

The dynamics of semiotics of culture; its pertinence to anthropology

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I argue in this paper that new and renewed perspectives are emerging in American anthropological studies, which I loosely group under Lotman's useful term "semiotics of culture," where the significant unit is the culture text. One of Lotman's definitions of text, which pertains to culture texts is the following:

A (culture) text is a mechanism constituting a system of heterogeneous semiotic spaces, in whose continuum the message...(is) circulated. We do not perceive this message to be the manifestation of a single language: a minimum of two languages is required to create it (Lotman 1994: 377). [(1981)].

The assumption is that all communication is through signs, verbal, visual, movements, performances, rituals, etc. Peirce's classic definition of the sign is the following: "A sign is something which stands to somebody for something in some respects or capacity" (CP.1.372).

Among the agenda coming to the fore In the spirit of such semiotically oriented scholars as Charles Sanders Peirce, Mikhail Bakhtin, Roman Jakobson, Jurij M. Lotman, V. V. Ivanov and B. A. Uspenskij are the following: the close relations between verbal and non-verbal realms; an emphasis on ambiguity and dynamics in place of static structures; the integration as well as tensions and factions within and between cultural units; the search for the the inner point of view including memory; the significance of culturally specific versions of history and their relations to official accounts, and the effect of the anthropologist upon the group studied. I see our fundamental tasks as interpretation of the meaning and interrelation of all modes of sign communication, verbal or non-verbal, conscious or subliminal, including auto-communication; and the distilling from artistic tropes, whether consciously created or not by the culture bearers, their various

potential meanings in full context no matter how new and unusual they may appear to be, and not neglecting double meanings embedded in satire, allegory and humor. Finally, one must look to underlying organizing principles in cultures and culture in general, such as perspectives of time and space, beliefs, and fundamental values. In this search the influence of the scholars mentioned was delayed since the Soviets held up the publication of the works of M. M. Bakhtin, Jurij Lotman, and other members of the Moscow-Tartu group, and unfortunately in the United States Charles Sanders Peirce had a similar fate and is only now being widely recognized as the greatest American philosopher, his works being energetically published at last. In fact Bakhtin and Peirce did not live to see the reception and publication of most of their works. During his American years Roman Jakobson tirelessly underscored the relevance of Peirce for the social sciences and humanities. Jakobson was teaching and writing in the United States since the days of the Second World War, and remained a leading scholar in European countries as one of the founders of the inter-war Prague Linguistic Circle and before that the Moscow Linguistic Circle. Jakobson also did not live to see the increasing though hardly sufficient influence of his work among American anthropologists. Indeed, only after the onset of the Gorbachev era was he openly lauded in his own former homelands, Russia and Czechoslovakia. Fortunately, there were brilliant scholars, particularly in the former Soviet Union, led by Lotman, Ivanov, and Uspenskij of the Moscow-Tartu group, and brave scholars in Czechoslovakia, who never ceased to work in a semiotic mode, no matter how constrained they were.

Let us preface our discussion of semiotics of culture by a comment on the excessive relativisation of postmodernism, not shared by the above-named scholars, by calling on the philosopher Robert Innis (1994: 308) who follows Wittgenstein in seeing that one of the principal tasks of philosophy is to “see connections” (Innis 1994: 1). Disagreeing with Derrida concerning the issue of the existence of a reality of independent of signs, Innis rejects the view that “in the absence of a center or origin everything becomes discourse” (Derrida 1978: 280 quoted by Innis 1994: 3), Innis argues, rather, “(W)e can openly admit a rather differently conceived universal play of signification, but it is one that is not cut off from its roots in perception and action ...” (Innis 1994: 3).

For Peirce, as Innis stresses quoting Eco, the subject matter of semiotics “is coextensive with the whole range of cultural phenomena ...” (Eco: 1976a: 6 in Innis 1994: 1), and involves perception at all levels. As Barnouw (1986:82 argues, Peirce’s system “stresses the progressive determination of meaning” (1986: 82). However, Peirce’s progression is a continuous direction with no end insight, a process which he called “infinite regress,” characterized by *synechism* which means that there is no absolute discreteness since “elements of Thirdness cannot be entirely escaped” (CP 7.653). For “Continuity is fluidity, the merging of part into part” (CP 1.164), and it “involves the idea of infinity,” (CP 1.165), Thus there is “continuous expanse” (1.166), Indeed “Evolution means nothing but *growth* in the widest sense of that word” (CP 1.173),

Innis finds that the positions of Peirce, Bühler, and Cassirer “arrive at the same conclusion: the theory of perception must necessarily advert to the sign-functions of the sense data found in it” (Innis 1994: 4–5). Innis also notes Vološinov’s argument that “not only does ‘expression organize experience’ but ‘there is no such thing as experience outside of embodiment in signs’” (1994: 5, citing Vološinov 1933).

