum.

*Figure 3*. "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel" by Mark Chagall.

The generative side of Chagall's personal artistic style coincides with his interest in Jewish culture and religion of which he was, self-admittedly, a devoted follower. His Jewish heritage translates into explicitly religious motifs in graphic arts, designs for opera and ballet, ceramics and stained glass windows. In addition, his visual arts exhibit the kind of humor and fantasy that have invited critics to suggest that he draws deeply on the resources of the unconscious. Indeed, Chagall's personal and unique imagery is often suffused with exquisitely subtle sujets. Yet, all these influences should not be taken for the foundation of sense that illuminates his work. As Barthes (1977: 148) argues, the modern art defies historiographic or biographical inter-pretations because "it is made of multiple authors, multiple voices". What singles a specific text out of this multiplicity is the author's performance. It is with this suggestion in mind that I am going to read Chagall's "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel".

As compared to Sir Jacob Epstein's sculpture whose three-dimensionality may count for a context of its own, Chagall's painting comes with an imbedded context. Unlike Rembrandt's still, it preserves the main line of the story by re-presenting the key elements of the story: the creek, Jacob's family, and the nocturnal deep density of the encounter: *"And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok."* In contrast to Rembrandt, whose work he surely knew, Chagall staged the battle in such as way as to have it be witnessed by the Jacob's family. He thus interpreted the passage from Genesis in a sense different than the intended one: Jacob was alone when he began to struggle with the Angel. He was also struggling alone. From his perspective, he was alone. But, at the same time, he was being witnessed. The subtlety of this discrepancy is emphasized by the audience's position. The other characters are placed in the upper right corner of the painting. By making this choice, Chagall detaches them from the scene that develops in the lower left side corner: the struggling Jacob trying to overpower the Angel. The creek separates the wrestlers and the audience. By this montage, Chagall resolves the ambiguity discovered by Barthes: Jacob is on the other side of the Creek.

With great force and determination, Jacob is trying to push the Angel to the edge of the painting, over the creek, away from his people. In the meantime, the Angel, somewhat immobile and inert, doll-like, is hanging high up in the air, over Jacob. There is a certain rigidity about the Angel's figure, even deadness. He is not resisting Jacob; he is simply hanging lifeless. It is not clear from the painting if Jacob had lifted the Angel up in the air, or the latter lifted himself. The Angel's wings are on fire, spread widely. Unlike Jacob's determination, the Angel's disposition is indetermination given as weightlessness and flight. The Angel exercises this power to point to those people who came with Jacob and are now standing on the other side of the brook. *Pointing* is the other side of naming. By pointing, the Angel gives Jacob the direction, thus disclosing his own mission: he is there to show the way. The moment is transforming in both literal and figurative sense. It is a moment of ethical reversal. Hovering over Jacob, the Angel is pointing to his people as if forcing Jacob to turn back, to return to the world of his own.

In sum, as a result of the sequential analysis conducted by Roland Barthes on an episode from the Bible, "Genesis 32: 22–32", the text revealed sequential breaks in the narrative. The resultant strategic ambiguity allowed for multiple interpretations to enter the narrative. Coming from other semiotic systems, these interpretations enhanced and transfigured the original text. Upholding the sequential unity, they have nonetheless changed the narrative design toward different meta-semantic effects. The coupling of these effects produced a new semiotic montage. The effect of Rembrandt's painting put an emphasis on *caress*. Caress became the point of inflection for the narrative. Sir Jacob Epstein broadened the notion of caress in *embrace*. A sequential connection between *caress* and *embrace* identified the mode of giving the struggle between the Angel and Jacob — as an erotic encounter. By positioning the characters in a specific way, separating Jacob from the audience, yet connecting them by the directing gesture of the Angel, Chagall introduces a new element into the story: the connection between the Angel and his people generated a new way. By *pointing* to the people, the Angel speaks the sign. The sign is given in the *face* of the Angel. The semioethics of the encounter with the Angle is thus predicated on the meta-effects of *caress*, *embrace*, and *face*. In order to understand what the encounter means ethically, we need to engage yet another dimension, that of semioethics.

## Crossing Over with the Angel

I associate semioethics with the name of Emmanuel Levinas who carried out a phenomenology of Eros in his major work, *Totality and Infinity*. Levinas (1969: 254) speaks about "erotic talk […] interpreted as sensation", that is, the talk that represents the ethical domain. Understanding language as an ethical phenomenon means to approach the language of Eros in terms of love. For Levinas (1969: 260), love is the condition for the possibility of transcendence that "goes beyond the face." In its epiphany, the face of the other reveals the origin of exteriority appearing not as an image but as "the nudity of the principle" (Levinas 1969: 262). What is given by the nudity of the face is not a ritualized agon conducted in the aesthetic realm but the face-to-face relationship of love and responsibility grounded in ethics. From this formulaic, we might indeed see how the battle with the

loving God who gives itself in the *face* of the Angel, the other, would override struggle aimed at overcoming with the passive *embrace* of becoming.

The ethics-first approach makes chastity and decency of the face "abide at the limit of the obscene yet repelled but already at hand and promising" (Levinas 1969: 263). The promise of the other makes Eros a social, albeit liminal phenomenon. At the same time, this liminality is not what delimits the whole, for then Eros will be at the service of the collective pleasure, a totality. Rather, the erotic nudity of the face designates "a *way*, the way of remaining in the *no man's land* between being and not-yet being" (Levinas 1969: 259, author's italics). Hence, the Angel's gift to Jacob: the way he shows is not the way Jacob can pursue on his own, but only by being connected to the divine *face*.

This characterization is essential, for it emphasizes the relation between Eros and ambiguity. For Levinas, ambiguity of Eros fuses the clandestine and its revelation in "the simultaneity or the equivocation of fragility and the weight of non-signifyingness, heavier than the weight of the formless real" (Levinas 1969: 257). The both/and of equivocation exposes the two sides of Eros: voluptuosity and fecundity. The relationship between the two sides is clearly asymmetrical, for the weight of responsibility in fecundity exceeds the fleeting enjoyment of voluptuosity. Because of the asymmetrical duality of the face-to-face relationship, the erotic, even in flight, and in tenderness, and vulnerability, cannot be hidden, only unseen, must remain unseen in order to be transcendence, the "what is not yet" (Levinas 1969: 256). This *what is not yet* is the mystery of love, and it can only reveal itself as mystery. Deprived of a particular form but tending toward the future, this mystery is without mystification: "the what is not yet is sensed in the night of the erotic, simultaneously uncovered by Eros and refusing Eros" (Levinas 1969: 258–259). In other words, the "what is not yet," the not-yet-sensible movement of erotic fecundity is unimaginable without the sensible enjoyment of voluptuosity.

The difference between the two co-joint modes is the difference of the self-other relation. While voluptuosity is a return to the self, fecundity is the very transcendence of the self. It is in fecundity that the face commands beyond refusal; there, it is more serious than serious. In apposition to voluptuosity, fecundity has the child for the other; it therefore "denotes my future" (Levinas 1969: 268). And not just the child; in addition to the offspring, who would stand for the

past in the future, Levinas talks about paternity and filiality that extend my responsibility to a complete stranger, making his possibilities mine. The two modes of givenness are co-foundational: by abolishing any expression except for the refusal to express desire, voluptuosity clears the way for fecundity, which is already removed from the enjoyment of the other, and not just the other but, most importantly, from the enjoyment of the self. It is with this sign that Jacob, the Patriarch and the father of the Israeli people returns from his struggle to his people.

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## Переход с ангелом

Эта статья является аналитическим развитием структурного анализа отрывка из Ветхого Завета (Книга Бытия 32: 22-32, известного как "Борьба с ангелом"), проведенного Роландом Бартом. Исследование отрывка в феноменологическом (ксенологическом) ключе как порогового явления, способствовало обнаружению в "Борьбе с ангелом" его "третьего смысла", который проявляет себя на пересечении явного и скрытого. Анализ трех визуальных изображений отрывка из Книги Бытия 32: 22–32, а именно: "Борьба Иакова с ангелом" Рембрандта, "Иаков и ангел" сэра Джейкоба Эпстайна и "Иаков борется с ангелом" Марка Шагала, — также показывает, что "третий смысл" базируется на основополагающей зависимости названия от изображения, указывающего на то, что "Борьба" должна пониматься как непосредственная взаимосвязь любви и ответственности, основанной на этических началах.

## Üleminek ingliga

Artikkel on Roland Barthes'i poolt teostatud ühe Vana Testamendi katkendi (Esimene Moosese raamat 32: 22–32, tuntud kui "Võitlus ingliga") strukturaalanalüüsi analüütiliseks arenduseks. Selle katkendi vaatlemine piiripealse nähtusena fenomenoloogilises (ksenoloogilises) võtmes aitas kaasa "kolmanda tähenduse" avastamisele, mis ilmutab end avatud ja varjatu ristumispaigas. Selle katkendi kolme visuaalse representatsiooni (Rembrandti "Jaakobi võitlus ingliga", sir Jacob Epsteini "Jaakob ja ingel" ja Marc Chagalli "Jaakob võitleb ingliga") analüüs näitab samuti, et "kolmas tähendus" põhineb nimetuse alustpaneval sõltuvusel kujutisest, mis viitab sellele, et "Võitlust" tuleb siin mõista kui armastuse ja vastutuse vahetut seost, mis põhineb eetilistel alustel.

# Spatial semiosis and time[1]

## *Leonid Tchertov*

Dept. of Philosophy, Saint-Petersburg State University,
Mendeleevskaja line 5, St. Petersburg 199034, Russia
e-mail: tcher@LC9661.spb.edu

**Abstract**. Spatial semiosis differs from temporal one by its structural and functional peculiarities. Meaningful relations between units of spatial texts are not ordered along of temporal axe and do not need time in their form of expression. However time remains an important factor for both: being of the spatial semiosis in the external time and being of time in the spatial texts as object of representation. In the contrast to temporal communication, where acts receiving of texts must be synchronized with the acts of their (re)production, spatial semiosis is built as a diachronic process, dividing in time from two separate acts: creating and perceiving. This structural peculiarity allows to connect people from different temporal periods and gives to spatial semiosis the function of irreplaceable means for cultural memory. Excluding time from the semiotic form of their plane of expression, spatial texts have some rules of presentation in time and semiotic means for representation of temporal order and duration in their plane of contents. There are different means of representation of time in the spatial forms: the projection of temporal structures on the spatial ones, concentration of different moments in one state, etc.

## 1. The difference between spatial and temporal semiosis

The problem of relations between spatial semiosis and time is a matter of principle for semiology of space. The last must be differed from spatial *semiography*, which describes concrete spatial signs and re-

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[1] The text is based on the report presented at the 8th Congress of IASS in Lyon (2004). Its short version was published in: *Научные чтения — 2004*. Санкт-Петербург: СПбГУ, 253–259 (2005, in Russian). A draft of this paper has been published in *Amsterdam International Electronic Journal for Cultural Narratology* (http://cf.hum.uva.nl/narratology/ a05_tchertov.htm).

veals their meanings. As to *semiology* of space, it is built on a higher level of generalization, and is occupied with such questions as the possibility of spatial semiosis itself, its specific character, ways of semiotization of space in different spatial codes, etc. The problems considered in the report belong just to this semiological level. These are the problems of relations between spatial and temporal semiosis, peculiarities of existence of spatial semiosis in time and ways of representation of time in spatial semiosis.

First of all, it should be mentioned, that distinction of spatial semiology as an autonomous branch of semiotics is based on the essential difference between temporal semiosis and spatial one, as a special form of sign connection. This difference depends to great extent on their different ways of existing in time: in spatial semiosis temporal relations do not generate meaningful units of text, — in contrast to temporal one, were they do. Despite spatial and temporal semiosis can often be coordinated with each other in spatial-temporal messages, they have different structural and functional possibilities.

Spatial bearers of meanings, which are mainly intended to the visual perception, permit arranging relations between meaningful units as structures of other types, than chains of signals following each other and addressed to listening (see Jakobson 1964). The semiotized space can differ in the main from temporal structures by its "semio-topological" properties: non-linearity, reversibility, types of symmetry and asymmetry, etc. (see Tchertov 2000). Due to variations of these properties, syntactic structures in spatial semiosis can be more various and complex, than ones limited by temporal axis.

For description of specific structural features of spatial semiosis the version of semiology, which traces back to Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic generalizations is ineffective. This version based on the declared in his "Cours de linguistique générale" principles of language: the principle of non-motivation of signs and the principle of linearity of significant units. These principles are not relevant for many semiotic systems, which regulate communication by means of the visual-spatial channel of connection. In particular, the principle of linearity, intended to describe consecutive interchange of signs first of all in oral speech, is not relevant for messages, plane of expression of which is not reduced to such linear sequence, and where the order of units can be reversible. Correspondingly, a theory based on the principle of linearity turns out to be not a universal semiology, but a

"chronosemiology" — a theory of temporal semiosis, where meaningful units "dispose nothing but a timeline" and follow each other forming a chain (see Saussure 1972: 103).

Describing of systems regulating non-linear and reversible bearers of meanings in the spatial semiosis requires another, "non-saussurean" semiology — such theory of semiotic means, where at least one of two principles of saussurean semiology is not performed. First of all it is the principle of linearity of syntactic units, though another one — the semantic principle of sign arbitrariness is also irrelevant for many of these systems.

Like linguistics became the ground for semiology of Saussure and logic — for semiotics of Peirce, investigations of expressive and representative means of visual arts, carried out traditionally in aesthetics and visual arts theory, can become a basis for semiology of space. It is notable, that the difference between spatial and temporal means of representation is discussed in aesthetics from the moment of its appearance as an autonomous discipline in the Age of Enlightenment, when this problem was raised especially sharp in famous "Laocoon" by Lessing. Particularly, a number of Russian art investigators, like Bachtin, who has described a "chronotop" in literature, have discussed the relations between the time and spatial arts (see, especially Favorsky 1988; Florensky 1993; Gabrichevsky 2002; Vipper 1962; Volkov 1967; Zhegin 1962). However the problem of relations of spatial means of representation and the time exceeds the limits of aesthetics and art theory and touches the grounds of sign theory, first of all the divergence of two its branches — spatial and temporal semiotics (see Tchertov 2002).

The difference between spatial and temporal bearers of meaning can be defined within the framework of the "non-saussurean" semiology as the structural diversity of the texts having different expression plane: in the first case it is built as a chain of signs following each other, and in the second case — as a configuration of co-existing spatial forms and their relations. Such configurations can be considered as specific *spatial texts*, where only these spatial forms and their relations are meaningful, but no meaning is attached to any temporal changes of their material bearers. It is possible to say that a spatial text not only exists in a space, but also forms its *own space* of meaningful relations, whereas it does not have *own time* and exists only in external time, where something happens *with* it, but not *within*

it. Temporal texts, on the contrary, have their own, or internal, time (but not their own space), formed by relations of temporal following between units of their "expression form". There are also many mixed spatial-temporal texts, which have both of these own form types.

It is important, that specific structure of spatial texts touches the "form" of expression, rather than its "substance" (using Louis Hjelmslev's terms). That is the point, the difference between "temporal" and "spatial" bearers of meaning is not essential for the substance of expression. Both of them participate in the process of communication by means of a material mediator, for which both space and time are inalienable attributes. Any spatial bearer of meaning changes in time as well as any perception and interpretation of spatial text as psychological processes has temporal structure. But all peculiarities of physical or psychical substance of spatial texts are only the ground for special "semiotic form", established by spatial codes, each of that is a system of norms semiotizing the space. On the contrary to its bearers, the spatial text is constructed and reconstructed only by means of these codes and their semiotic form. Therefore it does not have any relations, which are not provided by them. In case of temporal semiosis the situation is different: spatial relations here are the elements only of substance of expression, but not of its form. The last includes, on the contrary, as the meaningful units the temporal relations, which in spatial semiosis only exist in the "substance of expression", but do not mean anything as elements of its semiotic form. The inevitable physical changes in the substance as a rule are not included in the authentic structure of spatial text, and, for example, painting restoration just has to take out all physic results of this temporal being. So the reasons of separation of spatial semiosis are not physical or psychological, but only semiotical: the separation of spatial relations from temporal ones in the semiotic systems and derived texts, where the form of expression is built only by configurations of the spatial relations.

However the time which exceeds the limits of semiotic form of expression in spatial texts, remains, on one hand, in its physical and psychical substance as an important factor of communicative process. On the other hand, the spatial texts get special means representing time in their plane of contents. Correspondingly, it is possible to speak about being of spatial semiosis in time as well as about being of time represented in spatial semiosis.

## 2. Spatial semiosis in time

### 2.1. Peculiarities of temporal being

It is incorrect to think that a specific feature of spatial semiosis is existence out of time. As every process it is performed in time, but it differs by another way of temporal being. Both functioning of communication by spatial bearers of meaning and historical changes of conditions of this functioning have own peculiarities in spatial semiosis. Moreover relations of these two aspects differ here not as deep as in the case of temporal semiosis.

The last exists as a synchronic process of sending and receiving, because usage of signs following each other supposes as an obligatory condition coexistence of a sender and a recipient of a message in a common communicative action (even if this coexistence has virtual character, and act of message creation is reproduced by technical means). On the contrary, this condition is absent in case of spatial semiosis, because it does not need coexistence of participants of communication, but cannot do without coexistence of meaningful units in the space. Thereby communication occurs here as a *diachronic* process divided in two acts performed in different times: creating and "reading" of spatial text.

Separation of these acts in time permits them, first of all, to have different duration, because their synchronizing is unnecessary in the spatial semiosis. The process of text creating can be very long (for example, seven centuries of building of Cologne Cathedral), whereas perception of the text can be very short. Vice versa: a meaningful spatial form can be quickly created (for example, water-color created on a wet paper in technique *alla prima*), but perceived and interpreted during a long time. However, one can find also a temporal correlation between both of these acts: as a rule, more complicated spatial texts demands more time for their creating as well as for their perceiving. Secondly, a long time period can pass between the acts of creating and receiving of a spatial message, and that makes possible not only communication between contemporaries, but also between people, who belong to different generations and historical periods. As the spatial message can outlive its creators it naturally gets to other contexts and to other times. Thereby they can exist not only within the time of creation and perception, but also within historical time. The difference

between synchrony and diachrony themselves is not sharp in spatial semiosis, because, on one hand its functioning has a diachronic character, and, on the other hand, the preservation of spatial text during long time allows to extend this functional connection as far as its spatial bearer exists.

So the structural properties of communicative process in spatial semiosis make possible some of its specific functions. Due to these functions, spatial semiosis is especially favorable or just unique for preservation and transmission of information for "long distances" in time. Therefore the spatial form of representation is irreplaceable for preservation of cultural memory — both personal and collective ones. Moreover, historical time itself arises together with the possibility to fix events in written form that means — together with the possibility of translating of oral speech and all available for its cultural experience by means of spatial semiosis. Thus, fixation of time in the past allows spatial semiosis also to have impact on the future.

The introduction of spatial texts into new historical contexts, where they get new senses, is connected not only with the change of communicated subjects, but also with historical changing of codes, and even of mentality of interpreters. These changes are performed in history to different extent. Several of them are based on the natural grounds, such as psychophysiology of eyesight, which is reproduced on genetic level and only modified in a culture. Such are the synesthetic codes, which correlate some visual sensations of forms and colours with definite feelings of other modalities, as well as the perceptual code, regulating transformation of optical data in a perceptual image of volumetric forms. The codes of this type less undergo cultural influences, than the codes derivative from them, correspondingly, architectonic and perceptographic ones, which have their own cultural history. Some other codes are created in culture and change more quickly, than natural based ones — as, particularly, the object-functional code regulating categorization of recognizable object forms constantly reproduced in culture and connections of these forms with their instrumental functions, — or as the social-symbolic code, endowing the forms with connotative meanings, thanks to which they can indicate the roles of their users in the space of social behaviour (see Tchertov 1997).

The uneven development of spatial codes leads to displacement of senses and ways of interpretation. This particularly regards to the

spatial texts with complex semiotic and rhetorical structure, which requires for comprehension united application of several codes together. Some configurations of these codes and their relations in each case influence the definite way of "reading" of the pieces as a visual-spatial text and conceiving of its senses.

Such complex semiotic structures are typical especially for pieces of art, which interpretation depends on usage of changeable set of codes. From this point of view all history of spatial arts can be considered as the history of using of diverse visual-spatial codes for creation and interpretation of art pieces and changing of relations between them. So the treatment to the art history as a "history of semantic structures" suggested several decades ago (see Wallis 1970) can be re-interpreted as the idea of evolution of visual-spatial codes developed in history to different extent and modified their relations.

## 2.2. Presentation of the spatial text in time

The specific relations of spatial texts to time suppose their regulation on the level of semiotic form in the systems of corresponding codes. The process of text actualization during its perceiving as well as the process of text generation requires special rules providing some conditions of temporal presentation of spatial texts.

These rules are provided at least in cases of several special codes serving for recording of temporal texts in spatial form and their reconstructing in the new contexts. These codes have the rules of correlation between the expression plane of spatial texts with the coded expression plane of texts developing in time. For example, phonetic writing gives the ways of projection of the temporal order of oral speech into spatial axes, as well as the rules of the reverse translation of spatial relations into temporal ones by reading. Its expression plane contains spatial rows of significants that denote temporal successions of phonemes (for example, by interpretation of spatial relations "left-right" as temporal relations "earlier-later", etc.). The represented temporal relations of phonemes belong to the contents plane of written text and form its "semantic" meaning, whereas its plane of expression contains only spatial relations but not the internal time. However, it is also possible to find some "syntactic" or "grammatical" meaning of this text, related to the way of its temporal

presentation, — because "reading" of the spatial text as a process developing in time needs definite order of its actualization and limiting of liberty by successive transit from one spatial unit to another. The semiotic form of written code sets the direction of these transits and thereby gets to the space, semiotized by its means a quality of irreversibility, making its structure more similar to the structure of oral speech.

The possibility to represent internal temporal relations of oral texts through internal spatial relations of written texts due to their structural similarity differs phonetic writing from other spatial codes — even from some non-phonetic writing, which do not aim to translate temporal sequence of signs into the spatial order. It is true, that culturally educated eye can learn to read signs formed up in lines, for instance, from left to right or from top to bottom, — as in European writing systems. However, such linear reading is a special way of seeing and is not the only norm of visual perception. "Natural" eyesight is able to synopsis and can take many spatial relations as one whole picture, as a simultaneous, but not successive image.

That does not mean that peering into non-written spatial texts has no temporal order. The internal programs of its "reading" are not only in written texts. For example, the system of architectonic code permits perception of spatial relations as a successive process reiterating spatial signals, treated as a "rhythmical order" built in time.

However, temporal "opening" of spatial text during its perceiving can be subordinated not only to the "principle of projection", which supposes "drawing up" the space in a line, but to be inherent also to perception of the two- and three-dimensional spatial text, which can not be reduced to a line. Many complex architectural buildings can be perceived gradually due to well arrangement, which allows successive transit from one rank of parts to another. So, for example a Gothic cathedral, which silhouette is perceived from the big distance, "opens" for a view all its smaller details as far as they become nearer literally "step by step" and big forms go out of viewing field. In a similar way temporal ordering can be performed also by perception of many other visual-spatial texts (book miniatures, gobelins, ornamented pottery and so on), if their perceiving is determined by the artistic using of means of architectonic and other visual-spatial codes.

A temporal order of "reading" is supposed also in well-constructed depictions, where the lines and tonal contrasts can put a process of

viewing in time and "guides" the glance of viewer into pictorial space in a definite temporal succession (see Florensky 1993: 230–231). So, for example, well known scene of "Banishment from the Haven" in the relief of Berndward's doors of the St. Michaelis Cathedral in Hildesheim is arranged as a succession of gestures each of which draws attention at first to Adam, then to Eva and at last to the devil; — as well as in famous "Sistine Madonna" by Raphael (Dresden Gallery) a lot of weakly distinguished angels' heads are opened only for a sight looking into the background after perceiving of the figures clearly silhouetted on the foreground.

But in all these cases the temporal structure of "reading" differs from the cases of reading by lines, because it neither requires irreversibility nor one-dimensionality of the textual space. On the contrary, by the "reading" of a picture, as well as of an architectural construction, the look is moving in a principally reversibly and non-one-dimensional space. The temporal ordering of these spatial texts becomes possible, because they, excluding the temporal relations from their internal syntactic structures, contain nevertheless the means of their presentation in the time of text receiving. As these means are regulated by the spatial codes, they are related not only to the being of spatial semiosis in the external time, but also to existence of time in spatial semiosis.

## 3. Time in spatial semiosis and semiotic means of its representation

### 3.1. Time represented in semiotized space

Together with the means of presentation of spatial texts in time, culture develops the means of representation of time on the semantic level of these texts. The "internal time" in semiotized space is possible only as the time represented by spatial means. Such "internal time" is contained, for example, in a picture representing some depicted events. Their time coincides neither with the external time of physical being of its expression "substance", nor with the psychical time of the picture creation or perceiving, nor with the time of expression "form", where it is absent according to the definition of the spatial text. The "internal time" of a picture belongs only to its plane of contents and is

represented together with the depicted space, where some indexes of shown action are given.

The *temporal semantics* of semiotized space includes all three aspects accordingly to three temporal modes: the present, the past, and the future. However, expression of the present has no temporal specifics, and speaking about the representation of time in spatial semiosis it is natural first of all to mean the modes of the past and of the future.

Spatial forms have specific ability to represent something that happened in the *past*, due to "taking out" its image or its signs from the time stream and preserving on its more stable "banks". Space, as an order of relations between the coexistent things, has a relative stability in time that permits its structures to imprint the past in converted form and to preserve the memory about it. Preserving of the past in the space can occur involuntary, as "natural signs", or indexes, of past events — tracks of diverse processes imprinted in spatial forms. By these indexes the cultural history can be naturally laid up like geological processes leaving their traces in spatial structures of rocks. So, the structure of territory involuntary imprints the ways of life of its inhabitants, the structure of roads — the connections between settlements, and at least, any print of rolling wheel is an obvious evolvement of a temporal process in the space. But imprinting of time in the space can be developed also as intentional, in specific cultural forms most of which are produced and reproduced deliberately. So the function of tools is imprinted in its form, social relations between citizens are imprinted in the plan of a city, etc. In fact, every spatial artifact preserves traces and indexes of processes, in which it has participated whether as a condition, a medium, or a result.

The spatial text can also point to the *future*. Yet animals can anticipate some future events, using some spatial indexes. Human increases this ability, firstly, interpreting "natural signs" more deep and, secondly, creating artificial spatial signs, which program his behavior in the future. This programming touches different aspects of the activity — from the above mentioned reading of spatial text itself, till various spatial moving and actions, directed by forms and spatial layout of indexes of movement.

This semantic differentiation has also some *pragmatic aspects*, and they are connected with the corresponding important functions of spatial texts. The ability of spatial imprinting of the past in the present

and thereby of preserving the past for the future allows spatial semiosis to perform a function of cultural memory. Another pragmatic function of spatial texts touches the other temporal modus — programming of the future by establishing of some spatial signals and indexes directing body, hand or eye movements.

Both of these functions can be combined and performed by the same sector of semiotized space, where equally signs, signals and indexes of different time modes function. The semiotic means as natural as artificial origin form complex semiotic structures, representing different aspects of time.

Such combination of different temporal modes in the plane of semantics as well as performing different pragmatic functions is typical particularly for the *architecture*. An architectural building can contain indexes of the present conditions of its being, for instance, revealing of internal constructions by its external shape or representing some "static" or "dynamic" qualities. Due to expressive means of the architectonic code a building can look as solid "staying" on the place (as a Greek Temple) or visually "striving" above (as a Gothic Cathedral), or "flowing" together with surrounding it fountains (as the Dresdner Zwinger).

Architectural buildings also give artificial spatial signs, which program behavior of their inhabitants in the future. Each architectural building (which is constructed according to a project) appears yet with a ready "program" directing future movements and behavior of a human in the space arranged by it. Architectural forms have in its syntactic structure some spatial units, which act as signals of reproduced movements. So steps of a staircase serve as signals of definite movements in the future and even as their signs keeping the meaning independent on realizing of these movements.

Architecture has also different ways of holding the past. Every architectural construction is made artificially and preserves more or less clear traces of its creation. Even if rows of bricks point out the time and temporal order of their arrangement.

In semantics of architectural buildings one can find diverse cultural types of time imprinting through spatial forms — from Egyptian pyramids till building forms intentionally reproducing the styles of other epochs ("Stylization", "Historicism", etc.). These artificial means of time representation are combined in architecture with the natural traces of physical or historical changes, and sometimes it is

difficult to differ one from the other (for example, the natural deformations and artificially created "Ruins" as signs of the past).

In a similar way three modes of time can be represented by the *picture*, which can serve as a project of the future situation (for example, the planned building), as a drawing of a present object, as well as an imprinting of the past. A picture can "remember" the images of persons or of things carried away by time long ago. As a picture has double space — the depicted and the depicting ones, — it can contain the means of time representation in both of them — the tracks of brush moving in the depicting space as well as some images of past events, people or objects represented in the depicted space.

In some cases the time itself in general becomes a subject of depiction. This occurs in Vanitas — a special genre of picture, which collects different visual-spatial indexes of the transitory and taken by time life — old skull, fading flowers, smoked pipe, and other things with spatial marks of temporal changes.

The space of picture can represent even relations between time and eternity. So the picture by Albrecht Altdorfer "The Battle of Alexander Magnus and Dary III" from Munich Alte Pinakothek is divided in two parts representing different: the lower part shows a mass of fighting people, which forms a stream making literally visible a "stream of time" taking out their lives, and the upper part represents an immovable board with inscription fixing a result of this battle remained eternally.

One can see some historical changes in representation of diverse temporal or extra-temporal qualities in different cultures. Unlike depictions in Ancient Egypt, which can be elaborated for transit from temporal to eternal world, or Medieval icon painting, which was intended for uncovering of some eternal for the transient, New European painting is directed more on stopping in time of separate episodes, which become the shorter, right up to "snapshots" of moment in Impressionist's painting.

## 3.2. Semiotic means of time representation in space

The means of time representation in semiotized space can differ semiotically. They can be *indexes*, for example, the tracks of movement — both naturally formed and artificially held indications of the

past events. They can be signals of movements and actions, which can also have both natural and artificial origin (any wall is a spatial signal of stopping or turning for the moving subject). They can take the semiotic form of *conventional signs*, as, for example, a tombstone is a sign of a last life and memory about it (this sign's function is clearly expressed in Greek 'sema' denoting 'tombstone' as well as 'sign'). Both index-signal and sign (in narrow sense) means of time representation are regulated by different spatial codes, each of them has its own possibilities. Several of these codes mainly give the means for imprinting of the past in the present and its saving for the future. Such is for example the code of writing permitting to fix oral speech. Several other codes contain more signs and signals of the future actions — as for example, the object-functional code connecting object forms with "programs" of their using. The indexes of real or imaginary forces are presented in forms of the architectonic code as if they act in the presence.

Different codes can also interact with each other in a common act of sense expression. It is possible for example in case of *symbols*, which have complex semiotic structure with two and more levels of meaning signified by means of diverse codes. For example "The Tower of the Third International" by Wladimir Tatlin was intended to serve as a symbol of temporal development of the world, using the signs of social-symbolic code connected with relations "upper-lower" together with the means of architectonic code for expressing of dynamics.

The spatial semiosis uses also such rhetorical forms of time representation as *metonymy* and metaphor. The spatial metonymy represents a whole period through some parts left of this time. For example, the Doric column or the whole building of the Parthenon can be interpreted as a metonymy of "classical antiquity", as well as lancet arch or Gothic cathedral can mean "the Middle Ages", etc. The spatial objects can also represent time by using some *metaphors*. Such spatial metaphors can be found, for example, in different forms of clocks: moving of sun shadow, flow of water, pouring out of sound or turning of hands in mechanical process become there metaphors, on basis of which the time is indicated.

Diverse means of time representation often combine with each other. The clock can serve as an example of such a combination of different spatial ways of time representation. Indexes of temporal

order are used here also as signals of some actions for a subject; the clock can point out not only the present time, but also the historical time of its creation, turning into a sign of time of their origin or even into a symbol of some historical period. Some tower clock can contain the iconic figures representing following each other periods of human life, etc. Construction of clock itself can express some ideas of time typical for definite historical periods and can be considered in the spirit of Bachtin's ideas as a specific "chronotop". The diverse forms of ancient clepsydra or of sun clocks point out different ways of time comprehension by Egyptian, Greeks or Romans, — as well as the spatial form of sound clock expresses the idea of overflowing of the future into the past through a short moment of the present, which can be found, for example, in Saint Augustine's meditations about time (Augustine 1968: 268–279). In a similar way rotation of wheels in mechanical clocks served as a model of temporal order of universe in deterministic conceptions of Descartes, Leibniz and other philosophers of XVII–XVIII centuries (see Tchertov 1998).

These examples reveal one more and very important way of time representation — formation of its various *spatial models*, — iconic and non-iconic ones — which have some common features or structures with time. The spatial models of temporal structures allow representing mainly some their quantitative features: an order of discrete units or duration of a continual period. Both these cases need different means of representation.

Representation of the *temporal order* is possible, first of all, through its submitting by spatial relations. This representation is performed, as a rule, by usage of the same principle of its projection into the spatial structures, which take place in the above described written code. Such projection occurs, for example, in a face of watch, where the temporal order is represented by spatial relations of circularly arranged indexes differing from each other only with the spatial order. The projection can be performed by different syntactic constructions: the meaningful orders can be separated and built as lineal sign successions arranged along the spatial axe — as a rule, vertical or horizontal one; the spatial order can be cyclical (as in dial) or tabular (as in calendar). The semiotized space has in such cases not only a fixed dimensionality, but also as a rule a fixed direction; therefore it is "semantically anisotropic", because changing of the direction influences the sense.

The *principle of projection* is also used for representation of the temporal order by means of spatial relations in other cases. It can be found, for instance, in the motive of procession often met in the art of Ancient East (Egypt, Assyria, Persia, etc.) — rows of figures arranged one after another and presented in different moments of time. The principle of projection is also appeared in the rows of pictures representing different events of a story separating them in singled pictures. Coordination of temporal and spatial successions is typical for arrangement of narrative pictorial series intended to be drown in a line — from the relief on the column of Trahan and rows of Bible scenes (as, for example, in mosaics of Saint Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna) till contemporary comic strips. The same projection of the time succession in the spatial order can take place also within the frames of one picture representing some processes due to stratifying them into a row of moments. In Medieval icon painting and even in Renaissance pictures there was a usual way of depicting of several story episodes performed in diverse moments of time as scenes, which are arranged in different fragments of one space — as, for example, in "Seven joys of Maria" by Memling (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) or in painting series "The story of Saint Ursula" by Carpaccio (Venice, Gallery of Academia). Dissociated moments of time can be smaller and consist of single stages of movement, on which the parts of moving figures are decomposed — as it was made in Futurists paintings, where this "cinematographic" way of depiction became very popular expressive mean. It is essential, that time representation gets especially important for spatial arts of XX century. N. Pevsner and A. Gabo in their "Realistic manifest" (1920) theoretically proclaimed introduction of time in spatial arts as their actual task and practically fulfilled it having created own non-figurative spatial constructions with multiple elements as a spatial equivalent of the temporal order (see, for example, Thomas 1986: 142).

It is also possible to represent *duration* of processes by means of spatial semiosis. For such representation other grammatical forms are necessary, than for projection of temporal order in spatial rows. The duration can be represented — particularly in pictorial series — through the distance between depicted scenes — as, for example, in the miniatures of some ancient Russian manuscripts (see Lihachev 1979: 31). It can be represented also by concentration of different events or states in one picture or even in one figure. An example of such

concentration is well known — a "flying gallop" of horses, depicted by Gericault as well as by many other artists and discussed by many art explorers starting from Rodin (see, for example, Volkov 1977: 134–139).

Projection of a temporal succession in the spatial order represents the time as a homogenous multitude of moments — as if any moment is equal to other one and all their difference is reduced only to places order. However, the spatial means can represent not only general and unified course of time and its quantitative structures, but also its qualitatively differed periods — such as seasons of the year, times of the day, etc. (as, for example, famous sculptures of Medici tomb by Michelangelo). Spatial bearers also preserve the memory about the individual being of concrete persons and unique moments of their life: their birth, death and other significant events.

This memorial function performs, for example, tombstones and any other monuments dedicated to some heroes or outstanding events. However, it is natural, that imprinting of something or somebody individual takes a form of their iconic models, which can, unlike general signs, reproduce particular features of things or of people. This form includes all kinds of depictions, each of them "stops" a depicted and saves its image from disappearance, due to the quality of space to hold the forms of things left in the past (cf. Peirce 1960: 360, about connection of icon signs with past experience). In the same time, there are depictions specially intended to this saving. Such are, for example, death-masks, which make an attempt to imprint last face in more constant substance, and which do it in a different way in diverse cultures: preserving something general and essential in Ancient Egypt or, in opposite, keeping some individual features in Ancient Rome. Such are also the memorial portraits of later ages performed in sculpture, painting or engraving and representing some persons together with attributes of their time. The preservation of particular instants and conditions is performed especially in photograph, which literally "stops" a moment and "takes" its fleeting image from temporal stream for saving in the more stabile spatial form.

The developed cultures besides "primary" spatial forms of time representation like writing or art pieces have also "secondary" ways of artificial imprinting of temporal changes. Their specific feature is ordering of spatial bearers, which already perform the function of cultural memory. Among these "secondary" aggregations one can find

some involuntary appearing formations as, for example, sponta-
neously formed environment of towns, which contains the marks of
diverse events of their centuries-old history. However the cultural
memory can be concentrated intentionally in some "reservoirs" of
spatial bearers of information, in collections of spatial texts. Various
types of these collections can take, in particular, a form of a
*cemetery* — an aggregation of tombstones as signs of last lives, of a
*library* — a depository of written texts as accumulators of all human
experience, or of a *museum* (pinakothek, gliptothek, etc.), as a
collection of art pieces and other bearers of cultural memory. Each of
them transforms in its own way some temporal traces in semiotized
space. For example, museum can be treated as a form of transfor-
mation of historical time in heterogeneous cultural space, where the
spatial relations between art pieces and historical documents of
different ages become a form representing their temporal relations. A
new type of such "hyperspace" is formed by *Internet* as an infor-
mation milieu, which gives perhaps already a "ternary" system of time
representation and of cultural memory.

Concentration of the collective memory in diverse forms of the
spatial semiosis makes possible the qualitative transformation of
culture. The space of its changing is accelerated by appearance of the
new technical means of the spatial semiosis — from book-printing to
the Internet, — each of them gives new possibilities for semiotized
space to keep of the past in the cultural memory, as well as to program
the future.

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## Пространственный семиозис и время

Пространственный семиозис отличается от временного своими структурными и функциональными особенностями. Значимые отношения между единицами пространственных текстов не строятся по временной оси и не образуют внутреннее время в своей форме выражения. Однако временной фактор остается существенным для пространственного семиозиса, который, с одной стороны, находит свои особые способы существования во времени, а, во-вторых — способы репрезентировать время в пространственных структурах. В отличие от временной коммуникации, где акты приема сообщения должны быть синхронизированы с актами их создания или воссоздания, пространственный семиозис строится как диахронный процесс,

в котором акты создания и восприятия значимых пространственных структур разведены во времени. Эти структурные особенности позволяют связывать людей разных исторических периодов и сказываются на функциях пространственного семиозиса, делая его незаменимым средством культурной памяти. Исключая время из семиотической формы своего плана выражения, пространственные тексты имеют определенные правила своей презентации во времени и семиотические средства для репрезентации временного порядка и длительности в своем плане содержания. В пространственном семиозисе развиваются различные средства репрезентации времени с помощью пространственных форм: проекция временных порядков на пространственные структуры, концентрация различных моментов в одном состоянии и др.

### Ruumiline semioos ja aeg

Ruumiline semioos erineb ajalisest oma struktuursetelt ja funktsionaalsetel eripäradelt. Ruumiliste tekstide ühikute vahelised tähenduslikud seosed ei ehitu ajateljel ja ei moodusta sisemist aega oma väljendusvormis. Kuid ajafaktor on oluline ka ruumilise semioosi jaoks, mis, ühelt poolt, leiab oma erilised olemisvormid ajas ja teisalt — aja representeerimise viisid ruumilistes struktuurides. Erinevalt ajalisest kommunikatsioonist, kus teate vastuvõtu aktid peavad olema sünkroniseeritud nende loomise või taasloomise aktidega, ehitub ruumiline semioos kui diakrooniline protsess, milles tähenduslike ruumiliste struktuuride loomise ja vastuvõtu aktid on ajas lahku viidud. Need struktuursed iseärasused võimaldavad seostada erinevate ajalooliste perioodide esindajaid ja mõjutavad ruumilise semioosi funktsioone, tehes sellest kultuurimälu asendamatu vahendi. Eemaldades aja oma väljendusplaani semiootilisest vormist, omavad ruumilised tekstid kindlaid reegleid ajalise järgnevuse ja kestvuse representeerimiseks oma sisuplaanis. Ruumilises semioosis arenevad erinevad aja representeerimise vahendid ruumiliste vormide abil: ajaliste järgnevuste projitseerimine ruumilistele struktuuridele, erinevate momentide kontsentratsioon ühes seisundis jmt.

# From globality to partiality:
# Semiotic practices of resistance
# to the discourse of war

### *Daniele Monticelli*

Dept. of German and Romance Language and Literature,
University of Tartu
Ülikooli 17, 50090 Tartu, Estonia
e-mail: monticelli@hot.ee

**Abstract.** This paper examines the discourse of war from a semiotic point of view and suggests some ideas for the development of practices of resistance to it. The discourse of war can be considered symptomatic in respect to underlying discourses of totality such as globalisation. By aiming at explanatory simplification, this kind of discourse takes the paradoxical form of an exhaustive paradigm which always engenders a residuum to be eliminated. Semiotics can develop practices of resistance to the discourse of war by operating on the syntagmatic chains generated by its mediatic agencies. These practices are based on the postmodernist critique of totalising discourses. A process in which details are disconnected from the mediatic chains where they vanish might trigger the opening of a space of community that makes the residuum of war discourse presentable through metaphorical substitutions. Semiotic practices of resistance to the discourse of war presuppose a shift in theory from the paradigm of globality to that of partiality. Partiality must be understood both from a political and an epistemological point of view and it could therefore represent an important element in the development of a semioethics.

Some striking similarities are, in my opinion, evident in the debate of recent years about the situation in the humanities and social sciences in general (and semiotics in particular) on the one hand and the discussion about globalisation on the other. These similarities are evidently due to the critical problematisation of the "modernist project" (Pettman 2004: 13), within which the kind of rationality constituting the ideological basis of Western knowledge has been responsible for the kind of World Order represented by globalisation and finds in it its own accomplishment.

In the case of the social sciences and humanities the main focus of the discussion has been on the contraposition between an ideal of unity and one of multiplicity (hence the various distinctions between 'science' and 'studies', 'unified method' and 'plurality of approaches' or 'theory' and 'practices'). The almost universal claim about the vanishing boundaries between individual disciplines and the inter-disciplinarity of the humanities hides the attempts of different methods of research to gain a hegemonic position, something parti-cularly evident in the recurring inclination of semioticians to present themselves as the new methodologists of the humanities and social sciences. In the discussion about globalisation, the terms of the problem seem to be quite similar. Much in focus is the distinction between the principles of universalisation/assimilation on the one hand, and those of differentiation on the other. The question of hegemony also has a strategic role here, and it has been sometimes asked to what extent alternative forms of existence will be able to continue in the age of the *pensée unique* or "global monoculture" (Anderson 2004: 2). War is the extreme moment, when the polemical aspects deeply inscribed in the logic of globalisation become over-riding.

In this paper I will consider what can be called the 'discourse of war' and show its symptomatic status in relation to the underlying discourses of totality (such as globalisation). I will then try to put forward some proposals for the development of semiotic practices grounded on partiality, which could be opposed to the discourse of war. In doing so, I will take sides in the debate mentioned above, arguing that a semiotic theory should be thought of as a set of practices which can function as a generator of resistance to totalising discourses. This is what a 'semioethics' should look like, rather than like a 'science' with a unified method.

## Globalisation and semiotics

At the end of the 1980s, when the totalitarian regimes of Eastern Europe started to collapse, the feeling that a new era of peace and freedom was about to begin was widespread. The fears of annihilation which were experienced during the Cold War disappeared. These fears had had a material basis insofar as they were related to different

degrees of embodiment: the physical division of the body of humanity into two (East and West separated by the Iron Curtain); the deportation and imprisonment of individuals as an instrument of the dismemberment of national and social bodies (particularly in the Soviet Union), and the dissolution of individual bodies (as a consequence of a possible nuclear war).

The end of the Cold War coincided with an impressive acceleration of so-called globalisation, which in Western societies took the form of 'informatization', a progressive *dematerialisation* or disembodiment of everyday-life with an increasing amount of human interaction taking place through exchanges of information within a virtual environment.[1] The protagonist of this process is the new media: what represents globalisation better than the World Wide Web? These changes appeared very promising for semiotics. In fact, the dematerialisation of reality can also be seen as a progressive *semiotisation* of our world. Globalisation and its new media have enormously enlarged the portion of reality which is graspable by the methods of semiotics. The *web*, with its nodes and inter-related threads, is exactly the kind of structure semioticians have been accustomed to dealing with from the very beginning of their discipline (a classical Saussurean structure and a web can be seen as isomorphic construction). In these conditions the dream of a global semiotics, which would be the most natural theoretical way to describe our new world in exactly the terms of a "semiotic web", seemed to be justified. Global semiotics can be seen from this point of view as an attempt to extend a method originally thought of and developed to deal with human (social/cultural) artefacts as systems of signs, to cover all the phenomena of the biological world: "the activity of signs, or 'semiosis', extends in principle to the *whole of being* as 'knowable'" (Deely 2005: 7; see also Sebeok 2001: 10: "The criterial mark of all life is semiosis"). The condition of possibility for the development of a global semiotics could therefore be found in one of the (realised or

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[1]    Globalisation brought in this sense to full realisation what Guy Debord defined as "the spectacle". As Debord explains, the spectacle must not be thought of as a simple set of images, but as a social relation between persons (Debord 1995: 16). I will return later to the consequences of this fact.

dreamed of) aspects of globalisation: the culturalisation/humanisation of nature as a reduction of its alterity.[2]

At the foundations of the dream of globalisation thus lies an ideal of intelligibility or *transparency*, just as if the sources of opacity could once and for all be removed, connections substituting for divisions, previous alterity becoming penetrable and therefore knowable through already existing means. The information society naturally finds its Other in the Third World; the undeletable materiality of hunger and disease is the challenge to globalisation. But if in the past the (barbarian) Other was seen with terror, as a constant threat of chaos to the order of civilization, at the beginning of the 1990s globalisation seemed to be the power which would make that which was still something else finally 'our own'. The expansion of the Western system to the former East of the Communist Bloc had already successfully shown the power of market values; if this happened in a case in which the other side had a strong form of its own, why should it not happen in the case of the Third World, a space that we Westerners are used to imagining as having no systemic form at all? The increasing transparency granted by globalisation was thought to mean that the world would become increasingly readable for us Westerners, as our capacity to interpret reality thousands of miles away from home with the aid of our cultural codes. The dream of globalisation can be described in semiotic terms as a dream of assimilation without contamination of the original system, like the imposition of a form on an amorphous matter. Assimilation in fact presupposes a preliminary disarticulation of the pre-existent forms: the charge of symbolic violence through which the "external culture"

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[2]  I am not saying that global semiotics agrees with these aspects of globalisation. On the contrary, it can be understood as a polemical reaction to them. It simply seems to me that the "delinguistization" and consequent "biologization" (Sebeok 2001: xxi) or "animalization" (Deely 2005) of man suggested by global semiotics presupposes in some sense a preliminary 'culturalisation' or 'humanisation' of the biological by theory. The question is that of whether Saussure was too logocentric or whether, on the contrary, he was not yet able to imagine the extraordinary power of language (systems of signs) in the society of the spectacle to substitute itself for reality, creating its own separated world and the subjects inhabiting it as essentially linguistic beings. I think that a theoretical attempt to fill the gap between culture and nature cannot ignore these points.

destroys the "internal cultures" (Tarasti 2005) becomes here imme-diately evident.[3]

The illusions promoted by globalisation were brought to a halt by an unexpected fact: the growing centrality of war in our new world. Examples of resistance to the global order provoked a return to the violence of colonization, a return to expansion through annihilation of the Other. To think of war as a momentary difficulty in the peaceful process of globalisation is to miss the point. War is the symptom which reveals the essence of globalisation as violence and at the same time its purest, supreme means. I think that semioticians cannot ignore this fact any more, but this paper will not be an attempt to develop a new component of the global web of semiotics, a semiotics of war which could be add to the semiotics of life, culture, passions and so on. Such an attempt would result in a 'discourse about' with its own method and that is exactly what I do not want to do. Rather, the aim of this paper is to show how semiotics could go about developing a critical attitude towards war, and the kind of practices which would follow from this. The object of these practices would not be war in itself but the discourse of war and its mediatic agencies, in the spirit of what Umberto Eco has described as semiological guerrilla warfare (Eco 1986). That is, instead of taking language as a merely *partial* aspect of the global semiotic web of the 'semiotic animal', I will try to bring *partiality* into language taken as the global semiotic web itself.[4]

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[3]  In the terms of globalisation we could think in a provocative way about the disarticulation and dissolution of the Soviet Union and the consequent formation of national states with weak economies as the creation of forms which are easily penetrable by international capital and other assimilating forces. The violence of the process is evident in the consequent marginalization of a significant part of the population. This means that the nation and nationalism can not always be considered as a hindrance to globalisation. The national state can be seen in this perspective as "the form whose homogenizing drive connects the apparent particularity of national identities to the greater homogeneity of universal history" (Lloyd 1997: 182).

[4]  I do not claim that this is the 'right way out', simply that it fits well with the kind of critical practice I am going to develop in what follows.

## The paradoxical character of wartime

I will take as a starting point three different theoretical ways to approach war, covering a stretch of time from the First World War until the first Gulf War of 1991. The somewhat contradictory ideas contained in the texts to be examined will help me to draw the reader's attention to the different components of what will be defined as the discourse of war, as well as to the changes triggered in it by the development of its agencies, the media.

In an article written in 1915, Sigmund Freud described war as a "*whirlwind*" [*Wirbel*] in which participants are confused by the significance of the impressions that overwhelm them (Freud 1974: 35). He writes of "wartime" as a complex process, a peculiar time, when violence knows no limit and overwhelms with blind rage anything that stands in its way, as though there were to be no future and no peace afterward (Freud 1974: 38). In the terms used here above, what the whirlwind of wartime destroys is the intelligibility and transparency of the world we live in. We lose the necessary 'distance' from the transformations that are taking place and remain in the dark. Freud defines this psychological condition as the end of belief in the power of human acculturation, a "disenchantment" [*Enttäusschung*] to which individuals react by trying to direct outward the disorienting forces menacing their stability. If wartime represents a danger to individuals because it tears them out of their "place", it simultaneously mobilises those very same disintegrating forces against an Other, which is labelled as the enemy (Weber 1997: 94).

Similarly to Freud, Emmanuel Levinas sees in war the establishment of an order from which no one can remain at a distance. War reduces individuals to bearers of impersonal powers, which direct them (Levinas 1996: 6). Levinas, therefore, links war to that kind of *totality* which characterizes Western thought: the goal of both is the reduction of the Other to the Same. Totality coincides with the exhaustion of all exteriority, the closure of the system, recalling the lack of future of Freud but also the ideas of such theoreticians of the global world as Francis Fukuyama about the "end of history". War serves totality in two ways: firstly by making individuals bearers of an impersonal universality, and secondly by actively leading them to neutralise the Other which would otherwise remain exterior to the totality. That is why, according to Levinas, peace always has an

eschatological nature and the Other is linked with infinity: both bear the signs of the exteriority, the open, the not-still as opposed to totality (Levinas 1996: 8–9).[5]

The third text I will briefly consider is the much-discussed essay by Jean Baudrillard about the Gulf War. What Baudrillard insists upon is the dematerialization and the virtuality of war in our time. This is accomplished by the media where the events vanish in information itself, stripping war of its passions and violence and re-clothing it with "all the artifices of electronics as with a second skin" (Baudrillard 1995: 64). The disorienting effect of war (the Freudian whirlwind) does not disappear: it is now triggered by the media which, by liquidating the event in an infinite series of repetitions, speculations, interpretations, transforms the spectators into "corpses in the charnel house of new signs" (Baudrillard 1995: 76). War, therefore, functions in Baudrillard as a symptomatic device; it reveals that the dema-terialising power of the media engenders a new, radical *opacity* in respect to the events which are deleted by discourse. This has become possible in contemporary society, where the spectacle, alienating language, constitutes it as the separated world in which we live (Agamben 2000: 81). The media does not bring war nearer to us, into our houses, as some say. We do not really know more about war than Freud's contemporaries did. Anyway, it would be false to think that the mediatic unreality of war implies its lack of real effects. The mobilizing power of war, as stated by Freud and Levinas, remains unquestionably in place in the age of the spectacle too. Media sources has simply become the new "storm troopers" (Agamben 2000: 94) of the discourse of war and, at the same time, the media has become the battlefield where it is really decided who shall win (Vietnam was an earlier example of this shift. In the case of Iraq it would be very difficult to decide who won the war, if the media had not told us that the US did.)

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[5]   In his comment on Levinas' book, Derrida diverges from the author of *Totality and Infinity* in that he situates the Other within language and history, where it can never be thought of as a 'positive infinity', but always as maintaining within itself the negativity of the indefinite. This is a very important point for my argument, because Derrida links *in-finity* and partiality to finitude and positions them all straight into language: "The other cannot be what it is, infinitely other, except in finitude and mortality (mine *and* its). It is such as soon as it comes into language" (Derrida 2004: 143). I will return to this later.

The synthetic exposition of Freud's, Levinas' and Baudrillard's ideas about war has brought to light a kind of paradox in the logic of wartime, whose consequences will be of great importance in what follows. 'Wartime' brings with it an overwhelming lack of transparency and intelligibility in people's relationship with the events which are taking place. The impossibility of remaining at a distance is established by the tyranny of a present which ends future and past in the 'real time' of the media.[6] But, simultaneously, wartime triggers also a shortcut to that sort of simplifying intelligibility which is characteristic of all discourses of totality. The tyrannical present of wartime transforms itself into presence[7], the imposition of a given discourse as a closed and self-evident totality, the only possible way to look at the events. Freud describes the effects of this imposition on the "best minds" as a "logical blindness" [*Verblendung*] which is a secondary phenomenon following an "emotional excitation" [*Gefühlserregung*] (Freud 1974: 47). It is through this blindness that the mobilising potentiality of war becomes a reality.

It is precisely in this paradox (lack of intelligibility together with a shortcut to simplifying universalisations) that the symptomaticity of war in relation to globalisation begins to appear. Seeing things by means of this paradox, beyond the ideal of globalisation as a growing cosmopolitan knowledge, the asymmetrical ignorance "that stands as an indictment of the crippling and disastrous inequalities of the world system" (Hitchcock 2000: 4) will emerge.[8] Let us consider, to briefly exemplify this, the phenomena which we usually call 'natural disasters' when they take place in the globalised world — this might

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[6]  "War implodes in real time, history implodes in real time, all communication and all signification implode in real time" (Baudrillard 1995: 49).

[7]  See Derrida (2004: 1–35).

[8]  It is from this perspective that Tarasti proposes precisely the coming to an end of both the future and the past which was discussed above, as fundamental to globalization. For individuals, this means uncertainty and an impossibility either to make long term plans or to resort to history in the search for explanatory criteria (Tarasti 2005). William E. Connolly develops the same ideas at the level of the State: "global contingencies" are, in his view, "possibilities and potential emergencies that might be resistant to control". Global contingencies engender a gap between the power of the most powerful states and the power they would require for self-government and self-determination. The drive to close this gap causes, in Connolly's view, a rise of disciplinary pressure in the domestic sphere and represents a serious danger to global survival (Connolly 2002: 24–25).

also give a further explanation of the doubts expressed above about global semiotics. In both the cases of the South-east Asian Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans what strikes our imagination as something unthinkable (a paradox) is the coexistence of a perfectly transparent knowledge (sanctioned by science) of the event with the absolute opacity of what is taking place. It is enough to look at the victims of the two disasters to see how the paradox finds its explanations in the 'asymmetrical ignorance' and the 'disastrous inequalities' characteristic of the global world mentioned above. The recurrent use of bellicose metaphors in the description of natural disasters also manifests the symptomatic quality of wartime in our representation of such phenomena.

## The discourse of war

I am now ready to proceed with a semiotic analysis of the discourse of war as it manifests itself in our times. In so doing, I will sum up the elements presented so far, and add some new perspectives. In essence, it is possible to explain the paradox referred to earlier by postulating a functional detachment between the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic levels of the discourse of war. It is here that a space opens for semiotic practices of resistance to this discourse.

At the paradigmatic level it is particularly evident that the discourse of war is based on what Levinas called totality, the thing that we often hear of and recognize today as 'fundamentalism'. In fact, the paradigmatic oppositions of the war discourse are all grounded in a fundamental and irreducible difference, that between *we* and *they* strengthened by the principle 'anyone who is not with us is against us', making the paradigm an exhaustive classification in which everything is comprehended without any exteriority.[9] But the disposition of the two terms of this opposition on the same level is only apparent. Actually we encounter here what Sidra Dekoven Ezrahi has called an apocalyptic logic based on chosenness. In this kind of totalising discourse, Ezrahi writes, "we don't see in *them* a reflection of *our*

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[9]  The inscription of the *tertium non datur* principle in the discourse of war was, for instance, a very important point in George W. Bush's speeches after the September 11 attacks.

humanity" because "there is really no room in the mirror for more than one reflection" (Ezrahi 2002: 66; my emphasis — *D. M.*). This removal of humanity is a process in which the identity of the enemy is disarticulated, and the enemy is excluded from all possible (social, juridico-political, cultural) attributions. Paradoxically, the exhaustive classification mentioned above therefore generates, by its very functioning, a *residuum*. This kind of residuum is very similar to the one generated by what in political and legal theory is known as a "state of emergency" and Giorgio Agamben re-defined in a broader philosophical perspective as a "state of exception" (Agamben: 2005). A state of exception is a state of suspension of the law, in which the individuals who are subjected to it suffer a deprivation of their juridico-political status and are essentially reduced to what Giorgio Agamben calls "bare life". In the state of exception power applies without mediation directly to bare life as a sovereign right over life and death (Agamben 1998: 81–86; 2000: 40). As Freud demonstrates, war is the symptomatic moment, when the citizen realizes what should have already been clear in peace time: that the State monopolises the use of violence and every possible injustice (Freud 1974: 39). It is thus possible to describe the process which is made clear by the paradigm of war discourse in terms of the process of "dislocating localization" (Agamben 2000: 43) at work in the state of exception; through it the localisation of 'us' as an exhaustive totality (for instance 'humanity') is based on the differentiation of a 'they' and its dislocation as a residuum (bare life). Karl Schmitt describes this procedure as follows:

> Humanity as such as a whole has no enemies. Everyone belongs to humanity [...]. 'Humanity' thus becomes an asymmetrical counter-concept. If he [the person who speaks in the name of humanity] discriminates within humanity and thereby denies the quality of being human to a disturber or destroyer, then the negatively valued person becomes an unperson, and his life is no longer of the highest value: it becomes worthless and must be destroyed. Concepts such as 'human being' thus contain the possibility of the deepest inequality and become thereby 'asymmetrical'. (Schmitt 1987: 88)[10]

We therefore face a paradigm which generates diversity only to disarticulate or dislocate it, by excluding it from any possible defini-

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[10] For a discussion about the construction of humanity/inhumanity in relation to war and terrorism see Butler 2004: 89–91.

tional status; the above-mentioned paradox disappears when we think at the constitution of the enemy into a residuum as the legitimising precondition for its annihilation which restores the self-sufficiency of the totality. Note that the inequality and asymmetricality mentioned by Schmitt in this case are actually of the same kind as those described above as characteristic of globalisation.

There are some terms which bring this kind of totalising activity to an extremity, and they seem to function within the paradigm of war discourse in an unrelational way, as if they had an extra-systemic value. In the Western discourse of war, such terms include for instance 'freedom' and 'democracy'. When asked, George W. Bush frequently gives quite a deceptive definition of them, for example by saying that Americans had the opportunity to vote him out of office, but they did not use it (and that this is democracy) or that the State must serve citizens, not vice-versa (and that this is freedom).[11] But 'freedom' and 'democracy' acquire a somewhat magical value in the discourse of war, where they figure as universals not subject to (syntagmatic) definition or (paradigmatic) relativisation: they own "the redemptive unity of the Idea" in respect of the abjection of war (Kristeva 1982: 145). This unity takes precisely the form of the 'dislocating localization' encountered before: '*We all* want freedom and democracy, but *they* don't.'

It is possible to summarize the different aspects of the paradigm of the discourse of war using Levinas's observations about the two ways in which Western thought faces the relation between the Same and the Other: supremacy of the Same (apocalyptical oppositions) or reduction of the relation to an impersonal universal order (unity of the idea), where being together means being side by side all looking at the idea rather then at each other. The new concept of residuum defined here will become important in what follows.

On the syntagmatic level of war discourse we encounter the mediatic chains described by Baudrillard. Here the totalising process manifests itself as an absolute predominance of the whole over its constituent parts. It has been noted in relation to poetry that an abuse of syntagmatic procedures like alliteration can provoke strong inter-ferences in the processing of meaning with a consequent loss of sense (Silverman 1983: 106). In the same way, repetition is the process

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[11]   See for instance the interview released by Bush to the Estonian newspaper *Postimees* (*Postimees*, 07.05.2005).

which establishes that, in media coverage of war, the real and singular event is always and already left behind. The relation between the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic moment of war discourse appears clearly in the words Baudrillard uses to describe what Debord and Agamben call the "society of the spectacle":

> the age of simulation thus begins with a *liquidation of all referentials* — worse: by their artificial resurrection in *systems of signs*, which are a more ductile material than meaning, in that they lend themselves to all systems of equivalence, all *binary oppositions* and all combinatory algebra. (Baudrillard 1988: 167)

If the event vanishes within the repetitive syntagmatics of war discourse, the paradigmatic order offers a shortcut to the kind of explanatory transparency described above for the case of globalisation. In a sense the paradigm does not provide us with the competence needed for the interpretation of the mediatic syntagms. Instead, it exonerates us from the need to interpret them, because their compositional logic (relations of meaning between the parts and the whole) remains opaque from the very beginning. That is why I speak of a detachment between the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic levels of the discourse of war. It is possible to think about this detachment as a double erasure, with the generation of a residuum, as shown in Fig. 1.

EVENT → WAR DISCOURSE SYNTAGM → WAR DISCOURSE PARADIGM
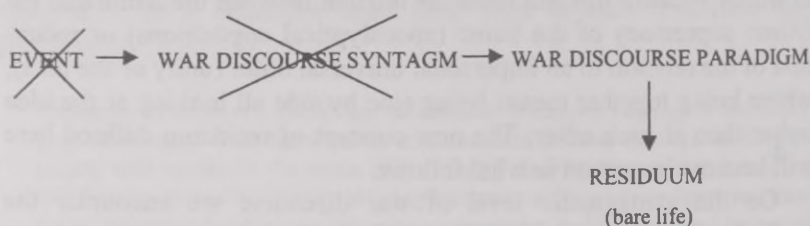
↓

RESIDUUM

(bare life)

*Figure 1.* Double erasure and residuum.

The residuum produced by the shortcut as a consequence of the use of asymmetrically universalising concepts is precisely the point at which the discourse of war becomes symptomatic to all the discourses of totality, such as globalization. Practices of resistance to the discourse

of war can be developed starting from its realized, that is syntagmatic, form; if the paradigm is a totalising system of classification, the syntagm always presupposes speech (Silverman 1983: 104) and, as Saussure long ago observed, it is only through speech that we can trigger changes in language.

## The whole and the parts

The mediatic environment represents, in the society of the spectacle, our always-already given and it will therefore be the starting point for the semiotic practices of resistance described in what follows. First of all, the image of the media as a web must be substituted with an image better fitted to the observations made so far. It is the Italian writer Italo Calvino who offers a suitable image when, in his novel *Priscilla-Death*, he compares our mediatic environment or, as he writes, "everything that is language in the broad sense", to a *cover* (*calotta* is the Italian world, meaning a hemi-spherical and hard kind of cover rendered as *cap* by the English translator):

> As soon as we are out of the primordial matter, we are bound in a connective tissue that fills the hiatus between our discontinuities, between our deaths and births, a collection of signs, articulated sounds, ideograms, morphemes, numbers, punched cards, magnetic tapes, tattoos, a system of communication that includes social relations, kinship, institutions, merchandise, advertising posters, napalm bombs, namely everything that is language, in the broad sense. [...] Like a duplicate of the Earth's crust, the *cap* [*calotta*] is hardening over our heads. (Calvino 1969: 91)[12]

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[12] Note that, in his attempt to show the extension of the category of sign, Sebeok quotes a passage from Peirce, suggesting examples that are reasonably analogous (given the difference in time) to Calvino's: "Signs in general [are] a class which includes pictures, symptoms, words, sentences, books, libraries, signals, orders of command, microscopes, legislative representatives, musical concerts, [and] performances of these, in short, whatever is adapted to making mental impressions virtually emanating from something external to itself" (Peirce, MS 634, 16–17 [September 1909], quoted in Sebeok 2001: 8–9). A relevant difference seems to lie in the fact that Calvino speaks of a covering, and therefore of a duplication, while in Peirce's terms the universe is "perfused" with signs, which are therefore represented as much more "inherent" to it (hence global semiotics). That is why, in my opinion, Calvino's image (quite similarly to Debord 1995: 21) works better than Peirce's in describing the society of the spectacle.

The filling of empty spaces (hiatuses) caused by the cover does not mean, in Calvino's terms, the elimination of all barriers to communication, on the contrary it makes communication nonsensical and impossible, becoming an "hostile envelope", a "prison"; what we thought of as a "network" of connections (the media) turns out to be an instrument of isolation (Weber 1997: 100–101). The symptomatic nature of war in relation to the nature of the media, which we can re-state in everyday terms as the 'complete coverage' of war by the media, could become a site on which semiotic practices might seek for a spot to "break the cap" trying "to prevent its perpetual self-repetition", as Calvino puts it (Calvino 1969: 92). It seems to me that this cannot be done along the critical lines proposed by Baudrillard, because the situation has changed since 1991. If at that time the problem of the reduction and absorption of the singular into the universality of the New World Order seemed to be soluble for the West with the cleanliness of a spectacular operation (Baudrillard 1995: 86), we are now witnessing, with terrorism, the return of the fears of annihilation characteristic of the Cold War: the body of humankind divided into two (Islam and the West), the individual body exposed to dismemberment (for example in the beheadings of hostages or the falling bodies of the Twin Towers) and the social body constantly threatened by a possibly mortal virus (immigrants as potential terrorists).The discourse of war uses the vulnerability arising from these fears of constant menaces to our life to promote war as the symbolic space where we can continue to imagine ourselves as invulnerable; it does so through the process of dislocating localization described above, a mechanism which more and more transforms the state of exception into the rule of our societies: we can be 'sure' only if everyone, potentially, might be deprived of his or her juridico-political status and reduced to a residuum, bare life without any rights subjected to a power able to decide on his or her life and death: "power no longer has today any form of legitimization other than emergency [...] power everywhere and continuously refers and appeals to emergency as well as laboring secretly to produce it" (Agamben 2000: 6; see also Agamben 1998: 114–115, Connolly 2002: 24; Butler 2004: 50–100).[13]

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[13]  Thus, in Agamben's view, the Third World, enemies of war, and the 'enemy combatants' at the prison in Guantanamo Bay are instances of bare life on the global level just as much as migrants, aliens without citizenship and the

In search of practices of resistance to the discourse of war, it is useful to revert to the strategies of reaction to totality elaborated within the frame of postmodernist thought.[14] Difference, dissemination, heterogeneity, molecularity, discontinuity (Jameson 1983: 53, 58), multiplicity and plurality (Haber 1994: 7, 18), segmentation (Silverman 1984: 246–250) are some of the concepts that postmodernist thinkers have used as critical instruments against totalising forms of discourse. What postmodernist critique tries to do is to identify those places in discourse where subjects and worlds seem to "resist recuperation within the oneness of the world" (Hitchcock 2000: 16). I want to introduce here this strategy of resistance to totality in a quite unusual way: by returning, that is, to some of Calvino's ideas about literature instead of quoting some well-known postmodernist theoretician.

In his *Six memos for the next Millennium*, Calvino writes about Lucrezio's *De rerum natura* as the first "work of poetry in which knowledge of the world tends to dissolve the solidity of the world, leading to a perception of all that is infinitely minute, light and mobile" (Calvino 1996: 8). This is why, first of all, Lucretian atomism gives rise to a "poetry of the invisible", a poetry "of infinite unexpected possibilities". Secondly, the Lucretian *pulverization* of reality is a means of avoiding the oppression of matter, dissolving the solidity of the world, and establishing "an essential parity between everything

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inhabitants of the outskirts of great post-industrial cities (think of the Parisian *banlieue*!) are within the national state. Anderson uses the concept of 'fifth world' to describe "displaced persons and peoples" such as refugees or the homeless (Anderson 2004: 300–302). In terms quite similar to Agamben, Connolly describes what he calls the external Other (foreign enemies and terrorists) and the internal other (low-level criminals, drug users, the disloyals, racial minorities, and the underclass) as both functional to the "theatricality of power" which construct them as "a dispensable subject of political representation and an indispensable object of political disposability" (Connolly 2002: 208).

[14] I think therefore that semiotics can and should usefully employ some of the ideas generated by the postmodernist tradition instead of proclaiming itself "*the* postmodern revolution in philosophy" (Deely 2005: 10; my emphasis — *D. M.*) or opposing its own solid "pre-socratic" origins to the "ephemeral Parisian fads" of twentieth-century thought (Sebeok 2001: 6). The 'postmodernist turn' in semiotics means giving up the idea of semiotics as a unified and unifying method and instead *doing* semiotics in a situation where it already appears to be: a set of different theoretical practices which employ some common concepts, defining them in very different ways.

that exists, as opposed to any sort of hierarchy of powers or values"
(Calvino 1996: 9). What is important in the Lucretian method is the
recovered independence of the parts in respect to the whole to which
they belonged. If Lucretrius was dealing with matter, we could apply
the same process to the mediatic environment, particularly now, when
Calvino's words have been used to define it as a cover, something as
hard and oppressive as matter was for Lucretius.

The semiotic procedure which I would like to propose would apply
the Lucretian method to the mediatic environment, disentangling
small *details* from the uninterrupted flow of information which makes
them invisible, assigning them a place only within the chains of
interpretations, speculations, and argumentations. This disentangle-
ment implies a reversal of the direction of semiotic practices: if se-
miotics traditionally tends to establish connections, we should instead
try to favour the emergence of *disconnections*.[15] Highlighting the
detail, paying attention to it, we make room for its emergence and help
it resist: "it is we alone who determine whether the world will appear
and so be, or languish in the darkness of non-being" (Silverman 2000:
7). If at the beginning of the history of cinematography Walter
Benjamin called the new technique shocking, because of the temporal
impossibility of the spectator arresting a single scene and developing
an independent train of thought about it (Benjamin 1973: 231–232), in
our time, on the contrary, it is exactly the idea of stopping the con-
tinuous flow of images and words that has become shocking. Think of
the fundamental role which photos, not videos, have played in the
development of a critical conscience against war from Vietnam to
Iraq.

The semiotic procedure here proposed relates, in my opinion, to
Benveniste's ideas about the difference between the semantic and the
semiotic, the first being based on understanding, the second on

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[15] We find a similar procedure in Barthes, where segmentation ("cutting up",
"breaking", "interruption") is used to disrupt the syntagmatic order of the text and
to challenge the ideological systematization imposed by a given code (Barthes
2000: 13–16). Agamben uses the term 'interruption' to characterize the process
through which "the *factum* of language comes to light for an instant" (Agamben
2000: 70). Furthermore, Levinas speaks of the need to "break" the discourse,
which vanishes otherwise into the All (Levinas 2002). Lacan seems to synthesize
Calvino's intentions in the best way, when he writes: "this cut in the signifying
chain alone verifies the structure of the subject as *discontinuity* in the real" (Lacan
2001: 331; my emphasis — *D. M.*).

*recognition*. The only difference is that if Benveniste claims that "la seule question qu'un signe suscite pour être reconnu est celle de son existence" (Benveniste 1974: 64), in what I am trying to do this statement could be inverted as follows: "the detail is called into existence as a sign only if it is recognized". Recognition has, therefore, the form of a shock, a short circuit in the system which disentangles the detail from the syntagmatic chain, where it figured as an insignificant part. The question is now "which kind of recognition?", because, as shown above, the discourse of war has its own paradigm and inside this paradigm recognition is achieved on the basis of the all-important opposition between *we* and *they*. The kind of recognition I am thinking about should be able to disrupt exactly this paradigm. As a basis for this idea of recognition, Kaja Silverman's description of different kinds of resemblance (Silverman 1983: 87–125) might be useful. Drawing on Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, Silverman argues that we can distinguish between three kinds of resemblance, those related respectively to paradigm, condensation and metaphor. Differences and distinctions are fundamental to the paradigm which is organized on a relational logic and based on binary oppositions, where "the parts have value by virtue of their place in the whole" (Saussure 1966: 128, quoted in Silverman 1983: 105). The paradigm is the place of the *we/they* and all the other related oppositions of the discourse of war, as shown above. Condensation refers to what Freud calls 'primary processes' (like dreams) and collapses distinctions between different elements to achieve absolute identification. In condensation, "each manifest signifier refers to a group of latent signifieds", highly economically; "under its [condensation] influence the part stands for the whole, a single figure represents a diverse group" (Silverman 1983: 91). The mechanism of condensation appears to be at work in the above mentioned "redemptive unity of the Idea" with its charge of symbolic violence. Is it not as if in some kind of dreamlike conditioning that 'freedom' and 'democracy' impose themselves as self-evident universals? *Metaphor* lies in between: it is neither complete identity, nor irreducible difference, "it permits profound affinities and adjacencies to be discovered without differences being lost" (Silverman 1983: 109). If paradigm and condensation are grounded on presence and exhaustive closure (all is here now and there is nothing more), in metaphor it is the 'principle of absence' that becomes central. It is precisely because of the uneliminable partiality of the metaphor (a metaphor is a substitution legitimated

only in some respect) that the hidden term is never exhausted in the substitution, never totally present. That is why it would be more precise to consider the ground of a metaphor not as a sign, but as a *trace*, where something is "present not as a total presence" (Derrida 2004: 119, 135; see also Derrida 1997: 44–73). The disentangled detail can become the ground for this kind of metaphorical recognition linking the Self and the Other, where the Other is absent but evoked by the detail functioning as its trace. As in Lacan and Levinas, absence triggers desire and desire puts into motion a series of further recognitions.[16]

## Opening the space of community: partiality, in-finity and finitude

It is now possible to change Figure 1, as shown in Figure 2.
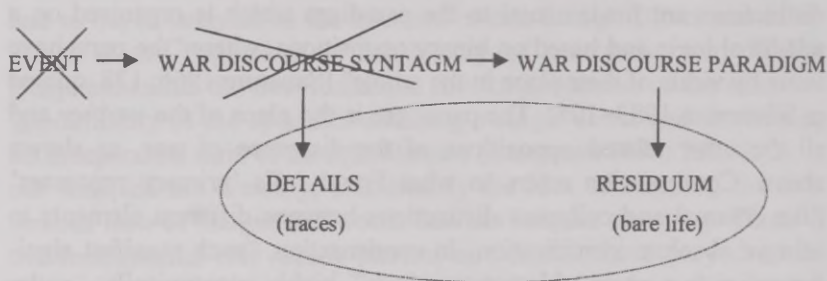


*Figure 2*. Disentanglement of the detail and space of community.

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[16] Basing the kind of disconnections I am discussing here on recognition and resemblance, I take the risk of once more emphasising similarity at the expense of difference. Anyway, as Honi F. Haber has shown, the universalisation of difference, like the universalisation of totality, prevents the elaboration of every possible strategy of resistance. The latter become possible only insofar as "sometimes we recognize parts of ourselves in the stories of others" (Haber 1994: 43; see also Whitebrook 2001: 150–151 and Connolly 2002: ix–xxxi). Anyway, unlike the last two authors, I will not use the concept of 'identity' to describe the kind of resemblance I am speaking about, for reasons that will be explained below.

The disconnection of the detail from the mediatic chain opens a *space of 'community'*, where the Other generated and dislocated by the paradigm of war discourse as a residuum (bare life) can be experienced by us. Opening up this space means resisting the alienation of language as our power to communicate in the world of the media, the cover which fills all the empty spaces between our discontinuities only to make communication impossible and the place where "human beings are kept separate by what unites them" (Agamben 2000: 84). To open up the space of community therefore means bringing "language itself to language" (Agamben 1993: 82). The space of community is the space of the re-instituted power of language, the space of total possibility that Derrida, following Heidegger, identifies with Being, not as a given predicate but as "what authorizes all predicates" and "far from closing difference, on the contrary liberates it" (Derrida 2004: 175, 406). In comparison with the fullness of being (universality) represented by the paradigm of war and the non-being of the residuum as bare life (exception), we can define the space of community opened by the disconnection of the detail as the space of the possibility to *not* not-be (Agamben 1993: 31). The kind of community here imagined has nothing to do with identity (which grounded the paradigmatic opposition between *we* and *they*); on the contrary, the space of community should be thought as a space of pure communicability, pure mediality, where instead of identity a principle of *unconditioned substitutability* (Agamben 1993: 24–25) is in force. If the rhetoric of identity was the premise for the universal representability and the self-identification of individuals inside the paradigm of the discourse of war, anti-identitarian substitutability will be the way to present within the space of community what that paradigm dislocated as something unpresentable (residuum, bare life) to be destroyed. In his theory of the text, Barthes defined this kind of unconditioned substitutability as an "unbridled (pandemic) circulation of signs", which "abolishes the power of legal substitution" exhaustively regulated by the paradigmatic oppositions (Barthes 2000: 215–216).

It is interesting to note the way that the opening of the space of community triggered by the disentangled detail becomes paradoxically possible, in spite of Baudrillard's pessimism, exactly because of the separation of language in an autonomous sphere accomplished by the media in the society of the spectacle. This is the positive aspect

of what Benjamin earlier defined as the "loss of aura" of the work of art due to its mechanical reproducibility (Benjamin 1968: 215). The society of the spectacle, more generally, can be defined as the "devastating *experimentum linguae* that disarticulates and empties, all over the planet, traditions and beliefs, ideologies and religions, iden- tities and communities" (Agamben 2000: 85); this experiment makes it possible for us to fully experience our linguistic being. Derrida stresses how Levinas too never condemned technology, on the contrary he saw in it the possibility of letting the human face shine in its nudity as opposed to the violence of the traditional "taking root", or "implantation in the Site" (Derrida 2004: 400, 409). Thus the simpli- fying transparency of the paradigm of war discourse and the relative practices of identification obtained through double erasure and shortcut (fig. 1) need not be the only possible results of the constitution of language as an autonomous sphere within the society of the spectacle. The latter contains a positive possibility too precisely in its very much criticized 'devoiding power'. This possibility starts to emerge when the pulverization of the mediatic chain into details opens up a space of community, where the paradigm is disrupted and its residuum made presentable in a trace, the ground for a metaphorical link between *we* and others where the range of possible substitutions knows no pre-established conditions.

Returning to the recognition which enable the disentanglement of the detail, it is possible to describe it now, in Levinas's terms, as the answer to an interpellation which Derrida reformulates as an ethics of "letting be" (Derrida 2004: 172, 179). "To let be" presupposes what has been described as the opening up of a space of community, the reinstating of the linguistic power as a possibility to *not* not-be. The point of departure of that interpellation (the Other) is thought by Levinas to be exterior to the totalising discourse it helps to deconstruct. That is why the details which trigger our rejection of the discourse of war are usually not scenes of war (such as images of the wounded, or of dead people); those make violence into a spectacle to which we are accustomed to a high degree (Baudrillard 1995; Weber 1997: 96–105). However, there are other images and words (children, details of everyday life or scenes of joy, faces, words of affection and so on), which entangled as they are in the mediatic chains of the discourse of war lose their ability to make sense, but if they are recognized and disentangled they point to their (that is my and the

Other's) exteriority to that discourse. In recognition we become vulnerable to the Other, losing the invulnerability that the totality of war discourse granted us, but overcoming our vulnerability to the confusing effects caused by the mediatic chains of war discourse. The disenchantment described by Freud as a consequence of wartime is not denied and reversed against the Other any more, but affirmed as the condition where the Self and the Other may meet. As Agamben puts it, only in a world "in which the citizen has been able to recognize the refugee that he or she is", it will be possible to think at the "political survival of humankind" (Agamben 2000: 26), the opening of a space of community. Only if we recognize ourselves in the ones who may not be, does it become possible to let be, to cultivate the possibility to *not* not-be. It is at this point that the *partiality* of details encounters the *in-finity* (see footnote 5) of the Other and our (and the Other's) *finitude* (mortality), whose acknowledgment has often been understood as the premise for all possible critique of war and violence (e.g., Freud 1974: 49–60; Weber 1997; Connolly 2002: 164–171; Silverman 2003).[17]

It should now be clear how the semiotic practice of disconnection suggested here may represent a strategy of resistance to the discourse of war as characterized above. From the paradigmatic point of view the details, with their lightness and lack of hierarchy, become a contrast to the unbalanced oppositions of the discourse of war. Like the "parity between everything that exists" obtained through the Lucretian pulverisation of reality, the pulverisation of the mediatic cover into details provokes a similar parity between *we* and *they*, questioning apocalyptic chosenness and making "empathy" possible (Ezrahi 2002: 66). From the syntagmatic point of view, disconnection represents the necessary precondition for developing our own discourse, it gives us access to the right to speak.[18] Recognition is in fact always experienced by me, it is my point of contact with the Other, my metaphor for the Other, my way of being for the Other: "Creatures and things invite us to answer to their appeal in a manner which,

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[17] "This identification with humanity through the experience of difference and finitude may achieve its most influential presence in life, though, if death is taken as a theme of reflection and treated as one of the tests around which life is organized" (Connolly 2002: 167).

[18] Agamben writes in this sense about the "event of language" as "free use of the common" (Agamben 2000: 117–118).

although fully responsive to their formal coordinates, is absolutely particular to ourselves" (Silverman 2000: 22). Peace, writes Levinas, is always my peace and it manifests itself as an attitude towards speaking (Levinas 1996: 8, 342).

## About semiotics

In conclusion I would like to sum up how war taken as a symptom helps us to reconsider the method of semiotics. I return therefore to the title of this paper to claim that we should bring about in semiotics' practices a shift from the paradigm of globality (totality) to that of partiality. This shift goes, in my opinion, in the same direction as some of the proposals made by the late Michel Foucault for a new intellectual ethics.

The first meaning of partiality which I suggest is a rather political one. *Commitment* could be a fundamental premise of our activity as semioticians and commitment means taking a position within the field we are studying. This is why it is more useful to discuss the place of semiotics' practices in the social field than the status of semiotics as a science. What we should renounce is the pretence of imagining ourselves to be positioned somewhere outside that which we are observing, the pretence of objectivity or, better to say, that of objectification, which is the premise of all totalising discourses. Foucault described what he presented as a necessary change in the role of the intellectuals as a shift from the universal (the position of "owner of the truth", *maitre*) to the local, where intellectuals can see themselves as positioned and conditioned within their own field, the field of knowledge, truth, consciousness, discourse. This perspectival (partial) point of view represents an indispensable premise for becoming engaged in the struggle against the forms of totalising power characteristic of our own field (Foucault 1977: 20, 109). Theory should therefore not be seen as the translation of a practice, but as a practice itself, not totalising, but local, regional. It is only from this point of departure that it becomes possible to construct transverse links between different theoretical practices and struggles as a premise for a committed interdisciplinarity.

The epistemological meaning of partiality derives immediately from the political one. The decision to look at our mediatic environ-

ment as a cover rather than as a web solicits from the semiotician an *analytic* rather than a synthetic approach, an approach able to discover the part in the whole, the particular in the global, the different in the same. The result need not be a straightforwardly deconstructive kind of semiotics. On the contrary, I am trying to answer the Foucault's request for a criticism which would multiply "signs of existence", having as a fundamental means curiosity because "it evokes the care one takes of what exists and what might exist; a sharpened sense of reality, but one that is never immobilized before it [...] a lack of respect for the traditional hierarchies of what is important and fundamental" (Foucault 1997: 325). The segmenting, disconnecting moment of the semiotic practice suggested here can become the premise for another kind of speech, where the parts do not vanish into the whole and the exteriority of the Other is never finally resumed into the totality of the Same. Lucretius's atomism and Levinas's philosophy both have in-finity as their epistemological basis and so should semiotics.

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## От глобальности к парциальности: семиотические стратегии сопротивления дискурсу войны

Дискурс войны можно рассматривать как симптоматический по отношению к основным дискурсам тотальности (напр. глобализации). Стремясь к упрощению, такие дискурсы принимают вид исчерпывающей парадигмы, но в ходе этого они всегда создают нерепрезентируемый и подлежащий уничтожению остаток. Семиотика может развивать практики сопротивления дискурсу войны, оперируя его синтагматическими цепочками, образуемыми их медиаторами. Такие практики сопротивления основываются на постмодернистской критике тотализирующих дискурсов. Если мелкие детали теряют в синтагматических цепочках дискурса войны свою ценность, то их различение и выделение может открыть "пространство общности", в котором остаток дискурса войны стал бы репрезентируемым с помощью метафорических замещений. Семиотические практики сопротивления дискурсу войны предполагают теоретический сдвиг от парадигмы глобальности к парадигме парциальности. Парциальность следует рассмаривать как с политической, так и с эпистемологической точки зрения, тем самым она может явиться существенной предпосылкой разработки "семиоэтики".

## Globaalsuselt partsiaalsusele:
## Semiootilised vastupanupraktikad sõja diskursusele

Sõja diskursust võib käsitleda kui totaalsuse diskursuste — nt globali-
seerumise — sümptomaatilist väljundit. Lihtsustava seletamise eesmärki-
del võtavad sellised diskursused ammendava paradigma kuju, aga seda
tehes loovad need alati ka esitamatut ja hävitamisele määratud jääki.
Semiootika võib arendada vastupanupraktikaid sõjadiskursusele, pöörates
tähelepanu selle süntagmaatilistele ahelatele meedias. Sellised vastupanu-
praktikad põhinevad totaliseerivate diskursuste postmodernistlikul kriiti-
kal. Kui väikesed detailid kaotavad sõja diskursuse süntagmaatilistes
ahelates oma väärtuse, siis nende eristamine ning esile tõstmine võiks
avada "ühisruumi", milles sõja diskursuse jääk muutuks esitatavaks meta-
foorsete asendamiste abil. Semiootilised vastupanupraktikad sõja diskur-
susele eeldavad teoreetilist nihet globaalsuse paradigmalt partsiaalsuse
paradigmale. Seda nihet tuleb mõista nii poliitiliselt — partsiaalsus kui
enese positsioneerimine, kui ka epistemoloogiliselt — partsiaalsus põhi-
neb paljususel ja erinevusel. Poliitiline ja epistemoloogiline partsiaalsus
on oluliseks eelduseks "semioeetika" väljatöötamisel.