The following summary remarks highlight what I hold are some of the focal concepts relevant to a semiotically oriented anthropology.

1. Peirce

Perhaps the most penetrating analysis of individual Identity and interrelations between ego and the other, which foresees the flexible and permeable boundaries of Lotman, is Peirce’s program of the human sign. The human sign is not only a metaphor or a form of discourse for Peirce, it is a paramount construct structuring all communications of all humans. Peirce insightfully took the first leap that called for the formal study of the human sign, holding that all conscious perception involves self-consciousness, that is seeing oneself as object (Peirce CP 5.532, cf. Portis-Winner 1983a). One can thank Jakobson who called attention to this fundamental thought of Peirce. Jakobson noted that Bogatyrev, without knowing of Peirce’s existence, realized Peirce’s program, “launched over a century ago under the slogan ‘Man, A Sign’” and urged that this program be furthered (Jakobson 1976: 30).

The human sign is placed within Peirce's vast scheme, but here I must confine myself to a major epistemological distinction which is a concomitant of Peirce's fundamental trichotomy, sign, object, interpretant, and which makes clear the chasm between Peirce's world view and that of the post-moderns.

Importantly, Peirce sees two kinds of objects, which may be verbal or nonverbal, the *immediate object* and the *dynamical object*. Peirce's object is anything with which the sign presupposes an acquaintance in order to convey some further information concerning it. Peirce also held that there are various interpretants, the immediate, the dynamical and the final or logical. Deledalle sees Peirce as holding that in describing aspects of reality the final logical interpretant is "that which *would* finally be decided to be the true interpretation if consideration of the matter were carried so far that an ultimate opinion were reached" (CP 8.184)." But Deledalle asks "how can we distinguish the dynamical object which is outside the sign from the immediate object in the sign?" (Deledalle 1995: 26). Peirce holds that the dynamical object can be known only by "collateral experience" (CP 8.514)." In other words, we receive knowledge of the existence of the dynamical object, but not of its nature in itself, its substantial nature, as, writes Deledalle,

... we were born into a world that was already constituted.... Here , we do not start from the dynamical object, We start from signs. Not formal signs-representamens, but signs already constituted with their final logical interpretants and their objects Our distinctions shed light on the processes of their constitution and reveal their functions. They do not describe the state of things (*ibid.*: 29).

Peirce's human sign is the fertile plain which makes semiosis possible. Peirce wrote that everything present to us is a phenomenal manifestation of ourselves which does not prevent it from being a phenomenon of something without us (CP 5.283). Since "every thought is a sign" and "life is a train of thoughts ... (this) proves that man is a sign; so that every thought is an *external* sign, proves that man is an external sign. Thus, "when we think we are at that moment a sign ... the man and the sign are identical" (CP5.314). Thus reflexivity is the *sine qua non* of semiosis but also the basis for the whole process of semiosis representing, however imperfectly, outside reality. As Peirce wrote, "(E)xperience is our only teacher, its action takes place by a series of surprises, bringing about a double consciousness at once of

an *ego* and a *non-ego* directly acting upon each other. An imaginary object was expected but something different comes instead” (CP 5.53).

2. Jakobson’s aesthetic function and metonymic metaphors and the importance of underlying iconicity

In its *Theses* (1929) the Prague Circle adopted Buehler’s three functions for the verbal message, the referential, the emotive, and the conative. And the *Theses* added a fourth, the poetic (later broadened to the aesthetic) function focused on the message for its own sake, which Jakobson described as

... not the sole function of verbal art, but only its dominant, determining function, whereas in all other verbal activities, it acts as a subsidiary, accessory constituent. This function, by promoting the palpability of signs, deepens the fundamental dichotomy of signs and objects (Jakobson 1960: 356).

In 1960 Jakobson defined two more functions of the message, the phatic and the metalingual. Both have parallels in Bakhtin’s program and for Lotman the *meta* conception is fundamental for all semiotics.