# Маленький человек в неевклидовом мире:
## о художественном пространстве в фильме и пьесе
## Т. Стоппарда "Розенкранц и Гильденстерн мертвы"

*Олег Борисович Заславский*

Department of Mechanics and Mathematics,
Kharkov V. N. Karazin National University
Svoboda Square 4, Kharkov 61077, The Ukraine
e-mail: ozaslav@kharkov.ua

**Abstract.** *Oleg B. Zaslavskii*. **The little in a non-Euclidean world: On the artistic space in Tom Stoppard's film and play "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead".** It is shown that quite different aspects of Tom Stoppard's work — spatial organization, relationship between reality and the conditional character of events, causality and narrative links, the problems of choice and personality — are united by the spatial one-sided model like the Möbius strip or Klein bottle. The artistic space turns out to be not orientable, the time being cyclic. This enables us to explain the mutual exchange of names between Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and a number of other paradoxical features in the plot and composition. The model like the Möbius strip embodies the absence of a free choice: there is no other side in the world and there is no chance to escape from the fate indicated in the title of Tom Stoppard's work. The relevance of topology, e.g. the property of a global nature, is connected with the fact that a bearer of danger is the world as a whole. Apart from this, it points to the fact that such a structure of the world is essentially "non-Euclidean" and cannot be understood on the basis of observations from every-day life or "obvious" experiments like those carried out by Rosencrantz.

## Введение

В настоящее время драматургия Стоппарда является объектом изучения с самых разных точек зрения, и о ней имеется обширная литература (примерами могут служить недавние монографии

Fleming 2001, Bloom 2003). Между тем, есть важный аспект, который до сих пор был лишь бегло затронут в исследованиях. Речь идет о пересечении художественного мира Стоппарда с миром науки, главным образом математики и физики. Например, в "Аркадии" содержится в свернутом виде обсуждение идей, связанных с фракталами, хаосом и вторым началом термодинамики (Jackson 1995; Peterson 2002). В произведении "Professional foul" значимы понятия теории катастроф (Cobley 1984). В пьесе "Hapgood" имеются интересные соответствия между свойствами сюжета и такими особенностями квантовой механики как влияние измерения на результат эксперимента, невозможность точной локализации объекта, квантовые скачки и т.д. (Brouwer 1994: Sec. VI). В данном отношении пьесе "Розенкранц и Гильденстерн мертвы" повезло меньше. Обычно рассмотрение роли математики ограничивается здесь обсуждением диалога двух героев о теории вероятности. Характерно, что на сайте "Mathematical Fiction", специально посвященном отражению математики в художественной литературе и театре, эта пьеса включена в список лишь под нажимом читателей.[1] В одноименном фильме Стоппарда сциентистский аспект усилен тем, что Розенкранц по ходу действия неоднократно ставит физические опыты. Между тем, роль научных идей в художественном произведении отнюдь не исчерпывается их явным обсуждением непосредственно в тексте или демонстрацией опытов. Наибольший интерес здесь представляет случай, когда соответствующие абстрактные конструкты (которые могут быть вообще не эксплицированы в тексте) организуют саму художественную структуру произведения. Именно такому явлению и посвящена данная работа.

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[1]  "This brilliant, weird play, retelling the story of Shakespeare's Hamlet from the point of view of two "throw away" characters, unfortunately has very little mathematics in it. However, every few days I get an e-mail message from someone suggesting that I add it to the list, so I will" (http://www.math.cofc.edu/faculty/kasman/MATHFICT/mfview.php?callnumber=mf129).

## Безальтернативное пространство

Речь пойдет об одной, но ключевой особенности языка пространственных отношений в произведении Т. Стоппарда "Розенкранц и Гильденстерн мертвы". Она является общей для обоих художественных произведений — пьесы и фильма,[2] но поскольку в фильме как тексте иконической природы она проявляет себя более наглядно, мы в основном (делая необходимые оговорки) сосредоточимся на фильме.

В представленном там мире с самого начала действует странность: подброшенная монета неизменно падает одной и той же стороной. При этом выпадает "орел" — по-английски "heads", так что Гильденстерн говорит даже о "double-headed coins" — это довольно очевидным образом намекает на мотив казни (в фильме — повешения), причем две головы орла соответствуют двум головам незадачливых героев (этот момент пропадает при переводе с английского на русский). Не в силах понять, почему же монета падает лишь одной стороной, Гильденстерн однако воспринимает это как намек на нечто угрожающее. В фильме он спрашивает Розенкранца, не испытывает ли тот страх ("No fear?"); в пьесе он говорит: "И это все? И никакого страха? [...] Да, страха! Такая, знаешь, щелка, сквозь которую мозги заливает светом!" (Здесь и далее мы используем перевод И. Бродского — Стоппард 2000.) Судя по трагическому финалу, интуиция не обманула героя в том, что касается "страха". Это заставляет с особенным вниманием отнестись и к его словам о том неясном и пугающем, что стоит за опытами с монетой: как мы сейчас увидим, в этих опытах действительно проступает фундаментальная характеристика мира произведения в целом. Она связана с нейтрализацией противоположностей и дискредитацией выбора.

Это, прежде всего, относится к проблеме индивидуальности. По ходу дела время от времени оказывается невозможно разобрать, кто из героев есть кто — причем их имена путают как другие действующие лица, так и они сами, так что различие между Розенкранцем и Гильденстерном ставится под сомнение. Приведем сначала пример первого рода. "Гамлет. Мои милейшие друзья! Как поживаешь, Гильденстерн? (Идет к авансцене с

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[2]   *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead.* Режиссер Том Стоппард, сценарий Тома Стоппарда. Metro Goldwyn Mayer, 1990.

рукой, протянутой к Розенкранцу, Гильденстерн кланяется. Гамлет поправляет себя.) Ах, Розенкранц!" В дальнейшем Гамлет повторяет эту ошибку (начало 2-го действия): "Гамлет (к Розенкранцу). Слушайте, Гильденстерн, и ты (к Гильденстерну), Розенкранц". Пример второго рода: "Розенкранц. Мое имя Гильденстерн, а это — Розенкранц. Гильденстерн делает ему замечание. (Без смущения.) Виноват, его имя Гильденстерн, а Розенкранц — это я".[3] В ходе игры в вопросы и ответы (перед первой встречей с Гамлетом) герои, пытаясь подготовиться к этой встрече, лишь воспроизводят указанную путаницу. Гильденстерн обращается к Розенкранцу: "Гильденстерн!", и тот откликается. В свою очередь, Розенкранц, сбитый с толку предшествующей репликой Гильденстерна, обращается к нему: "Мой милый Розенкранц!". Характерен вопрос в ходе этой игры: "А я в таком случае должен стать тобой?".

По всему произведению рассыпаны намеки на то, что неотчуждаемые признаки человека потеряли свою устойчивость и способны к превращениям и взаимным перераспределениям между разными людьми, так что в этом мире понятие личности теряет однозначность. Так, в пьесе во время нападения пиратов Розенкранц, Гильденстерн и Актер спасаются, прыгая в бочки. Однако потом Розенкранц и Гильденстерн вылезают из бочки Актера, Актер — из бочки Гамлета (Гамлет же исчезает) — как если бы произошло превращение в самом буквальном смысле. Другой пример. В фильме показан издали персонаж, напоминающий фигурой и длинными волосами женщину, полуодетый в женское платье; лишь когда персонаж оборачиваются, он оказывается мужчиной (сцена в бане). Это выглядит так, будто бы женщина превратилась в мужчину, так что пол обнаружил способность к превращениям.

Аналогичным образом обстоит дело и с соотношением персонажа и его ролей. В фильме актер, игравший в таверне убитого Полония, играет в сцене пантомимы во дворце Луциана. Сам же Луциан из персонажа, соответствующего в "Гамлете" убийце Клавдию, превращается в фильме в персонаж, функционально эквивалентный Гамлету. В пьесе в пантомиме, разыгрываемой актерами, "убитый король играет Полония" ("the murdered king to

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[3]   Здесь и далее, отсутствие уточнений источника цитаты (фильм или пьеса) означает, что фраза вошла и в фильм и в пьесу.

stand in for Polonius") — происходит как бы превращение одного персонажа в другой. Более того, сама фраза построена таким образом, что можно подумать, будто к тому же произошло и буквальное смешение персонажей и актеров, так что Полония и в самом деле играет убитый король, а не актер, который его играл. Когда же согласно действию этой пантомимы, описанному в пьесе, корабль прибывает в Англию, "перемена головного убора превращает актера, игравшего только что убитого короля, в английского короля". В пьесе Розенкранц рассказывает анекдот, в котором представители трех религий (христианин, мусульманин и иудей) обмениваются религиозной принадлежностью и именами, создавая немыслимые в реальном мире сочетания. В другом анекдоте речь идет о том, что христианин на небе встречает Савла, который сообщает, что он уже Павел. В таком контексте по-особому звучат слова Гамлета "дядя-отец", "мать-тетя", указывающие на то, что неоднозначность затрагивает и родственные отношения. Сказанное относится не только к свойствам человека и личности, но к целому ряду пар контрастных состояний — условность-реальность, явь-сон и т.п.: они не разделены однозначно, а взаимно превращаемы. Например, это проявляет себя в пьесе в притче о философе и бабочке: "Один китаеза, из династии Тан, — по мнению некоторых, большой философ, — ему однажды приснилось, что он — бабочка, и с этой минуты он уже никогда не был полностью уверен, что он не бабочка, которой снится, что она китайский философ...". Устранение контраста между противоположностями проявляет себя и в интертекстуальном взаимодействии. В фильме присутствует цитата из "Blow up" Антониони — площадка для игры в теннис, на которой сама игра заменена условным действием. В фильме Антониони это была игра воображаемым мячом, в фильме Стоппарда — игра в вопросы и ответы. Однако если у Антониони воображение и реальность сохраняли смысл как противоположные в норме категории (и именно поэтому нарушение нормы становилось значимым), то в произведении Стоппарда упразднение границы между противоположностями и разными семиотическими уровнями из аномалии стало нормой. В частности, в данной сцене стерта грань между вопросами и утверждениями, между фразами, входящими в игру, и описанием ее правил (т.е. текстом и метатекстом); это находит и наглядное

соответствие — в упомянутой выше сцене сетка на поле, маркирующая границу между противоположными сторонами, приспущена.

Все эти особенности получают простое истолкование на языке пространственных отношений, если допустить, что *художественный мир произведения в том, что касается любых альтернатив, устроен как лист Мебиуса, т. е. является односторонней поверхностью*[4]. Подчеркнем, что речь идет не о физическом пространстве, а об абстрактном — пространстве выбора. В этом случае сразу же становится понятным, почему монета выпадает только одной стороной: хотя в обычном физическом пространстве у нее есть две стороны (орел и решка), в пространстве альтернатив — только одна. (Как говорит Гильденстерн, "По крайней мере, у нас есть варианты. [...] Хотя нет выбора".)

Важное свойство листа Мебиуса (рис. 1 и 2) состоит в том, что он является *неориентируемой* поверхностью. Если, двигаясь по замкнутому контуру вдоль ее края, обносить перпендикуляр к ней, то по возвращении в исходную точку он окажется направленным по отношению к исходному направлению в противоположную сторону. Указанное свойство художественного пространства фильма позволяет просто описать на таком языке

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[4]  Замкнутым вариантом односторонней поверхности является бутылка Клейна, однако для определенности мы будем в основном говорить о листе Мебиуса. Сама по себе актуальность в произведении поверхности такого типа достаточно очевидна из-за явного упоминания одностороннего выпадения монеты — в этом отношении мы не претендуем на новизну наблюдения. Цель настоящей статьи другая — проследить, как указанное свойство проявляет себя в художественной структуре произведения в целом.

Известная нам попытка связать произведение Стоппарда с топологически нетривиальными структурами является неудачной. Caris (1987: Ch. 6) утверждает: "Tom Stoppard makes a Klein bottle transformation in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*". Основанием для этого автор считает тот факт, что актеры представляют на сцене события не только прошлого, но и будущего. Однако такое "знание будущего" (встречающееся например в "научно"-фантастической литературе вне всякой связи с бутылкой Клейна) само по себе еще не обязательно означает цикличность времени. Кроме того, даже в случае квазициклических условий возможны разные топологии (как это ясно при склеивании полоски в цилиндр или лист Мебиуса). В применении же к линии (в данном случае линии времени), т.е. одномерному объекту, вообще нет смысла говорить о бутылке Клейна, которая является двумерным объектом.

неоднократно происходящее "превращение" Розенкранца в Гильденстерна и наоборот. Розенкранц и Гильденстерн в таком контексте предстают как две "точки", задающие "вектор", однако в результате "обхода по замкнутому контуру" (обращения героев друг к другу, их взаимных вопросов — ответов, реплик и т.д.) ориентация этого вектора меняется на противоположную, так что Розенкранц превращается в Гильденстерна, а тот — в Розенкранца (ср. высказанное в пьесе опасение Гильденстерна: "Не то будем тут кружить всю ночь, наступая друг другу на пятки"). Неслучайно герои Стоппарда столь озабочены проблемами своей *ориентации*, причем это выражено как раз в терминах стрелок и компасов: из-за одностороннего характера листа Мебиуса ориентация на нем имеет только локальный, но не глобальный смысл, и может измениться в результате обхода. Как говорит в пьесе Гильденстерн, "Здесь на компас надеяться не приходится". Иначе говоря, пара Розенкранц — Гильденстерн представляет собой своего рода единый объект, определенный на односторонней поверхности, а не совокупность двух самостоятельных. В пьесе Гильденстерн заявляет "[...] я не в силах считать нас самих чем-либо большим, чем парой золотых с орлом и решкой", но монета оказывается на самом деле односторонней, и то же относится и к паре этих персонажей — разделение на две самостоятельных личности иллюзорно.
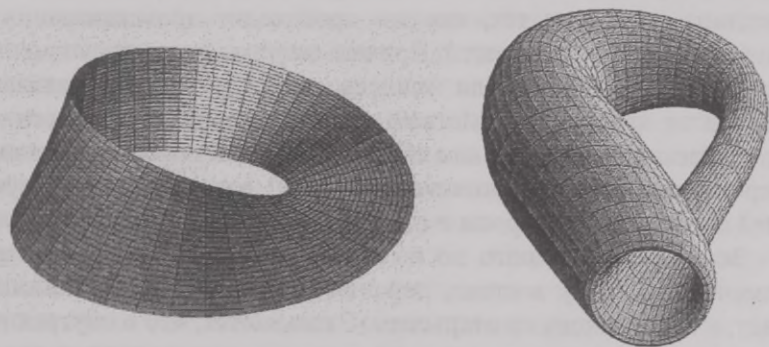


*Рис. 1.* Лист Мебиуса и бутылка Клейна.
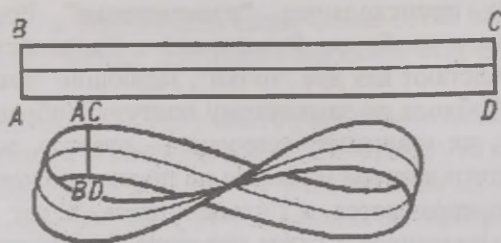
*Рис. 2.* Лист Мебиуса может быть получен двух противоположных сторон AB и CD прямоугольника ABCD так, что точки A и B совмещаются соответственно с точками C и D.

Приведем еще ряд примеров подобного рода. Розенкранц вытирает яблоко о камзол Гильденстерна, а тот его благодарит — очевидно считая, что Розенкранц хотел вытереть не яблоко, а камзол товарища. Здесь сочетание "очищаемая сторона — яблоко, чистящая сторона — камзол" (точка зрения Розенкранца), поступив к Гильденстерну и отразившись его репликой к Розенкранцу, заменилась на "очищаемая сторона — камзол, чистящая сторона — яблоко": произошло как бы перекручивание, характерное для листа Мебиуса. (Как известно, эта поверхность может быть получена, если взять обычную полоску бумаги и отождествить концы не так, как это происходит при склеивании в цилиндр, а крест-накрест.) Причем актуальность здесь именно пространственной модели усилена тем, что "перекручивание" относится как раз к свойствам геометрической поверхности — соприкасающимся сторонам яблока и камзола (наглядный пример перекручивания — состояние теннисной сетки в предшествующей сцене игры в вопросы и ответы, о которой говорилось выше).

Во дворце незадолго до выступления актеров Гильденстерн замечает заслонку в стене, резко ее отодвигает, сразу захлопывает, а потом вновь ее открывает. Оказывается, что с внутренней стороны дверца зеркальна, и перед этим зеркалом актер в маске совершает последние приготовления перед выступлением. При этом существенно, что точка зрения, с которой показана сцена, меняется по ее ходу. Сначала камера показывает происходящее с точки зрения Гильденстерна, так что перед зрителем до захлопывания дверцы быстро мелькает лицо в маске, возникшее в пустом

проеме, потом сцена дана со стороны актера, так что зритель вместе с ним видит лицо в маске, отразившееся в зеркале. Само по себе зеркало здесь как физический объект ничем не примечательно: это обычная двусторонняя поверхность, у которой только одна сторона покрыта отражающим материалом. Однако в контексте данной сцены такая подвижная заслонка функционально проявила себя как "одностороннее зеркало": с какой стороны ни посмотреть в него, оно показывает зазеркального двойника, причем одного и того же. Более того, этим двойником оказалось лицо в маске — в полном соответствии со сказанным выше о связи между односторонней поверхностью и стиранием индивидуальности. Заметим еще, что когда Розенкранц в этой сцене отвлекает Гильденстерна, показывая ему бумажный самолетик необычной двойной конструкции, тот в раздражении его сплющивает, т.е. проделывает по отношению к самолетику ту же операцию превращения двойного в одинарное, которая происходит в этой сцене и по отношению к зеркалу.

У Стоппарда Розенкранц и Гильденстерн распечатали письмо к английскому королю, узнали, что везут Гамлета на гибель, и запечатали обратно; Гамлет же подменил это письмо другим — с просьбой казнить Розенкранца и Гильденстерна. В данном контексте знаменательно, что этой подмене в фильме предшествует эпизод, когда Гильденстерн запечатывает письмо монетой, т.е. "односторонним" в контексте фильме объектом: непреложная гибель персонажей письма ("односторонняя" ситуация) сочетается с изменением индивидуальности казнимого — Розенкранц и Гильденстерн в результате проделанных Гамлетом операций с текстом как бы превращаются в Гамлета, о казни которого была просьба в первоначальном тексте. Это находит и более наглядное воплощение в фильме: когда Розенкранц и Гильденстерн обнаруживают, что Гамлет попал на корабль пиратов, и таким образом их миссия провалилась, то чтобы обезопасить себя перед английским королем, Розенкранц (забывая вначале, о чем датский король просил английского в своем письме) предлагает себя или своего друга выдать за Гамлета. В данном контексте приобретает смысл и тот факт, что перемена объекта казни происходит в результате манипуляций с куском бумаги — т.е. объектом, при помощи которого лист Мебиуса и может быть реализован наглядным образом.

В том или ином виде замкнутый контур представлен в фильме и непосредственно, будучи связан с мотивом смерти. Розенкранц делает из бумаги и запускает "самолетик", который, скрывшись из кадра и описав петлю, возвращается, причем как в момент запуска, так и в момент возвращения между Розенкранцем и Гильденстерном шел разговор о неминуемости смерти. В конце показаны кольца веревки, на которой вешают героев. Пространственная модель с движением по (квази)замкнутой линии, приводящая в результате полного цикла не к точному возвращению в исходную точку, а к "перевороту" или "сдвигу", организует и собственно временные характеристики. С одной стороны, есть текст с инвариантным сюжетом о гибели: Актер подчеркивает, что при приближении к финалу "все, кому назначено умереть, умирают" — "Это написано", а также вспоминает: "Я бывал здесь и раньше" — в данном контексте "раньше" можно понимать как относящееся к одному из предыдущих воплощений "Гамлета", включая собственно шекспировский "Гамлет". Иначе говоря, разыгрываемый перед зрителями сюжет — всего лишь один цикл нескончаемого процесса. После раскрытия театрального сундука разыгрывается вариант "Гамлета"; потом он заканчивается, актеры складывают сундук и путешествуют дальше — до новых представлений. С другой стороны, сам текст не является строго однозначным и допускает "флуктуации", свидетельством чему является хотя бы то обстоятельство, что сюжет фильма (в промежутке между тем, как актеры устанавливают сцену и убирают декорации обратно в сундук) представляет собой не в точности "Гамлет", а его вариацию. Как говорит Гильденстерн в конце, "Ладно, в следующий раз будем умнее": сюжет предстает не как окончательный и завершенный, а всего лишь как один из витков нескончаемой и повторяемой истории, в новом цикле которой героям (согласно этому замечанию Гильденстерна) возможно удастся избежать казни. Поскольку, однако, в данном контексте сама пьеса (фильм) Стоппарда оказывается как раз одним таким "следующим разом" по отношению к "Гамлету", то это свидетельствует о необоснованности упомянутой Гильденстерном альтернативы: герои не стали "умнее" и вновь гибнут, чем подрывается и надежда на "следующий раз" — на новом витке истории, но все по той же односторонней

поверхности.[5] Столь тревожившая героев проблема выпадения орла или решки при бросании монеты ("heads — tail", "голова — хвост") получает теперь неожиданное решение: накинутые на шеи героев длинные веревки представляют собой не что иное, как вариант того же сочетания "голова — хвост", причем казнь знаменует собой завершение, конец (еще одно значение слова "tail") показанного витка истории героев. При этом объединение в образе висельника "головы" и "хвоста", отвечающих двум различным, казалось бы, сторонам монеты (орлу и решке), само по себе отсылает в данном контексте к листу Мебиуса.

Циклический характер сюжета позволяет объяснить и два парадокса — почему в таверне в сцене пантомимы показаны не прошлые, а будущие события, включая казнь Розенкранца и Гильденстерна, и почему во время представления во дворце король-персонаж встает раньше, чем это делает "настоящий" король. Объяснение состоит в том, что на предыдущих витках сюжета все то, что показано на сцене во вставном представлении, "уже было" — и казнь героев, и вставание разгневанного короля во время представления, так что актеры воспроизводят не однократные события из недавнего прошлого (как это было в "Гамлете"), а инвариантный повторяющийся сюжет. Тем самым соответствующие события на сцене приобретают двойной статус — в пределах цикла, который видит зритель фильма, они изображают будущее, но с учетом предшествующих циклов пантомима (как и вставное представление в "Гамлете") раскрывает прошлое[6]. Таким образом, во вселенной произведения потерю ориентируемости в пространстве сопровождает разрушение однозначной упорядоченности во времени.

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[5]   С актуальным в контексте фильма образом витка можно сопоставить и упоминание "восьмерки" (представляющей двойной виток) как числа, связанного со смертью героев: в таверне Розенкранц и Гильденстерн насчитывают в показанной актерами бойне 6 трупов, однако Актер тут же им возражает репликой, что на самом деле трупов 8, и в этом самый момент вдергивают двойников Розенкранца и Гильденстерна.

[6]   Подробнее вставное представление обсуждается в следующем разделе.

## Композиция и топология

Нетривиальные топологические характеристики проявляют себя также в необычном соотношении между категориями внутреннего и внешнего, которые в фильме не столько противопоставляются, сколько нейтрализуются, вновь актуализуя пространственные модели, основанные на односторонней поверхности. Случаи же иного рода (с сохранением противопоставления) носят в основном пародийный и комический характер, причем оппозиция внутреннего и внешнего имеет в них аномальный характер, включая взаимную мену этих состояний ("выворачивание наизнанку").

Примером последнего может служить возникающий в начале фильма образ многослойного огромного бутерброда, который на привале в лесу (сцена незадолго до встречи с актерами) безуспешно пытается укусить Розенкранц: содержимое (еда) и содержащее (рот) оказались в соотношениях, обратных обычным. Во дворце Розенкранц и Гильденстерн, не зная где выход, пытаются идти за группой актеров, причем их бег за актерами по галереям здания показан с точки зрения извне; однако вслед за этим Розенкранц и Гильденстерн вдруг оказываются снаружи, смотря в ту же сторону, что и камера, причем их выход из здания не показан. Дело обстоит таким образом, как если бы пространство "вывернулось наизнанку".

Игра указанными пространственными категориями организует и пространство произведения в целом. В фильме Розенкранц и Гильденстерн зашли во внутреннее пространство театрика, стали на сцене снаружи от занавеса, а потом вдруг камера показала, что они выпутываются изнутри занавеса во дворце. Причем непосредственно перед таким переходом герои услышали странные слабые голоса издалека, которые и "превратились" затем в раздающиеся во дворце голоса Офелии и бегущего за ней Гамлета, а монета единственный раз выпала не орлом, а решкой — как бы "вывернулась наизнанку". Обратим внимание, что театральный занавес был в задней части сцены и отделял не пространство сцены от гипотетической публики снаружи, а внешнюю часть сцены от того невидимого, что было внутри и куда угодили Розенкранц и Гильденстерн, как бы пройдя сквозь занавес в театральное "зазеркалье" и фактически реализовав предложение Актера самим поучаствовать в действии, а также каламбур об

"исключительно актерах" и "актерах включительно". Иначе говоря, здесь Розенкранц и Гильденстерн превращаются в героев пьесы, представляющей вариацию "Гамлета" (добавим, что перед таким превращением в героев текста камера как раз показывает пачку старинной бумаги).

Однако утверждать, что они (как могло бы показаться, если ограничить анализ лишь указанным эпизодом) просто попали во внутреннее условное пространство из наружного реального, было бы неадекватным упрощением. Действительно, через некоторое время актеры прибывают во дворец, и Актер при встрече с Розенкранцем и Гильденстерном возмущенно пеняет тем, что они оставили актеров на дороге; Розенкранц в разговоре с Гамлетом также упоминает, что они с Гильденстерном обогнали актеров по пути в замок — стало быть, Розенкранц и Гильденстерн после встречи продолжили путь по дороге и попали во дворец своим ходом (причем эпизод с выпутыванием из занавеса имеет реалистическую мотивировку — занавес обрушил на героев не заметивший их Гамлет, который пробегал мимо, преследуя Офелию). Театр же, который актеры привозят некоторое время спустя в замок, остается внутри этого пространства дворца.

Таким образом, театральное пространство оказывается по отношению к пространству дворца и внутри и снаружи, т.е. фактически однозначное разделение и противопоставление этих состояний оказывается невозможным. Если представить себе художественное пространство в виде единого целого, то возникает топологически нетривиальная структура типа бутылки Клейна — односторонней замкнутой поверхности, которая вкладывается в трехмерное пространство с самопересечениями. Другой подходящий здесь вариант пространственной модели — лист Мебиуса конечной толщины: переход через этот слой напрямую соответствует переходу в пространство дворца мгновенным перескоком, а по полоске (скручиванием которой получается лист Мебиуса) — попаданию героев во дворец обычным ходом.

Следует, однако, сделать оговорку. В отличие от "научно"-фантастической литературы или кино, здесь речь не идет о необычных свойствах физического пространства как такового, поскольку переход в театральное пространство и перемещение по дороге имеют разный характер. В 1-м случае меняется статус действия и персонажей (повышается условность), во 2-м про-

исходит обычное пространственное перемещение. Таким образом, упомянутая выше топологическая структура описывает не "реальное" пространство произведения само по себе, а представляет собой абстрактную модель, интегрирующую в себе реальное и условное пространства. Например, можно сказать, что Розенкранц и Гильденстерн после встречи с актерами прибыли во дворец по дороге, но уже как персонажи пьесы.

Невозможность однозначного разделения на условное и реальное (или на заранее фиксированные степени условности) присутствует, как сейчас мы увидим, и в сцене пантомимы во дворце. В "Гамлете" разыгранная бродячими актерами "Мышеловка" противопоставлена в качестве относительно условного пространства "реальному" пространству, в котором находятся действующие лица. Будем использовать краткие обозначения; тогда в пьесе Шекспира отравленному отцу Гамлета (королю 1) и его отравителю Клавдию (королю 2) соответствуют при разыгрывании пьесы актерами король 1a и отравитель Луциан (назовем его для простоты королем 2a — хотя, строго говоря, "Мышеловка" была прервана королем 2 до того, как корона досталась Луциану). Перед этим события пьесы были кратко показаны в пантомиме, в которой указанным лицам соответствовали король 1b и отравитель (учитывая контекст пантомимы, его можно назвать королем 2b).

В фильме порядок действия иной. Уже после того, как короли 1a и 2a (которых играют живые актеры) представляют на сцене "реальные" события с отравлением, пантомиму повторяют куклы в условном представлении с кукольными королями 1b и 2b. За кукольным представлением наблюдает живой условный король 2a (чего не было в "Гамлете"), за представлением в целом наблюдает "реальный" король 2. Если в "Гамлете" пантомима была не самостоятельным целым, а всего лишь частью "Мышеловки", так что конструкция фактически была двойной (актеры — зрители, "Мышеловка" — "реальное" действие "Гамлета"), то в фильме эта конструкция оказывается тройной: куклы — актеры — зрители. Она является не механическим наращиванием условности по принципу "знак знака знака..." ("живой" король — актер — кукла), а привносит новое качество. Получается, что Актер и его труппа показывают на сцене уже не просто реальное преступление, совершенное ранее нынешним

королем (как было в "Гамлете"), а отрывок из "Гамлета", включающий в себя показ "мышеловки". Если в соответствующем фрагменте шекспировской пьесы король 2 видел перед собой только "мышеловку", то теперь он может видеть еще и собственную реакцию на нее. Это происходит из-за того, что король 2а, увидя картину своего преступления в кукольной "мышеловке", встает, прерывая представление, раньше "реального" короля 2. То есть не только король 2а следует за действиями короля 2 (тем, что представляет на сцене его преступление), но и король 2, вставая позже короля 2а, фактически следует за его действиями. В этом смысле в паре "король 2 — король 2а" резко ослаблен контраст в мере условности между "реальными" персонажами и актерами, их представляющими. Это полностью согласуется с тем обстоятельством, что общий сюжет фиксирован ("Это написано", как говорит Актер), так что ему на равных основаниях следуют и те и другие[7].

"Мышеловка" в фильме является, с одной стороны, частью представляемого в нем варианта "Гамлета", а с другой — она сама содержит в миниатюре "Гамлет", включающий, как известно, в себя эту самую "мышеловку" как вставную пьесу. Последнее обстоятельство приводит к тому, что (в отличие от, скажем, сцены в таверне, где также показываются события "Гамлета", но которая сама по себе в "Гамлете" отсутствует) не только удваивается сюжет, но и структура в целом замыкается на себя. При этом вместо последовательности вложений, каждое из которых условнее предыдущего, получается единая конструкция с самопересечением, где однозначное разделение всей структуры на разные композиционные уровни или часть и целое невозможно.[8]

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[7]  Можно было бы говорить о разной мере условности при механическом удвоении сюжета, если бы, например, король 2а и король 2 наблюдали разное число "мышеловок" со сценой убийства: первый только кукольную, а второй — и кукольную, и с живыми актерами. Однако именно этого и не происходит: король 2 входит в зал уже после того, как сцена убийства сыграна актерами. Так что и король 2а и король 2 видят перед собой только по одной "мышеловке", изображающей их преступление — это кукольный спектакль.

[8]  Напрашивается сопоставление со структурами, характерными для Борхеса (см. Левин 1981) и Набокова (см., например, Давыдов 1982). Однако такое сопоставление выходит за рамки нашей работы.

Поэтому в том, что касается "мышеловки", конструкция типа "текст в тексте" является в фильме принципиально иной, чем в "Гамлете" Шекспира, где происходило именно последовательное наращивание степени условности: "Так, например в "Гамлете" перед нами — не только "текст в тексте", но и "Гамлет" в "Гамлете": пьеса, разыгрываемая по инициативе Гамлета, повторяет в подчеркнуто условной манере [...] пьесу, сочиненную Шекспиром. Условность первой подчеркивает реальность второй" (Лотман 1981: 13–14). Здесь мы считаем необходимым внести коррективы в эти замечания Ю. М. Лотмана. Поскольку убийство Гамлета-старшего относится лишь к предыстории и в самом "Гамлете" не происходит, то его показ во вставной пьесе еще не означает композиционного удвоения той пьесы, частью которой является "мышеловка". Что же касается самой вставной пьесы, то хотя в "Гамлете" она благодаря пантомиме тоже удваивается, эта пантомима всего лишь повторяет в основных чертах действие обрамляющей ее пьесы (т.е. собственно "мышеловки"), но между "мышеловкой" и пантомимой нет прямых драматургических связей в самом действии. В противоположность этому, в фильме Стоппарда между пьесами разных уровней прямая драматургическая связь существует — реакция короля из обрамляющей пьесы включена во внутреннее представление. В результате структурное удвоение текстов разного уровня и приводит описанным выше образом к усложнению композиции в фильме по сравнению с "Гамлетом".

Сцена с повышенной степенью театральности возникает также в конце фильма. Актер устраивает представление, перевоплощаясь в английского короля, и приказывает повесить Розенкранца и Гильденстерна, дублируя уже разыгранное актерами представление в таверне, а также ту казнь, которая ждет героев в Англии. Обратим внимание, что в сцене казни за спинами героев просматривается дерево, и слышен щебет птиц — действие происходит в лесу, где Розенкранц и Гильденстерн встретили актеров. Таким образом, они гибнут втройне — как герои "Гамлета", персонажи спектакля в театральном "зазеркалье", куда попадают после встречи с актерами, и "реальные" персонажи — герои фильма. (Совмещение реального и условного в сцене казни находит структурный прототип в предшествующем рассказе Актера о том, как реальную казнь одного из своих сотрудников за

кражу овцы он совместил с его ролью в спектакле, по ходу которого персонажа вешали.) 1-я казнь происходит в Англии (о чем в фильме, в соответствии с шекспировской пьесой, есть сообщение английского посла), 2-я — на корабле, 3-я — в лесу. Насильственная смерть оказывается тем инвариантом, который объединяет разные уровни реальности (в той мере, в какой их здесь вообще можно различить) в единое целое.[9]

Доминирующая в фильме нераздельность реального и условного пародируется в эпизоде в таверне, где такое разделение происходит, но подчеркнуто комическим образом. Там актеры, изображающие Гамлета и Лаэрта, фехтуют воображаемыми рапирами, от которых, однако, слышится звук реальных ударов, причем показан видимый для зрителей в таверне помощник, который и производит этот звук, ударяя рапиры одна о другую. Этот эпизод содержит прозрачную отсылку к той же сцене в "Blow up" Антониони, о которой мы упоминали выше, — звукам ударов о воображаемый мяч при игре в теннис. Но если у Антониони воображаемое стремилось подменить собой реальность, то здесь реальное и условное демонстративно разделены — как если бы ударяющиеся рапиры были просто изъяты из рук соперников на сцене и перенесены в угол помощнику.

Если говорить о пространственной структуре в целом, то дело обстоит таким образом, что внутри театрального сундука находится мир "Гамлета"; заканчивается же фильм тем, что актеры собирают сундук (вместе с находившимся там ранее пространством "Гамлета") и отправляются дальше в странствие по дороге. Казалось бы, "мир" таким образом целиком находится внутри театра. Однако то обстоятельство, что актеры сами перед этим приняли активное участие в действии (вплоть до казни Розенкранца и Гильденстерна), находясь внутри театрика, который они же затем захлопнули, препятствует такому однозначному разделению на внутреннее и внешнее. (Об этом же говорят и другие описанные нами выше явления.) Произошло как бы выворачивание наизнанку в соответствии с высказыванием Актера "мы нечто обратное людям" и его ответом на вопрос, что же

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[9]   Характерно, что в фильме в речи Актера опущена детализация разных видов смерти, присутствующая в пьесе (т.е. различия), и оставлены лишь его слова, подчеркивающие ее универсальность — "Deaths for all ages and occasions".

они делают — "Обычные вещи, сэр, только наизнанку. Представляем на сцене то, что происходит вне ее. В чем есть некий род единства — если смотреть на всякий выход как на вход куда-то". Однако эти высказывания оказались существенно неполными, поскольку актеры в данном фильме не только представляют на сцене то, что происходит "в жизни", но и наоборот ("наизнанку"), "в жизни" делают то, что представляют на сцене (о чем лукаво умолчал Актер) — например, вешают Розенкранца и Гильденстерна после того, как повесили их театральных двойников в пантомиме, разыгранной в таверне. Если актеры приобретают свойства "реальных" персонажей, то "реальные персонажи", попав в находящееся внутри театрального сундука пространство, играют предназначенную им роль. Заметим, что в соответствующем высказывании Актера "Ну, одни считают, что мы для вас, другие, что вы для нас. Это две стороны одной монеты. Или одна сторона — двух, поскольку нас тут так много" фактически содержится намек на одностороннюю поверхность. Что же касается "выхода и входа", о которых говорил Актер, то из-за нетривиальной топологии "выход" оказывается иллюзорным и не отличимым от входа. В таком контексте знаменитое выражение "весь мир — театр" меняет свой статус и перестает быть метафорой, поскольку вместо двух разных объектов сравнения в фильме присутствует один единый, а "мир" и "театр" переходят друг в друга подобно тому, как вектор нормали меняет свою ориентацию при обходе по листу Мебиуса. Однако динамика переходов между условным и реальным оставляет неизменным инвариант — гибель героев, которой на односторонней поверхности не находится альтернативы.

## Статус героев и тип текста

Как уже отмечалось нами выше, художественный мир произведения подразумевает цикличность, так что предстающее перед глазами зрителя или читателя следует понимать лишь как виток сюжета. Таким образом, имеет место превращение первоначально линейного исходного текста ("Гамлета") в цикл. Такая трансформация является типологически обратной по отношению к исторически известному превращению циклических текстов в

линейные. Но если "очевидным результатом линейного развертывания текстов является появление персонажей — двойников" (Лотман 1973: 14), на которые распадается единый прежде образ, то в данном случае двойники возникают иначе. Персонажи, выступающие в "Гамлете" как независимые, сворачиваются (как мы старались показать это выше) у Стоппарда в единый объект, по отношению к которому они и оказываются двумя разными (причем не фиксированными — вспомним взаимные "превращения" между Розенкранцем и Гильденстерном) ипостасями — двойниками.

Особенностью циклических текстов является отсутствие категорий начала и конца. "Человеческая жизнь рассматривалась не как линейный отрезок, заключенный между рождением и смертью, а как непрестанно повторяющийся цикл" (Лотман 1973: 10). Однако эта особенность у Стоппарда усложнена и переосмыслена, а начало и конец выделены. Можно заметить, что содержанием цикла оказывается история героев от "рождения" до смерти. Герои, несмотря на все свои усилия, вспоминают в качестве первого события, оставшегося в памяти, отправку их посланником на выполнение неясной миссии. В таком контексте выкрикивание имен невидимым посланником может быть понято как "рождение" Розенкранца и Гильденстерна посредством наделения их именами и миссией. Это "рождение" является чисто функциональным — пока за ними не "послали", у них не было никакой предыстории, они просто не существовали. И только став позднее персонажами не только фильма в целом, но и заключенной в нем пьесы на сюжет "Гамлета", они приобретают такую предысторию, оказываясь старыми друзьями принца.[10] Что же касается содержания вышеупомянутой миссии Розенкранца и Гильденстерна, то она, как становится ясно из фильма (пьесы), заключается не в том, чтобы нечто выведать у Гамлета и помочь королю (как это было у Шекспира), а в том, чтобы оказаться в конце мертвыми. (Ср.: "Розенкранц. Они охотились за нами, а? С самого начала. Кто бы мог подумать, что мы такие важные

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[10] Так, во дворце Розенкранц восклицает: "Ничего не забыл — я всегда прекрасно помнил свое имя и твое тоже. О чем бы ни спрашивали — ответы были. Проблем не было — каждый знал, кто я такой". К сожалению, эта определенность относится лишь ко времени, когда герои, как это аргументировано нами выше, не существовали.

птицы? Гильденстерн. Но почему? Неужто все только ради этого? Неужто весь этот балаган сводится только к двум нашим маленьким смертям? (С тоской.) Кто мы такие? Актер. Вы Розенкранц и Гильденстерн. Этого достаточно".) Иначе говоря, мир произведения порождает героев только для того, чтобы их убить.

Присущее мифологическому сознанию отождествление рождения и смерти здесь деавтоматизуется. Непреложность развития событий, ведущих к смерти героев (а циклические тексты рассказывают именно о правилах, а не эксцессах[11]) непрерывно сталкивается с мучительными, но безуспешными попытками героев избежать угрожающей им неясной опасности, а характерная для мифологических текстов цикличность — с упорным нежеланием индивидуума терять свою единственную жизнь. Вместо обычного циклического сюжета об умирании — возрождении получается циклический сюжет о невозможности избежать насильственной смерти.

## Локальная физика и геометрия в целом

Топология листа Мебиуса (как и топологические свойства вообще) является нелокальной характеристикой, относящейся к миру в целом. Субъективно же герои пытаются передать этот глобальный аспект в терминах динамики: они ощущают, что попали в поле таинственных деперсонифицированных сил — универсальных и дальнодействующих, и пытаются разобраться в их природе, определить, откуда же "дует ветер", который может повлиять на их судьбу. При этом Гильденстерн предпочитает отвлеченные логико-философские рассуждения, а Розенкранц ставит физические опыты. Однако можно заметить, что в этих опытах каждый раз что-то не так оказывается как раз с соотношением глобального и локального — т.е. с наиболее значимым в данном контексте фактором.

Например, Розенкранц оказался близок к догадке, что при свободном падении (т.е. под действием тяготения — дальнодействующей и универсальной силы) тяжелые и легкие тела падают одинаково. Однако его опыт с бросанием деревянного

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[11] См. Лотман 1973: 11.

шара и пера явно этому противоречит. Дело здесь в наличии воздуха (из-за чего падение нельзя считать свободным), т.е. локальной среды. В разговоре с Гильденстерном Розенкранц, заметивший, что его конструкция из бумаги вращается, если подуть на нее или пустить струю пара (непосредственное, локальное воздействие), заявляет, что никакого ветра нет, и тут же эта вертушка начинает вращаться. Розенкранц это объясняет сквозняком, т.е. внешней непосредственно действующей силой, но за этим объяснением следует визуальный намек на роль деперсонифицированной и "дальнодействующей" по отношению к судьбе героев силы, отправившей их в дорогу — показаны ставни, хлопающие подобно тому, как было в кадре с невидимым посланцем. Розенкранц также устраивает опыт с цепочкой бьющихся друг о друга подвешенных горшков с землей — здесь движение передается от одного края к другому на конечное расстояние. Однако такое "дальнодействие" в действительности получено в результате передачи импульса при непосредственном контакте горшков в моменты ударов, что является типично локальным эффектом. При увеличении же амплитуды размаха крайний горшок при соударении разбивается — соотношение между локальным (поведение отдельных предметов) и глобальным (движение цепочки в целом) остается для озадаченного героя в этом опыте столь же не проясненным, как и природа глобальных сил в его собственной судьбе. Что касается последнего обстоятельства, то локальные опыты являются здесь вообще бесполезными, поскольку не могут прояснить суть дела, которая связана со структурой мира как целого, включая его топологические свойства, и относится к совсем другому уровню абстракции.

## Заключение

Таким образом, на основе односторонней поверхности как актуальной для произведения пространственной модели получили единое объяснение самые разные его особенности, в том числе и парадоксальные — то, что монета выпадает все время одной стороной, между Розенкранцем и Гильденстерном происходит путаница, между показанным и рассказанным есть видимое несо-

ответствие (попадание во дворец, казнь в Англии и на корабле), физические опыты могут иметь отношение к надвигающейся на героев угрозе и т.д. При этом на более общем уровне при помощи указанной модели увязываются в единое целое структурные и тематические аспекты произведения — пространственная организация, соотношение реальности и условности, причинно-следственные и сюжетные связи, проблема индивидуальности.

Художественное пространство — одна из важнейших категорий художественного текста, дающая "возможность пространственного моделирования понятий, которые сами по себе не имеют пространственной природы" (Лотман 1970: 266). В данном произведении мы, однако, сталкиваемся с более сложной и своеобразной ситуацией. Если, скажем, в случае с двойным попаданием героев во дворец категория пространства проявляет себя напрямую, то в таких эффектах как повторяющееся выпадение монеты одной стороной или путаница имен столь непосредственная связь отсутствует — актуальная для произведения пространственная структура типа односторонней поверхности проявляет себя в данном случае лишь как модель более высокого уровня абстракции. Вместо типичной для художественного текста ситуации "свойства пространства → моделируемые непространственные свойства" мы имеем в данном случае трехзвенную цепочку "непространственные свойства → свойства пространства → моделируемые непространственные свойства". Соответствующее пространство выступает при этом не как обычное физическое, а абстрактное (пространство альтернатив); отвечающая ему модель также отличается повышенной степенью абстрактности и, в отличие от реального "бытового" пространства, является неевклидовой. Тем самым область приложения понятий неевклидовой топологии в произведении оказывается шире, чем собственно хронотоп. Тот же факт, что неевклидова топология в произведении не ограничена какими-то частными проявлениями, а относится к основным свойствам мира как целого, придает ей "космологический" характер, заставляющий видеть здесь художественную аналогию концепциям теоретической физики 20-го и 21-го века. Речь идет не конкретно о листе Мебиуса (который в качестве гипотетической космологической модели вряд ли имеет какое-то отношение к реальной Вселенной), а о том общем обстоятельстве, что топология Все-

ленной является значимой самостоятельной характеристикой и может существенно отличаться от евклидовой.

Почему же для воплощения нового варианта "Гамлета" потребовался концептуальный аппарат, оперирующий с понятиями, которые лежат за пределами круга бытовой реальности и связаны с таким уровнем абстракции, который стал актуальным только в науке 20-го века? Можно думать, что это связано с двумя основными причинами. В 20-м веке маленький человек претерпел (но и совершил) *такое*,[12] что для описания соответствующего мира обычные наглядные "классические" средства оказались непригодны — так непригодными оказались локальные, мелкомасштабные способы познания действительности самими героями. Кроме того, актуальность именно топологических (т. е. глобальных) характеристик (причем ощутимых как раз благодаря их неевклидовости) связана с противопоставлением маленького человека и тотально контролирующей его глобальной системы — у Стоппарда не социальной, а более глубинной экзистенциальной. Ее свойства предстают пугающе иррациональными, однако в действительности имеют собственные законы, определяющие ее "неевклидову" природу, по которым дело должно быть доведено до гибели героев. Для описания такой системы, которая не допускает альтернатив и неизменно приводит к гибели человека, односторонняя поверхность как раз и оказалась адекватным средством.

Проявление надличной и невидимой силы, объективный конечный смысл которой состоит в смерти "маленького человека", получает выражение и на интертекстуальном языке, которое также укладывается в рамки обсуждавшейся выше пространственной модели. Необычный пейзаж в начале фильма Стоппарда явственно напоминает аналогичный пейзаж в начале фильма Карне "Вечерние посетители". Текст, который сопровождает соответствующий видеоряд в фильме Карне, недвусмысленно сообщает о "посланцах дьявола" (у Стоппарда же герои мучительно вспоминают, что за ними "послали"). Как хорошо известно (и

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[12] Обратим внимание, что в отличие от шекспировского "Гамлета" Розенкранц и Гильденстерн узнают на корабле о содержании письма, но намереваются и дальше везти Гамлета на гибель. Однако расплачиваются они вовсе не за индивидуальный выбор — как говорит Актер, "Вы Розенкранц и Гильденстерн. Этого достаточно".

уже стало общим местом), произведение Стоппарда во многом
отталкивается от пьесы "В ожидании Годо" Беккета, в названии
которой просматривается наименование Бога. С учетом того, что
какое-либо спасительное божественное вмешательство в судьбу
героев Стоппарда отсутствует, бог и дьявол в таком контексте
оказываются не противоположными сторонами одной медали, а
разными ликами одной и той же надличной сущности на одно-
сторонней безальтернативно-гибельной для "маленького чело-
века" поверхности.

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### Väike inimene mitte-eukleidilises maailmas: kunstilisest ruumist Tom Stoppard'i filmis ja näidendis "Rosencrantz ja Guildenstern on surnud"

Artiklis näidatakse, kuidas Tom Stoppardi teose erinevad aspektid — ruumiline korrastatus, suhe reaalsuse ja sündmuste tingliku iseloomu vahel, põhjuslikud ja narratiivsed seosed, valiku ja isiksuse probleemid — suhestuvad sellise ainukülgse ruumimudeliga nagu Möbiuse leht või Kleini pudel. Kunstiline ruum osutub mitte-orienteerituks, aeg selles voolab tsükliliselt. See võimaldab seletada Rosencrantzi ja Guildensterni nimede pidevat vahetusseminekut ja ka teisi paradoksaalseid käike süžees ja kompositsioonis. Möbiuse lehe mudel kehastab vaba valiku puudumist: maailmal ei ole teist palet ja ei ole võimalust pageda saatuse eest, mis on märgitud Stoppardi teose pealkirjas. Topoloogia olulisus seostub faktiga, et ohu kandjaks on maailm tervikuna. Lisaks viitab see ka tõsiasjale, et maailma struktuur on oma olemuselt mitte-eukleidiline ja seda ei ole võimalik mõista tavaelu vaatluste alusel või siis lähtuvalt Rosencrantzi poolt läbi viidud "ilmsetest" eksperimentidest.

# National signs:
# Estonian identity in performance

### *Janelle Reinelt*

Department of Drama, University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-2775, USA
e-mail: jreinelt@rgs.uci.edu

**Abstract**. Since Estonia is in the midst of a national redefinition and exami-
nation of past traditions and future aspirations, it makes an excellent case stu-
dy for the potentiality of theatre as an arbiter of national identity. The
changing value of the institution itself is part of the equation (will Estonians
continue to appreciate and attend the theatre in coming years?). In addition,
the historical role of Estonian theatre as a repository for national narratives,
especially literary ones, makes it a significant site for struggles around print
and technology, and between embodied performances and archival perfor-
matives.

This essay introduces a series of articles that address how Estonia and its
theatre might be regarded and understood in light of its history, memories,
present experiences, and future possibilities. The idea of pretence that lies at
the heart of theatricality itself provides an ideal means for interrogating
national identity in a time of great instability and flux. The examples of
productions discussed in these three essays share more than a deliberate
utilization of the rubrics of theatricality. It seems no coincidence that the
reworking of national classics, Estonian national myths, and ethnic folk songs
and ceremonies takes place concurrently with the representation of new
technologies, commodity capitalism, and diasporic collisions. Embodying
precisely the predicament of culture in a country reassessing its past and
confronting its future, the theatre is an important institution for national
resignification.

For several decades now, scholars in many fields have examined and
theorized national identities and the relationship between their
formations and modifications. Joining social scientists and humanists,
theatre and performance scholars have also participated in this project,
dating most clearly from Loren Kruger's *The National Stage: Theatre*

*and Cultural Legitimation in England, France, and America* (1992).[1] As the century turned, questions concerning the limitation of the very concept of "nation states" in light of the rapidly changing global world became more frequent and insistent, and a need to reassess the role of national identity in contemporary culture began to assert itself. From one perspective, the creeping globalization of media and technology seems to have saturated the national imaginations of many countries, where children may be more familiar with Disney characters than their own nation's folklore or children's literature. On the other hand, local traditions, practices, and cultures continue to persist and provide deep structures of meaning and identification for many. No where is this problematic dualism more apparent than in the former Soviet-bloc countries, the Eastern European nations, that since 1989 have been redefining their self-understandings.

Precisely because Estonia is in the midst of such a redefinition and examination of past traditions and future aspirations, it makes an excellent case study of the efficacy of theatre as an arbiter of national identity. The changing value of the institution itself is part of the equation (will Estonians continue to appreciate and attend the theatre in coming years?). In addition, the historical role of Estonian theatre as a repository for national narratives, especially literary ones, makes it a significant site for struggles around print and technology, and between embodied performances and archival performatives.[2]

At a recent conference, "National Theatres of Europe: Constructing National Identities", the Irish journalist Fintan O'Toole remarked, "National theatres pretend that a nation exists, at least for the duration of the theatre piece".[3] Whether the theatre in question is a monumental building carrying official status as National and supported by state subsidy, or whether it is a small, independent company performing in a warehouse, both theatres can pretend that a nation exists — this pretense consists of the address to the audiences assembled and its absent but imagined compatriots, and it can take the form of any subjunctive stage reality. The assembly of actual material

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[1]  For other recent scholarship on this topic, see for example Kobialka (1999), and Mäkinen *et al.* (2001); my own related work can be found in these volumes and in Colleran, Spencer (1998).

[2]  See Diana Taylor's discussion in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003).

[3]  Organized by Stephen Wilmer at Trinity College Dublin, March 11–13, 2005.

bodies in the theatre may itself invoke a nation more strongly than either print or media cultures.

In the case of Estonia, the question is, of course, not whether a nation now exists, but how it is to be regarded and understood in light of its history, memories, present experiences, and future possibilities. Nevertheless, this idea of pretence is at the heart of theatricality itself, and provides an ideal means for interrogating national identity in a time of great instability and flux. As Luule Epner writes in her contribution, "The action defined as play in a ludic space of theatre makes it possible to easily deconstruct and reconstruct fictional worlds." All the essays collected here mention the high levels of reflexivity and meta-theatrical strategies present in the recent Estonian theatre performances these scholars discuss. The theatrical apparatus itself at once puts in play a kind of promiscuous and variable set of diverse signifiers, and offers the stage as a contrastingly material and even stable space for public experience and consideration of shared identities.

This reaffirmation of a public sphere is perhaps more potent in small countries where gathering together groups of citizens to consider their own shared polity may still, because of matters of scale, stimulate and symbolize democratic participation within a nation. (This achievement seems much more difficult in a large country like mine where the actual geographical distances separating people combine with an experience of postmodern fragmentation and disaffiliation to dissipate the gesture to a national fabric symbolized by an isolated audience in a theatre that always appears from some vantage point to be situated at the periphery of the nation.) Although many of the Estonian productions described here had comparatively small audiences, 53% of its citizens attended the theatre during 2003, which means that the theatre as a cultural institution is still viable as a potential site for a meaningful rethinking of national identity. Epner reports that 12,000 Estonians saw *Kalevipoeg* in the summer of 2003, not a negligible number for only fifteen performances. The smaller audiences that attended the other performances discussed in these essays may still constitute an important intellectual and artistic group, and probably comprise a significant representation of Estonians positioned in the civil service or governmental sectors. In other words, the theatre tends to address audiences who hold or aspire to leadership roles in the making of a futural national identity.

The examples of productions discussed in these three essays share more than a deliberate utilization of the rubrics of theatricality. It seems no coincidence that the reworking of national classics, Estonian national myths, and ethnic folk songs and ceremonies takes place concurrently with the representation of new technologies, commodity capitalism, and diasporic collisions. Embodying precisely the predicament of culture in a country reassessing its past and confronting its future, the inability of the binary "global/local" to adequately account for present experience is undeniable. Anneli Saro points to the power of performativity to both confirm and repeat but also to unsettle preceding norms and traditions. In fact, sometimes the same series of signifiers can paradoxically affirm and oppose at the same time, as for example in the Midsummer Night scene in Jalakas's second *Werewolf*. The contribution of these productions to the process of national identity construction is perhaps contained in their ability to use the ludic processes of the theatrical to interrogate the multiple possibilities and constraints facing the national project of re-imagining Estonian identity.

Raymond Williams provides one fruitful intellectual avenue for understanding what is at stake in these theatrical productions. Convinced of the powerful role of culture in shaping the dominant mode of production in any given society, Williams theorized the categories of residual and emergent cultural practices as a way of accounting for the dynamism of social change. Not merely left-over from the past, residual practices linger because they are necessary to make sense of the present, and "will in many cases have had to be incorporated if the effective dominant culture is to make sense of those areas" (Williams 1980: 41). Emergent features are likewise not only the novel expressions of totally new impulses; they are also always already partially incorporated into the dominant sociality. This model explains how the past and the glimmers of the future can be reworked productively in the present without merely serving as markers of pastness or of futurity. Williams claims that both residual and emergent practices may be either oppositional or merely alternative, may exist alongside each other or challenge each other. Whatever will contribute, over time, to a new social formation will inevitably be made up of just such interpenetrations of past and future. Looking at the Estonian theatre productions described in these essays with Williams' theories in mind, the deconstruction of classical texts,

myths, and folkloric practices and artifacts can be seen as operations on materials that need to be reworked and partially incorporated into an evolving notion of national identity instead of merely being rejected or destroyed. Indeed, Estonians may need to recall and look again at earlier versions of themselves (as Werewolf, as Setu peasant, as "ironic Estonian") to recognize how far from earlier meanings and values they have moved, but also to interrogate what is worth keeping or refashioning in order to remember the past and create a viable future. Both Epner and Saro point out the way these performances split or displace the traditional narratives and typical national characteristics familiar from the Ur-texts. The character of Tiina in the 1998 version of *The Werewolf* unravels both earlier interpretations of her figure as either fearful Other to the "blond hair, blue eyes, modesty and slowness of the [...] typical representatives of the Estonian nation" (Saro), or as heroic Dionysian individual who suffers to be free; however it also creates a sense of an alternative, "new, un-familiar, and cosmopolitan identity of a contemporary Estonian" (Epner). The narrative of Oskar Luts's *Springtime* may have proved useful to directors Kõiv and Unt because they were able to stimulate the audience's desire for "good old friends" while simultaneously criticizing the basis for these feelings of intimacy. In this case, it is not only the criticism that is important; it is also important to acknow-ledge the intimate connection with and comfort of the mythical romance of the nation's childhood. A similar complexity of feeling and apprehension is stimulated in *Estonian Games. Wedding.* First, the Setu ethnic group appears to symbolize both self and other — that is, while in the past Setus have been discriminated against and viewed as outsiders to the Estonian national body, their folk songs turn out to be highly valued for being old and original — and representative of Estonia! Second, the bride was portrayed as a stereotypic Estonian doll-like figure, blond and charming (Saro). This casting ironizes both the stereotype itself (and its gender construct) as well as any possible identification between this figure and the "natural" or "original" Setu people. Thus in the present time of the performance, spectators were looking at the embodied contradictory role of the Setus as abject and prized examples of Estonian identity.

Deconstruction and other poststructuralist methodologies have often been criticized because they depend on a binary structure which reinscribes the original term while purporting to demolish it. At first

glance, these Estonian examples seem to exhibit this problem. Philip Auslander, paraphrasing Jacques Derrida, describes this deconstructive procedure:

> To attempt an exit and a deconstruction without changing terrain, by repeating what is implicit in the founding concepts and the original problematic, by using against the edifice the instruments or stones available in the house […]. Here one risks ceaselessly confirming, consolidating […] at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs. (Auslander 1992: 25)

However, I want to argue a different, almost opposite interpretation of this procedure, more in keeping with Raymond Williams than with Derrida. Because the attack on Estonian cultural myths, classical texts, and folkloric practices is built on the assumption of intimate knowledge of them, and personal as well as collective itineraries of memory, experience, and desire, the insights of these performances are predicated on an ongoing utilization of these cultural materials. The inadequacy of the old nevertheless becomes the ground of the insight into something else, something new or different. The ability to analyze, for example, the condition of internal differences within Estonia, whether in terms of Russians or Setus, is partially built on the history of past relationships with both groups and the material changes that have transformed the self/other perceptions of national consciousness. Similarly, the insights into the nature of the theatre apparatus as a memory machine and an organ of re-imagining emerge because a previous knowledge of theatre as a cultural institution is taken for granted and invoked in order to represent the tremors and fault-lines in its current socio-cultural operations.

Furthermore, most of the performances stage an encounter with technology as part of the representation of the new operations of globalization and postmodern living practices. Yet these do not function either as a vision of a preferable cultural paradigm or as an evil threat to indigenous culture. Instead, a complicated interrelationship is figured on the stage. In *Estonian Games. Wedding,* a series of tensions between the technology of the screen, the theatre, the singers, and the wedding ritual on the one hand, and the naturalness or perhaps better — humanity — of the songs, the actors, the dances, the stage, on the other hand, make for a dis-ease of knowing where to look, what to privilege, what to value. This dilemma actually constitutes the productive "work" of the performance for its viewers and artists.

Even in an intracultural project such as *Estonian Ballads*, the clash of Estonian folkloric ballads and Butoh bodily techniques seems to be posited not to maintain the mutual estrangement, but to complicate it by showing traces of each in the other, and furthermore showing bodies trained in one art form but taking on and expressing another in such a way that the traditions seemed compatible and productive. Here the goal seems to be to incorporate something emergent without completely losing its oppositional possibilities and maintaining something residual without the result of validating an unreconstructed return to the past folkloric traditions. The body as a site of competing and simultaneous signifying practices gives this dance theatre its power. Indeed, as Stan Garner has pointed out concerning this phenomena,

> embodiedness is subject to modification and transformation, multiple and varying modes of disclosure, and [...] the forms of ambiguity that characterize the phenomenal realm represent experience in flux, oscillating within and between modes of perceptual orientation. (Garner 1994: 51)[4]

Once again we find performance a highly suitable medium for capturing and rendering the ambiguities of experience together with the transformational possibilities of artistic creation. Ester Võsu and Alo Joosepson point out in their essay that "staging" functions analogically as well as theatrically. I would argue the properties of staging contribute to making theatre an ideal form for generating the necessarily dense and fluctuating images of national identity appropriate to Estonia in the present time.

These essays chart a history of theatrical representation in which we can see great change in the portrayal of national identities. If the practice during the Soviet years was to consolidate national opposition through the "manifestation of repressed national feelings" (Epner), the period immediately following independence celebrated the new freedoms by embracing the market economy and dispersing cultural cohesion. However, by the late 1990s and the early years of the new century, something else is clearly evolving — characterized by an inward turning in a global context. In other words, the internal complexity of Estonian identity as indicated from the examples above becomes a preoccupation not unlike the focus on preserving national

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[4] A further important discussion of a phenomenological model of actors' modes of experience can be found in Zarrilli 2004: 353–666.

identity during the Soviet period — it seems critical that an examination and reformulation of Estonian identity be pursued. On the other hand, this inward examination must grapple also with the relationship between Estonia and the "New Europe", and between Estonia and a global cultural matrix in which it is clearly embedded. So any inward turning must at the same time be coupled with an outward turn as well — there is a dancing figure here — reaching to comprehend and represent a world of commodified capitalism and homogenized culture in relationship to life on the ground, "at home". Amidst the deconstructive and ironic representations created through the performances described in these essays, one non-ironic figure seems to stand out: in Ain Prosa's parodic production of *Kalevipoeg*, the character of Kalevipoeg himself seems to have been played without irony, "in a humane manner, freed from both the heroic aura as well as the belittling reputation of a dim-witted barbarian. Kivirähk's Kalevipoeg was a solemn peasant who experienced the tragic loneliness of a leader" (Epner).

In the discussions of reception of the various productions, I can feel my Estonian colleagues' disappointment that some of the audiences were small and that discussion and debate about these richly devised and executed performances did not pursue in depth the socio-cultural implications of these productions. However, perhaps like Kalevipoeg, theatre scholars, artists, and other intellectuals have to face the somewhat lonely task of leading others to explore the issues and experiences raised in these performances. If we cannot overcome commercialism and the more shallow claims of global culture, we can engage in certain residual practices of appreciation and scholarship that may become intertwined with the newly emergent discourses that will mark the future. I am delighted and honored to join them in this project.

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## Национальные знаки: эстонский идентитет и театр

Тот факт, что Эстония занята переосмыслением своего национального идентитета, изучением традиций прошлого и поиском путей в будущее, делает ее замечательным объектом для исследования возможностей театрального искусства в решении вопросов, связанных с национальным идентитетом. Ценность самого театра как институции — категория изменчивая и зависит от разных культурных процессов. Историческая роль эстонского театра в качестве сокровищницы национальных нарративов (особенно литературных) превращает театр в значимое место, где сталкиваются печатное слово и технология, представления "вживую" и архивные записи.

Настоящее эссе является введением к последующим статьям, в которых исследуется то, как Эстонию и ее театральную культуру можно понимать в свете их истории, воспоминаний, современного опыта и будущих возможностей. Идея о том, что "театральное" изначально связано с притворством, уже сама по себе дает прекрасный материал для пересмотра национального идентитета в периоды

нестабильности и крупных изменений. У постановок, о которых пойдет речь в дальнейшем, точек соприкосновения разумеется больше, чем только сознательное использование театральности. Представляется неслучайным, что переработка классиков национальной литературы, мифов эстонской национальной культуры, народных песен и церемоний происходит одновременно с представлением новых технологий, коллизий потребительского капитализма и диаспорических конфликтов. Театр является важной институцией при переоценке национального, он отражает культурные проблемы в стране, которая переосмысливает свое прошлое и встречается со своим будущим.

## Rahvuslikud märgid: eesti identiteet etenduses

See, et Eesti on hõivatud oma rahvusliku identiteedi ümberdefineerimise ja minevikutraditsioonide ning tulevikupürgimuste uurimisega, teeb temast suurepärase uurimisobjekti, mille näitel vaadelda teatri võimalusi rahvusliku identiteedi üle otsustajana. Teatriinstitutsiooni enda väärtustamise muutumine on osa kultuurilistest tasandumisprotsessidest (kas eestlased hindavad teatrit ja teatris käimist ka tulevikus?). Ka eesti teatri ajalooline roll rahvuslike narratiivide, eriti kirjanduslike, varamuna muudab teatri siinmail tähenduslikuks kohaks kus põrkuvad trükisõna ja tehnoloogia, kehastatud etendused ja arhiivi-esitused.

Käesolev essee on sissejuhatuseks järgnevatele artiklitele, kus uuritakse, kuidas Eestit ja selle teatrikultuuri on võimalik mõista nende kahe ajaloo, mälestuste, tänapäevaste kogemuste ning tulevikuvõimaluste valguses. Idee sellest, et teaterlik/teatripärane on olemuslikult seotud teesklusega, pakub juba iseenesest suurepäraseid võimalusi rahvusliku identiteedi ülevaatamiseks ebastabiilsuse ja suurte muutuste perioodil. Lavastustel, millest järgnevas kolmes artiklis räägitakse, on muidugi suurem ühisosa kui teaterliku/teatripärase teadlik rakendamine. Näib, et see pole juhus, et rahvuslike kirjandusklassikute, eesti rahvuskultuuri müütide ja etniliste rahvalaulude ning tseremooniate ümbertöötamine leiab siin aset samaaegselt uute tehnoloogiate, tarbimiskapitalismi pingete ja diasporaaliste kollisoonide esitamisega. Teater on oluline institutsioon rahvusliku uuesti-tähistamisel, ta kehastab kõige otsesemas mõttes kultuurilist kimbatust maal, mis hindab ümber oma minevikku ja seisab vastamisi oma tulevikuga.

# Redefining national identity by playing with classics

*Luule Epner*

Department of Literature and Folklore, University of Tartu
Ülikooli 18, 50090 Tartu, Estonia
e-mail: luule.epner@ut.ee

**Abstract.** National identities are to a great extent based on common mythical stories (re)produced by literature and arts; in the long run, the core texts of literature themselves start to function as cultural myths. Performing classical works theatre relates them to the changing social context and thus actualises their meaning. Theatrical representations of national characters and mythical stories participate in reinforcing or redefining national identity. In independent Estonia of the 1990s–2000s the need for reconsidering national values and myths that served to consolidate society in the Soviet period, has become evident. The article focuses on theatrical productions in the turn of the century, which are based on active rewriting of well-known Estonian classics (August Kitzberg, Oskar Luts, and the national epic *Kalevipoeg*). The article tries to answer two questions: how ingredients of national identity (for instance, the relation to the Other) are displayed and (de)constructed by adapting or rewriting of above-mentioned classics; how textual strategies aimed at semantic transformations are motivated and shaped by the principle of self-reflexive theatrical play.

## Introductory remarks

This article deals with the study of interrelations of national identity, literary classics, and theatre, as exemplified by some Estonian stage productions of the 1990s–2000s. Although the building of a national identity with the help of the arts (including theatre) is a much-exploited research topic, it has not lost its importance at the beginning of the 21st century, but, quite the contrary, has gained new actuality because of social and cultural processes that are shaping contemporary world.

People, states and nations are nowadays affected by two strong yet contrasting tendencies: globalization, expressed through economic and cultural standardization, similarities in lifestyles and more intense communications, and localization, which conversely stresses local uniqueness and strives to preserve or reproduce indigenous forms of culture and living. Their complex, partially paradoxical intertwinings are deeply influenced by cultural identity (including national identity as one of its dimensions), and on the other hand these processes place a great strain on the cultural identity. According to Rien T. Segers, the localization tendency is based on cultural identity, whereas the globalization tendency is driven mainly by technological and economic flows; he even speaks about a "cultural turn", meaning that contemporary developments, whether they have a global or a local nature, can not be understood without taking into account the concept of cultural identity (Segers 2004: 87).

Discussion about the impact of the current wave of globalization (which started in the late 1980s (Therborn 2000, as referred in Sevänen 2004a: 17)) is in fact closely linked to the discussion about postmodernity in the same period. Robert G. Dunn argues that the fragmentation of symbolic experience in postmodernity, together with cultural pluralization, lead to the destabilization of identities (Dunn 1998: 222–223). Speaking about the political changes that have taken place in the late 20th century, the sociologists have, in their turn, suggested that national identity is the most principal problem of the newly established post-communist countries (like Estonia): "[...] *a fundamental question of transition for all East Europeans is 'who are we?'*" (Lauristin 1997: 28). Whether we look at the past decades from the perspective of developments in globalization, postmodernity or postcommunism, the question of identity becomes the focal point. There is reason to discuss the problematization or crisis of traditional identities, accompanied by a need to reconstruct or readjust them. One way or the other, it is too early to cast the concept of national identity into the garbage heap of history as something old-fashioned and superseded in our "global village".

National identity, one of the most salient layers of the broader concept of cultural identity, is itself multi-dimensional. It is generally based on ethnic bonds, articulated in the people's belief in their common origin, but can not be reduced to them. According to Anthony D. Smith, the national identity is composed of a number of

components: a historic territory (homeland); common myths and historical memories; a common, mass public culture; common legal rights and duties for all members; a common economy (Smith 1991: 14). It is evident that the relative importance of those components may vary across periods and/or nations. Common myths, historical narratives, traditions, values, beliefs etc. form the symbolic aspect of the national identity, which has been regarded as the most decisive for its durability, since it serves as a basis for the individual's emotional connection with the nation as a super-individual unity (Smith 1993: 162). Construction of the symbolic aspect of identity occurs to a great extent via representations produced by the arts. It has been noted that the creation of national myths by the arts has been exceptionally important in case of nations lacking political independence (Sevänen 2004b: 38); meaning that the relative weakness of one component is compensated with the (over)production of a cultural (symbolic) "generator". Estonia belongs amongst such nations; its national awakening took place in the second half of the 19th century, an independent nation was declared in 1918, only to be abolished again in 1940 by the Soviet occupation. The cornerstone of the Estonian national identity has generally been considered the Estonian culture, especially literature (see Veidemann 2004: 110). The less politic and economic freedom, the greater the need for unifying cultural events — a claim supported by an unusually high prestige of the arts in the Estonian society, as well as the high nationalistic coding of theatre productions during the 19th century, during the dominion of German landlords as well as during the Soviet regime.

Let us resume: national identity as a part of cultural identity is not something primordial and inherent in the human nature, but is constructed during a process of socialization; representations of (idealized) national narratives and myths by the arts are of vital importance for producing and maintaining it. The means, options and the ways of operating vary to a great extent both on a historical as well as (artistic) morphological scale.

## Literature and theatre

As was pointed out, literature has been considered the central factor in building up the Estonian identity, and it has been noted that the

foremost goal of Estonian literature has been *the production and reproduction of national and cultural identity*, which in the 20th century is supplemented with attempts at creating the Estonian world literature (Undusk 1999: 249). One of the reasons is that literature is a language-based art — the Estonian language, not the geographical Estonia is regarded as the space of Estonian literature (Undusk 1999: 250) —, and the national language is the most important and sensitive component of the identity of a small nation. Secondly, the formation of a nation is to a great extent dependent upon the creation of a national narrative, partly composed by the works belonging to the literary classics (canon), that articulate national mentality or character, based on the collective self-image, as well as values and ideals regarded as characteristically national (concerning the relationship of literary canon and national identity, see Annus 2000). The figurative concept of a core or root text is used in Estonian literary criticism; such texts bring forth collective characteristics, desires and fears of the nation and form the "energetic field" of patriotic feelings (Veidemann 2003: 891). "Core" texts carry essential national myths through ages and, in their turn, in time they themselves begin to function as myths, becoming a part of the body of fictional stories the national self-consciousness is resting upon. Examples of works, functioning as such myths, include the national epic *Kalevipoeg*, written by Fr. R. Kreutzwald (1853–1862), the drama *The Werewolf* (1912) by August Kitzberg, *Springtime* (1912–1913) together with its sequels by Oskar Luts, the novel *Truth and Justice* I–V (1926–1933) by Anton Hansen Tammsaare,[1] poetry by Lydia Koidula, Juhan Liiv, etc. In addition, the treasury of common myths comprises mythologized biographies of writers such as Kristjan Jaak Peterson (the first Estonian poet who died very young), Lydia Koidula (a romantic poetess, the personification of Estonian patriotism, who died abroad), Juhan Liiv (the original Estonian "mad genius"), etc.

But what is the role of theatre in the creation of Estonian identity? The Estonian national theatre emerged during the 19th century (in 1870), led by the poetess Lydia Koidula. Theatre as an art form, i.e. a system of stage conventions and practices, did not stem from national culture (although theatrical games of singing and national traditions are not absent from the Estonian folklore), but was borrowed from the (Baltic) German culture. The role of the theatre, which had turned

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[1] English translations: Kreutzwald 1982; Kitzberg 1979; Luts 1983.

professional in early 20th century, sprung from the European cultural system of the 19th century: the theatre is an institution of art for the purpose of performing and interpreting literary works. Initially, the Estonian theatre was untouched by the emancipatory movement of Western theatre taking place under the banner of a (re)theatralization. Supported mainly by the productions of original literary works, theatre has performed the task of producing national self-consciousness, working as a cultural amplifier of literary texts.

Attention should be paid to the specific manner of influence of the theatre art. First, the production and reception of theatrical performances is collective in nature. Due to this collective nature (sometimes even akin to a congregation), they have a strong emotional field of impact; theatre is a medium capable of amplifying the social field of influence of the otherwise "solitarily" received literary texts. Second, theatre is an institutional art. Loren Kruger has emphasized the character of theatre as a legitimate public sphere, and as a consequence, the appropriate site for nation building; it is not only a place, but also an occasion for the articulation of national prestige (Kruger 1992: 6–11). Of course, experimental performances of alternative theatres can form a part of the discourse of national identity as well as representative performances in big state theatres. Participation in a theatrical event can also be considered as a social ritual, where belief in a particular ethical-moral worldview is reinforced, and certain common myths are repeated (Paavolainen 1992: 15).[2]

The interrelation of theatre and literature in culture can also be described in terms of memory. According to Juri Lotman, culture is a collective intellect and a collective memory, a trans-personal mechanism for storing and exchanging texts, as well as for creation of new texts. The cultural space can indeed be outlined in terms of common memory. In the memory of the arts, which is of a creative type, the "forgetting" and "remembering" of pre-existing texts is taking place in a pulsating rhythm, the texts sometimes become actualized, sometimes fade (Lotman 1992: 200–201). This of course does not take place automatically. The theatre, bringing past works into the limelight —

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[2]    In his research, Paavolainen brings out two myths important to the Finnish public of the 1960s: the myth of a united nation and the myth of a strong woman in control of her destiny. They are both carried by classic texts (Aleksis Kivi's *Seven Brothers*, Hella Wuolijoki's *Niskamäe*-series) and both are clearly supportive of identities (both national and gender).

into the cultural consciousness of new generations — is for literature one of the mechanisms for "remembering", evaluation and re-evaluation. Staging as an intersemiotic translation of a literary text is also an active creation of relationships between the past texts and the temporally alternating social and ideological contexts of both the creators and the recipients of the stage production. Theatre (re)contextualizes literary texts, whereby the tradition of interpretation of the classic work and its author are part of the makeup the context, with which the new staging will inevitably form a dialogue. By updating the classics and activating new layers of meaning, theatre both preserves and renews the spiritual connection of the people with the legacy of the past.

When talking about theatre, its ephemeral and transient nature is often stressed (theatre is "written on sand"), yet on the other hand repetition and the tendency to recycle stories, characters, design elements etc. is also inherent to it. This side of theatre is pointed out by Marvin Carlson, who calls theatre a memory-machine and a repository of cultural memory — however, subject to continual modification as the memory is recalled in new circumstances (Carlson 2001: 2). Due to the close relationships between theatre and memory, national myths and historical stories utilize theatre to represent, reinscribe, and reinforce the nation as a cultural construction (Carlson 2001: 3).

The relation of theatre with literary classics is not limited to amplification and/or memory operations that suggest the primacy of conserving functions. Rather, stage productions balance between the two opposing attitudes: sometimes they insist on the present-day resonance of the classics, sometimes on their everlasting significance. Below, we examine how Estonian stage directors have treated Estonian classics at the turn of the 20th century.

## Stage production of *The Werewolf* by August Kitzberg

During the Soviet period the Estonian theatre largely operated as a memory machine and a medium for manifestation of repressed national feelings. In the stage productions of the literary classics of the 1970s to 1980s the emphasis laid on the everlasting and the archetypal, articulated in criticism through the image of renewing

contacts with national roots. This purpose was also served by some rewritings of classical texts aimed at purifying and intensifying their very core by means of a powerful ritualistic theatrical language, for example *We Are Looking for Vargamäe* based on Tammsaare's *Truth and Justice* (1976, directed by Kaarin Raid) or *A People's War* based on historical novels by Eduard Vilde (1981, directed by Jaan Tooming); characteristically they combined work-based themes with folklore. Although during the Soviet era stage productions of classics in an ironic key were also put on stage (e.g., by Mati Unt), these, nevertheless, were rather exceptional. One has to agree with Piret Kruuspere: typical of the 1980s was a unidimensional national pathos, replaced by a more ambiguous point of view in the next decade (Kruuspere 2000: 188).

The break in the Estonian political and economic system in the early 1990s coincided with rather sharp changes in the spiritual atmosphere — the shift to the post-modern lifestyle and worldview. The situation in general was quite contradictory: the fight for independence boosted nationalism, yet at the same time in literature, for example, myths were deconstructed rather than created. As usual, theatre was more conservative compared to other forms of art; moreover so since the theatrical system remained principally the same. Upholding an extensive network of state-subsidized repertory theatres under the circumstances of the market economy (no state theatres were shut down) has even been called the "third way" of Estonia in the field of culture. The paradigm shifts mainly started to take place during the second half of the 1990s. The need for the double-coding of nationality, characteristic of the Soviet period, disappeared; the natio-nal self-consciousness ceased to consolidate the rapidly stratifying and unstable society of the so-called transition period. Thus, theatre lost its former role as a place of consolidation and had to reformulate its relationship with audiences. The market economy and the diversi-fication of cultural consumption promoted more commercial produc-tions. On the other hand, the need for reconsideration of national values from the present-day perspective has become a new challenge for the theatre.

The Estonian theatre of the 1990s has been reproached for avoiding the topics of social and political problems. In contrast, the national past is reinterpreted in a number of productions of both Estonian classics and original contemporary dramas, rewriting

significant national myths. There are, of course, many traditional productions merely reproducing familiar stories and characters (e.g. the very popular open-air production of *Truth and Justice I* by A. H. Tammsaare (1997), performed at the writer's home farm, largely perceived as an "authentic" environment of the novel). However, besides these there are also productions the aim of which is a self-reflexive and critical dialogue with the national past. Among the most intriguing ones there are some rewritings of the "core" texts that perform a kind of deep ploughing on the field of national identity.

August Kitzberg's *The Werewolf* (1912) originates from the "golden era" of Estonian drama of the early decades of the 20th century. It is the most often produced Estonian play: approximately 40 stagings in professional Estonian theatres, as well as two screenings (one of them shot by exile Estonians living in the USA), and a ballet by Lydia Auster called *Tiina*. The story of the play takes place during the time of serfdom (19th century). The conflict between a young girl Tiina, aspiring for love and freedom, and the conservative village people (family of Tammaru) is motivated by her "foreign blood": different descent (Tiina's ancestors were free chiefs of people, her mother has been put to death as a witch), different appearance and temperament (a black-haired and hot-blooded girl *versus* the fair-haired and sluggish village people). Her otherness is emphasized by associations with wild nature, as opposed to human culture. As a consequence of a love intrigue she is publicly accused of being a werewolf and expelled from the village society; she stays living in the forest among the wolves. The play ends with Tiina's tragic death, struck by a bullet intended for a wolf. Kitzberg uses folklore in abundance: folk songs and games, chants, a scene during a Mid-summer's Eve, which is one of the most important Estonian holidays, as well as the folk faith concerning werewolves.

*The Werewolf* functioned as a text constituting a national myth by presenting traditional culture and looking back to the ancient slavery. The impressive display of the people's mental life and of the ancient history was credited in synchronous criticism. The historic-ethno-graphic layer was probably one of the reasons why *The Werewolf* was chosen to represent the recently incorporated Estonia in the Moscow art decade of the Soviet Union, which was supposed to take place in 1941. Identity formation is more deeply affected by the grand opposi-tion of Tiina and the Tammaru family, in which the idea of a personal

freedom collides with the primeval wisdom demanding self-sacrifice for the survival of the people. This antagonism expresses the tragic dilemma of the Estonians, who have been living under the yoke of foreign powers for centuries: the burden and price of the preservation of the people, the inevitability and danger of the self-preservation programme (see Lauristin 1987: 51–52). Tiina performs the role of the exceptional and the alien, upon which the ideology of self-preservation leans. However, an alternative interpretation is also present in literary criticism, according to which it is the passionate Tiina who represents the primeval Estonian archetype, whose dionysian vitality cannot be extinguished by the imposed Christian worldview (Valgemäe 1990: 38). The Soviet-era stage productions of *The Werewolf* were concerned with the aforementioned dilemma, sometimes emphasizing the idea of freedom, sometimes the endurance.

In the 1990s, ***The Werewolf*** was staged twice in the Von Krahl Theatre, which has an avant-garde alternative theatre reputation, on both occasions by the leader of the theatre, Peeter Jalakas. Von Krahl, the first private theatre of the newly independent Estonia, was established in 1992 and its inaugural play was *The Werewolf*. Picking a classic core text was a symbolic gesture, which however did not manifest a continuing tradition but instead a desire to demolish cultural myths. The stage director was interested in unlocking the functional mechanics of cultural clichés. *The Werewolf* was used as a source for stereotypical situations, which the company of non-professional actors played in a comical-parodying key, accompanied by the stage director's commentaries played from tape. For the second time, Jalakas turned to Kitzberg's drama in 1998. As a matter of fact, it was *The Werewolf* based on Kitzberg, compiled by Jalakas himself and Margus Kasterpalu. Their basic strategy was to frame Kitzberg's story by means of the theatre-within-theatre technique: present-day actors just rehearse *The Werewolf* and discuss the play, as well as the situation and functions of the Estonian theatre in general. The production was defined as an experiment, and its main goal was clearly worded at the beginning of the performance: theatrical investigation of the validity of play's values and problems in today's society. The questions directing the production were specified in more detail in the programme; several of them concerned identity formation, for example: Why should the world care about Estonia? Why should Estonia care about the world? Are Estonians turning into Russians?

Are Russians turning into Estonians? Does a border separate or unite? Etc.

In the course of the rehearsal on the stage, the actors tested different interpretative models, such as the realistic-psychological, the national-romantic, the ritualistic, and finally rejected all of them as inappropriate from the contemporary perspective. The actress playing Tiina (Liina Vahtrik) showed up to the rehearsals later, as someone from outside just like her character, but her singularity was not insisted upon (externally she did not differ from the rest), so that her threatening and alien character was dependent upon psychological motivation, which the actors however could not find. The theatre-within-theatre technique was supplemented with a fragmented stage and stage activities, by which *The Werewolf* as a myth was split; its elements were inserted into multiple new contexts and related with metatextual commentary, both visual and verbal. First, a man called August (an allusion to August Kitzberg; played by Raivo E. Tamm) was sitting on a little platform above the stage (suggesting author's supremacy over the work). He read out Kitzberg's stage directions, some passages from the prose on the theme of werewolf by another writer, August Gailit, and quoted critical interpretations with regard to the play. Secondly, new technological media were used: the stage was fragmented with video and tele-screens, where different images and episodes were seen in parallel with the main stage activity. A large video screen at the back of the stage was reminiscent of a window, from which scenes of contemporary social reality could be seen: a populous city street, weird wolf-shaped figures, who were later identified as the outcasts of contemporary society, etc. The most significant image on the big video-screen was of a man walking through various landscapes and winding a string on a reel; at the end he was identified as a collector of frontiers (perhaps referring to the (future) Europe without frontiers). There was also a large television set on stage, in which an "investigation" of a slaughter of a foal was presented in the form of a parodic TV report — the leitmotif of the tragedy was drowned in a mass mysticism characteristic of a mass culture, so that it lost all credibility. On both the visual as well as the verbal level the opposition of human — wolf was elaborated (often in an ironic key), which was often analogous with the opposition own — alien.

One of Jalakas's favourite techniques is a simultaneous combination of culturally, stylistically and ideologically different theatre

signs, which support and/or cancel each other out. For example, in the Midsummer Eve scene, the actors jumped over a small television set placed on the floor, in which a bonfire was shown, and at the same time scenes from the movie *The Werewolf* by exile Estonians were shown on the big TV screen: modern theatrical play clashed with a rather naive-romantic film with its primitive ethnographism (dissonant, in its turn, with English subtitles). After that, a no less than fourfold combination was displayed: August's hysterically nationalist speech about the need to drive away the Russians (and to burn Tiina), in order to protect *our blue-eyed race*; a nationally emblematic man with a shepherd's horn on the centre stage; a seduction scene between Tiina and Margus carried out with wolf-like movements on the apron; everything accompanied by the music of Rammstein. The theatre-within-theatre technique allowed the free fusion of elements of traditional, high and pop culture. The musical design was effectively eclectic: from Tchaikovsky's First piano concerto through national-romantic songs to Rammstein. Such combinations revealed an antagonism between the modern and the mythical in the discourse of cultural and national identity.

Staging strategies and the fragmented stage enabled to split *The Werewolf* as a national myth, to explore its components by means of recontextualization and relating with metatexts — and to abandon it. First and foremost, the inadequacy of the sharp opposition between "us" and the "other" (with a special allusion to the relationship between Estonians and Russians) in modern society was emphasized. At the end of the performance the actors turned to the author (August), refusing to accept and perform the tragic conclusion of the play. The characters have become empty signs without any meaning, they say. So the classical story remained unfinished, the initial question was answered in the negative. The production can be viewed as a gesture of denial of a fossilized nationalism, and of an ideologized image of the Other as an enemy. At the same time, as a critic has remarked, it manifested a new, unfamiliar, and cosmopolite identity of a contemporary Estonian (Kruus 1998). However, the production did not initiate a wider discussion about identity, and the interest of the critics was focussed on the use of technological media. As a small hall production only played during a single season, it did not accumulate a lot of audience.