In scrutinizing Jakobson’s model, we consider his challenging depiction of metonymic metaphors in poetry. As Jakobson wrote:

The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection onto the axis of combination ... Similarity superimposed on contiguity imparts to poetry its thorough going symbolic, multiplex, polysemantic essence ... In poetry, where similarity is superimposed upon contiguity, any metonymy is slightly metaphoric and any metaphor has a metonymical tint (1960: 358).

In 1974 in the opening address in the First International Congress of Semiotics in Milan, Jakobson defined the *artifice*.

The signs of a given art can carry the imprint of each of the three semiotic modes described by Peirce: thus they can come near to the symbol, to the icon and to the index, but it is obviously above all in their artistic character that their significance (*semeiosis*) is lodged.

As Jakobson continued,

The ‘artifice’ is to be added to the triad of semiotic modes established by Peirce. This triad is based on two binary oppositions: contiguous/similar and factual/imputed. The contiguity of the two components of the sign is

factual in the *index* but imputed in the *symbol*. Now, the factual similarity which typifies the *icon* finds its logically foreseeable correlative in the imputed similarity which specifies the *artifice*, and it is precisely for this reason that the latter fits into the whole which is now forever a four-part entity of semiotic modes (Jakobson 1987: 451–2).

It is not clear, I believe, that we need a fourth semiotic mode, the *artifice*, since may already be accounted for by Peirce's hypoicon and degenerate *index*. Nor can we necessarily distinguish factual and imputed similarity for they blend into each other in *index* and *symbol*. Furthermore, Lotman's forms of montage also account for the *artifice*. Finally buried in the above quotation is the Saussurean dichotomy *signifier* and *signified* suggested by the discussion of the two components of the sign. Jakobson gradually dropped this distinction but it was not clear that Jakobson fully accepted Peirce's sense that the sign is indivisible, although I think that it was implied in Jakobson's last work, nor did he account for the interpretant (Jakobson and Waugh 1979).

3. Dialogic anthropology

Bakhtin analyzes his overarching dialogic program to the novel and the carnival (cf Ivanov 1975). For Bakhtin the significant units in culture are dialogic utterances in full context in which emerging subjects perform polyphonic, heteroglossic and double-voiced dynamic texts which cannot be separated from ideological spheres, nor in the last analysis from chronotopes or horizons. Bakhtin's chronotope refers to perceptions of time and space affected by cultural traditions which underlie and shape specific texts and involve the opposition incomplete vs. open as contrasted to closed vs. final.

Bakhtin's horizons are described by Holquist (1990a: xxiv) in the following way:

I see the world from a 'horizon, the world gives itself as immediately around me, as circumscribed by the unique angle of my vision, as a surrounding full of specific meanings by my own ends. The other, however, I see as existing in an environment: the world is the same for him as it is for others, for it is not conditioned by the uniqueness of his intentionality (as is my horizon) (Bakhtin quoted in Holquist 1981: 72).

The dilemma of the ethnologist in portraying the other is depicted indirectly by Bakhtin's above remarks. Our perceptions of time-space (chronotopes) and world view, consciously or unconsciously penetrate our view of the environment and permeates the dialogue between subject and investigator.

The ramifications of Bakhtin's dialogue could lead us through his entire works (cf. Portis-Winner 1999 in press). This did not go unnoticed by the American ethnologists Tedlock and Mannheim, (1995: 2) who, largely inspired by Bakhtin, have designed their program of dialogic anthropology as a replacement of interpretive anthropology. Tedlock and Mannheim also credit Jakobson with advancing the Bakhtinian dialogic mode as early as 1942. (The only early work of Bakhtin's was published in Russia in 1929. Others had to wait until the sixties). Jakobson saw dialogue as a more fundamental form of speech than monologue, and called the latter a form of social pathology (Jakobson 1953: 13 in Tedlock and Mannheim and Tedlock 1995: 1). Jakobson argued that the idea that folk tales could be told monologically repeated from telling to telling is a fantasy, a projection of otherness that betrays its origins in a world of written literature and individualist social relations among first, second, and third persons (1995: 2). The two anthropologists correctly note Jakobson's argument that dialogue as a more fundamental form of speech than monologue "directly challenges the Saussurean focus on the individual actor as the source of *parole* or speech." Consequently, Saussure's *langue* becomes an emergent property of dialogue rather than having ontological priority over all speech (Mannheim and Tedlock 1995: 1 referring to Jakobson 1953: 13). Indeed, even if the speakers of monologue "expect no answer, ... (they) nevertheless takes a position in a larger linguistic world that is already constituted through countless prior interactions of social relationships among first, second and third persons" (Mannheim and Tedlock 1995: 2). As the authors continue,

(O)nce culture is seen as arising from a dialogical ground then ethnography itself is revealed furthermore as an emergent culture (or intercultural) phenomenon, produced, reproduced, and revised in dialogues between field-workers and natives. This process of its production is of the same general kind as the process by which ethnic others produce the cultures that are the objects of ethnographic study (Tedlock and Mannheim 1995:1).