# Two theatrical interpretations
## of the work of Oskar Luts

Oskar Luts's novel *Springtime*, dating from the same period as *The Werewolf* (published in two parts in 1912–1913) portrays the life of schoolchildren — the beauty and pain of the first love, funny pranks, conflicts with German cadets, and so forth. *Springtime*, together with its sequels concerned with the further life of the same characters (*Summer* (1918–1919), *Toots's Wedding* (1921), *Weekday* (1924), *Autumn* (1938)) play a central role in the cultural consciousness of Estonians, primarily due to the colourful characters, who rapidly became well known to everyone. This was encouraged by numerous dramatizations, staged from 1930s onwards. Stagings of Oskar Luts belong to the core of Estonian theatre classics and have usually been very popular. (For example, from 1955–1965, three dramatizations of Oskar Luts led the attendance rankings (*Toots's Wedding*, *Springtime* and *Summer*) and the top ten included two more (Kask 1987: 465).) In addition to theatrical productions, there are also screenings, TV productions and Ülo Vinter's comic ballet *Springtime*.

*Springtime* has become a sort of a mythologeme of national discourse, referring to the "golden past", to the childhood of a nation, and to archetypal Estonians. A director Voldemar Panso, who staged *Springtime* in 1969, drew parallels with *Seven Brothers* by Aleksis Kivi: for him, the primordial soul of the Estonian nation finds its expression in *Springtime*, just as that of Finnish people is found in *Seven Brothers* (Panso 1969). The above-mentioned cycle by Luts has also been called a grand myth of the seasons, and an Estonian national allegory of the dance of life (Undusk 1994a). Luts has been considered as the Estonian national writer *par excellence*, who is loved by all Estonians, but hard to translate and hard to understand outside of the national cultural space. As a writer and a director Mati Unt has said: "*Every nation has secret writers of its own, who grasp its originality with a particularly intimate authenticity*" (Unt 1993: 91). The expectations of the theatre audiences have been led by the desire to meet "good old friends" from the pages of the books, to see familiar humorous stories, or to borrow the words of a critic: "*It has become so intimate to the people that a change would bother*" (Rosenvald 1984).

However, at the second half of the 1990s, two strongly altered versions were staged: *Winter* by Madis Kõiv (1996, *Vanemuine* theatre, directed by Raivo Adlas) and *Tonight We Play Ducks and Drakes* by Mati Unt (1998, Estonian Drama Theatre, directed by Unt himself); the title of the latter makes a pun on the name of Luts (to play ducks and drakes = to play 'luts')[3]. The creative impulse behind both productions seems to be the unique intimacy shared by the authors. Madis Kõiv considers Luts to be a constitutively relevant writer for Estonians; perhaps Estonians have shaped themselves according to Luts's characters, he smirked at a literary gathering. For Unt, Luts forms a part of his self-myth: they are united through the same childhood landscapes and being melancholic.

*Winter* and *Tonight*... are so-called "derived plays" (*pièces dérivées*, Tadeusz Kowzan), of which one domain is constituted by the rewriting of well-known classical texts. The concept of rewriting covers different far-reaching thematical and diegetic transformations, resulting in texts that stand in a complicated inter- and metatextual relationship with the primary texts and sometimes tend to function as an autonomous work. Matei Calinescu has pointed to post-modern sensitivity to the phenomena of textual transformations or rewriting, although it is by no means a monopoly of the post-moderns (Calinescu 1997: 247–248); in Estonian theatre this practice dates back to the modernist theatrical renewal in the late 1960s.

*Winter* is, as its title indicates, a continuation and the finale of Luts's cycle, following *Autumn*[4]. Kõiv inscribes the characters, these representative Estonians, into the period of the Soviet occupation and Stalinist repression of the 1940s. Winter, together with the imagery of snow and blizzard refers both to the death-phase of the cycle of the seasons and to the Stalinist period of history prior to the so-called "thaw", i.e. to the ruin of the good old times of national past, which in its turn are symbolized by "the spring" and "the summer" — from these Luts's works, extensive passages are quoted. Under the pressure of history, the national myth of the "golden past" (or the "old-time tale", as is said in Kõiv's text) breaks up. The stick-together

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[3] Unt has also written and directed a short play after Luts *People in the Sauna* (1999) and published his works on Luts's motifs as a collection titled *Huntluts* [*Wolf-Burbot*] (1999).

[4] Actually the title can be interpreted also as an allusion to the central character, whose name is Arno Tali (tali = winter).

community of the schoolchildren splits along different tracks of the historical destiny of Estonians: some of them become "forest brothers", desperately fighting against the Soviet rule (the prankster Toots), or deportees and refugees, some others become communist potentates or collaborators (Visak, who is an illegitimate child), and some try to creep into hiding in order to survive (Arno Tali). The characters on the stage seemed old, exhausted and tattered, being in sharp contrast with the original types in Oskar Luts's story. Similarly to *The Werewolf*, the writer (Oskar Luts, played by Ants Ander) himself was one of the characters — but as an author who has lost control over the world he has created, and forced to obey communist rulers (or — supremacy of the history?) himself.

The world of *Winter* undergoes rapid metamorphoses on account of alternation and blending of different layers of fictional time — that of the *Springtime* and the *Summer* and that of the 1940s. In some episodes this overlapping produced grotesque contamination. For example, the chrestomathic scene about Kiir's lost boot-buttons was presented in the form of a KGB interrogation: the schoolboys were threatened with deportation, Toots's fire hook turned out to be a rifle and cartridges were found instead of boot-buttons. The author, Oskar Luts, was forced to act as a transcript writer. The funny images of old times were crossed with rude violence of historical processes, and Luts's gentle humour was mixed with harsh Stalinist rhetoric, even on the level of sentences — for example, the parish clerk (a KGB agent in the reality of the 1940s) said to the students: "*You better learn [Bible] verses and slogans*!"

The temporally complex stage activity can also be interpreted as mental images or dreams of Arno Tali (Aivar Tommingas), in which the pressures of a collective subconscious find their expression. The subjectivity of temporal cognition was indicated by lighting design, alternating from all-encompassing darkness to full bright in images of the past. The people were portrayed not only as the victims of history, but collective guilt and fear was also illuminated. The splitting of the cast into two hostile camps was derived from the "golden past" itself: the boy who was bullied in *Springtime* became a Soviet militia in *Winter*, the son of a wealthy farmer became a *well-groomed old gentleman in an American manner*, i.e. a successful exile. The Arno of *Winter* wanted to take the blame for the eternal class struggle upon himself, to redeem the people from punishment. (The "translation" of

causal processes into ethical categories of guilt and punishment is a recurring theme in Kõiv's work.) When the hope for a possible individual responsibility failed, he too, similarly to the characters of *The Werewolf*, turned to the author, and demanded him to be "taken back", as if he had never existed. Oskar Luts, as presented by Kõiv, is an author without power, who cannot change the past: "[...] *which was, has been and is inevitable*."

History (or the course of time) was denoted by several theatrical images: the snowdrift into which Arno was sinking (reminiscent of *Happy Days* by Beckett); the wind, flying banners and pictures of statesmen, etc. The monstrous, grotesque monument built of school-desks with characters' faces appearing in its openings was the most impressive one, both evoking and concealing memories. It impressively visualized the metamorphoses of the myth of a national childhood under the impact of a historical experience of violence, and also functioned as an image of the work *Springtime* itself, which has become a sort of "cultural monument".

One of the main themes of this adaptation was memory — individual, collective, and cultural. In the world of the play (that of the 1940s) it is dangerous to remember and to recognize each other — during an interrogation, this would mean betrayal. The past has to be forgotten. The production spoke of an outrageous abolition of memory, ensuring the continuity of identity. In opposition to Luts's work, *Winter* began to manifest rupture, cleavage, and difference, both in the (historical) time and (social) space of Estonian nationalism. As for the reception, *Winter* provoked some perplexity, even indignation among the spectators. Already the open dress rehearsal caused polemics: is *Springtime* a proper basis for treating political issues and collective guilt of Estonians (Karja 1996). One protested against the demolition of a beloved myth. The audiences remained pretty small — about 3400 spectators.

Mati Unt's productions of national classics have been characterized as sceptical "studies of the Estonian archetype" and the cultivation of a self-ironic view of a small nation's complexes (Kruuspere 2000: 193). ***Tonight We Play Ducks and Drakes*** is a comprehensive collage of about 25 works by Oskar Luts, as well as of documentary materials concerning the writer's biography and the reception of his works among critics. The so-called seasons-cycle constitutes the main line of the composition. The production's

aesthetics were based on unconcealed playfulness and meta-theatri-
cality: the fictional world was defined as a stage, where the actors
perform situations originating from Luts's work. Initially, they were
dressed in plain peasant tunics, later to be replaced with fashionable
apparel. The stage design was laconic and functional, scenes were
marked with scant items. The non-illusionist stage space was
contrasted by scenes from the proto-landscapes for *Springtime* (Pala-
muse, Vooremaa), as a sign of "authenticity", projected onto a screen
located at the back wall. The stage, divided into zones capable of
smooth changes in meaning, would come to indicate the entire lived
world of Estonians. The fictional time was just as all-inclusive. All of
the layers of time — narrative, psychological, and theatrical —
behaved similarly, bringing forth repetitions and variations.

Similar to Kõiv, Unt too opened Luts's fictional world to the
history but unlike Kõiv he accentuated historical recurrence, not
rupture. History repeats itself: the crucial historical events of the 20th
century fused into each other, and were performed as a series of
variations on the basic conditions of the life of Estonians. With the
help of a playful manipulation of time and space and pattern of
repetitions, the overall history of the Estonian people in the 20th
century — that of unending fight for independence, wars and
subsequent rebuilding — was displayed in a slightly ironic manner.
The mythical "golden past" of Estonians, too, broadened on account
of the history. For instance, Luts's "old Russian time" was transferred
onstage to refer both to the czarism and to the Soviet era; in this
manner, the concept of the "golden past" itself as an object of
permanent nostalgic yearning was highlighted. The purpose of the
production's treatment of time and space was not a reiteration of a
historical myth, but its mythical nature, i.e. the disclosure of the
mechanisms constructing the myth.

A similar fusion could be observed in characters: stage figures
were synthesized from several different characters from Luts's works,
and often associated by means of intertextual techniques with different
cultural texts. The premise was to define the environment of existence
of the characters as a stage: "[...] *the characters are neither lived nor
historical, but are unfortunately real on the stage"* (Unt 1999: 179).
For example, Imesson "included" Imelik and Tõnisson from *Spring-
time*; the latter's patriotic hatred towards the Germans were
emphasized by quotations from Eduard Bornhöhe's historic novel *The*

*Avenger*, the protagonist of which is a symbolic figure of the national fight for freedom. Luts's comical Kiir was alternately quoting Hamlet and the amorous Bottom from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. By fusing different characters, Unt reinforced their psychological dominants, so that they could be perceived as representations of national archetypes (or basic psychological types) on an international background. However, the actors were playing Luts's characters in an untraditional manner, sometimes even in direct contradiction with expectations: the feeble redhead Kiir (Taavi Eelmaa) was a stout and sturdy man of action, the melancholy dreamer Arno (Mait Malmsten) was played with a certain ironic distance, etc. The psychological summary of Estonians was in an uncanny displacement with Luts's "good old acquaintances", empathic identification was also hindered by a theatrically overblown manner of acting.

Similarly to Kõiv and Jalakas, Unt introduced the character of the author — Oskar Luts (Andrus Vaarik). The author was accompanied by his biography (inscribed into the text based on his diaries and other documentation), on account of which the fictional time embraced the Stalinist period from 1940s to 1950s; the campaign for uncovering "formalists" of that time as well as the fate of Luts's writer colleagues was incorporated through textual references. The Author in Unt's stage production was not primarily a commentator, but communicated actively with the other stage characters, sometimes from the author's (or rather, from the director's) position, and sometimes acted as a spectator, giving meaning of theatre-within-theatre to the scene.

From the viewpoint of identity formation one of the most intriguing supplements by Unt were two characters, acting in couple: the Russian Bolotov (Aleksander Eelmaa) and the German Sumpfentropf (Sulev Teppart). These were explicitly marked characters who embodied both the political forces that have determined the fate of Estonia (attention should be paid to the similarity of the names to those of Molotov and Ribbentrop, who contracted the infamous secret protocol) and cultural mentalities that have influenced Estonian culture. Their speech was full of cultural clichés; when one called in German *Lebensraum!*, the other replied in Russian *Derzhava!*, one — *Angst! Weltschmerz!*, the other — *Toska! Krassotaa spasayet mir!*, one advocated Pushkin, the other Goethe, etc. Their thematic function was to perform the role of bog bogeys (from Luts's short story *Bog*; their names also have the *bog*-stem). From an ideological perspective

they appeared as aliens engraved into the collective subconscious ("the bog") of Estonians, who are fought but never disposed of. So the archetypal Other built into the mental space of a nation was made visible by theatrical means.

Unt's rewriting also thematized the status of Luts's works as classics: with fragments of criticism and the actors' memoirs inserted into the dialogue, which caused the "memory" of the text to emerge, or by performing some of the most famous phrases with an emphasis on demonstrating masterful acting, so that they sounded like quotations.

The reception of the stage production was quite controversial. It was well received by the critics, but attracted little audience, quite similar to *Winter* (less than 20 performances, about 3400 spectators), while the most popular production of Luts's work in the 1990s (*The Backyard*) gathered 21,000 spectators.[5] The audiences seemed to prefer safe and familiar interpretations of classics.

## *Kalevipoeg* by Andrus Kivirähk

With such a background in mind, the success of young writer Andrus Kivirähk's comedies paraphrasing national myths during the recent seasons is somewhat surprising. One of them, *Kalevipoeg*, was performed as an open-air production (2003, directed by Ain Prosa). Kivirähk's play is a parodic travesty of the Estonian national epic, compiled by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald in the middle of the 19th century, and regarded as the *national creative text*, and *ideological axis of the Estonian national spirit* (Undusk 1994b: 148), even as a *sacral text of Estonian literary culture* (Veidemann 2003: 891). The cultural context of the stage production could have supported a sanctifying interpretation: 2003, the year in which two hundred years had passed since the birth of the creator of the epic, was declared Kreutzwald's Year, and the playing location was a landscape (Neeruti Sadulamägi), where, according to a folk legend, lie the furrows ploughed by Kalevipoeg. It is noteworthy that the Estonian political elite, including the President and the Prime Minister attended the

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[5]  For comparison: the most successful stage production of the 1955–1965 period (*Toots's Wedding*) gathered 136,000 spectators.

performances of Kalevipoeg. Yet the production counteracted the sacral context, operating more like a blasphemous counter-balance to an event organized the very same spring on the ancient Vallimägi in Rakvere, where approximately 80 volunteers (including the actors and actresses of the Theatre of Rakvere) recited the full text of *Kalevipoeg* during a 14 hour time span. The ritual recital, striving for a resuscitation of the epic in the collective memory, was contrasted by the bitter parody of the production. Parody, according to Linda Hutcheon, is a perfect post-modern genre, for it simultaneously incorporates and challenges its object (Hutcheon 1988: 11). The parodic stage production actualised the story of *Kalevipoeg* (extremely rarely performed in the Estonian drama theatre), but decisively redefined its characters and the motivation of events. On the stage, Kalevipoeg, the mythic king of Estonians, was not a powerful giant but an entirely ordinary young man of small height (played by Anti Reinthal), distinguished only by a sense of honour and responsibility. With the help of additional episodes originating from Kreutzwald's story *Kilplased* (an adaptation from the German folk book *Schildbürger*) common Estonians were depicted as being a fool-proud nation; the spirit of resistance of the nation degenerated into envious cursing and contempt for the rulers. The roles of the three men, representative of common people, were performed with coarse comic. Some heroic deeds of Kalevipoeg that have a rather negative impact, such as the killing of the son of a Finnish blacksmith, turned out to be the exaggerations of people's spiteful gossip. Some others, such as the defeat of the Devil, were resolved through purely theatrical tricks: the gigantic Devil, played by two actors inside the same costume, literally broke into pieces, when one of the actors dropped down from the other's shoulders. The prophetic closing lines of the epic (Kalevipoeg will return, *to bring happiness to his children*) were lies invented by the corpse-trading Hedgehog. The generative mechanisms of heroic tales were revealed, and meaning hence abolished; the production demonstrated in a comical manner the constructed nature of the national myths and demythologized them by shifting the viewpoint. In fact, two different demythologizing operations were executed. On the one hand, popular wisdom, expressed in utterances such as *live simply and quietly* and *we are little people* was mocked, and Estonians were cast in a poor light. On the other hand, the mythic Kalevipoeg was conveyed in a humane manner, freed from both the heroic aura as well

as the belittling reputation of a dim-witted barbarian. Kivirähk's Kalevipoeg was a solemn peasant who experienced the tragic loneliness of a leader.

The problems of identity and the criticism of Estonian democracy in the stage production were pointed out in critical reviews, however a meta-theatrical level started to dominate: *Kalevipoeg* as a self-parody of a rag-tag summer theatre. For this purpose, Tuuslar (Andrus Vaarik) from the epic was turned into an aggressive entertainer who constantly tried to instigate both the actors and the spectators to play and merrymaking. The theatricality of the staging was emphasized by scenography (a small revolving stage amidst nature) and kitsch costumes. A small walk to the staging place preceding the performance, called a national expedition, during which the spectators could participate in folk games, sing folk songs and purchase Estonian handicraft products, showcased the rather ambivalent connection of nationality with commercial interests. *Kalevipoeg* was one of the most successful summer theatre productions in 2003 — about 12 000 people watched the 15 performances — and as such it was more a social than an art event.

## Concluding remarks. Play

The stage productions covered in this article are based on rewritings of core texts constructing the national identity. In the transitional society of Estonia in the 1990s, in which adaptations with an individualist mentality and the conditions of a market economy are taking place, the traditional national identity no longer has the power to unite people and to offer security. Some theatre practitioners have attempted to give new life to national myths with the help of their reproduction to big audiences, in order to make them experience national unity. Some others, presuming that theatre must reflect today's unstable world and fragmentation of identities, prefer to de- and reconstruct the traditional contents of identity.

Identity is constructed through relations with the alien/other. In this connection the reinterpretation of the sharp opposition between us vs. the strangers in terms of acceptance of the other and the different should be considered as being especially important (*The Werewolf, Tonight...*). It also concerns the relations inside the Estonian com-

munity, considered not as a monolithic national body but as including inner discrepancies and differences (*Winter*, etc). National narrative includes an imbedded "golden past", the cultural representations of which are also several literary core texts. In theatrical adaptations, these are opened up to history and contemporary social reality through the support of an intertextual reference networks, demythologizing them (*Winter, Tonight..., Kalevipoeg*). It is in the power of theatre as a visual and activity-based art form to demolish through casting and manner of acting the stereotypes of the national character, embodied in characters and systems of figures of classical works, and to critically expose national psychology. This facet is relevant in Andrus Kivirähk's rather blasphemous texts. It seems that the popularity of his plays is on the one hand based on the recognition effect and on the other hand on the pleasure of laughing self-ironically at national sanctities. (It should be noted that through this they unavoidably cultivate the stereotype of a self-ironic Estonian.) So the above-mentioned productions undermine the current myths and disclose the hang-ups and illusions of a small nation and by doing this encourage the self-conscious creation of identity, including national identity. The starting-point is the explication of myths forming the basis of identity as cultural constructs, in order to indicate that identity is not a self-evident and pregiven, but "made" and alterable.

Let us ask what sort of theatrical strategies are used in the stage productions described. First of all, the explicit "presence" ("visibility") of the theatre situation in these adaptations of the classics is noteworthy: they contain clear signals that tell the audience — this is a theatrical play (as opposed to the mimetic representation). Therefore, rewriting is coupled with meta-theatricality. According to Gérard Genette's *Palimpsestes* typology, we are dealing with semantic transformations that use and/or bring about a diegetic (transposition to a different spatio-temporal world) and a pragmatic (modification of events) transfer (see Genette 1982: 418). The initial stimulus for semantic changes is provided by the transposition into a world whose framework is formed by theatre-time and theatre-space that is the stage. The world of the production is firstly and openly defined as theatre. Diegetic transfer to the stage establishes initial conditions, which together with the openly playful nature of the activity motivate further transformations. Theatre is not regarded as a neutral medium for conveying classical works, but is presented as a specific situation

of showing and looking. The action defined as play in a ludic space of theatre makes it possible to easily deconstruct and reconstruct fictional worlds. Klaus Schwind has argued that theatre play is an ambivalent, dynamic and genuinely dialogical process in which the spectator is an active co-player; it tends to complicate the structures and elements used in the play rather than simplify them, but it also makes them observable (Schwind 1997: 425). The theatre can play with texts, using them as game guidelines and playthings — playthings in the sense that due to the play they acquire new meanings, different from those that were valid before (Schwind 1997: 434). Playing as an explicit basic attitude motivates and permits the fragmentation of texts and putting of the elements into new contexts, created during the performance. Through play a strong present-day perspective can be established, the activity of playing splits cultural myths, opens new dimensions therein, and generates new meanings.

Theatre play (with the inscribed position of the spectator as a co-player) may be seen as a mechanism for modelling cultural reality: "[…] *theatre can be understood as an act of self-presentation and self-reflection on the part of the culture in question*" (Fischer-Lichte 1992: 10). The productions under discussion thematize and foreground the theatrical act of cultural self-presentation in itself, using various staging and acting strategies. The explication of the theatre situation builds into the play a complementary reflective level. The status of literary core texts as cultural myths or monuments is indicated by stage images (*Winter*) and/or by bringing in previous interpretive models (*Tonight...*, *The Werewolf*). Characters of classical works as icons of national archetypes are interpreted and acted as theatrical roles, displaying the understanding of "the Estonian as a role" (see also Kruuspere 2000: 198). The demythologized character of the author is also included in the stage production (*The Werewolf, Winter, Tonight...*) as a creator who has forfeited the symbolic power over the work.

The play, as has been argued, needs co-players, i.e. spectators, but the audiences of the productions under discussion have mostly been rather small. In addition, theatre in general is shifting into a more peripheral sphere of social life of Estonians in the 1990–2000s. According to recent inquiries, 47% of Estonians have not visited theatre within a year (compared to 13% some twenty years ago); one can speak about a drastic decrease in cultural consumption in its

entirety in the post-communist Estonia.[6] Thus the impact on the processes of identity formation of the stage productions, crumbling the traditional national narrative by means of theatrical rewriting of the classics, cannot be overrated. The questions concerning who or where the most influential "architects and constructors" of national identity are in the present-day Estonian society, can obviously not to be answered within the frame of theatre studies alone.

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[6]  See at http://www.kul.ee/failid/kultuuritarbimise_uuring_2003.rtf.

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## О переформулировании национального идентитета с помощью игры с классиками

Национальный идентитет в большой мере основывается на общих мифах, (вос)производимыми литературными и художественными произведениями, которые в течение времени могут сами начать функционировать в качестве национальных культурных мифов. В постановках классических произведений театр соотносит эти мифы с постоянно изменяющимся социальным контекстом и обновляет, опровергает или вновь подтверждает их смыслы. Театральные репрезентации актуальных для нации нарративов и типов персонажей является частью механизма создания идентитета. В 1990–2000 гг. национальные ценности и общие мифы, которые в советское время сплачивали общество, утратили свою консолидирующую силу. В статье рассматриваются постановки эстонского современного театра, которые основываются на активном переписывании эстонской классики (Август Китцберг, Оскар Лутс, национальный эпос Калеви-поэг), и пытаются ответить на два вороса: как составляющие национального идентитета (например, отношение к Другому) представлены и (де)конструированы при адаптации или переписывании вышеназванной классики; как текстовые стратегии приводят к семантическим транформациям, вызванным игровым характером театрального действа.

## Rahvusliku identiteedi uuestimääratlemisest klassikamängude kaudu

Rahvuslik identiteet on suurel määral rajatud ühistele müütidele, mida (taas)kujutavad kirjandus- ja kunstiteosed, mis aja jooksul võivad ise hakata funtsioneerima rahvuslike kultuurimüütidena. Kodumaist klassikat lavastades suhestab teater neid müüte pidevalt muutuva sotsiaalse kontekstiga ning uuendab, kummutab või taaskinnitab nende tähendusi. Rahvuse jaoks oluliste lugude ja tegelastüüpide teatraalsed representatsioonid on üks osa identiteediloome mehhanismidest. 1990.–2000. aastate Eestis on rahvuslikud väärtused ja ühismüüdid, mis nõukogude ajal ühiskonda

koos hoidsid, minetanud oma endise konsolideeriva jõu ning kuuluvad
küsimuse alla seadmisele. Käesolevas artiklis vaadeldakse eesti nüü-
disteatri lavastusi, mis põhinevad Oskar Lutsu proosa, August Kitzbergi
tragöödia "Libahunt" ning rahvuseepose "Kalevipoeg" ülekirjutustel:
"Libahunt" (lav Peeter Jalakas, 1998), Madis Kõivu Lutsu-aineline "Tali"
(lav Raivo Adlas, 1996) ja Mati Undi "Täna õhta viskame lutsu" (lav
Mati Unt, 1998), Andrus Kivirähki "Kalevipoeg" (lav Ain Prosa, 2003).
Kui 1980. aastate eesti teatrile oli tüüpiline rahvuslik paatos ja identiteedi
kinnitamine, siis järgmiste kümnendite üleminekuühiskonnas, kus toimub
kohanemine globaliseerumise, multikultuurilisuse ideoloogia jm uute
mõjuteguritega, on teatri toimimine identiteediloomes muutunud mitme-
plaanilisemaks ja keerukamaks. Tähelepanu väärib oma — võõra konf-
liktse vastanduse ümbertõlgendamine teise ning erineva aktsepteerimise
vaimus ("Libahunt", "Täna õhta..."). "Kuldse mineviku" müüt, mida
mitmed klassikateosed representeerivad, avatakse teatriadaptsioonides
intertekstuaalse viitevõrgustiku varal nii ajaloole kui ka tänapäeva sot-
siaalsele tegelikkusele, ning seeläbi demütologiseeritakse ("Tali", "Täna
õhta...", "Kalevipoeg"). Teatri kui visuaalse ja tegevusliku kunsti
võimuses on samuti osajaotuse ja näitlejate mängulaadi toel lammutada
rahvusliku karakteri stereotüüpe ning kriitiliselt valgustada rahvuslikku
psühholoogiat. Vaadeldud lavastused eksplitseerivad identiteeti põhis-
tavaid müüte kui kultuurilisi konstruktsioone ning näitavad, et identiteet
ei ole etteantud, vaid "tehtud" ja muudetav. Tekstiloome seisukohast
köidab tähelepanu alustekstide ülekirjutamine ja lavastamine nii, et selgelt
tuuakse nähtavale teatrisituatsioon; lavategevus kätkeb ilmseid signaale,
et tegemist on teatrimängu, mitte mimeetilise reproduktsiooniga. Klas-
sikat n-ö mängulises režiimis esitavad lavastused lammutavad kultuuri-
müüte ja toovad neis esile uusi ulatuvusi.

# Von Krahl Theatre revisiting Estonian cultural heritage

*Anneli Saro*

Department of Literature and Folklore, University of Tartu
Ülikooli 18–230, 51014 Tartu, Estonia
e-mail: anneli.saro@ut.ee

**Abstract.** In the 1990s Estonia underwent a process of radical socio-political changes: a periphery of the Soviet conglomerate became a country with an independent political and economic life. The new situation also brought about a revision of cultural identity, which in the Soviet Union had been grounded primarily on the dichotomy between national and Soviet culture. Since these oppositions were rendered unimportant with the changed politico-economic conditions, a time of ideological vacuum followed. Estonia as an independent state and a cultural island between the East and the West turned its face toward Europe, questioning for its new or true identity in the postmodernising and globalizing society. In this article three productions of Estonian theatre as examples of identity construction will be analysed, investigating the rewriting of cultural heritage, intercultural relationships and implicit ideologies.

The 1990s were a period of new emerging subgroups and identities, so establishing a common national identity was no longer a primary concern. Sooner or later, almost all customary social structures and collective values and beliefs collapsed, forcing persons — as individuals and as a members of particular groups — to question their position in the rapidly changing society. The continuously fluctuating social and cultural contexts through which identities are constructed made the process particularly complicated and infinite. In the post-modern art practice classical texts and national myths are used mostly as material for deconstruction and free play with other cultural sources.

The Von Krahl Theatre (the first private theatre in Estonia, founded in 1992) with Peeter Jalakas acting as an artistic director, has

been interested in performing and researching cultural myths about Estonians, while at the same time mixing them with modern international culture. Productions of Jalakas have been grounded on clear oppositions: our own — foreign, old — new, while 'our own' is usually the old and 'new' is mostly foreign. In "The Werewolf" (1998), for example, the characters and story-line of a play by August Kitzberg from early 20th century, depicting the social system and superstitions in Estonia at the beginning of the 19th century, is bound together with persons (characters and actors) from the end of the 20th century, while at the same time being conscious of the new technological world-view. "Estonian Games. Wedding" (1996) exposes the wedding traditions of an ethnic group, Setus, and Estonian history in the frame of a computer game. The latest production of the Von Krahl Theatre, "Estonian Ballads" (2004) uses the techniques of Japanese modern dance, Butoh, for visualising the world-view inherited with ancient folk songs.

In the present article I am going to concentrate on the above-mentioned productions, investigating the rewriting of cultural heritage, intercultural relationships and implicit ideologies.

Stuart Hall states:

> In common sense language, identification is constructed on the back of recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. In contrast with the 'naturalism' of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construct, a process never completed — always 'in process'. (Hall 2000: 16)

But here an inevitable question arises — to what extent identification and identity construction depend upon a person's free and conscious will and to what extent the process depends on ideology, on discursive practices. There are eras and domains where one discursive practice clearly dominates the other and subjects' wills — such as the communist ideology of the Soviet regime, for example. Nowadays it is widely acknowledged that a person is constituted by a plurality of identities, some of them inscribed by social or cultural systems, and some of them taken on voluntarily.

> Like all signifying practices, it [identification — *A. S.*] is subject to the 'play'
> of *différance*. It obeys the logic of more-than-one. And since as a process it
> operates across difference, it entails discursive work, the binding and marking
> of symbolic boundaries, the production of 'frontier-effects'. It requires what is
> left outside, its constitutive outsider, to consolidate the process. (Hall 2000:
> 17)

Thus we can conclude that not only different identities but also the
Others against which these identities are constructed should be taken
into consideration.

Since Estonia has been an oppressed nation for most of the time of
its notorious history, the identity of Estonians is constituted not so
much in opposition to neighbours but in opposition to conquerors and
rulers. The most important landmark of identity has been language,
however since the Estonian language also indicated a social class up
until the beginning of the 20th century, change in language often
accompanied the ascent in social hierarchy. The second constituting
component of the self-image has been the Estonian culture, of which
the traditional peasants' culture was considered to be the most genuine
and original, and also the most valuable, almost continuously until the
beginning of the 1990s. An influential Estonian folklorist, Oskar
Loorits, has treated the traditional culture as a static (using the word in
a positive sense) element and foreign cultural influences as dynamic
elements in Estonian culture. He admits in 1938 that these two flows
lead to different directions but should be united to a common power-
station that would explore the heritage of the old folk culture for
enriching modern life even on an international scale, and for
transforming foreign loans and influences into an original creation
(Loorits 2000a: 218). A slogan of the Soviet culture was "socialist by
content, national by form", and results of this policy were generally
quite ridiculous and artificial. Thus until the 1990s and even nowa-
days folk music and folk dance, national costumes and anniversaries,
old beliefs and stories play an important role in the Estonian mind-set
and way of life.

Analysing gender and queer identity, Judith Butler relies on the
concept of 'performativity', which is relevant also in the context of
performing the national identity.

> In no sense can it be concluded that the part of gender that is performed is
> therefore the 'truth' of gender; performance as bounded 'act' is distinguished
> from performativity insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of norms

> which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot
> be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice'; further, what
> is 'performed' works to conceal, if not to disavow, what remains opaque,
> unconscious, unperformable. (Butler 1993: 234)

Both individuals and communities need certain public identity statements that are often organised as performances or rituals in the broad sense of these terms. There is a repertoire of identification performatives (John Austin's concept — Austin 1975), which are widely known and repeatedly practised (verbal statements, dress code, attendance of particular events, etc.) and all these performances signify a corresponding identity. But performativity is not unalterably attached to preceding norms and traditions, quite the contrary, there is a certain individuality (conscious or unconscious) and contingency concealed in every performance, not to speak of intentional denials of norms. For example, in the end of 1980s, demonstrating one's national identity or sympathies became fashionable in Estonia. The use of national colours (blue-black-white) and elements of national costumes in clothing was one of the most evident ways of performativity that still left some room open for improvisation and individual differences. Such performances as signifiers of a larger concept can not fully cover all the range of meanings connected to the theme of identity, which is at least partly opaque or indefinable, but despite of them having a reductive nature, performances play an important role in confirmation and creation of communities. Thus performativity can be interpreted both as a kind of reiteration of the norm and a guarantee of consistency and coherence that is indispensable for a particular identity. The ways in which identities and performative strategies signifying them might be altered or modified will be analysed below by some examples from the repertoire of the Von Krahl Theatre.

## "The Werewolf"— confrontation of mentalities

First and foremost, the Von Krahl Theatre has been a place for cultural exchange, a meeting place for liberal creators from different fields of art and different countries for interdisciplinary and intercultural co-operation. We'll start the examination of the aesthetics of theatre with a stage production of "The Werewolf" (orig. published in 1912) by

August Kitzberg. This text has been a volume of school classics, a programme text in identity construction for Estonians during the 20th century, explicating its abiding value and changing meanings in numerous stage interpretations; deconstructive stagings of this (and other) plays have become a part of the programme of the Von Krahl Theatre and its leader Peeter Jalakas as well. The latter has staged "The Werewolf" twice: in 1992 the Von Krahl Theatre was inaugurated with its production and in 1998 the second version of the play was brought on the stage with a new troupe. The first production relied on the profanation and (post)modernisation of the tragic village life, using rock music, rollerskates, bullfights and other heterogeneous elements of popular culture. It was a rewriting of the topic of Estonian slavery and servility in an era of political and aesthetic freedom (Estonia became an independent state in 1991). The second interprettation was consciously more political and retrospective, according to Peeter Jalakas (Adorf 1998). (In the following analysis, I will rely on the video taken on the 9th of September, 1999, at the Drama festival in Tartu and on my own on the spot experience of the performance that took place in the summer 1998.)

The production starts with a video clip that introduces the actors in their everyday surroundings, preparing for rehearsals of the play. The attentive viewer, who knows that the main character, the werewolf, is called Tiina, notices the surprising similarity of the first names of actresses: Liina Vahtrik (plays Tiina), Tiina Tauraite, Katariina Lauk-Tamm. (In the 1992 production Margus was played by Margus Värav, Mari by Mari-Liis Roos and Tiina Kristina Paškevičius.) In this way, the stage director has created a space for investigating the free play of *différance* and *différence*: Tiina as a generalised subject trapped in the opposition with society and her self, actresses re-enacting the existential situation as players and as characters. This interpretation is supported by a prologue presented by the author, August Kitzberg himself, who announces that the reason for gathering all these people is a sociological experiment through which the stage director attempts to answer the following questions: are the values and truths that were valid in ancient times, described in "The Werewolf", also relevant in this particular community of people? (The actors were chosen to be representative of the character types in the play.) Is the system that worked without failures in a society of that time and which is so accurately depicted in "The Werewolf" also transferable to our

modern times? Or has something changed so radically that the problem is utterly unfamiliar to our society? Kitzberg himself has aesthetic interests in the project — what sort of possibilities are there for an authentic performance of the text in a time of stylistic pluralities of the modern theatre? Kitzberg opines that an authentic staging of his play is possible in principle.

August Kitzberg is sitting on a scaffold in the upper right corner for most of the duration of the play and tries to direct the game down on the stage by reading stage directions of his own play. His godlike physical position over the theatrical scene also gives him the role of a stage director, the creator of a fictional world. The author is not dead, as we might conclude after an acquaintance with Roland Barthes and his articles, instead his overt authority over the performance is unravelled on the stage on both the physical and the mental level.

There are four different areas on the frontal stage of black-box theatre: the central area is a play-ground for the actors; the upper right hand corner is a platform for the author, the director of the game; on the back of the stage there is a huge video screen, shaped rather like a window that extends the stage to different virtual or subconscious worlds, and a television on the right side of the stage. The latter has various functions and identities: sometimes it functions on the same level with the actors, who watch a programme about criminal activities (specifically about a wolf killing several animals), sometimes Kitzberg uses it as a tool (appears on the screen) for amplifying his comments, sometimes the actors use a video camera and the television for creating close-ups of characters' faces in their performance. A feminist reader interprets it as a male gaze following the female body that is taught to perform (Adorf 1998).

The fragmented and unsynchronised stage activities explicitly depict a sensation of a dispersed, unstable and bizarre world. There is also a figure on the video screen that strengthens the feeling — an old man coiling up red rope on a snowy landscape that might be interpreted as a demarcation of borders (state borders inside and between (?) the Soviet Union and Europe, as well as frontiers between different mentalities and clear notions, and between fiction and reality on the level of production).

Different times and identities ('real' and fictional) are also mixed on a personal level. The production depicts a postmodern world-view with its obligatory identity crises. Whereas identities are quite stable

and coherent on the fictional level, they become fragmented and/or fluid on the performative level. Theatre as a certain model of community especially reflects and illustrates social roles and role playing in general. For example, Tiina Tauraite as an actress has to perform two fictional roles close to her own nature, Mistress and Grandmother. Even though she tries to impersonate different characters, some of her lines sound strangely modern and ambivalent, and as such dropping between the past and the present discourse. Multiplied identities and the (subconscious) heritage of the past as one of the constructive factors for this phenomenon is also explicitly questioned in the production.

> Tiina Tauraite: Who has drawn off the curtains? [It remains unclear whether she means stage curtains or window curtains. — *A. S.*] The curtains must be in front of the window; someone might cast an evil eye.
>
> Erki Laur: Did you say it as yourself, as Mistress or as Grandmother?
>
> Tiina Tauraite: My grandmother spoke like that.

The central character of the play, Tiina, has a double identity; she is a human being and a werewolf. In the metatheatrical level she has become an object and a symbol of superstition, which is believed in and denied at the same time. (The actress performing the role is called Tiina by other actors even though her real first name is Liina. Also, her acting style allows us to deduce that she is more tightly connected with the fictional world than the other performers, or she is checking the limits of fictional and real.) Tiina's identity in the play is built up on her Otherness, on clear physical and behavioural differences from other characters — she has dark hair and eyes, she is lively and cheerful, as opposed to blonde hair, blue eyes, modesty and slowness of the others as typical (chosen, wishful) representatives of the Estonian nation. In the production this physical confrontation is extinguished. The actresses, playing Tiina and Mari, opponents in a love affair and in their respective mentalities, who are naturally (of course, in the postmodern era of corporal manipulations we should prefer here the construction 'in public life') quite blonde, perform dark-haired and relatively inward-turned persons, similarly to most of the others. The appearance of the whole troupe indicates that nowadays blonde hair and blue eyes are rather exceptional characteristics of

the local people and represent stereotyped and outdated visual representations of Estonians.

The otherness in general and this particular case especially (the werewolf) is frightening, but also admirable and desirable. The actor playing the humpbacked Master (Erki Laur) implores his beloved Tiina to make him an animal, a werewolf, so that he too could be free, equal with Tiina and able to escape to the forest. He refuses his human identity. An Estonian theatre researcher living in New York (multiple-identity!), Mardi Valgemäe, has commented upon this problem already in 1971:

> It seems as if Kitzberg would want to say that light is actually dark and the dark-haired Tiina is the real original Estonian type, whose Dionysian thirst for life is not suffocated by Christian piety obtruded to our nation. (On one level, the conflict in "The Werewolf" is presented as a conflict between Christianity and superstition.) (Valgemäe 1995: 69–70)

The quotation also illustrates the search for authenticity from the preferable primordial times that we discussed earlier.

Dispersal and deferral of fictions, events, spaces, meanings and identities comes to the fore with distinctive clarity in the bonfire scene on Midsummer Night. Some of the first representations of Estonians as a nation in the theatrical discourse have been folk traditions. At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, when researchers began to divide the socio-cultural reality up into different national cultures, they became interested in the peculiarities and "spiritual" characteristics of nations and national cultures (Sevänen 2004: 57–58). Interest in native people also spread among the Baltic German nobility in the beginning of the 19th century, resulting in productions in the Tallinn City Theatre, depicting local language and customs. The most favoured topics were bees, Midsummer Night bonfires and weddings, enabling the presentation of 'authentic' songs, dances, customs and national costumes. Such a practise has been, and still is quite common in colonised countries. It should be noted that the Midsummer Night bonfire is still the most relevant, alive and widespread national tradition in Estonia at the present time.

Different world-views and traditions are explicitly opposed in the bonfire scene: one of the actors proposes to organise a primitive pagan ritual, another offers a modern urbanised conception, paraphrasing a well-known folk song: "Bring us petrol, bring us diesel, bring us

tyres..." But on the stage a rather postmodern or theatrical version is carried out, with multicoloured dust brushes as fireworks and jumping over the bonfire (= television set showing burning logs), in accordance with the old custom of Midsummer Night. Simultaneously with this activity, the movie "The Werewolf" is shown for entertainment on the other television. This pseudo-romantic movie, shot by Estonian emigrants living in Canada, where Estonian is spoken with a heavy accent and supported with English subtitles, evokes the feeling of a truly campy style and makes both the actors and the audience roar with Homeric laughter. One more layer is added to the heterogeneous intertextual discourse of "The Werewolf" — half-mythological marsh creatures, *urgveelased*, from a short story "The Werewolf" by August Gailit appear behind the window (on the screen). Gailit warns us that these scary beings bear the sign of death and their appearance forebodes the death of a domestic animal. (Later it is proposed that *urgveelased* are in fact trumps who watch the television from behind strangers' windows.)

The party gains momentum and the stage activity turns into a Dionysian celebration: on the video screen, there is a mechanically dancing trumpeter, familiar from a well-know vodka label "Viru valge", acting as a sign of intoxication and mental inebriation,[1] Tiina and Margus are dallying around in front of the TV showing a bonfire like wolf cubs bringing out their werewolf potential, etc. In a state of released subconscious another implicit connotation of the notion of werewolf is opened: the actor playing Kitzberg, who is physically present on the stage during the whole performance, is now shown in another television. With the monotonous voice of a news announcer he tries to dissect the relationship between Estonia and Russia and the circumstances of Russians in Estonia, the most problematic topic in Estonian foreign policy, and by which an attempt is made to evoke a subconscious feeling of guilt among the local populace. Although the speech of Kitzberg/news announcer/politician is buried by the tumult of the party and it is difficult to follow his train of thought, the spectator nevertheless concludes from the political commentary an allusive assertion that the fear of werewolves (Others, strangers) has today changed into the apprehension and hostility towards Russia and Russians, so that "they [Russians? — *A.S.*] must be burnt on the stake

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[1]  The critic Mihkel Mutt (1998) suggested that this can be as a sign for Estonia, referring to the public discussion that was going on.

for the preservation of the blue-eyed [the word also carries a connotation of naiveté — *A.S.*] people as long as they exist". Mounting is one of the most well known and widespread methods for modifying messages ('truth') and manipulating with audiences. This television transmission problematises both the form of the presentation (how does a neutral commentary about a common living-space for different nations turn into a hysterical Nazi manifestation?) and content (for example, where does the vague border between nationalism and Nazism run? In Estonian these words are even more similar: *natsionalism–natsism*).

In any case, the national myth about the slavery of Estonians, lasting for 700 years, is abased in the production through the sublime and pathetic incantation of words by the Grandmother, an ideologist of Estonian ideals and the only light-haired person in the group. Actress Tiina Tauraite (the last name is Lithuanian in origin) recites an anthem for conservativity, patience, long suffering and blood, following the rhythm and melody of Tchaikovsky's "Piano Recital No 1". Compiling Kitzberg's sentences, she is stressing that there is not a drop of foreign blood in our veins, it is pure and there are generations upon generations of light-haired people standing in a line, all of them having suffered greatly. The pathos and exorbitance give the incantation a clearly ironic meaning.

The influence of television as a mediating and manipulative medium comes more clearly to the fore later on in an interview with a countryman whose foal was torn by a wolf. Answering an ambiguous question, "did the wolf resemble a human being", the respondent discusses a pantheistic world-view in which the two are generally quite similar but that a wolf is more beautiful than a man. The reporter summarises the conversation as follows: "It is evident from the testimony of Mr Kaarel Kivest that the wolf who tore the foal was *clearly* a human being. Everyone can draw this conclusion on their own." The retort seems to suggest a freedom for interpretation but still leads the recipient on the path of misunderstanding. There is an obvious parallel with a legal procedure concerning a 77 years old shepherd Gaston Dominici, described by Roland Barthes in "Mythologies" (Barthes 2004: 55–60). Both stories describe a conflict between different linguistic discourses, between ways of thinking and living.

The topic of a time of transitions and a relativization of values is activated several times in this production. Already in the beginning, the half-blind Grandmother/Tiina Tauraite uses the words of Kitzberg:

> [...] the world is full of things that are unreachable to the mind and senses. You watch and watch but you cannot see anything. The old religion/faith made a difference between good and bad: there were evil sorcerers and clever people who knew more than others. The new religion/faith makes no difference, everything is the same — the same kind of witches! But yet some good and bad is concealed underground like little veins of water. Good and bad that do not make sense. (Kitzberg 1969: 10)

The play by Kitzberg offers a general existential, situational and linguistic pattern (it is non-hierarchical and flexible) which has been carried further by cultural institutions and genes. 'Pattern' can be interpreted as a factor of social and cultural stability and continuity but which is also open to certain changes — a pattern can be filled with different substances. Certain structural changes are also possible, although they are strongly resisted. Yet the deconstruction of a pattern confirms and strengthens the vitality of a structure, or at least activates it in the memory and consciousness of a community. The characters/actors of "The Werewolf" rebel against the traditional ending of the play and against the power of the author to direct their lives. Thus Mari and Margus go to the attic to confront Kitzberg, similar to characters from a Pirandello play ("Six Characters in Search of an Author" or "Tonight We Improvise") and demand changes to be made in the conception of characters and that in the end, love would win all social obstacles. Mari/Katariina Lauk declares the failure of the social experiment of testing the suitability of the system described in the play for modern times:

> "The Werewolf" is not written about humans, but about talking dolls. We are like signs that are supposed to mean something and may-be once we did mean something, but not anymore, since everything is changed. The world is not divided into black and white, us and strangers, the Tammaru's people and *urgveelased*, any more. Everything is much more complicated! When dolls revive, everything will change.

Margus protests against the pattern of life and decisions prescribed by his ancestors, he marries Tiina out of passion, instead of rational calculations and prescribed traditions. He shouts at the Grandmother:

"I do not care about your race and brush.[2] We draw new borders, me and Tiina, with the blood of our love. Rammstein!"

The time of transitions also raised questions about the role and structure of theatre in Estonia. Thus the actors in "The Werewolf" are discussing several issues on a meta-theatrical level: are state subsidies for theatre justified, what would happen if one day the system would be turned down, what kind of needs theatre would meet, etc. There is a plenitude of different opinions but the conclusion is that theatre-making is possible without state support and theatre's most important task is to create an emotional contact between people.

We may conclude that "The Werewolf" is an assiduously typical postmodern production, yet these kinds of deconstructive ironical metatheatrical games with a national heritage and cultural myths have been replayed in every single culture, because only in this way can local peculiarities confront global structures.

## "Estonian Games. Wedding" — engagement of cultures

"Estonian Games. Wedding" (for the first time played in 1996, staged by Peeter Jalakas and Priit Raspel) is created on the principles of a computer game and with an authentic Setu female choir "Leiko", six actors and a huge computer screen. Setus, an ethnic group living mostly in south-east Estonia, as well as on the other side of the Estonian-Russian border, have received special attention at home and abroad because of their living folk song tradition and by their special national costumes that clearly differ (at least those of women) both from Estonian and from Russian traditions. Due to several differences in behaviour and life-style, the word 'Setu' has also obtained pejorative connotation and the ethnic group has been often excluded from the original national body.

Estonian folk songs are traditionally divided into two groups: authentic Estonian folk songs that are based on "primary rhyme" (alliterations and assonances) and parallelism of thought; songs with end rhyme were domesticated here through German chorales only in the beginning of the 19th century (Loorits 2000b). Until the 1990s, the

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[2]   Linguistic word play: *suguvõsa* (meaning 'family' in Estonian) = *sugu* (race; sex) + *võsa* (brush) — *A. S.*

old stratification of songs has been more valued than the newer ones, mostly for their authenticity. Folk songs of Setus are based on alliterations and assonances and thus they are considered to be old and original.

Peeter Jalakas has admitted a constant conflict between two different mediums in theatre: human beings and a video screen. He finds that the problem results partly from the collective nature of theatre art — usually one person is responsible for video images, another for stage directions and these two persons and two mediums are rarely working in unison. Ideally video and stage activity should form an integrated whole that mostly depends on the location of the centre of gravity in the production. When the moving picture is alone then its centre of gravity is situated mostly behind the screen, depth of space opens up to the other side of the screen. In theatre the intensive place should be located in front of the screen — the picture must be sufficiently sparse for filling the space between spectators and the screen with energy (Jalakas 2004: 10–11). Speaking about the core of energy on the stage also concerns the centre of the spectators' attention and producers' intentions in directing it.

In "Estonian Games. Wedding" the computer images are insistently flat ethnographic drawings depicting Estonian living conditions through changing times and socio-cultural influences — thus the centre of gravity of the production was meant to be situated in front of the screen and the source of the energy should be the choir of 7 women. But most of theatre critics and other spectators stated that their centre of attention was attached to the screen since most of the information originated from this space. First, verbal information on the screen was written in plain English, contrary to the songs performed in Setu language and actors consciously mumbling their lines in Estonian, probably for imitating naturally spoken Estonian. Second, all of the characters played by the six actors enter the stage through the screen, upon which they are introduced humorously or self-ironically from a national point of view. Third, television and computer game strategies and stylistics were the most familiar for the majority of the spectators. Critic Raivo Kelomees declares in his article "The screen as the main character":

> In the case in question, the screen can be understood as big mother whose apertures are used by actors [the author probably means the characters, for actors are only vehicles — *A. S.*] for arriving to the real reality (stage

conventionality). From here we might proceed to psychoanalytically in-
fluenced discussions about 'sex' of the screen and about stage director as the
'father' whose phallic indicating cursor is moving on the screen... (Kelomees
1996)

But the screen can also be considered as condensed national memory
or knowledge about the historical past that is in part relatively
independent and fixed (facts and chronology) and partly constantly
changing, depending on its human or material carriers, demanding
both retaining and rewriting. A single subject, such as a perceiving
spectator, can never possess the whole information about the national
body but when certain details pop up on/out of the screen from this
discourse he/she as a member of the community knows intuitively its
meaning and significance.

While the informative computer game tell us a story about the
Estonian history from 1130 up to the present day, singers perform
Setu wedding rituals in parallel. Both the narrated history and the
performed wedding can be considered isomorphic — grand narratives
formally based on observing and strengthening the tradition but
concentrating on change and transition by content. But in the
production the diachronic perspective is expressed only in the screen,
on the stage time is almost congealed: a bride is constantly waiting for
her groom, a father wants to match his son, brothers are fighting for
the girl, a war is going on somewhere and one of the brothers has an
obligation to go to the war, and for that reason the girl can not get
married. There are many speculations, derived from a language with
no future tense (Masing 1993: 53) or from the life-style and folklore
(Loorits 2000b: 97) that the epic, future-oriented forms are extraneous
to the Estonian mentality. Thus they concentrate on the present
moment, on descriptions of static situations and feelings.

> Estonians lack the Faustian urge for infinity, the feeling of constant travel and
> change, they do not fight with time in time like an Indo-German. — Instead,
> he lays the time over himself, the future exists only so far as far it can be done
> in the past. Of course, this also is a certain urge for infinity but in another
> form, instead of fighting development, a simple step over the limits/borders of
> time, outside of motion. (Masing 1993: 53)

At last the marriage act is performed in the production but the date
onscreen refers to the future, the year 1998 (the performance analysed
here was recorded on Oct. 31, 1997), or perhaps to the positive and

ever-existing potential for success, not situated in the mythical past or in the dreamed future.

I would like to mention a detail which in a manner questions the topic presented in "The Werewolf". In "Estonian Games. Wedding" the bride represented as a stereotypic figure of an Estonian woman — blonde, charming, smiling, silent, a doll-like being, performed by Kristina Paškevičius (a Lithuanian surname!). The reception of the production in the festival Theater Der Welt in Berlin, an Estonian living in Germany for the 9th year mentions that that the word Estland (Estonia in German) denotes something very blonde and Nordic yet at the same time also something from the East (Kasterpalu 1999). Thus the conventional sign of the bride was probably also supposed to stress to the representational/performative nature of the character in context of the slightly ironic production, yet at the same time it reinforced the stereotype.

In contrast to the bride and the other fictional characters on and in front of the screen, the Setu signers have an untheatrical, perhaps even a natural, but at the same time quite an inward-turned effect on the stage, which is an artificial environment for the singers and not their regular performance space. Therefore constant conflicts appeared on the stage between the artificial (technology, 2-dimensional 'space' on the screen, theatre discourse in general, acting as such) and natural (non-actors, performing rituals, folk songs in an original rendition), new and old, borrowed (technology, theatre as an institution and an art form) and own (songs, dances and rituals, even their originality is questionable). Many people reacted as follows: "They [the Setu singers — *A. S.*] symbolise consistency of the national identity, a self-confident mental strength that still lasts and continues to do so from century to century" (Liivrand 1999). Thus a marginal exotic ethnic group and its peculiar culture became a source for national pride, admiration and partly even identification, although they represented a difference in language, place of residence, lifestyle, worldview, as well as age, compared to most of the spectators. All this happened in a time when Setus themselves had been striving for cultural independence and recognition by Estonians. And this is only one aspect of the complicated notions 'national identity' or 'us *versus* others' in a globalizing and individualising world.

## "Estonian Ballads" — merger of cultures

"Estonian Ballads" (2004), the latest production of the Von Krahl Theatre, uses the techniques of Japanese modern dance, Butoh, for visualising a world-view inherited with ancient folk songs. This became a significant and non-debatable event in the Estonian cultural field, but Peeter Jalakas has confirmed the stability of his intentions and working methods from the end the 1980s, although the means of expression as well as the context of reception have changed (Jalakas 2004: 10). Jalakas reached a level of artistic maturity and perfection already in 2003 when he brought out a post-modern dance production "The Swan Lake" in the Von Krahl Theatre together with Sasha Pepeljajev, famous Russian choreographer.

"Estonian Ballads" unites several different discourses: music for the folkloric ballads was written by the famous 'nationalist' composer Veljo Tormis already in 1980, the production is staged by an avant-garde director Peeter Jalakas, Butoh dancer Aki Suzuki and the well-known conductor Tõnu Kaljuste, the troupe consisted of actors, dancers and singers. "Estonian Ballads" was performed in a huge barn built during the Soviet regime located some 60 kilometres from Tallinn. Whereas the aural side (ballads and music) of the production stressed the archetypical and national topics, the visual level relied almost entirely on Butoh aesthetics: faces and costumes of performers covered with clay, slow minimalist movements, naked bodies, dancing Aki Suzuki etc. Other dancers were carrying the bodily techniques inscribed on them by European/Estonian cultural tradition and training methods but at the same time exposed new, learned technique of Butoh that seemed artificial and strange at the first glance but managed to display some hidden phenomenological qualities of the local pre-Enlightenment society and national/tribal values. Since the ballads chosen for the production mostly represented a female point of view and the main characters were all women, the performances might lead also to feminist interpretations, though this possibility was not realized in the reception process. (Which is in fact characteristic of all three productions analysed here.)

Thus the task and result of the collage of cultures was not some sort of a postcultural production (of course, I can not totally deny the possibility of this reception strategy) where the origin and original meaning of different elements is reduced or forgotten. "Estonian

ballads" might be classified mainly as an intracultural project, proceeding from Pavis' definition, according to which intracultural "refers to the search for national traditions, often forgotten, corrupted or repressed, in order to reassess the sources of a style of performance, to situate it better in relation to external influences and to understand more deeply the origins and the transformation of its own culture" (Pavis 1996: 5–6). Both "The Werewolf" (the version staged in 1998) as well as "Estonian Games. Wedding" can be gathered under this notion because deconstructive strategies were used not for demolition but for revisiting the national cultural heritage.

The conclusion of the analysis of the aesthetics of the Von Krahl Theatre and of staging the Estonian national identity might be asserted in a manner similar to William Butler Yeats almost a century ago — our world is caught between the two eternities of blood and soul, blood: reflecting the tribal past, and soul: anticipating the cosmopolitan future (Segers 2004: 80). But some complicated questions remain in the air: will Estonians manage to remember and value their tribal past (as well as other sources for creating cultural differences), and will they succeed in the preservation of their national body geographically and genetically or will they become a mere display in an ethnographic ghetto/museum.

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## Театр фон Краля переигрывает эстонское культурное наследие

В 1990-е гг., в связи с изменением социально-политической ситуации в Эстонии, произошли сдвиги и в местном национальном идентитете. Если в Советском Союзе эстонский культурный идентитет строился в основном на противопоставлении советского и национального, то в новых условиях эстонцы ощущали свое промежуточное состояние между Востоком и Западом, им вновь нужно было определиться как в смысле национального, так и государственного идентитета в постмодернистском и глобализирующемся мире. В этот период уменьшилась роль национального идентитета в самоопределении эстонцев, важнее стали новые возникающие субгруппы. В художественной практике наступило время национальных мифов и деконструирования классики. Театр фон Краля (первый частный эстонский театр, основанный в 1992 г.) и его художественный руководитель Пеэтер Ялакас в нескольких своих

постановках расследовали культурные мифы эстонцев, противо-
поставляя свое–чужое и старое–новое. В статье анализируются три
постановки Ялакаса: "Оборотень" (1998), "Эстонские игры. Свадьба"
(1996) и "Эстонские баллады" (2004), в которых (во всех трех)
интерпретируются основы национальной культуры.

## Von Krahli teater eesti kultuuripärandit ümber mängimas

1990. aastatel seoses Eesti sotsiaal-poliitilise situatsiooni muutumisega
leidsid aset nihked ka siinses kultuurilises identiteedis. Kui Nõukogude
Liidus oli eestlaste kultuuriline identiteet üles ehitatud peamiselt sovjet-
liku ja rahvusliku vastandusele, siis uutes tingimustes tajuti oma vahe-
pealsust Ida ja Lääne vahel ning tuli taas küsida oma rahvusliku, aga ka
riikliku identiteedi järele (post)moderniseeruvas ning globaliseeruvas
maailmas. Sel perioodil vähenes rahvusliku identiteedi osatähtsus eest-
laste enesemääratlemisel ning olulisemaks muutusid uued tekkivad sub-
grupid. Kunstipraktikas saabus rahvuslike müütide ja klassika de-
konstrueerimise aeg. Von Krahli Teater (esimene Eesti erateater, asutatud
1992) ja selle kunstiline juht Peeter Jalakas on mitmetes oma lavastustes
uurinud eestlaste kultuurilisi müüte, vastandades oma ja võõrast ning
vana ja uut. Artiklis analüüsitakse semiootiliselt kolme Jalaka lavastust:
"Libahunt" (1998), "Eesti mängud. Pulm" (1996) ning "Eesti ballaadid"
(2004), mis kõik tegelevad rahvusliku kultuuri aluste interpreteerimisega.

# Staging national identities in contemporary Estonian theatre and film

*Ester Võsu, Alo Joosepson*

Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu
Tiigi str. 78, 50410 Tartu, Estonia
e-mails: ester.vosu@ut.ee, alo.joosepson@mail.ee

**Abstract**. This paper focuses on the ways in which national identities are staged in recent film and theatre productions in Estonia. We want to complement the prevalent approaches to nationality (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Bhabha 1990), where the role of theatre and film as modellers of national identity are undervalued. *National identity* is a complex term that presupposes some clarification, which we gave by describing its dynamics today; its relation to ethnic identity, a thread between the lived and declared national identities, and the relevance of culture-based national identity. Herein we consider the concept of *staging* to have two implications: (1) as an aesthetic term it incorporates an artistic process, comprising several devices and levels; (2) as a concept in cultural theory it describes cultural processes in which something is set on stage for public reflection. Accordingly, in our analysis we considered national identities in theatre and film *stagings* in both senses. The results of our analyses demonstrated that our hypothesis about emerging new national identities in Estonia was valid, though deconstructed and hybrid national identities are not exactly and absolutely new types of identities but rather strategies of creating space for new identities to develop. A *deconstructed national identity* refers to the state of high self-reflexivity in which the existing elements of national identity are re-examined, re-contextualised and re-evaluated. Further, a *hybrid national identity* demonstrates the diversity and coexistence of the components of national identity. Both strategies of *staging* are characteristic of the transformation of national identities, confirming that a single homogenous *staging* of national identity seems to be replaced by bringing multiple new self-models on stage.

> *Artists help to create and reproduce the very*
> *fabric of national communities*
> *to which they belong, and thereby disseminate*
> *and perpetuate*
> *the idea of the nation itself, its history,*
> *development and destiny.*
> Anthony D. Smith (2000: 57)

> *Scripts and roles, stage management, directing, improvisation*
> *and reflexivity — all function as parameters of national identity*
> Tim Edensor (2002: 69)

In social sciences and humanities today, 'identity' is a complex term, evoking numerous definitions and interpretations. Literally signifying sameness in qualities or conditions between different entities, its diverse contemporary uses make it impossible to find a single satisfying formulation for the concept. In this sort of a situation 'identity' is described through various characteristics, such as constructedness, dynamics, processuality, multiplicity, fragmentation, etc. This contemporary comprehension of the fluidity of identity, however, does not mean that all coherence is lost, instead it underlines the fact that the latter is continually reproduced.

By focusing on the concept of 'national identity', we support the idea that national cultures and identities are not disappearing from the globalizing postmodern world, but instead resist the process of self-destructive fragmentation. In post-soviet countries, including Estonia, the rise of nationality and the need to redefine national identity seems to be a sign of the cultural logic of post-socialism (Annus 2000a: 769–780; Binder *et al.* 2001: 7–9). National identity apparently does not vanish in the European Union nor in other international political and economic associations. Instead, the subject of the national undergoes changes and needs to be redefined in complex systems of contemporary socio-cultural relationships, where identities are processes that "weave together" multiple elements such as "fragments of discourses and images, spaces and times, things and people" (Edensor 2002: 29–30). Finally, it is inadequate to talk about a single national identity today, but of plural national identities; and, of course, national identity in its own turn should be considered within the pattern of other cultural and personal identities of the (post)modern human being.

## 1. National identities in change

Although recent discussions about the changing nature and approaches to national identity have concerned themselves with aspects of popular culture, such as tourism or sports, as well as with less visible forms of "banal" or "popular" nationalism (Edensor 2002; Pretes 2003; Porter, Smith 2004; Billig 1995), we prefer to stay within the more traditional genres of "high" culture, such as theatre and film. First, because we think that distinguished works on cultural nationalism (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Bhabha 1990) have underestimated the role of theatre and film in the processes by which the various forms of cultural expression have been instrumental in helping to construct notions of national identity. In addition, theatre and film as (re)creators of national identity in Estonia have not heretofore been sufficiently studied. Second, theatre and film do not function only as high-culture institutions subsidised and thereby controlled by the state, but because of their communal creation and reception they also serve as public and popular forums for reflecting, discussing and inter-preting national identities. One could say that theatre as well as film facilitate the revelation and exhibition of latent practices and lived identities.

Several criteria can be advanced that distinguish one nation from another (e.g. membership of an ethnic group, shared language, shared culture, shared values, etc.). National identity refers both to these defining criteria as well as to the sense of belonging to a particular group. When distinguishing national from ethnic identities[1], one of their most conspicuous discrepancies is the heterogeneous nature of ethnic culture, whereas national cultures attempt to bring different ethnic traditions under the denominator of one nation[2]. Indeed, it is vitally important for every nation to develop a sense of integrity and to recognize and acknowledge the boundaries that differentiate it from other national cultures. Ethnic and/or national symbols provide good evidence in the process of dissociating "us" from "them" (Edensor 2002: 8) and here both film and theatre have "offered a particularly effective means of conveying notions what is national and what is

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[1]  For the attributes that distinguish ethnic and national identity, see Smith 1991: 14, 21.

[2]  On the other hand, national cultures today are themselves part of a multi-farious world that contrasts with the global tendencies of homogenization.

alien" by considering their "rhetorical and semiotic features" (Wilmer 2002: 1). In the spatial dimension, identity manifests itself in the tension between the poles of the opposition *in-out* and its variants (*me-the other*, *we-the others*), revealing the inherently dialogic nature of identity. In the temporal dimension, identity is about a subject being able to change and remain the same simultaneously (cf. Lotman 1992: 7–8), making the existence of conflicting representations of national identity possible. Thus one can say that in addition to retaining its sameness (traditional core), the capacity to change makes national identity dynamic and thereby viable in the contemporary cultural environment.

Due to its homogenous nature the formation of national culture is mostly based on normative self-models that fit the mental image of national culture in which various phenomena that unfold in the actual cultural process of a community are excluded. Such a unified declared collective identity explicit in self-models of the nation often conflicts with the implicit, lived identities experienced and perceived in the actuality of the cultural everyday life (Edensor 2002; Friedman 1994; Lotman 1990: 128–129; Kotov 2005: 185–188). Therefore a certain tension between the declared and lived identity inevitably remains, "as lived identity is always project, not settled accomplishment" (Calhoun 1998: 27), but in order to sustain and communicate national identity some stable and typical elements in it are inevitable. In Estonia, the conflict between declared and lived identities arises mainly from a tradition that rejects ethnically foreign (primarily German and Russian) and socially unaccepted "others" (e.g. numerous socially challenged rural inhabitants) from the image of national identity and only recently has began to include them. At the same time, lived identities in Estonia have developed within a manifold of alien influences and at this point both the recent disposition towards the deconstruction of traditional self-models and the acceptance of hybridity as an inherent constituent of Estonian national identity are examples of renewed self-models.

It is important to stress here that similarly to many other small nations, Estonian national identity has been primarily culture-based, mostly concerned with engaging in our ethnic heritage (language; values, symbols, myths, narratives; music, folklore, literature; clothing; festivities, etc.) and the creation of new efforts in various cultural practices. *Cultural nationalism* differs from *political*

*nationalism* — whereas the latter has its roots in the modern legal-rational society, the former is first and foremost

> a movement of moral regeneration which seeks to reunite the different aspects of the nation — traditional and modern, agricultural and industry, science and religion — by returning to the creative life-principle of the nation. Its proponents are not politicians or legislators, but are above all historical scholars and artists who form cultural and academic societies, designed to recover this creative force in all its dimensions with versimilitude and project it to the members of the nation. (Hutchinson 1987: 14 — cited in Mäkinen *et al.* 2001: 57–58)

For this reason the key role played by intellectuals (writers, historians, artists, scholars) is often stressed in building national cultures. Creators of national theatre and film productions are part of the group of nation-designers, being members of the very same national community, embodying the same identities, and offering manifestations of these identities in their works, although often unintentionally. Directors may stage particular versions of national identities, suggesting opportunities for identification, but it is the audience who decides whether these models will function as accepted self-models or not. Although the conceptual language of self-models of a nation is usually formed by the elite, national cultural hegemony is not simply an asymmetric process, enforced by cultural leaders to whom the masses are subjected, instead "it must be *achieved,* must offer plausible points of identification" (Edensor 2002: 8).

We have chosen the insider's viewpoint for analysing some of the new self-models and self-representations of Estonians in contemporary theatre and film productions. Our paper focuses on the ways in which national identities are staged in contemporary film and theatre productions, by observing the effects that appear when the established canon encounters artistic interpretation; furthermore, we examine how the emergence of new national identities might be associated with the changing self-models among present-day Estonians.

## 2. Staging national identity

The term *staging* is a relatively uncommon noun in English, and in theatrical discourse the term *production* is usually used instead. However, the latter has connotations that hinder its use as an analytic metaphor, therefore we find *staging* to be more appropriate for discussing the development of national identities. For instance, the German and French equivalents, *Inszenierung* and *mise-en-scène*, both originating form theatre practice, are today used as critical analogies for describing and analyzing various cultural phenomena (Willems, Jurga 1998; Müller-Doohm, Neumann-Braun 1995; Pavis 1992). In fact, differences between the three terms are unsubstantial, as they all refer to (a) putting a play on a stage (by a director) as well as (b) producing or organizing something for a public viewing. Below, we will concentrate both on aesthetic as well as culture-theoretic meanings of the concept.

### 2.1. Staging as a cultural concept

If we consider culture as *staging,* two implications of the concept for contemporary theoretical discourses may be distinguished. One dominant viewpoint associates *staging* of culture with everything that is unauthentic, insincere, simulated and false. The other approach, in similar manner, sees *staging* mainly as the activity of certain ideologically-motivated figures in politics, media etc., with the purpose of manipulating people to think and act in certain ways[3]. A third alternative, suggested by Erika Fischer-Lichte (2004: 17–18) conceives *staging* primarily as a general "descriptive concept" in cultural theory that does not necessarily contain value judgments. This latter sense, in conjunction with a semiotic perspective, sees *staging* as incorporating three actions — setting something/somebody on a stage, performing something/somebody on a stage, and perceiving something set on stage as a signifying model (see Eco 1990: 104–105).

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[3]    From this aspect, the idea of *staging* the nation involves staging it *for* outsiders (e.g. tourists) or observing it from an external point of view (i.e. staging "the other" for "us"); presenting the nation in international events or in the media, and the manipulation of the people by local authorities or elites.

Therefore, the study of *stagings* and *performances*[4] of a culture refers to a "a critical way of grasping how persons choose to present themselves, how they construct their identity, and ultimately how they embody, reflect, and construct their culture". (Fine, Speer 1992: 10 – cited in Ruby 2000: 245)

Thus, we cannot consider staging as a simple and purely asymmetrical and unidirectional ideological form of communication, where actors as well as spectators are manipulated by an omnipotent director. Culture is a collective staging, formed by the cooperation of various intentions; to a certain extent, everyone participates in the staging of a culture, in the processes of rehearsal, performance or in the reception.

## 2.2. Staging as an aesthetic concept

Although theatre is a live and film a technologically mediated art form, and their modes of representation differ in many respects, we consider *staging* to be the uniting concept that refers to the strategies and aspects that are similar in both arts. Film and theatre actually share various common sign systems, such as acting, costumes, props, design, make-up, music, dialogue, etc. Martin Esslin (1987: 23–38) defines fictionality, acting, spectatorship, and synthesis of various arts as characteristics that are inherent in all dramatic media. Both theatre and film derive from "the mimesis of human interaction through its embodiment by human beings assuming the identities of (fictional or real) human beings and presenting this interaction to an audience as

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[4]    The concepts *performance* and *staging* often intermingle in critical discourse, although the former is usually preferred. However, a distinction between them is necessary in the present context, as they stress different aspects of a cultural process: staging indicates the imaginary and performance points to the material, manifested dimension. Staging is not a direct perceivable empirical object, but above all "an object of knowledge, a network of associations or relationships uniting the different stage materials into signifying systems, created both by production (the actors, the director, the stage in general) and reception (the spectators). [...] *Mise-en-scene* as structural system exists only when received and reconstructed by a spectator from the production. [...] The aim is not one of reconstructing the intentions of the director, but of understanding, as a spectator, the system elaborated by those responsible for the production" (Pavis 1992: 25). The study of cultural performances is inevitably related with the analysis of staging – the principles that frame and model the former both in the processes of rehearsal, enactment and reception.

though it was happening at that very moment before their own eyes"
(Esslin 1987: 23–38). Although the devices may differ, the creation
and exchange, representation, and evaluation of identities are always
present in theatre and film. In the following pages we will discuss six
primary meaning-generating choices of *staging* that we will proceed
from later on, in the analysis of four specific stagings in theatrical and
film productions.

*Staging* evolves from two parallel sources: the individual author's/
authors' creation and from a particular cultural context. Often a
written play or some other literary text is the starting point from which
every director proceeds to make his or her concretisations. The very
choice of text itself is the first step in the *staging* process — whether it
is an international or national classic, a contemporary unfamiliar
foreign author, a local infamous celebrity, etc. Choosing the text, or in
a broader sense, material for the scenario, is therefore not a neutral but
an evaluative decision. Reception today is not viewed as an isolated
act. The intertextual world of other cultural texts and previous
interpretations of the same text form an intermedial textual network
which begins to influence the processes of ongoing and upcoming
*stagings*. Furthermore,

> the same texts appear, more or less lightly adapted, in all the dramatic media:
> many leading actors tend to be prominent in all of them; many of the best
> directors and designers work in theatre, film and television and can switch
> from one to the other without undue difficulty. (Esslin 1987: 34–35)[5]

Other important aspects that determine the choice of signs and codes
and refer to the intentions of the creators with respect to future
reception are the choice of a viewpoint (from "outside" or "inside",
for "us" or for "the others") and the genre (comedy, drama, etc.) of a
production. Dominant sign systems and the relations between them are
in the heart of a *staging* as a fictional world; the staging space and the
actors being of utmost importance here.

The actor forms the core of performing arts and is a major element
for the spectator to identify with in the theatrical/film production.
Casting as the process of choosing the actors to perform the roles
therefore involves fundamental questions such as — who will play the

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[5]   This is especially true of the conditions of cultural production in Estonia,
where human resources are rather limited.

main roles and why, how will they play these roles (acting style, appearance, bodily movements, etc.), what is the relationship between the actor's identity and the character he or she embodies?

In the contemporary sense, stage is not just mere setting and decorations, but instead all spatial circumstances and characteristics that influence and shape the movements of the actors, as well as the relationships between the fictional characters and events. Performance places are rarely as neutral as an empty stage or a black-box would be; they are always already saturated with meanings and memories. The objects displayed in stage space often acquire a symbolic and an indexical meaning besides the iconic one.

Finally, from each *staging* a general conception, style, idea(s) and theme(s) hatch that in turn make it possible to return the aesthetic *staging* back to a wider cultural context and thereby the understanding of certain aspects of culture (e.g. national identity) may be cast in a new light.[6]

## 2.3. Staging national identity

The concept of *staging* is equally useful for focusing on a particular aspect of culture, such as national culture. To a certain extent, national identity is always a *staging*, although its concepts and representations might differ inside and outside national culture. National identity as a *staging* evolves from different choices of cultural signs (from national/ethnic heritage as well as from contemporary culture; what symbols, values, ideas become significant; who are the main characters/heroes; what is the setting for a particular staging, etc.) and their combinations, as well as from their "ostension" (Eco 1990: 103), the way they are put on public display and meant to stand for an entire class of objects. *Staging* of a nation is first and foremost

> [...] the analysis of symbolic communication that plays a central role in the apprehension of the collective concept of national identity. [...] Hence the central question is: how the semantics of the national becomes translated and reset in concrete cultural representation and mobilization strategies. Nations

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[6]    This process of interaction between an artistic model and the world — reality as reinterpreted in light of artwork — is described in more detail by Juri Lotman (1967).

are "set on stage" and thereby into the space of experiencing the community as "us" [...]. (Binder *et al.* 2001: 10)[7]

Although in the above quote the *staging* of national identity is underlined as an important strategy for a community to achieve public agreement about who they are, we accordingly want to emphasize the dialogic nature of the process of *self-staging* (*Selbstinszenierung*). Whereas the processes and strategies of self-staging are better explicated in theories of social identity of individuals and minority groups (e.g., subcultures) associated with the public presentation of self, social roles and lifestyles (see Früchtl, Zimmermann 2001: 10–18), we consider it appropriate to pay attention to self-staging in the context of national identity. As indicated above, national identity concerns both certain characteristics and a sense of belonging to a certain group. Proceeding from the Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) and Russian sociologist Leonid Ionin (1996), the phases of *staging* in culture are described as particularly characteristic of societies in transformation (such as Estonia and other post-Soviet countries), where the need to stage new identities is urgent. The process of self-staging can accordingly be divided into two phases: (1) rehearsing the new identity (Goffman's "backstage"), and (2) acquiring and fixing the new identity by performing it (Goffman's "frontstage"). In the second phase the reception of the new identity is equally important — the conceptual base and the ways by which a group will be "known by certain others" (cf. Cohen 1993: 195) is formed here. In conclusion, both *staging* the self in the auto-communication of a national culture as well as the process of dialogic communication with other cultures are needed to establish a developed model of national identity.

Since national identities are always created collectively, it is difficult to pinpoint their precise "director". *Cultural stagings* are embodied practices where the borders between the collectively established "scripts" and individual realizations are not always evident.

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[7] "Bewust sprechen wir von der "Inszenierung" des Nationalen und weisen damit der Analyse symbolisher Vermittlungsformen eine zentrale Rolle für das Verständnis nationaler kollektiver Identitätskonzepte zu. [...] Eine zentrale Frage war daher, wie die Semantiken des Nationalen in konkrete kulturelle Repräsenta-tions- und Mobilisierungsstrategien übersetzt bzw. umgesetzt warden. Nationales wird "in Szene Gesetzt" und dadurch zum Raum für die Erfahrung von Wir-Gemeinschaften [...]" (Binder et al. 2001: 10).

We want to lend our support to the approach that takes agency into active consideration and sees *staging* of a nation not as something external to the people, but as something that unfolds between the interaction of the people (Edensor 2002; Thompson 2001). Unlike in theatre, where explicit individual authorship is valued, the strength of *staging* a national identity lies in its collectivity and heterogeneity — the more coherent the *staging* of a national identity and the more recognizable the position of the director(s), the more ideologically manipulated and asymmetric is the communication of identity.

At this point we would like to remind the importance of differentiating between the political, state-based national identity and cultural identity; we would also like to add the consumable national identity to the list. In the contemporary world, *staging* a nation is more and more often associated with the aim of branding a nation in the global market (especially for touristic purposes), where often an ideal national identity is staged, involving elements such as "generic landscapes and attractions, and promoting particular sites and events" (Edensor 2002: 85). Consumable national identities are often staged in theatre as well as in film productions that are targeted at international audiences. Frequently, the official identity of a nation staged by governmental or business authorities conflicts with the usually much more heterogeneous[8] popular *stagings* and representations of a nation. Some of the significant features of national identity may nevertheless coincide (e.g. in Estonia, the national flag, the national anthem, symbolic landscapes). Accordingly, *staging* self for the others inevitably needs an auto-communicative phase, where various self-models are considered, analyzed and rehearsed.

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[8] Although the project *Brand Estonia*, realized between 2001–2002 and co-ordinated by Enterprise Estonia, wished to distance itself from presenting a new national identity, it still provoked a controversy in Estonia, since it was managed in an asymmetrical way and still touched several aspects of pre-existing national identities. The essential conflict of the project consisted of an ambition to create visual and textual representations that would simultaneously describe what Estonians are *for themselves* as well as how they are seen *by the others*. (See http://www.eas.ee/?id=12 .) See also footnote 25.

## 2.4. Staging national identity in Estonian theatre and film

The problem of representing national identity in theatre and film brings together both the aesthetic and cultural aspect of the concept of *staging*.

National identities are not just mental constructs, their formations and reproductions are still grounded in spatially and temporally rooted "material, performative and representational dimensions of everyday life" (Edensor 2002: 20). In other words, *stagings* operate through concrete and perceptible manifestations that should create preconditions for a common understanding of valid representations of national identity. (Although they may be differently accepted and interpreted among different groups in the same national community.)

Theatre and film productions can be considered as concrete self-representations of national culture. Theatre and film reflect the reality of the culture in which it originates in a sense that it "depicts that reality and presents it in such a depiction" (Fischer-Lichte 1992: 10). Traditionally, theatre and film directors have actively participated in this "project of popular national representation and renewal". They have staged the "ideal of the nation and its historical myths, memories and symbols" mostly in a realistic mode of expression, executing it in "palpable, dynamic forms which are easily accessible to the mass of the 'national' membership" (Smith 2000: 48). The innovative potential of theatre and film in *staging* a nation must be especially stressed in the contemporary cultural situation. Today, national identities as cultural identities are not predominantly determined by the past, although their historical dimension is undeniable; they are undergoing a constant transformation. Present identities are "the different names we give to the different ways we are positioned by and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (Hall 1994: 394). The coexistence of different aesthetics and theatrical/film styles initiates and brings out new alternative strategies of positioning national identities, some of which may be ironic, grotesque, and parodic. The fondness by which such critical positions are adopted stands witness to the strong conventional core of national identity — the persistence of its mythical and archetypical elements that form the basis from which new identities and representations emerge.

Estonians have traditionally employed art culture for the purposes of creating coherence within an imagined community as well as for

claiming political independence and for creating a feeling of resistance against alien occupying cultures. Drama was a powerful tool for awakening the people of the post-romantic period to a common heritage, and to oppose external political and cultural influences (Carlson 1994: 152). By first modelling themselves after Germans and later creating their own original plays and theatre societies, the Estonian cultural elite "awakened the nation" in the second half of the 19th century.[9] During the Soviet occupation, a period of national crisis, theatre in particular functioned as "a political and ideological tool to help reconfigure the nation" (Wilmer 2002: 3); theatre could often fulfil the function of resistance better than film, because its "liveness" made it more difficult to be controlled by Soviet censorship and made it a substitute for the missing free broadcast media. Using a different medium, national film likewise functions as the creator of *stagings* of national identity through choosing

> identifiable national narratives and myths, tradition of particular genres; conventions of acting and characterization (bodily and paralinguistic codes), signs and values carried by national stars, and finally, the audience for whom the film is meant (home, international). (Gledhill 2001 — cited in Edensor 2002: 143–144)

During the Soviet period, several admired comedies in Estonian film turned a number of local star-actors into "national heroes" (who were later identified with the roles they played) and excerpts from their dialogues became popular catch-phrases that still function to create a feel of community among Estonians. From the end of 1980s and 1990s, Estonian film has served as an important enlivener and reappraiser of national history, *staging* themes that could not be dealt with during the Soviet period. Today, art culture has lost its earlier function of resistance, although theatre and film still offer "symbolic stages where national identity can be dramatized, broadcasted, shared and reproduced" (Edensor 2002: 69).

*Staging* national culture in Estonian theatre and film is connected with the question about the relationship between political and cultural national identities. First, theatre in particular, but film as well,

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[9]    The popularity of amateur theatre and theatre going today still testifies to the importance of this medium among Estonians.

function as national cultural institutions that present certain views of a nation, influencing

> the emergence of certain types of texts by legitimizing them and giving them a point of insertion in society. These institutions constitute the main part of the dominant system and ideology, and as such play a central role in the distribution and consumption of cultural texts. (de Toro 1988: 44)

In this sense, theatre as well as film have played an important role in Estonia as institutions of national culture. Second, as an effect of governmental subsidies, a tension between the official and hegemonic, and the alternative artistic interpretations of national identities seems to emerge. In practice, neither theatres nor films that get financial support are expected to make considerable profit themselves; national cultural institutions cannot be strictly market oriented. It should be clarified, however, that in contemporary Estonia, the state of film is markedly different from the theatre system, and this definitely influences the position of film as a medium for representing national identities. Theatres in Estonia have been subsidised by the state from the 1920s onward (although they were turned into national institutions only after World War II) and as an institution theatre is still considered a crucial component of national culture. A poll analysing the consumption of culture by Estonians conducted in 2003 indicated that 53% of the inhabitants visit theatre at least once a year; the number is rather noteworthy, considering that the Estonian population is a mere 1.5 million.[10] Although Estonian film also received state support during the first decade of independence, it soon lost it and remained in an unstable situation until becoming part of the heavily censored Soviet system of film production and distribution. This state-controlled and financed system of studios and network of cinemas crumbled after the collapse of this political system. During the 1990s, Estonia as a developing state lacked resources to finance the local film industry, and consequently domestic film-making went to a decline. The Estonian Film Foundation, established by the government in 1997, is intended to create favourable conditions for the development of national film by financing the creation, production and distribution of professional national film. Nevertheless, the funds available are too limited for the creation of a sufficient number of films and thereby

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[10]    See http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x917&sona=kultuuritarbimise.

ensuring artistic development and diversity (e.g. between 2002 and 2003, the budget was 34,34 million EEK per year[11]). The fact that films from 1960s and 1970s still form a significant component of national identity and that Estonians prefer comedy[12] both on stage and on screen indicates that *staging* of national themes should take this genre earnestly into consideration.

In conclusion, it is not so much the Estonian state that controls what is staged and how; rather, the genres, themes, styles, conceptions, devices, etc. are influenced by the rules of a liberal market economy and consumer preferences of contemporary theatre and filmgoers in Estonia. All in all, the directors still have possibilities to stage alternative, ironic, critical, parodic, etc. interpretations of national themes and characters. For the object of our analysis, we chose new *stagings* of national identity that deviate from the traditional — four theatre productions and films from 2002–2003 whose identity strategies can be considered as deconstructed and hybrid. Only the first one of them "Estonian funeral" deals explicitly with Estonian national identity. In the other 3 stagings the question of national identity is implicit and its crucial role in the formation of the conceptual system of the staging has to be explicated through analysis.

## 3. Deconstructed national identity

To be able to deconstruct, one first has to realize that something is constructed. To specify which of the multiple meanings of the concept "deconstruction" is employed here, some references to classic definitions are necessary. Deconstruction started out as a label for a specific way of "reading" and criticizing philosophical texts, first initiated by Jacques Derrida, but the uses of the concept have proliferated during the past few decades (see Norris 2003: 134–135). For the purpose of our analysis we take as a starting point the widest categorisation of deconstruction as an "intellectual strategy" (Culler 1983: 85) that has significantly influenced the creation of the subsequently analysed theatre and film texts.

Identity as a mental construct relies extensively on hierarchical oppositions of differently valued categories (in–out, self–other, us–

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[11] See www.efsa.ee.

[12] See http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x917&sona=kultuuritarbimise.

them, now–before, normal–abnormal, city–countryside, etc.). In the present context, deconstruction does not directly refer to the reversal of the hierarchies in a Derridaean sense; instead, it opens up developmental perspectives for national identity, forcing one to acknowledge the constructedness of the prevailing identity, making it questionable and thereby creating space for the emergence of new identities. The dichotomous categories can be criticized and their repressive power can be decreased by inserting them into new contexts (for instance, artistic texts), where their inner contradictions and unjustified, arbitrary values become explicit. An important part of tracing this questioning is the critical examination of theatrical and filmic representations (more specifically, the key signifiers of *Estonianness*) that embody the conceptual oppositions.

Other strategies also exist that use different techniques for similar purposes, such as "demythologisation" or "demystification", as Roland Barthes (1957) has employed them to criticize the "naturalness" of secondary meanings of cultural signifiers. We prefer the term "deconstructed identity", since it refers to the whole complex domain of questioning national identity, which is not based solely on myths.

A parodic mode of textual production is one such deconstructive strategy, applied to stagings analysed later in this paper. Parody includes any cultural practices that provide a relatively polemical, allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice (Dentith 2000: 9). Humorous effect arises from the displacement of recognized textual elements into a new context, making them conflict with the expectations of the spectator. (A single film or theatre performance can simultaneously parody, that is imitate allusively and polemically, several other cultural texts or practices). Usually, this polemical moment urges the recipient to reconsider his/her reading of and attitude towards the parodied texts or practices, including the values and identities conveyed by them.

Deconstruction of national identity accordingly consists of a specific interpretation of canonical texts (e.g. presenting stereotypical self-models) of national culture that entails the dismantling of conceptual and hierarchical oppositions in those texts, bringing out the repressed and silenced aspects which, when explicit, render the text paradoxical, self-contradictory and thereby decrease its authority. This deconstruction does not necessarily have to be done "in a spirit of game-playing nihilist abandon and without the least concern for

constructing a better alternative" (Norris 2003: 135). An ethically responsible deconstruction is possible.

It has been noted that in Estonia, a former socialist country, the essentialist concept of national identity is still preferred to constructivist approaches (Sevänen 2004: 50–51). This preference is prevalent mainly among the older generation of Estonian intellectuals, who have felt a crucial need to preserve the national past. However, during the 1990s, a younger generation of Estonian researchers has welcomed postmodern theories concerning the constructedness and mutability of identity, social reality and national community (Annus 2000b: 115–130; Viires 2004: 130–139). The postmodern perspective has influenced not only the critics but also the creators of artistic texts, encouraging them to deconstruct the commonly held perceptions of *Estonianness* that emphasize historical narratives, ethnic heritage, etc. in national identity.

## 3.1. "Estonian Funeral"[13]

"Estonian Funeral" ("Eesti matus") is based on a recent play by Andrus Kivirähk (2002), a writer of the younger generation, who has already achieved a cult status in Estonia today. He is prolific in a variety of genres, from newspaper columns and pamphlets to dramas and novels, as well as co-hosting a hilarious, socially critical radio talk show. For him, national history serves as fictional material for creating new fiction — tales and myths that (re)construct our popular national consciousness. The primary devices employed by Kivirähk are parody, irony and the grotesque, which he applies to national stereotypes and common clichés well known to most Estonians. "Estonian Funeral" is probably one of his most successful dramatic texts, with its excellent comic characters and, as with all good comedies, a bitterly serious dimension as well.

Although the dramatic situation — a funeral where various relatives meet again after a long separation — is one of the most viable archaic rituals in all cultures, the topics and problems that emerge in the present text are for the most part specifically related with Estonianness. This claim is grounded on the fact that "Estonian

[13] Premiere: June 8th, 2002, Estonian Drama Theatre. Text: Andrus Kivirähk. Director: Priit Pedajas. Scenographer and costume designer: Pille Jänes.

Funeral" is a parody of the epopee "Truth and Justice" ("Tõde ja õigus") by the most distinguished national writer Anton Hansen Tammsaare, who through his writings offered a model of national values for many generations of Estonians.

The staging in the Estonian Drama Theatre sets the play into a stylized backyard of the deceased grandfather's old farmhouse. The central element of the scanty stage design is a huge stack of firewood that functions on several levels, referring both to the practical and the symbolic. Firewood, especially in the countryside, but also for many urban dwellers, is still the main source for heating. Buying, chopping and piling firewood are familiar activities for most Estonians. These practices are also displayed on stage — the axe is a significant prop. The end of the stack disappears into distance, symbolising the never-ending need to work in a farmhouse. In the scenography, the stack restricts the fictional world the audience can see — most of the action takes place in front of the stack and one can only guess as to what lies beyond. On the other hand, this is a place in a periphery, hidden form the neighbours' gazes, suitable for solving family problems or even a nice place for a garden party. Similarly, the location of Estonia in the European Union is comparable with the fictional place in the staging of "Estonian Funeral" — somewhere behind a stack of firewood.

The main theme both in the play and in the staging is a parodic representation of the Estonians' work ethic, powerfully described in the aforementioned novels by Tammsaare, something that is accepted at face value by most Estonians — "work hard and love will come". The most commonly accepted self-description states that Estonians are a laborious people and because of this they survived all difficulties in the past and are going to survive them in the future. "Estonian Funeral" shows us several different types of workaholics, who are created by using well-known cultural and theatrical stereotypes. Grotesque or freakish types are created by the costumes and make-up of the actors. The bodily shapes of some female characters are exaggerated, stressing the stereotypical figure of an Estonian mother who can support three children and a husband, who is either a duffer or a drunkard. In general, the characters and aesthetics of the staging embody the very essence of a popular comedy (e.g. situation comedy), resulting in tours to various different locations in Estonia and is a guarantee for full houses even today. However, in spite of the plenitude of comic situations and characters, the general message of

"Estonian Funeral" is far from funny; quite the contrary, it is very tragic, but it replies to painful national memories with a liberating laughter. Critical reception has called it a refreshing "national therapy" that offers a possibility for comic distancing from the painful memories and taken-for-granted national values (Vellerand 2003: 137).

We can observe the older generation (mother and father) in "Estonian Funeral" who for most of the time live and work in town, but nevertheless do several farm jobs in their parents' household — potato planting and harvesting, berry-picking and cooking jam, etc. At a first glance, the middle-aged businessman (uncle) with his career-making wife are the exact opposites of mother and father, but in fact their labour-mania is just directed into other channels — office work till late hours. Even their holidays pass as hard work — from training to sailing and riding etc, etc. The majority of the characters form a group subjected to the protestant work ethic.

The protagonist and supposedly the alter ego of the playwright — young Andres (Jan Uuspõld) — is an ambivalent character, who also performs the role of the antagonistic narrator. He argues against this deeply rooted workaholism and has a "geopathologic" (Chauduri 1995) relationship with his grandfather's farmstead. For his parents, this household is a locus of various obligations, for his uncle and his wife it is a pastoral area, a good place for a brief vacation. For young Andres, his topophobia stems from unpleasant childhood memories, when he was forced to work in this farm during summertime. The grandfather's old farmhouse becomes a symbol of national labour-worship and repression. This place has lost its value for Andres and the only reasonable solution for him is to sell the house (cf. Chekhov's "Cherry Orchard"). For the characters of the older generation in "Estonian Funeral", the father's "home is the foundation of [their] identity as individuals and as members of a community"(Relph 1976: 39). Andres wants to escape his grandfather's farm, because he defines it as a "house" and not a "home" and believes that selling it helps to erase his memories and prevent him from becoming like his parents and relatives. Selling homesteads as a result of lifestyle changes is a painful problem for rural inhabitants in contemporary Estonia, especially in the western part of the country and the islands, where many households are inhabited by new owners from Finland or Sweden. Homogenous rural communities are decaying, most new-

comers stay only for seasonal vacations. Declared national identities (e.g. Estonians — the hardworking farm people) are more stable and in this case they conflict with the real new lived identities.

## 3.2. "The Old and the Bold Get on Their Feet"[14]

The Estonian feature film with an international distribution title *Made in Estonia* (2003) is a parodic comedy (with elements of travesty, drag and slapstick humour) that aims to be funny and serious at the same time, having a tragicomic and also some bittersweet tonality in it. The original Estonian title — *Vanad ja kobedad saavad jalad alla* (a literal English translation could be "The Old and the Bold Get on Their Feet") — summarises the characters and the storyline in a nutshell.

"The Old and the Bold" is a well-known and rather popular trademark in the Estonian cultural scene. The project started as a radio show of comic sketches (by two male radio DJ-s who are not professional actors), followed by a series of TV sketches and eventually summer tours of open-air performances around the country. The film was a logical next step in the production chain, but it entailed a new challenge for the script writer, director and the two actors (the same former radio DJ-s) behind the TV serial. A much longer, more nuanced and multilayered story (compared to the TV or radio series format) had to be created for a viable feature film. And the storyline had to be comprehensible for a foreign audience as well.

The fictional world of the film models present day Estonia, the locations and landscapes are easily recognizable. So for an Estonian audience a close connection with the real space is established from the outset. There are two opposite surroundings where the action is set: the capital city of Tallinn vs. the peripheral, "in-the-middle-of-nowhere" countryside of southern Estonia. In the fictional world there are two levels (i.e. a fiction within fiction device): the level of the two radio DJ-s (that serves as the "real" in comparison with the second level) and a world created by their imagination in the live comic sketches they create through voice-acting. On the first level the characters are realistic in their appearance and behaviour. On the

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[14]   Premiered in 2003. Script: Peep Pedmanson. Director: Rando Pettai. Cinematographer: Mait Mäekivi.

second level the characters are qualitatively more exaggerated and stereotypical — their costumes, make up, the props (especially vehicles as lifestyle markers) mock certain genuinely existing Estonian stereotypes by developing their distinct characteristics to their extremes.

The main character of the story is Väino (Henrik Normann), who belongs to the second level of fiction and is a dedicated bachelor in his fifties, living in the capital. His misfortunes — loneliness, being evicted from his home, given a substitute house in the countryside far away from the capital — and his adaptation in the new environment form the pivot of the storyline. His feckless, reserved, misogynist behaviour mocks and enacts one of the ironic Estonian self-descriptions: "hot (i.e. passionate) Estonian men". A common conception of an Estonian male is that they are careless, lack passion, are uncomplimentary, etc. Väino's fate mirrors in an inverse way that of the radio DJ Norm (Henrik Normann), who creates Väino. Norm is a young man from the countryside who does not have a home in the city — he stays overnight in the radio studio where he works. Both men are lonely, searching for a home and secretly yearning for love. In the end, Väino gets both — he sells his unwanted rundown homestead to NATO who plans to build an airport on those lands. Afterwards Väino moves to a fancy villa (the surrounding landscape of which is unknown) with the girl he fell in love with. This resolution implies a subtle parody of an Estonian cliché: as a rule a man with a house must have a wife. Having accidentally acquired enough money, Väino literally buys the villa and in a less direct sense also buys a wife, thereby conforming to the commonplace dream cultivated by today's consumer culture. "'Home' has indeed become a marketable, exchangeable, and sentimentalised good." (Relph 1976: 83). But he does not acquire a new identity through this purchase because "home is not just the house you happen to live in" (Relph 1976: 39). Contemporary identity construction foregrounds the personality (with his/her biography, appearance, world view, etc.) that determines the home rather than the other way around. However, Väino's external signs of success work as a psychological compensation mechanism for Norm, who more or less remains a loser. "Norm" is not normal at all as the name seems to suggest, which creates a comic ambiguity.

Casting is especially significant in this film, since the two male actors play a total of six main characters. They play "themselves" on

the first level of fiction as radio DJ-s Norm (Henrik Normann) and Mill (Madis Milling). On the second level of fiction they both impersonate one male and one female character. For the Estonian spectators both actors are generally known only through these two characters they impersonate in the TV series and in the film. Therefore there is a very strong disposition to identify the actor with this particular character, thereby creating an easily recognizable, fixed and stable role. All the devices for role creation an actor can employ to "transform" oneself into the character — use of voice, body (gestures, plastics, movement in space), mimics, make-up, costume — contribute to the creation of colourful, grotesque and exaggerated types — i.e. amplified stereotypes, which in their more moderate form have a clear position in the popular self-models of the community.

The conceptual strategy of world-making that can probably first and foremost be attributed to the director, script writer and cinematographer is derived from parody. It imitates and comments on several other cultural texts and practices. The most evident targets of the parody are soap operas and sitcoms. Even the Estonian title pattern "The Old and the Bold..." is a subversive allusion to the titles of soap operas such as "The Bold and the Beautiful". Two US critics[15] also easily recognize the soap opera mode, although they naturally miss the allusion in the original title, lost in the English translation. The constant presence of humour-evoking travesty or drag element (men playing women, comparable to the classical movie "Some Like It Hot") disrupts the common sitcom-type fictional world which this film would otherwise plainly imitate. It "lowers" these two popular genres even more through parody and invites the Estonian audience prone to watching sitcoms and soap operas to reconsider its attitude towards these genres and to develop a more critical spectator-relation to their daily media content.

The general theme of the film is the sensitive issue of home and more specifically the relation to the land and countryside landscape

[15] Barnes, Harper 2004. 'Made in Estonia' isn't quite an export quality film. Post-Dispatch 01/02/2004. http://newhomes.stltoday.com/stltoday/entertainment/reviews.nsf/0/D8FB0E597F91CD6C86256E0E0018FD4F?OpenDocument&Headline='Made+in+Estonia'+isn't+quite+an+export+quality+film (access date: 15.10.2005); Felperin, Leslie 2003. Made In Estonia. *Variety.com*. December 3. http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117922555?categoryid=31&cs=1 (access date: 15.10.2005).

which in the stereotypical and canonical Estonian self-description is the true site of an Estonian home (i.e. a farmhouse surrounded by fields and forests) which is one of the core elements of traditional national identity. The usual direction of population movement in present-day Estonia is away from the countryside and increased suburbanization. Väino's route is exactly the opposite. This alone suffices to make him an "inverted" hero, since he, albeit unwillingly, acts against the common mentality. Still, according to the declared (but no longer lived) national identity, his return to the countryside would be a positive example. This turns him into an ambiguous hero, since most urbanized Estonians seem to long in their hearts for a true home in the countryside. Owning a house signifies a high social status in Estonia. But Väino's house is on the brink of breaking down and more a source of problems than pride.

## 3.3. Lonely Hero and the Problematic Question of Home

We now present a brief comparison of the *stagings* of national identities performed in "The Old and the Bold..." and "Estonian Funeral". In the former, the main character Norm/Väino is a loser, who normally evokes a distanced and ironic attitude, but due to the severity and tragedy of his problems (solitude, homelessness), a sympathetic identification with him emerges for Estonians (see Jauss 1977: 271–277). The response of the foreign audience perhaps stayed more on the ironic side. The US critics, for example, did not notice the specific issue of solitude associated with the problems of land and home.[16] The fictional hero, Väino, is a survivor-type, and follows the comic life strategy; with his adaptability and ability to turn chance occasions in his own favour, he seeks to resolve his problems with a minimum of suffering (Meeker 1997: 14–15). The real character, Norm, employs a strategy of escapism, finding consolation in the fictional characters he creates for the radio-show. The protagonist of "Estonian Funeral", Andres, tends to be a rather tragic anti-hero, and in this sense he is similar to Norm. Andres is haunted by uncanny memories, surfacing from the depths of the national subconscious. As a protagonist he remains dramaturgically weak — his moralistic commentaries distance and perplex the spectators. The only perspec-

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[16] See fn. 15.

tive he offers is an improbable wish to escape to a "far-away land where the orange trees grow", a place where there is no need to do any work. The familiar workaholics from the national stereotype remain more alive and genuine, and provoke laughter through parodic exaggerations.

In the two considered and analysed stagings, the element of traditional peasant culture is still intrinsic to the national self-descriptions, foregrounding the deep love-and-hate relationship with the land. Relations with the homestead are central to both of these texts. The image of home presented in them is a combination of ideal and real places. "Estonian Funeral" and "The Old and the Bold..." are both informed by "geopathology", i.e. the "problem of place — and place as problem" (Chaudhuri 1995: 55), through the ruptures that occur in the character — homestead relations. In the former Andres and in the latter Norm/Väino share a similarly dislocated connection with the traditional home in the countryside. The texts loosen the sacred bonds with the homestead by applying parody as a deconstructing technique that reveals the suppressed contradictions and anxieties. Similarly, as a deconstructive critique in general, it attacks essentialist philosophical concepts (see Hall 1996a: 3–4). These *stagings* disclose the relativity of the taken-for-granted national values. Nevertheless this strategy does not amount to the destruction of traditional national values. It only shows their inadequacy in the contexts of rapidly changing Estonian lifestyles and the corresponding everyday lived identities.

Finally, both "Estonian Funeral" and "The Old and the Bold..." function as forms of national therapy, saturated by self-irony. They reflect the multiplicity and contradictions of Estonian identities today. It is remarkable that the creators of both artistic texts have an ethical concern — they care about the issues they stage. Therefore, the laughter that arises in the audience does not serve just an entertaining but also a cathartic function.

## 4. Hybrid national identity

In 20th century cultural theory, concepts of hybrid cultures, hybrid identity and hybridization are often associated with ethnically mixed identities, issues of linguistic mingling, etc. Hybridity has assumed a central position in postcolonial and globalization discourses, referring

to the contact between two or more cultures (between the self and the Other) and the formation of new transcultural forms (Hall 1996b; Bhabha 1994; Young 1995). Cultural hybridization may be generally defined as a situation "when an individual or a group is exposed to and influenced by more than one cultural context" (Oyserman *et al.* 1998: 1607); it is linked with the adaptations people undergo while moving from one cultural context to the other.

In addition, the concept of hybridity has received theoretical treatment in cultural semiotics through an engagement of hybridity with the descriptions of interference between cultural languages. Mikhail Bakhtin, an influential figure for postcolonial theory, uses the term 'hybridization' to describe the textual encounter of two or more "consciousnesses, separated from one another by epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor" (Bakhtin 2001: 358). Juri Lotman furthermore stresses that in order to stimulate the development and generation of new meanings in a culture, the intervention of a foreign element becomes crucial (Lotman 1991: 290–291). Hybridization (or creolization) of cultural languages consists in the process whereby the principles of one cultural language begin to model the principles of the other in spite of extensive differences between their grammars. 'Hybridization' is characteristic of periods of cultural change. Culture evolves through the stages of hybridization (creolization) and homogenization (Lotman 2002: 2652). Sooner or later hybridization ends with the formulation of a new homogeneous self-model of a culture.

The concept of 'hybridization' is far from being unproblematic, because once one states that "all culture is a hybrid, and hybridization is universal" (Papastergiadis 1995: 9), the concept may lose its explanatory potential. Although the postcolonial treatment of 'hybridization' focuses its attention on the colonial antagonism and inequity, the aspect of new hybrid identity, stressed by Homi Bhabha, questions the essentialist approach to culture and identity. The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is always reciprocal and ambivalent (Bhabha 1994). In everyday life people are usually not consciously aware of the hybrid nature of the culture they live in, because internalized cultural self-descriptions stress the homogeneity of national culture, which in the case of Estonia seems to be built on a seemingly "uncorrupted core" that has remained the same in spite of multifarious foreign influences and colonisations. It should be evident

that no national culture can identify itself without certain "others" and in an evolving dialogue partners change and influence each other mutually. We would like to stress that hybridity exists in ethnically "pure", "homogeneous" groups (e.g. Estonians) as well, and to show how different levels of hybridity relate to national identity.

Ever since its conscious cultivation, Estonian national culture has been shaped by strong influences of German and Russian culture (19th century), later also by other European and Soviet cultural models and languages. Estonian culture has undergone multiple phases of intensive hybridization and can therefore be justifiably labelled as hybrid and creole (Hennoste 2003: 92–93), although many of the borrowed and adapted elements are now considered to be genuinely Estonian.

Forming a hyphenated,[17] hybrid identity allows the person to adopt an integrative acculturation strategy (cf. Berry *et al.* 1977: 132) that fosters active participation in the public life of the society. The official Estonian historiography has silenced the ethnic diversity for the sake of projecting a homogeneous national identity, based to a great extent on the Estonian language, which is in fact full of loans and adapted speech patterns. This protective strategy of national self-description is constantly challenged in the contemporary media environment where "interpretive communities use the media to create new, interstitial identities that are linked to "official" cultural identity, but also linked to the images culled from international film and television, and to international and regional cultural movements."(Olson 2002) In contrast to the official discourse of historians and politicians, the artists have to a greater extent dealt with the actual diverse legacy of inter-cultural influences and mixtures that underlie the lived identities of the Estonian national community today. Through this disruption of homogeneity, the dynamics of and ability to adapt flexibly with a culture are celebrated and stimulated.

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[17]  "Hyphenated identity" refers to a specific type of ethnic identity which relies on connecting two different ethnic origins (languages or cultures or regions) and claiming to hold more or less equal allegiance to both (e.g., Latin–American, Japanese–Canadian, African–American).

## 4.1. "Goodbye, Vienna"[18]

Because of certain historical developments, it is the Germans who have traditionally been the "hostile foreigners" for Estonians.[19] The colonizing relation of German culture with Estonian culture consists of the aggressive Christian mission by the Teutonic Order (*Deutscher Orden*) into the present-day territories of Estonia during the 13th century, the establishment of a new administrative division here, and turning local peasants into subalterns of recently settled German landlords. The mutual but asymmetrical influence of the two cultures lasted for seven centuries. Since both Estonian and Baltic German culture evolved on a shared territory, they are both hybrid cultures. Nevertheless, national narratives created in Estonian literature and especially in national-ideologically inclined historiography have strongly supported the commonplace myth of Estonian (ethnic) culture that has preserved its „authentic core" in spite of all the foreign influences. When the Estonian nationality was formed in the last decades of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th century, Baltic Germans were the Other opposed two whom Estonian identity was constructed; Estonians used the colonizer's culture to create their own (Annus 2000b: 123). The Estonian national movement was initiated by Baltic German Estophiles and many national cultural forms (e.g., the foundation of numerous song, drama and literary societies, creation of national poetry, etc.) were directly created on the basis of German models. Those hybrids are nowadays unconditionally accepted as part of national culture. At the turn of the 21st century, many Estonian intellectuals have stressed the importance of German influence in the formation of Estonian culture as part of the European cultural space, and have begun research that focuses on these bilateral cultural connections, especially in literary texts (see Lukas 2004). Whereas in Estonian literature the narrative representations of Baltic Germans are quite varied, visual representations of them in theatre and film seem to be rare and relatively stereotypical.

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[18] Premiere: August 20, 2002, Tartu Theatre Lab. Text: Jaan Undusk. Director: Tõnu Lensment. Scenographer and costume designer: Silver Vahtre.

[19] In this particular context, „German" and „Estonian" are used as conventional labels for those communities that dwelt on the territories of present day Germany and Estonia and shared a common way of life, language and belief system.

Jaan Undusk, the author of the drama "Goodbye, Vienna. (Gertrud)" (published in 1999), has a twofold position with respect to the aforementioned context. He is both a creator of fictional texts and an outstanding literary researcher who at present leads a research project that focuses on the creation of the narrative of Estonian identity. Undusk has actively studied Baltic German literary and historical heritage and wants to bring this cultural Other into the focus of attention by showing how contemporary Estonian culture has developed from this interrelationship, as well as how the waning Baltic German culture today shares a common environment with the Estonian culture. Examples of this long-established co-evolution that has formed the foundation for hybrid identities are the common Baltic solidarity and a shared land history (Undusk 2002, Undusk 2000, Undusk 1993). All these research interests are reflected in "Goodbye, Vienna". Undusk is also the translator and commentator of Friedrich Nietzsche's "Ecce homo" into Estonian, so the thematic richness of the drama can already be foreseen. "Goodbye, Vienna" was staged in august 2002 as a production of Tartu Theatre Lab (Tartu Teatrilabor), directed by Tõnu Lensment.

The fictional time-space of the drama is set in Vienna in the 1990s, more precisely in August of 1991; the premiere on the 20th of August coincided with the day the Estonian national statehood was restored. The staging took place in a multi-layered symbolic space in Tartu — in the ruins of old Dome Church (built in the 13th to 16th century), originally one of the biggest gothic cathedrals in the Baltic states. The performance took place in the reconstructed chorus-part of the building, where the History Museum of the University of Tartu resides today. This building has another important role in the Baltic German and Estonian intellectual history — for more than a century it functioned as the Tartu University Library. Therefore the audience can find various strata of cultural past in this architectural space as the "condenser" of public memory (cf. Kotov 2002). In accordance with the fictional space in acts two and three (inside St. Stephens Cathedral in Vienna) the performance moves vertically from the hall to the attic of the Dome Church. At the same time the spectators feel the heightened sacredness of being surrounded by the soundscape of the church bells and organ music and the smellscape of frankincense candles. The result of the meeting of "foreign" (St. Stephens Cathedral in Vienna) and "own" (Tartu University History Museum) creates an

estranged hybrid effect — the fictional space conjures up the latent dimension of the real space, its very primal sacral dimension.

The casting of the main roles was of utmost importance in the staging of "Goodbye, Vienna". Nietzsche was played by Tõnu Oja, an actor in his late thirties with a bohemian image, with something naturally hesitant in his behaviour. An outgrown haircut and coarse moustache emphasize his peasant-like look. Gertrud, on the other hand, is performed by Merle Palmiste, a charming actress who is dissimilar from a stereotypical Estonian woman. She is a tall brunette, with a beautiful figure, in her early thirties. Both actors are well-known, Palmiste especially is a beloved celebrity who performs in various media.

The Estonian connection in "Goodbye, Vienna" becomes evident from the very first act, where the characters discuss their origins. At first glance, the protagonist Adolf Nietzsche seems to have nothing Estonian about him. His name is a combination of two infamous names in German history — Adolf Hitler and Friedrich Nietzsche. The trick lies in a clever anagrammatic word-play where the transformation of letters changes "Nietzsche" to "Estnische" (*adj.* Estonian) (Kraavi 2002). Therefore we may define Nietzsche as a "crypto-ethnic" (Hutcheon 1998: 28–33) Estonian whose name does not tell us anything about his ethnic origin. Although he is an Estonian, Nietzsche's national identity is somewhat uncertain. He is a contemporary young intellectual, a "postmodern pilgrim" — to paraphrase Zygmunt Bauman (cf. 1996: 19–23) — whose "desert" is the academic sphere and who, thanks to various scholarships, spends a considerable amount of his formation years in different (European) universities.[20] But unlike for a vagabond (see Bauman 1996: 28–29), the idea of a home(land) is still important for him. We can therefore ask: is Nietzsche really even an Estonian academician, an Estonian philosopher? We can speak about asymmetric power relations between different philosophical traditions and also about a certain hybridity that emerges when foreign ideas are translated into a particular national language (culture). In today's international

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[20] This is an allusion to Young Estonia (1905-1915), a movement of Estonian intellectuals, the members of which declared that they are Estonians but want to become Europeans. Many of its members educated themselves in European cultural centres such as Paris, Vienna, etc. The few Estonian intellectuals before the end of the 19th century were assimilated into the Baltic German culture.

philosophical space, important national traditions function as empires
that possess international prestige, and their peripheral colonies lack
wider acknowledgement (Schusterman 1997: 297).

During the German influence, many of their ideas were adopted in
Estonia, but did they move in the opposite direction as well? Do
national traditions exist in philosophy at all? Two different concep-
tions of nationality in philosophy can be proposed — one considers
national to be the particular regional institutions or organisations (e.g.
universities), whereas the other seeks the more metaphysical content
of a nation's way of thinking. In "Goodbye, Vienna" the question is
not so much about schools of philosophy (even though there are
numerous allusions to Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, etc.), but rather about
philosophizing in the sense of playing with thoughts. The latter is
specifically national or ethnic, because it originates from native
language, it is possible only in this particular language and is
untranslatable.[21]

Foremost in "Goodbye, Vienna" is the linguistic space, which
seems to support the belief/argument that the Estonian language forms
the very basis of national identity. Most of the characters are Baltic
Germans but they speak Estonian for the audience. The dramatic text
is full of untranslatable wordplays. For example, the central game
repeatedly reformulated by Gertrud is supported by an acoustic
similarity of two words: *vabadus* (freedom) can at any moment turn
into *labasus* (banality). The Sapir–Whorf hypothesis of linguistic
determination is paraphrased by Gertrud when she says: "I don't
understand it [Estonian], but I know that it is my mother's tongue that
sits in my flesh and bones. [...] If I don't speak Estonian, then perhaps
I look in Estonian, perhaps I hear and smell in Estonian?" (Undusk
1999). "Goodbye, Vienna" as a unilingual play that contains various
cultural languages. Here one can find the complex philosophical
discussions inspired by Nietzsche and Wittgenstein side by side with
the vulgarities of everyday discourse. Both the ancient Baltic German
culture and culture of young Estonian intellectuals are represented
here, etc.

In 1991 it was still rather unusual for a young Estonian scholar to
have a chance to study abroad. Nietzsche has only three days to spend
in Vienna and he is so caught by the city that the news brought by an
acquaintance, the young Baltic German countess Gertrud — "Estonia

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[21]   We wish to thank Peeter Torop for this comment.

is in a revolution, yesterday they declared independence" — hits his national nerve as an embarrassing surprise. He is disappointed that this historical event happened while he was away. Both Nietzsche and Gertrud are actually alien in Vienna and paradoxically they share a common homeland — Estonia (*Estland*). Though Gertrud has never visited Estonia, she and her relatives constantly stress that they are representatives of the "Baltic spirit". When Gertrud wants to tease Nietzsche, she calls him "a German" or "the son of a reverend".[22] In this play/staging, Nietzsche is in a complicated position; he is invited to the "parlour of the Teutonic Order" where he would be forced to share both the common history and the common present with strangers (Baltic Germans) in a strange country (Austria). His host, baron von Middendorf calls the independence of Estonia "the last great event in the Baltic German history" and stresses that there would have been no national sovereignty if there had been no Baltic German barons who "embodied freedom in the Russian state".[23]

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[22] There is a double connotation here. First, of course, Friedrich Nietzsche was the son of a minister. "Protestant reverend" in the most common sense refers to conservatism. Second, German reverends as representatives of colonizers were ambivalent persons in the history of Estonia, "culturalizing" Estonian peasants and later became interested in Estonian language and culture through translations of clerical texts. However, there is a possibility that already before the protestant reformation reached the Estonian territory, some Estonians may have become members of the clergy themselves, because theological education was the most readily available for vernacular people and served as an universal humanitarian education during those times. It is difficult to tell whether Estonian reverends were hybrid persons for other Estonians because they were now part of the culture of colonizers, or because of their position in the social hierarchy they no longer shared the grassroots position of Estonian peasants.

[23] Middendorf's words once again refer to many historical aspects. It was the Baltic German community that brought the ideas of German national romanticism into Estonia in the 19th century. The Estonian national awakening movement adopted many forms of German culture, giving them a national-Estonian content. "Russian state" here signifies both the Russian Empire in the turn of the 19/20th centuries and the Soviet occupation from 1940–1991. This delicate hint is explicable only for Estonians who stayed in their homeland after World War II, satirizing those Estonians who emigrated and after the events in August 1991 overemphasized their role in restoring the independence.

## 4.2. "Agent Wild Duck"[24]

Although the international title of the Estonian film "Agent Wild Duck" ("Agent Sinikael", 2002) invites an association with the parodic and comic instances of the spy thriller genre, this first impression is misleading. "Agent Wild Duck" plays with generic and narrative expectations of the spectators on several levels. Traditionally, a spy story focuses on suspense, glamour, displaying the extraordinary circumstances and assignments of undercover work, culminating in the triumph of the protagonist super-hero. In contrast to this, "Agent Wild Duck" (based on an original screenplay by Marko Raat and Andres Maimik) is an unglamorized spy movie (cf. "Spy Game", "The Bourne Identity") with practically no episodes of gun slinging or explosive action. It displays only the grim and unpleasant characteristics of living in the world of constant paranoia, lack of emotional satisfaction and mental loneliness.

Within this movie, hybridization processes operate especially vividly on the levels of world-making and character portrayal. A clear hybridization of genre-specific visual styles is discernible, since it is a feature film (fictional content, wide screen format, meticulously composed shots, the usage of markedly artificial-looking rear-projection in car driving episodes, etc.) with many sequences composed in the visual style of documentaries. However, the aesthetic of the movie is not psychologically realistic or naturalistic. It rather relies on hyperbole, subtle satire or irony, painting a mocking and sad caricature of the new economic situation and its influence on values and ethics. Western audiences may find it comfortable to categorize this film as yet another statement against globalization.

For most of the time, the world created in this film is generalized and not explicitly stated as depicting any geographically specified place in the world. There are no conspicuous visual clichés of national self-representation (e.g. landmark buildings, ethnic costumes, etc.) that would indicate a connection with a specific nation state. But in the passport check episode, the customs officer replies to the arriving antagonist Florian Flug: "Welcome to Estonia". This is a direct

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[24] Premiere: 2002. Script: Andres Maimik, Marko Raat. Director: Marko Raat. Cinematographer: Arko Okk.

citation of the "Brand Estonia"[25] project slogan, the process of creation of which was heavily criticized in the Estonian media as a token of government ignorance and folly in spending tax payer money. The reply sounds ridiculous, since the antagonist has just told the customs officer the purpose of his visit: "I intend to fire a bunch of workers, organize a revolt and perform a human sacrifice". However, it is strikingly well in accordance with the popular Estonian perception of bureaucratic ignorance and corruption in the state apparatus. The languages spoken, certain allusions to work ethics, social problems connected with miners, specific industrial and natural landscapes etc., signal to the Estonian audience that the setting is Estonia.

Most of the time the interiors used in the movie are stylized (espionage firm office, restaurant, protagonist's apartment), rather empty, and no ethnically marked decor is used. However, some props (e.g. second hand cars imported from the west), some of the set design (e.g. the factory director's office, furnished with standardized Soviet furniture; the Soviet style café interior in the mining region), characters and specific social problems (the reorganization of big and inefficient large-scale enterprises, illegal business deals) indicate that it is a post-soviet country, a society in transition in the second half of the 1990s. For a West-European audience it may as well be set anywhere in eastern Europe.

Intercultural influences are the main phenomenon modelled by this film — more precisely the imbalance, "explosions", unexpected developments that a sudden and strong influx of alien principles can cause in the receiving culture. The main conflict in the film unfolds between different worldviews and ethical positions which, among other dissimilarities, happen to originate from different cultures. The two main characters of the film embody two sharply contrasted ideologies of living and working. Their ideologies are already hybrids of diverse cultural sources and their clash in the fictional world creates yet another new potential for hybridization.

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[25] In 2001 and 2002, the Estonian governmental institution for supporting entrepreneurship — Enterprise Estonia — carried out the Brand Estonia project: a communications strategy and a visual identity was developed to promote the Republic of Estonia abroad. The strategy describes Estonia as a positively transforming country. The verbal and visual identity presented in the Estonia Style brand book is composed of a slogan, a logo, a predefined set of colours, patterns, photographs and a typeface to be used in all international media related to the country (http://www.eas.ee/). See also footnote 8.

The protagonist Hans Gens[26] (a crypto-ethnic Estonian with a rather German-sounding name) clearly incorporates features of Soviet culture and markedly "authentic" Estonian traits as well. Hans, with his ethics that is inadequate in the new economic system, is a hybrid person, as he combines: (1) the Estonian national (self-ascribed) zeal for doing one's work with painstaking precision and fervour, devoting every aspect of one's life to work; (2) the soviet high ideal of being totally faithful and loyal to the state or organisation you are part of. Because spies did valuable service to the state during the Cold War, they could retain a very high self-esteem and consider themselves noble warriors in the vanguard of the great battle against the exploiting and greedy capitalism. Hans admires the technical perfection of Stirlitz (from the film "The Seventeen Moments of Spring"), the most celebrated spy in Soviet popular culture. Since the end of the Cold War, the former spies were forced to retrain themselves and they lost their high social prestige.

Hans was lucky: he found work in a private enterprise called *Konfident Kapital*, specialized in industrial espionage (publicly "advertised" under the euphemism of "PR-services"). He could continue practising his formerly highly praised professional skills, but his attempts to preserve a high self-esteem and a solid identity start to crumble away. He no longer receives positive feedback from the system and his natural inclination towards paranoia (i.e. "delusions of persecution, grandeur, and hypochondria" (Dowbiggin 2001) which are to a certain degree essential for survival in the totalitarian Soviet culture as well as for spying) gradually exacerbates to the extreme.

The psychosomatic result is narcolepsy — brief but sudden and irresistible attacks of deep sleep — caused by his work that eventually ruins his ability to do this very same work that caused it in the first place. Narcolepsy is the clinical outcome of constant suppression of emotions during leisure time, and work that is technical and stressful in its nature. Emotional reservedness is a rather stereotypical feature in the self-model of Estonians and the glorification of loyalty, as well as technical workmanship are a clear residue of the Soviet period. The protagonist is faced with the influences of this hybrid legacy on his

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[26] Played by a well-known and good-looking Estonian theatre actor Mait Malmsten, who has substantial experience in acting in TV series and feature films. His roles have mostly been positive ones and his appearance evokes sympathy rather than disgust in the minds of the Estonian audience.

personal identity, as he embodies these ideals in an extreme form, while the government has to deal with them on the collective level, such as for example the problem of the miners (or any other people doing physical work), who are relatively superfluous for the new economy.

A bold and brave herald of the new economy is the "top specialist" from Germany — a "human resources consultant" Florian Flug.[27] Hans is irritated by the news that the new owners are sending their own "top specialist" and asks his manager angrily: "What do the Germans want from here?" This outburst of hostility sounds slightly xenophobic and resonates fairly well with the Estonian spectator, since Germans were the colonizers and the local oppressing rulers on the Estonian territory from the 13th to the 20th century. Although there are no direct reasons that should bring about this hatred today, the painful aspects of history stay firmly in the Estonian national consciousness. The former colonizer creeps back in a new disguise to take over the higher positions of power. Hans senses a threat to his position in the company and is reluctant to changes.

Florian is also distinctly hybrid. Although his nationality is German, he does not utter a single German word. His fluent command of the international language of business — English — evinces his identity as a cosmopolitan person, a postmodern "player" (cf. Bauman 1996). His ethnic origin is not his most important feature — representing West-European superiority of economic power and know-how is. Yet this superiority is not unambiguous since in his practice of managing human resources Florian combines rationality and efficiency with magic rituals and sacrifices that he has probably adapted from some African tribes (the exact source is insignificant, what is essential is the exotic impression). This peculiar hybridization of working methods seems rather ridiculous and nonsensical for the Estonian spectator. However, none of the characters dares to protest, as Florian is labelled a "top expert" from Germany, a country famous for its highly disciplined, orderly and rational working culture. This

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[27] Played by the German performance artist Florian Feigl, who is unfamiliar to the film's core audience and whose appearance and face look distinctly alien compared to the other characters. Therefore F. Flug is a rather well-chosen person to play the strange foreigner. Although in the film's storyline he as the antagonist is successful, he is not endowed with the sympathy of the audience, mostly because of his alien features.

depiction of quiet submission to crazy ideas from a figure of authority is a perspicuous critique of the Estonian serf-mentality.

The clash and contrast between the protagonist and the antagonist mainly takes place between being liberal, innovative versus being old-fashioned, conservative. Florian values the "beauty of the game", that is aesthetics, not ethics. Hans, on the other hand, values loyalty above all, a deeply ethical criterion. Florian enjoys the process and consequences of his work. For Hans, completing the mission is the only thing that matters. Emotional reactions are to be avoided and consequences are not to be considered. Florian's working methods imply interaction with and manipulation of people. Hans's methods presuppose strict avoidance of interaction, and manipulation of documents, the material carriers of information. Florian is charismatic, bold, self-confident, unpredictable — a radical. Hans is reserved, paranoiac, distrustful, ascetic, predictable and systematic — a conservative. In the age of globalisation and ensuing hybridization and dynamism, the position of Florian is superior to that of Hans, since the former is more flexible and adaptive to the ever-changing circumstances. As they are sharply contrasted opposites in the fictional world, no hybridization occurs between their character traits.

However, an intermediate and developing character is placed between them: Monika Sumberg[28] (again a crypto-ethnic Estonian with a rather German sounding name). In the beginning of the story she is the "assistant" and girlfriend of Hans. In the end she inclines more towards Florian's worldview and way of life.

Since the cast of the film does not contain a single positive character there is no direct and obvious point of identification for the audience. The audience understands that Hans is noble in his ideals (and the Estonians probably recognize their own national work ethics in his professional credo), but his introverted, unemotional, reserved character (once again the exaggerated features of the Estonian male stereotype) and failure to adapt are unlikely to elicit a sympathetic identification. The antagonist, Florian, certainly does not provide a comfortable role-model either. He is too bizarre, foreign, alien for the common sense of the majority of the spectators.

The woman in the triangle, Monika, provides little possibilities for sympathetic identification as well, since she becomes obsessed with

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[28]   Monika Sumberg is played by a young and attractive Estonian theatre actor Kersti Heinloo.

ruthlessly climbing the career ladder. However, she is a person in transition, in change, searching for a new identity. Therefore she can function as an embodiment of the flexible, adaptive type, who can point the way out of the antagonism of ascetic ethics (Hans) and no-ethics (Florian). She is an ethical hybrid. She abandons the old conservative work-ethics but does not totally dispose of her humanistic concern: she still shows warmth, compassion and care for those who are not able to adapt (Hans, the miners).

The reception of "Agent Wild Duck" by the Estonian film critics was rather positive. It received the film critics award of Best Estonian Film in 2002 for its original film language, its skilful blend of sincerity and irony within its penetrating social criticism of the Estonian society today. However, the cinema audience in Estonia did not share the sentiment of the critics and the total number spectators in cinemas was around 4 000 (the estimated number of spectators during the September 12, 2004 screening on Estonian Television — 54 000). From this one can infer that the treatment of identities in "Agent Wild Duck" has not had a significant actual influence on the lived identities of most Estonians. However, its potential was clearly recognized on the metalevel of culture (i.e. critical appreciation).

### 4.3. Different Pasts Integrate with Various Presents

Neither of these two texts explicitly foregrounds being Estonian or Estonianness, yet our analysis points to a way national identity can be interpreted in these texts in the context of intercultural influences and globalization. The possibility of finding and describing hybrid identities created by the stage production "Goodbye, Vienna" and the film "Agent Wild Duck" shows that hybridity is an emergent topic in the present-day Estonian cultural self-models. The protagonists of both texts find themselves in a transformational situation where their hitherto well-functioning identities no longer provide them with security and balance. Both protagonists are unsuccessful in adapting to new circumstances that should actually coerce them to change their self-models. Unconsciously they apprehend the need to change, since they are no longer certain where they belong. They therefore start to contemplate their identification possibilities, but in practice fail to change. Instead, adherence to fixed values and in-grown behavioural

patterns makes them modernist heroes cast into the vortex of the progressing postmodern turn.

Both protagonists are aware of their hybrid nature, where many foreign influences have fused together with the national ones, but they keep their status quo, unwilling to change in spite of the changing situation surrounding them. Therefore, they both can be called *local hybrids*, whose personal identity is structured around the specific combination of historically conditioned values stemming from (currently or historically) adjacent, overlapping cultural spheres that have spread only in this particular border area. The changing socio-cultural environment nevertheless forces them to deal with their identity. Hans is rooted in Estonian work ethics on the one hand, and Soviet loyalty to the organization on the other; this makes him a local hybrid who cannot easily be relocated someplace else. Nietzsche is an Estonian who does not realize how pervasive the influence of Baltic German culture has been on the development of contemporary Estonia. Despite being a knowledgeable intellectual, aware of the global influences on local culture, he subconsciously seems to believe in the mythological concept of a nation. Adolf Nietzsche's situation — an urgent need to (re)define his national identity while being abroad — is quite typical.

"Agent Wild Duck" seems to tackle problems of a more universal scope, capturing some essential insights into the process of globalisation, but it does so through a *staging* of the local cultural context of Estonia. The colonial history of Estonia, the extreme protestant work ethic (that has a well known intimate connection with the spirit of capitalism that still functions as the driving force behind global trends) and smallness of the nation, inducing a strong fear of extinction, are mobilised for this purpose. These three elements foster the domination of a rather reactionary and conservative conception of national identity among Estonians.

This inability for substantial changes exists side-by-side with the new, dynamic, daringly hybrid identities. Gertrud in "Goodbye, Vienna" and Florian in "Agent Wild Duck" represent the identities of postmodern players (Bauman 1996) for whom the connection with their home environment is less significant than for local hybrids. It should be noted that *global hybrids* in the analysed stagings are not ethnic Estonians. Florian's personal identity is structured around values that originate from many spatially non-adjacent cultures and

therefore as a combination seems much more random, contingent and also liable to change more easily. Two highly dissimilar cultural contexts meet and intermingle in Gertrud — the Baltic German nobility and the proletarian Vienna mixed with Catholicism; and even though she is unable to articulate it properly, she senses that her roots are in Estonia. Nevertheless, she is a contemporary urbanised woman who enjoys playing with her identities, never adopting a single one for long.

Between the local and the global hybrid a third type — *transitional hybrid* — can be distinguished. S/he almost never reaches the global end of the spectrum since breaking the local ties is not so easily accomplished. Monika Sumberg is an example of such type, being somewhere in-between the two aforementioned hybrids. This transitional hybridity seems to be an emerging reality of new personal and national identities in Estonia.

To sum up, both stagings present the hybrid nature of Estonian national identity by focusing on basic interferences between German and Estonian as well as Soviet Russian and Estonian culture. In addition, both deal with the changes in national identity in the context of globalization, indicating various forms of cultural hybridity that may exist. Problems such as the protestant work ethic versus the postmodern playful attitude towards work, the theme of nationality in philosophy, the dubious nature of Estonian language and ethnicity as the main components of national identity, are acutely raised in these stagings.

## Conclusions

The essentialist conception, stressing the stable core of a homogenous national identity, is today replaced by constructivist approaches that emphasize the plurality of national identities. Nevertheless, the transforming national identities are not entirely novel and do not irretrievably replace historical components of national identity. Some elements of national past (history, myths, artistic narratives) are always mobilized for the creation of future visions of national identity.. The former core elements can be renegotiated from a contemporary viewpoint and emerging national identities, likewise, cannot entirely replace the pre-existing ones, some common con-

nectors of national memory are needed for the new national identities to be vigorous.

Estonian national identity has traditionally relied on cultural heritage (language, folk tradition, etc.) and the self-model of Estonians has been relatively fixed from the 1940s due to its functioning as a tool of resistance against the assimilation strategies of foreign occupations. Theatre as live and therefore not completely censorable art functioned as a substitute for free media in Estonia, and many films, that on first sight do not include any rebellious content for the foreign spectator, likewise carried coded messages, displaying national values and national heroes for Estonians themselves. In such oppressive circumstances, mainly homogenous self-models appeared on stage and on screen. During the past fifteen years of Estonian political independence, democratic society, and integration into European Union, the possibilities for self-models have multiplied tremendously. Today, fixed, simplified and outdated national identities are in a process of transformation, intensively carried out in the arts, where both the presentation and reflection of self-models can be performed. The analyses of *stagings* of national identities in Estonian theatre and film in this paper were written from an internal viewpoint and can be seen as a study of auto-communication within the national community, which is an essential precondition of the communication between different nations. Such a study of national identities can help us elucidate both of these forms of communication more appropriately.

Ever since the national awakening, literature has been the leading field of Estonian national culture, therefore it is characteristic that new national identities of the postmodern kind (such as the playful, the ironic, the parodied) first emerged there. However, theatre, and later film as well, have in parallel been significant *loci* where national identities find concrete audiovisual and embodied manifestations, set to the stage for public reflection and evaluation. The creation, maintenance and development of national identities in all cultural spheres always involves a process of *staging*, comprising of three sub-processes, namely setting on stage, performing and perceiving/interpreting. Although theatre and film primarily create aesthetic *stagings*, they can also be considered cultural *stagings* due to their collective nature, as they provide a nation with the opportunity for public estimation of their declared and lived collective identities. In comparison with literature, where the creation process is first of all individual,

theatre and film *stagings* are produced cooperatively, relying on collective memory. This may help explain the reasons why traditional historical components of national identity are still intrinsic in the stagings of the past few years. Hence, theatre and film can be considered as transitional forms, where individual and collective *stagings* of national identities coalesce. Live and favourable reception of certain identities presented in theatre and film stagings prove that they have found a response in the audience's collective memory, where the same aspects of national identity may be well-established.

*Stagings* of national identity can be realised in various genres, the most solemn of them being historical drama. Contemporary Estonian audience, however, seems to find the comic representations of national identity more enjoyable, though this does not mean that only simplified amusement is offered by those theatre performances and films. The majority of the stagings examined in the present paper were hilarious and bewildering reinterpretations of national themes, that at the same time had a rather anxious and even a tragic tonality. The analysis supported our hypotheses about two possible strategies of changing national identities in contemporary Estonia — deconstruction and hybridization.

Deconstruction was conceived of primarily as an intellectual strategy for interpreting canonical texts and self-models of a nation. The theatre production "Estonian funeral" (2002) and the film "The Old and the Bold Get on Their Feet" (2003) were comedies that applied deconstructive methods, such as parody, irony, travesty and slapstick humour to re-interpret traditional, conservative self-models of Estonians that exist within the imagined community and in classical texts of Estonian literature. However, the deconstruction presented here was not a strategy of annihilation, but rather the questioning of traditional values and convictions by provoking the audience's reflexive laughter. Some key elements of the traditional national self-model (for instance, devotion to physical work, having a home in the countryside, being a resisting/suffering hero) are playfully re-contextualized, highlighting their constructedness and fictionality. In the traditional self-model, Estonians are defined by modesty, emotional reservedness, solitude, conservativeness. These qualities are not highly praised in any of the analysed texts; instead, a critical attitude is expressed through parodying or treating them with irony. Concurrently, new aspects of national identity — the enjoyment of life, a

modern home in the city, a successfully transforming hero — are presented. It is probably not incidental that actors from the younger generation, local celebrities known from television and other media, were primarily cast into the main roles, proposing new role-models for identification for the audience. Nevertheless, the protagonists in the deconstructive, as well as in hybrid *stagings* remain ambivalent, they are rather antiheroes, evoking sympathy but not admiration.

In addition to the diversity and contradictions brought out by the deconstructive strategy, the homogeneous self-model is called into question in a similar way by acknowledging and exhibiting hybridity as part of the Estonians' lived national identities. "Goodbye, Vienna" (2002) in theatre and "Agent Wild Duck" (2002) in film staged various types of hybridizations, namely an intermingling of the colonizing German culture and the colonized Estonian culture; an amalgam of opposite mentalities (the inner exile of a Soviet citizen and the openness of a representative of an independent nation); a combination of aesthetic and ethical values. In the process of hybridization, elements from the periphery of national identity move to the centre and vice versa. Borderline places and outsiders are presented, that do not qualify for the perfect image of a nation. The stagings showed us deserted and decaying rural homesteads, under-inhabited small towns and desolate industrial landscapes together with their marginalised inhabitants, such as Russian-speaking miners, unemployed alcoholics, criminals, etc. The hybridization of national identity brings new characters to the stage who embody postmodern identities: a local hybrid identity (Adolf, Hans), a global hybrid identity (Gertrud, Florian), a transitional hybrid identity (Monika). The frequent occurrence of foreign-sounding names hints at the latently hybrid nature of Estonians and the Estonian language, the most central element in the declared self-model of Estonians. In the two films (and in Estonian cinematography in general) several foreign and colonizing languages (mostly Russian, German, English) are used in addition to Estonian. This vividly represents the reality of lived identities in contemporary Estonia: fluency in one or several foreign languages is a prerequisite for being successful in Estonia, although on the declared identity level, the mastery the Estonian language defines "authentic" *Estonianness*.

In conclusion, deconstructed and hybrid national identities introduced in the present paper are not as much new identity types but

rather strategies of creating possibilities for new identities to emerge; they indicate that existing self-models should change. Lived national identities are always in the process of transformation and in certain periods of their development a critical self-reflection is needed. The latter can be realised through the deconstruction of existing values, myths, symbols, etc. Hybridization, alike, is an inherent quality of national identity, primarily existing latently, and is brought into the collective consciousness only during periods of active reflexivity and, thereby, identity transformation. Deconstruction and hybridization as identity strategies help us understand that national identities are not disappearing in the contemporary world, but are rather being reformed, and show us how these strategies, inherent to the postmodern attitude, do not completely eliminate the traditional aspects of national identity but re-contextualise, re-examine and re-evaluate them. Questions about home, and what and where it is, and how much of our past influences our future, are still acute and painful. Playing with national identities in Estonia has just begun, and all the possibilities are open...[29]

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## Репрезентация темы национальной самоидентификации в современном эстонском кино и театре

Статья сосредоточивается на способах репрезентации (постановки/экранизации) национального идентитета в эстонском театре и кино последних лет. Целью является дополнить общепризнанные трактовки национальности (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Bhabha 1990), которые зачастую недооценивают роль театра и кино в образовании национального самосознания.

Понятие национального идентитета требует в наше время комплексного подхода и точной формулировки в зависимости от контекста, в котором его употребляют. Мы определяем современный национальный идентитет как динамическое понятие, выделяя его

связь с этническим идентитетом, указывая на различия "реального" и декларируемого идентитета, а также на особенности национального идентитета, обоснованного культурой. Говоря о национальном идентитете как о постановке, мы исходим при использовании понятия "постановка" (*staging*) как из его эстетического значения, которое охватывает различные уровни и средства творческого процесса, так и из его культурологического значения, в котором при помощи понятия постановки описываются процессы культуры, в которых нечто ставится определенным образом на "социальную сцену" для публичной рефлексии.

Объектами анализа нами были выбраны четыре поставноки — два фильма ("Made in Эстония", "Агент Кряква") и две театральные постановки ("Эстонские похороны", "Goodbye, Vienna"), которые вышли на экраны/на сцену в 2002–2003 гг. Результаты анализа подтвердили нашу гипотезу о возникновении новых национальных идентитетов в пространстве эстонской культуры, указывая в то же время и на то обстоятельство, что *ad hoc* созданные понятия деконструированный и гибридный национальный идентитет являются не столько новыми типами идентитета, сколько стратегиями идентификационного процесса, которые позволяют образовываться новым идентитетам. Деконструированный национальный идентитет указывает на высокую степень саморефлексии, когда доминирующие в данный момент элементы национального идентитета пересматриваются, заново контекстуализируются и переоцениваются. А понятие гибридного национального идентитета позволяет объяснить диверситет национального идентитета и сосуществование в нем различных компонентов. Обе стратегии постановки национального идентитета характерны прежде всего периодам трансформации национального идентитета, подтверждая тем самым, что гомогенная постановка национального идентитета заменяется репрезентацией нескольких новых авто-моделей.

## Rahvuslike identiteetide lavastamine kaasaegses eesti teatris ja filmis

Artikkel keskendub rahvusliku identiteedi lavastamise viisidele eesti filmis ja teatris viimastel aastatel. Meie eesmärgiks on täiendada üldaktsepteeritud rahvusluse-käsitlusi (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Bhabha 1990), milles sageli alahinnatakse teatri ja filmi rolli rahvusluse kujundajatena.

Rahvusliku identiteedi mõiste vajab tänapäeval komplekset lähenemist ja täpset defineerimist sõltuvalt kontekstist, milles seda kasutatakse. Määratleme kaasaegset rahvuslikku identiteeti dünaamilisena, tuues välja selle seosed etnilise identiteediga ja juhtides tähelepanu elatud ja deklareeritud identiteetide erinevustele, samuti kultuuripõhise rahvusliku identiteedi eripärale.

Rääkides rahvuslikust identiteedist kui lavastusest, lähtume lavastamise (*staging*) mõiste puhul nii selle esteetilisest tähendusest, mis hõlmab endas loomeprotsessi erinevaid tasandeid ja vahendeid, kui ka kultuuriteoreetilisest tähendusest, milles lavastamise mõiste abil kirjeldatakse kultuuriprotsesse, milles miski seatakse teatud viisil "sotsiaalsele lavale" avalikuks reflektsiooniks.

Artikli analüüsi osas uurime me rahvusliku identiteedi lavastamist mõlemas eelmainitud tähenduses. Analüüsi objektiks valisime neli lavastust — kaks filmi ("Vanad ja kobedad saavad jalad alla", "Agent Sinikael") ja kaks teatrilavastust ("Eesti matus", "Goodbye, Vienna"), mis esietendusid/linastusid aastatel 2002–2003. Analüüsi tulemused kinnitasid meie hüpoteesi uute rahvuslike identiteetide esilekerkimise osas Eesti kultuuriruumis, osutades samas ka sellele, et ad hoc mõisted dekonstrueeritud ja hübriidne rahvuslik identiteet ei ole mitte niivõrd uued identiteeditüübid, kuivõrd identiteediprotsessi strateegiad, mis võimaldavad uutel identiteetidel välja kujuneda. Dekonstrueeritud rahvuslik identiteet viitab kõrgele enesereflektsiivuse astmele, milles parajasti domineerivad rahvusliku identiteedi elemendid üle vaadatakse, uuesti kontekstualiseeritakse ja ümber hinnatakse. Hübriidne rahvuslik identiteet aga võimaldab selgitada rahvusliku identiteedi diversiteeti ja erinevate komponentide kooseksisteerimist selles. Mõlemad identiteedi lavastamise strateegiad on iseloomulikud eeskätt rahvusliku identiteedi transformatsiooniperioodidele, kinnitades, et rahvusliku identiteedi homogeenne lavastus asendatakse mitmete uute enesemudelite lavaletoomisega.

# A translation with (apparently) no originals

Review: Umberto Eco, *Experiences in Translation*.
(Translated by Alastair McEwen.)
Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2001, x+135 pages.

## *Bruno Osimo*[1]

The genesis of this book *about* translation itself involves many translation processes. The present volume is based on the Goggio Public Lectures given by Eco at the University of Toronto in 1998. So, one could argue, the prototext of this book was an oral text published (performed) three years before the actual printing. However, the prototext of this book must be also an Italian text, since the book claims to be an English translation. Yet, looking for this book on the Italian publishing market, one sees none — or, better, didn't see any until April 2003.

In April 2003 Eco published a book in Italian, whose title (*Dire quasi la stessa cosa. Esperienze di traduzione*) is echoed, in part, by the supposed translation's one. Looking into more detail, one discovers that the supposed Italian "original" is 250 pages longer: in fact, in the preface one realizes that the "prototext" of the Italian book consists, in its turn, also of the eight Weidenfeld Lectures given at Oxford in 2002 and two annual seminars for Ph. D. students in semiotics at the Università di Bologna, which explains the greater pagination. I am no longer able to tell if it is an original or not, having been published three years later, with many additions and examples in Italian.

The book is divided in two parts: the first part (Translating and being translated) is devoted to Eco's experiences in translation and supervision of his own texts' translations. In this part I noticed that Eco doesn't have a descriptive approach to translation — prevailing in the modern science — preferring rather a normative one. However, this may be not too difficult to explain. I therefore try by abduction to infer that the reason why Eco is often

[1] Author's address: Bruno Osimo, via Tolentino 19, 20155 Milano, Italy; e-mail: osimo@trad.it; homepage: www.trad.it.

so sure of the validity or censurability of the various translators' choices is that he is the Empirical Author in person. Therefore the *intentio operis*, usually left to the sometimes perverse, aberrant relation between Model Author and Empirical Reader, here has an indubitable authority — the *intentio auctoris* — able to tell what is Right and what is Wrong beyond any doubt. Who could tentatively argue in opposition to the will of the Empirical Author, who is both living and writing (novels and semiotics) and translating and writing about translation — who therefore is both metalinguistically and metaculturally self-conscious?

Eco's general approach is along the functionalist school and the *skopos* theory: he is a promoter of the functional equivalence in interlingual translation, in which he lucidly realizes that the translator must make decisions about the metatext's dominant — although he never uses Jakobson's term: "Obviously this means that translators have to make an interpretative hypothesis about the effect programmed by the original text. Many hypotheses can be made about the same text, so that the decision about the focus of the translation becomes *negotiable*" (p. 45). In another passage, Eco refers to the dominant as spirit of the text: "[...] rewriting is certainly a case of interpretation, and is translation proper only in part, if not in the sense in which (on the basis of a critical interpretation of the original text) it has pretensions to conveying, not the letter of the original, but its 'guiding spirit' (whatever that means)" (p. 117).

Eco many a time goes round the notion of "dominant" but hardly ever mentions it. In the Italian version an author's footnote explains that the notion of "dominant" is too vague, representing a huge spectrum of features, techniques, arts, functions. However, having rejected this notion as a solution, he proposes to use it as an advice: "search what can be the dominant for you in this text, and on it stake your choices and exclusions".

The Italian semiotician only apparently refuses the possibility that a translator should interpret the text in place of the metatext's reader: "Let us also assume that in an adaptation some levels — deemed fundamental — are isolated, and it is on these levels that we try to 'translate'. But the fact of having isolated some levels means *imposing one's own interpretation of the source text*" (p. 125; author's italic). That interpretation (and, sometimes, disambiguation) in the translation process is nonetheless implied and, in the Italian version, subject of a whole chapter.

Eco's functional position induces him to discard the translator's footnote hypothesis, as a moment of surrender, of impotence. Speaking of his own Italian translation of Gérard de Nerval's *Sylvie*, he tells about a potential translation loss solved by the adding of an adverb: "By adding a single

adverb, I avoided the footnote, which is always a sign of weakness on the part of a translator" (p. 50). This conception implies that the text being translated has as a dominant its fluent readability, which indeed is the case of most Eco's books, both in fiction and in non-fiction. These statements are undoubtedly true for Eco's work, since the author tells us so. And for many works whose dominant lies in the reader's entertainment — both in a narrative and in an intellectual sense. The search for pleasure (almost in a sexual way) in a text is a fortunate *topos* of Eco's work, as far as both his essays and his novels are concerned.

It would be boring to argue that from a scientific point of view it is not of much use stating norms meant as general rules to be followed, and that from a semiotic point of view there is no kind of message (textual or metatextual, or intertextual for that matter) that is *a priori* weak; the result must be found out in the empirical readers' reception of the text. Boring and, in the given case, inappropriate, since we are not talking about theory: these are experiences, empirical facts.

In many cases Eco implicitly uses the intersemiotic metaphor, like when he recurs to the simile of the translator as a film director; here he explicitly states his position as far as metatextual or periphrastic rendering is concerned: "But the translator cannot use either images or detailed specifications, and must respect the rhythm of the story, because descriptive *longueurs* would be fatal" (p. 52). In general, I think that this volume focuses on theoretical boundaries.

This is above all evident in the second essay, "Translation and interpretation". Here Eco starts from where most modern semiotic-oriented translation theories start, i.e. from the celebrated Jakobson's 1959 essay *On linguistic aspects of translation*. In it Eco tries to set boundaries to the "totalizing" theory of translation (although Torop is never explicitly quoted). My impression is that, as in 1992 with *Interpretation and overinterpretation* Eco had the sane intention to impose boundaries to the apparently boundariless Deconstructionist approach to literature, allowing any interpretation, included the ones not altogether justified by the text ("aberrant decoding"), so in this 2003 essay his aim is to set boundaries to the apparently boundariless "total translation" approach in which any kind of communication act is assimilable to translation.

However, there might be a misunderstanding on this point. Eco says, for example, that "it would be pure (and not very perspicuous) rhetorical licence to call [the short English description of the *Divine Comedy*] a translation" (p. 77) of the original. What "totalist" semioticians say, however, is not that all kinds of translations (textual, extratextual, metatextual, intertextual, intra-

textual) produce a metatext that is the *complete* rendering of the prototext: what these theorists say is that there is *never* a complete rendering of a prototext, that any rendering is incomplete. Therefore, it can be useful to study the translation process just because it makes explicit what in interlingual translation is sometimes implicit: the translation choice, as Eco himself states: "In passing into a semiotic system that is totally 'other' with regard to those of the natural languages, the interpreter would have to decide if the 'savants austères' sit in a large and chilly library, in a cramped little room like one of Rembrandt's philosophers, or in front of a lectern like Saint Jerome [...]" (p. 99).

Eco, as always, is very pleasant to read, and this is even more evident in the Italian 2003 version of the essays, containing many more examples. One could say that the Italian version is so rich in examples, that theoretical positions are simply interspersed among them. Through examples he clarifies questions like cultural translatability, archaization/modernization, domestication/estrangement, addition/omission. He is capable of justifying approaches that are hard to be argued, as in cases when the referential content of a text is radically changed in translation, leaving untouched the work intentions. It is a book that, in its Italian version, is a big success, especially among translators, which is a great achievement, since seldom translators are so eager to read about what is sometimes dismissed as "translation theory".

The greatest interest of this book is that it provides a rare chance to see translation simultaneously from the points of view usually associated to three different persons: a translator, a writer, a semiotician. Eco can elegantly manage the three of them.

# Floyd Merrell named sixth Thomas A. Sebeok Fellow of the Semiotic Society of America

## *John Deely*[1]

The combined 29th & 30th Annual Meeting of the Semiotic Society of America was held on the campus of the University of West Florida in Pensacola on October 20–22. At this meeting, Professor Floyd Merrell of Indiana University/Purdue University (IUPUI) was inscribed as the sixth Thomas A. Sebeok Fellow. Professor Merrell's Fellow Address, forthcoming in *The American Journal of Semiotics*, entitled "The Magical Number Three", addressed the nature of the Peircean sign in light of a nonlinear, complemented, context-dependent lattice, with particular focus on how the lattice: (1) reveals the function of distinctions between signs; (2) supports Peirce's triadic notion of semiosis; (3) models the notion of signs incessantly becoming other signs; (4) takes its leave of classical logical principles; and (5) accounts for the emergence of novelty — spontaneous, fresh, unique signs.

There are few names better known in the semiotic circles of North America than that of Floyd Merrell. While all of Floyd's writings involve semiotics, he considers the following from among his books to be "central to semiotics": *Semiotic Foundations: Steps Toward an Epistemology of Written Texts* (1982; selected by *Choice* as an outstanding academic book of the year); *A Semiotic Theory of Texts* (1985); *On Semiotic Modeling*, edited with Myrdene Anderson (1991); *Signs Becoming Signs: Our Perfusive, Pervasive Universe* (1991); *Sign, Textuality, World* (1992); *Semiosis in the Postmodern Age* (1995a); *Peirce's Semiotics Now: A Primer* (1995b); *Signs Grow: Semiosis and Life Processes* (1996); *Peirce, Signs, and Meaning* (1997); *Sensing Semiosis: Toward the Possibility of Complementary Cultural "Logics"* (1998a); *Introducción a la semiótica de C. S. Peirce* (1998b); *Tasking Textuality* (2000a); *Change, Through Signs of Body, Mind, and Language* (2000b); *Signs, Science, Self-Subsuming (Arti)Facts* (2000c); *Signs for Everybody: Or, Communication, Quandaries, and Chaos* (2000d); *Living*

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[1]    Author's address: John Deely, University of St. Thomas, 3800 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006, USA; e-mail: deelyj@stthom.edu.

*Learning, Learning Living: Signs, East and West* (2002); *Sensing Corporeally: Toward a Posthuman Understanding* (2003).

### Background to the Sebeok Fellow Award

The Sebeok Fellow Award is the highest honor given by the Semiotic Society of America. The idea for this award was introduced in 1991 by the then-Executive Director, Dean MacCannell, and approved by the Executive Board. An Awards and Recognition committee was established to choose a first recipient. As the Society's official newsletter, the *Semiotic Scene* 4.1 (1993), put it: "The Sebeok Fellowship is awarded to honor substantial career or lifetime contributions to semiotics and service to the semiotic community. The committee is not required to select a Fellow each year." The practice has been to nominate a Sebeok Fellow only on such occasions as a strong consensus plainly emerges around a proposed name.

The title for the award was chosen in honor of Dr. Thomas Albert Sebeok (9 November 1920–2001 December 21), founder of the SSA, and himself a pioneer both nationally and globally in the establishment of semiotics as a doctrine of signs respecting which the development of "semiology", as a kind of 'social science' in the modern sense of language and culture, could be seen as no more than a part of the larger process of anthroposemiosis which itself, in turn, is no more than a part of the still larger semiosis of the world of nature itself and as a whole.

### The list of Sebeok Fellows

The choice of Sebeok Fellows had a lugubrious beginning. A dramatic turn of events within the Society, namely, the unexpected death of its Vice-President/President-elect, Dr. David Savan (1916–1992), in the late Spring of 1992, led the committee to make the first award a post-mortem honor. Thus the first Thomas A. Sebeok Fellow was chosen to be the late Dr. David Savan, a senior scholar of considerable distinction[2] and one of the pioneers of semiotics in North America. Among his contributions, particular mention can be made of his *An Introduction to C. S. Peirce's Full System of Semeiotic* (1988).

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[2]   Cf. http://www.pragmatism.org/genealogy/savan.htm.

The complete list of Sebeok Fellows is as follows:

1. David Savan (1916–1992; posthumously awarded 1992);
2. John Deely (1993; St Louis Meeting);
   Sebeok Fellow Address, 22 October 1993: "How Does Semiosis Effect Renvoi?" (Deely 1994);
3. Paul Bouissac (1996; Santa Barbara Meeting);
   Sebeok Fellow Address, 19 October 1996: "Can Semiotics Progress?" (Bouissac 2000);
4. Jesper Hoffmeyer (2000; Purdue Meeting);
   Sebeok Fellow Address, 29 September 2000: "The Central Dogma: A Joke that Became Real" (Hoffmeyer 2002);
5. Kalevi Kull (2003; Ottawa Meeting);
   Sebeok Fellow Address, 10 October 2003: "Semiotics Is a Theory of Life" (Kull 2005);
6. Floyd Merrell (2005; Pensacola Meeting);
   Sebeok Fellow Address, 22 October 2005: "Chewing Gum, Ambulating, and Signing, all at the Same Time: Or, The Magical Number Three", forthcoming in *The American Journal of Semiotics*.
7. To be named.

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— 1992. *Sign, Textuality, World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

—— 1995a. *Semiosis in the Postmodern Age*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press.

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—— 2000b. *Change, Through Signs of Body, Mind, and Language*. Chicago: Waveland Press.

—— 2000c. *Signs, Science, Self-Subsuming (Arti)Facts*. Dresden: Thelem Press.

—— 2000d. *Signs for Everybody: Or, Communication, Quandaries, and Chaos*. Ottawa: Legas Press.

—— 2002. *Living Learning, Learning Living: Signs, East and West*. Ottawa: Legas Press.

—— 2003. *Sensing Corporeally: Toward a Posthuman Understanding*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

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# Founding a world biosemiotics institution: The International Society for Biosemiotic Studies

## *Donald Favareau*[1]

> *While, as I continue to insist, all human beings —
> indeed, all living entities on our planet —
> modulate their environment by means of signs,
> only a handful grow up to be professional
> semioticians (and a good thing too).*
>
> Thomas A. Sebeok (1920–2001)[2]

In the late-life summation of his work in which the above quote appears, semiotician extraordinaire Thomas Sebeok — one of whose dreams was to found an International Biosemiotics Society — explicitly invokes philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* to argue that:

> Both normal science and [scientific] revolutions are community-based activities. To discover and analyze them, one must first unravel the changing community structure of the sciences over time. [...Because] a *paradigm* governs [...] not a subject matter but rather a group of practitioners [and therefore] any such study of paradigm-directed or paradigm-shattering research must begin by locating the responsible group or groups. (Kuhn 1962: 179–180)

As has been recounted elsewhere (see particularly Sebeok 2001a; Kull 2003; 2005; Favareau 2006), the coming together of enough individual researchers scattered across the sciences and the humanities so as to finally constitute a recognizable domain of "biosemiotic inquiry" has been a gradual and often serendipitous project, and one that has really only begun to take on solid form over the course of the last ten years.

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[1]   Author's address: Donald F. Favareau, National University of Singapore, University Scholars Programme, Blk Adm 06-37, 10 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore 119260, Singapore; e-mail: favareau@gmail.com.
[2]   Sebeok 2001b: ix.

Indeed, one of the earliest attempts to solidify the efforts of the various individual researchers independently studying the roles of sign processes in life processes was the decision made by Thomas Sebeok and Thure von Uexküll (1908–2004) to found an International Biosemiotics Society in 1990. Proposed towards the end of the series of groundbreaking international conferences on biosemiotics arranged by the two men at the Glotterbad Clinic in Glottertal, Baden-Württemberg during the late 1980's and early 1990's, Sebeok announced proudly in 1991 that: "the foundation of the IBS took place in May 1990 [...] with the new society beginning to function fully in May 1991" (Sebeok 1991: 7).

Biosemiotician Jesper Hoffmeyer — having just initiated his own Danish-language biosemiotic publication, *OMverden* ("a literal translation of the German term *Umwelt*") — met Sebeok for the first time at this 1990 meeting, and recalls that conference organizers Sebeok and Uexküll had high hopes for the continued growth and success of the Society (Hoffmeyer 2002: 384 and personal correspondence). Unfortunately, however, reports semiotician Jeff Bernard, "the whole thing never became formalized and fell apart [...] most probably [because] there were mainly elderly doctors of medicine involved [and at that time] nearly no biologists [...] except our own Anton Fuerlinger, because he happens to be both" (J. Bernard to J. Hoffmeyer, personal correspondence).

Thus, with modern-day biosemiotics still in its infancy, Sebeok's vision of an International Biosemiotics Society proved to be premature by several years, and remained a dream that never came to full fruition in his time.

The Glotterbad conferences had far-reaching effects, however, eventually bringing together the Copenhagen and the Tartu–Moscow researchers in biosemiotics, and — again, with the direct encouragement and sponsorship of Thomas Sebeok — launching the series of conferences and journal issues in biosemiotics that raised the visibility of biosemiotic inquiry substantially throughout the decade of the 1990s (for an overview see Sebeok 1998 and Kull 1999).

That visibility — and the growing number of researchers it has since attracted — led directly to the founding of the annual *Gatherings in Bio-semiotics* series of international conferences in 2001, as well to as the peer-reviewed *Journal of Biosemiotics* in 2005 — and the ongoing success of both these endeavors promises to turn the previously loosely coordinated *domain* of biosemiotic inquiry into a cohesive and legitimate *field*.

The distinction between a "domain" and "field" of course, derives from Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's work and has a long tradition in biosemiotics, as it acknowledges the triadic interaction between individuals, domains (symbolic structures) and their intermediaries, in the creation of novel understandings, methodology and norms. Thus, in scientific, academic, artistic and professional circles (and probably elsewhere), a *field* is that intermediary "which includes all the individuals who act as gatekeepers to the domain. It is

their job to decide whether a new idea or product should be included in the domain" (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 28).

As committed adherents of self-organization through sign exchange, however, biosemioticians intend their gates to be open ones and the "field" provided to be a community locale where *all* possible semiotic approaches to biology can be explored. Only in this way can biosemiotic inquiry have a field proper to the underlying principles of its domain. And it is in that understanding that the International Society for Biosemiotic Studies has been founded and is hereby being officially announced.

Arising out of discussions that have been taking place intermittently — yet consistently — since Sebeok's original proposal in 1990, the revitalized effort to found an International Society wherein researchers from all areas of living sign study can co-inform each other by sharing research data and analysis was resurrected at the Eighth International Congress of the International Association for Semiotic Studies that was held in Lyon, France from July 7–12, 2004.

Representing the biosemiotic perspective with a Special Session on Neurosemiotics, the author and co-panelists Jesper Hoffmeyer and Kalevi Kull were approached by IASS organizers with the proposal to found an International Society for Biosemiotics under the auspices of IASS. The suggestion was made again at a seminar organized by semiotician Paul Cobley in London the next spring,[3] after which Jesper Hoffmeyer initiated a series of e-mails with current Administrative Vice-President of IASS Jeff Bernard, who enthusiastically supported the idea.

Several months of back and forth e-mailing later,[4] the following proposal was filed with the Executive Committee of the International Association for Semiotic Studies:

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[3] The symposium "Biosemiotics: The New Challenge" that was held in the London Metropolitan University on March 23, 2005, featuring papers by Kalevi Kull, Søren Brier, and Jesper Hoffmeyer.

[4] Including an online "Skype-conference" linking biosemioticians from Copenhagen, Tartu, and Singapore that took place on June 12, 2005 and that could be considered to be the founding "cyber-meeting" of the ISBS.

## Proposal for the formation of
### *International Society for Biosemiotic Studies*

*The undersigned group of scholars, who are all engaged in studies of biosemiotics, hereby propose the formation of the "International Society for Biosemiotic Studies" (ISBS).*

*The purpose of the ISBS is to constitute an organizational framework for the collaboration among scholars dedicated to biosemiotic studies, and to propagate knowledge of this field of study to researchers in related areas, as well as to the public in general. Specifically, the ISBS should assure the organization of regular meetings on research into the semiotics of nature as well as to promote all kinds of publication of scholarly work on the semiotics of life processes.*

*ISBS sees it as one of its important objectives to engage in cross-disciplinary exchange of ideas and welcomes the eventual membership of scholars from neighboring disciplines (e.g. biology, physics, chemistry, computer science, cognitive science, philosophy, anthropology, semiotics, etc).*

*With this mail I request the acceptance from IASS of the ISBS as an associated society.*

*The proposal has now been agreed upon by the undersigned 12 scholars engaged in biosemiotic studies:*

Myrdene Anderson, Purdue University, USA
Marcello Barbieri, University of Ferrara, Italy
Søren Brier, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark
Luis Emilio Bruni, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Charbel El-Hani, Federal University of Bahia, Brazil
Claus Emmeche, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Don Favareau, National University of Singapore, Singapore
Jesper Hoffmeyer, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Kaie Kotov, University of Tartu, Estonia
Kalevi Kull, University of Tartu, Estonia
Anton Markoš, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic
Frederik Stjernfelt, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

The International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS) was founded in 1969 by (among others) Algirdas Julien Greimas, Roman Jakobson, Julia Kristeva, Émile Benveniste, Thomas A. Sebeok, and Juri Lotman. It remains the premiere organization for the study of semiotics worldwide, and their eager acceptance to include the International Society for Biosemiotic Studies under their auspices — an acceptance formalized on June 26, 2005[5] — speaks well of "biosemiotics' roots, proliferation and prospects" (to borrow a phrase of Sebeok's).

"Both Tom and Thure would have embraced this initiative" writes Hoffmeyer (personal correspondence) — but, of course, it is up to we living practitioners of biosemiotics to ensure that this time our International Society not only survives, but thrives.

*Further information about, as well as an online form for membership in, the* International Society for Biosemiotic Studies *is available at the website* www.biosemiotics.org.

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[5] Following the first full in-person meeting of the founding members of the ISBS in July 23, in Urbino, Italy, during the 5th Gatherings in Biosemiotics, wherein the initial operating principles were ratified, and the first slate of official positions within the organization were elected.

# Thure von Uexküll
# 1908–2004

## *Kalevi Kull,[1] Jesper Hoffmeyer[2]*

Looking back in 2001, Thomas Sebeok (1920–2001) emphasized how important for the formation of contemporary biosemiotics had been the discussions that he, Giorgio Prodi (1929–1988) and Thure von Uexküll conducted in Freiburg in the 1970s (Sebeok 2001: 63–65). As one of these three main figures, Thure von Uexküll significantly contributed to the realignment of the semiotic threshold (i.e., the threshold below which genuine sign action cannot properly be said to take place) from the borderline between nature and culture to the borderline separating life from non-life — thus effectively making the study of living systems a study of semiosis (Anderson *et al.* 1984; 1990). His writings on the development of the main concepts of biosemiotics and on the interpretation of Jakob von Uexküll's work in relation to thereof certainly qualify as biosemiotic classics. As a physician and philosopher, he developed a semiotic approach to medicine in general and to psychosomatic medicine in particular. As a semiotician, he renewed ties with the old roots of semiotics deriving (since Antiquity)



*Fig. 1.* Dr. *honoris causa*, University of Tartu, Dec. 1, 1994.

[1]  Author's address: Kalevi Kull, Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu, Tiigi Str. 78, 50410 Tartu, Estonia; e-mail kalevi.kull@ut.ee

[2]  Author's address: Jesper Hoffmeyer, Copenhagen, Department of Biological Chemistry, University of Copenhagen, Solvgade 83, DK 1307 Copenhagen, Denmark; e-mail: jhoffmeyer@mail.dk

from medical science. He died on September 29, 2004.[3]

Thure von Uexküll was born in Heidelberg on March 15, 1908, as the elder son of Jakob von Uexküll. After his study of medicine (1928–1936) in Hamburg, München, Innsbruck and Rostock, and residency and internship Charité in Berlin (1936–1943), he became an assistant professor at the medical hospital at the University of Munich (1945–1952). Awarded a Rockefeller Grant, he worked in the USA from 1952–1953. From 1955 to 1965, he was Director of the Medical Outpatient Department at the University of Giessen, and from 1966 to 1977 served as the Director of the Department of Internal Medicine and Psychosomatics at the University of Ulm.

After his retirement in 1977 he lived in Freiburg as a Professor emeritus of internal medicine and psychosomatics at the University of Ulm. However, he stayed active in research, producing several books, lecturing in conferences in Germany and elsewhere, and remaining enthusiastically interested in new ideas and, until the last year of his life, was a member of the editorial board of *Sign Systems Studies*.



*Fig. 2*. In a summer seminar on biosemiotics, in Puhtu, Aug. 8, 1995.

In 1994, Thure von Uexküll was awarded an Honorary Doctorship from the University of Tartu in the field of semiotics and psychosomatic medicine (Fig. 1). Since his family comes from Estonia, he has had strong contacts there.

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[3]    See obituaries by Krampen (2004), Hoffmeyer (2004), Geigges (2004), Tuffs (2004), Loringhoven (2005), Wesiack (2005). For a list of obituaries see http://www.int-med.de/uexkuell/uexkuell.html.

He spent many summers in Puhtu in the 1920s and 1930s at his family's villa on the coast of the Baltic Sea, and was named Karl Kuno Thure after a former owner and designer of Puhtu, Karl Thure Helwig (father of grandmother of grandfather of Thure v. Uexküll).

During his lifetime, he had a clear influence upon both the Copenhagen and the Tartu schools groups of biosemiotics. In 1991, he attended the meeting "Biosemiotics and Biotechnology" in Denmark, and in September 1989, he visited Tartu to contribute to in a conference commemorating the 125th anniversary of Jakob von Uexküll. In the following years, he visited Estonia several times for biosemiotic seminars (Fig. 2), and both the *Jakob von Uexküll Centre* in Tartu (Magnus *et al.* 2004), and the *Jakob von Uexküll-Archiv für Umweltforschung und Biosemiotik* in Hamburg University (Rüting 2004) have been the recipients of Thure von Uexküll's support.

Thure von Uexküll's principal interests included internal medicine, psychosomatic medicine, philosophy, and semiotics. Besides his role as the leading thinker in the field of psychosomatic medicine, his impact on semiotics include major achievements in at least the following important areas (see also Sebeok 2001; Tiivel, Kull 1999):

(1) The analysis of *fundamental questions of semiotics*, including the semiotic interpretation of 'self' (e.g., Uexküll 1984; 1986b; 1992a; 1995); in which he constructed a theory of natural semiotic levels ranging from the cell which constitutes the lowest level (a "semiotic atom") and progressing through the ascending semiotic levels of vegetative semiosis (phytosemiotics) and animal semiosis (zoosemiotics) to human sign systems such as language which allow for the capacity to represent absent objects and possible worlds (see Hoffmeyer 1998);

(2) The interpretation and *development of Jakob von Uexküll's approach*; by publishing a compendium of his father's works (J. v. Uexküll 1980) and writing extensive commentaries on them (Uexküll 1982a; 1987; 1992b; 1993b; 2004);

(3) The analysis of the relationships between *semiotics and medicine*; establishing a semiotic approach to psychosomatic medicine (Uexküll 1982b; 1986a); developing a theory of human integrated medicine (Uexküll 1994; Uexküll, Wesiack 1998) and of *subjective anatomy* (Uexküll, Fuchs 1997) — for, as Uexküll pointed out, medical practices tend to focus myopically on the indexical aspects of disease, not seeing the importance of symbolic or iconic layers of reference (Uexküll 1999; see also Hoffmeyer 2001);

(4) The development of *biosemiotics* (including the work on *endosemiotics*); in Thure von Uexküll's pioneering work on endosemiosis (1993, together with Geigges and Herrmann), the knowledge on sign transmission inside the organism was systematized, and *microsemiosis* defined as the sign processes occurring within the cell, and between its organelles (Uexküll 1988; 1993a; 1997a).

On the occasion of Thomas Sebeok's 65th birthday in 1985 a *Festschrift* was produced to which Thure von Uexküll contributed an article in which he gave a semiotic interpretation of Jean Piaget's theoretical work, connecting it at the same time to the work of his own father, Jakob von Uexküll. In this article, Uexküll first explains Piaget's idea of *circularity* — i.e., that a stimulus presupposes a *need*, or "a readiness to react", and that "the reflex can only be described as a circular event, in which a neutral phenomenon receives a property which it does not have independently from the reacting organ, and which it loses again after the completion of the reflex, i. e. with the cessation of the readiness to react" (Uexküll 1986b: 122).

Uexküll then makes the following remarkable observation: "The mere fact of the insoluble concatenation of stimulus and reaction has been, and still is today, to some extent overlooked through the prevailing dogma of the constant causal connection of reality — a graphic illustration of Einstein's statement that *theory determines what can be observed*" (Uexküll 1986b: 122; our italics). What Uexküll wants us to see, we presume, is the direct parallel between epistemology and life, i.e. *needs co-determine stimuli in much the same way that theories co-determine observations*.

Clearly, the deeper goal running throughout all of Uexküll's work was to uncover "the pattern which connects", to quote another great thinker of his own generation, Gregory Bateson: "What pattern connects the crab to the lobster and the orchid to the primrose and all the four of them to me? And me to you? And all the six of us to the amoeba in one direction and to the backward schizophrenic in another?" (Bateson 1979: 8).

Already by 1947, Thure von Uexküll had published a chapter entitled *"Von dem Bedürfnis der Physiologie nach einer philosophischen Naturbetrachtung"*, in a book whose other half written by his father (J. v. Uexküll, T. v. Uexküll 1947) — for Thure had begun to co-author with his father already during Jakob von Uexküll's lifetime. In 1943, they published *"Die ewige Frage"* (translated into English recently — see J. v. Uexküll, T. v. Uexküll 2004). In addition, Jakob von Uexküll's unfinished book *Das allmächtige Leben* was completed by Thure and his mother Gudrun von Uexküll, who together wrote the nine last chapters of the book on the basis of Jakob's notes (G. v. Uexküll, T. v. Uexküll 1950; see the details in Kull 2001: 33).

Specializing in medicine, and developing his father's paths of thinking, Thure von Uexküll gave a theoretical basis to psychosomatic medicine. As Thomas A. Sebeok observed "no pillar of the medical establishment would more crisply and trenchantly discern and signal a crucial paradigm shift in, or a consistently comprehensive semiotic overview of, the intellectual landscape than Thure von Uexküll" (Sebeok 2001: 62).

*Lehrbuch der psychosomatischen Medizin*, the largest volume in its field, was edited by him, has been published in six editions (1979, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1996, 2003), and has appeared in English translation (1997c). His

views on the relationship between medicine and biosemiotics may be illustrated by the following passage:

> Medicine must replace its mechanical model for the body with a model of the living system. Living systems do not react in a mechanical way to mechanical inputs; rather, they transform inputs of the environment on their receptors into signs which inform the systems about the meaning of the environment for its needs. These signs enable the system to recognize and to assimilate the resources of the environment in order to maintain their autopoiesis as basis for their health. (Uexküll 1992: 455)

Similarly, the following quote comes from his "Medicine and semiotics":

> The ability to form symbols means that the direct connection between perceiving and operating is interrupted. The sensory signs lose their absolute unambiguity. They become as it were, un-homely ('*un-heimlich*'). An inner world separates perception and operation, in which test operations are needed to find out whether one's senses can be trusted or whether it is dangerous to follow their demands. (Uexküll 1986a: 213)

And, approaching medicine as a culturally related system, "If every culture produces its medicine, may it not be possible that every culture also produces its illnesses?" (Uexküll, Wesiack 1997: 36).

Thure von Uexküll was actively working until the last year of his life.[4] In 1998, at the Seventh World Congress of Endocytobiology, a session was dedicated to his 90th birthday (Tiivel, Kull 1999). The opening talk was given by himself.

For the Uexküll-conference in Hamburg in January 2004, he sent a contribution noting that "Living beings do not discover their Umwelten. They have to construct it out of the signs found" (Uexküll 2004: 374). And throughout Thure von Uexküll's life's work as a physician and a semiotician, this is exactly what he did.

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[4] See Thure von Uexküll's bibliography, e.g., at http://www.karl-koehle.de/archiv/uexkuell/publikation.html.
We also thank Donald Favareau for his help in preparing this text.

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[5] In Danish. See German translation ("Thure von Uexküll ist tot — Die Einheit von Körper und Seele. Auch wenn die Nervenzellen im Gehirn sich nicht amüsieren, freuen wir uns dennoch") at http://www.int-med.de/uexkuell/hoffmeyer.pdf.

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