Furthermore, “(E)ven as the voice of objectification or interpretation narrows itself toward an authoritative monologue,” this only means that a multiplicity of voices are suppressed (*ibid.*: 2–3).

(The individual’s) speech already has first and second person embedded in it. ... In addition to persons, there are other deictic elements that locate the speaker with respect to a world that already has persons or things in it.... No one can speak of language, as we know it, without already being situated in the world (7).

Kristeva’s intertextuality (1980: 68–69), when other discourse infiltrates directly or indirectly into a text, is seen by Tedlock and Mannheim as a form of Bakhtin’s dialogism, and they accept most of Bakhtin’s basic concepts such as “heteroglossia,” a mixing of linguistic registers (Mannheim and Tedlock: 16 referring to Todorov 1984: 56), and “double voicing,” that is speaking in the manner of other voices without quoting them (Bakhtin, 1981:324-30). Tedlock and Mannheim (1995: 16) hold that dialogism exists even at the level of the individual word since the environment of the words of others is always implied (Bakhtin 1981: 276). And they note that Bakhtin speaks of parodies and ironic importation of a word from one speech type to another (Bakhtin 1981: 305–8). They agree with Jakobson that the folk tale, which Bakhtin did not treat, is more widespread and probably older than the epic, and that story tellers engage in code switching or heteroglossia in which every level of discourse has dialogic elements (Mannheim and Tedlock 1995: 16).

Many important themes unite Bakhtin with ethnological studies. I quote from Bakhtin’s path-breaking interpretation of medieval European carnival which he places in an ethnographic context.

Of the meaning and functions of worldwide images of the rogue, clown and fool-from the deep recesses of pre-class folklore up to the Renaissance We encounter new forms for making public all unofficial and forbidden spheres of human life, in particular the sphere of the sexual and of vital body functions (copulation, food, wine), as well as decoding of all the symbols that had covered up these processes (common every-day symbols, ritualistic ones and symbols pertaining to the state religion) (Bakhtin 1981: 165).

Such carnivalesque characteristics are typical of many ethnic texts that exhibit reversals of all kinds, and particularly reversals of roles that pertain to different hierarchies and different bounded cultural worlds. Boundaries are understood here to have reference not only to spatial

and temporal divisions, but also to other sociocultural divisions such as those of gender divisions, social and economic strata, religious distinctions, folk/urban dichotomies, and others. For Bakhtin the carnival minimally opposes and integrates two cultural worlds and their many internal divisions.

Lotman associates his cultural dynamics with Bakhtin's broad program. As Lotman writes

In Bakhtin's analysis inevitable action, change, and destruction are latent even in the stasis of the text. Therefore, there is a plot (*sjuzet*) even in instances that would appear to be far removed from the problems of plot (*sjuzet*).

and:

As a generator of meaning, as a thinking mechanism capable of working, the text needs an interlocutor. This requirement reveals the profoundly dialogic nature of consciousness (1994: 378).

4. Lotman's Narration; Implicit and Explicit Montage

Lotman's work was very broad and in this brief statement I can only touch on some of his penetrating concepts. For Lotman montage is only a special case of one of the most widespread methods of narration for forming artistic meanings — the juxtaposition (contrast and integration) of heterogeneous elements. In Lotman's system, montage may be *implicit* or *explicit* (1976: 47–61). Changes in *implicit montage* are modal, by transformation. An example of implicit montage described by Lotman for the cinema is the joining in one shot of an individual's face to a new version of the original, where the facial expression is changed, the alteration being a transformation which makes the perception of change gradual. Whether certain elements are rearranged, or whether there is a change in mood or scale, there is no clear addition of new elements but simply a change in the formal organization and thus the mode of the material. This form is plotless and timeless, being non-linear. *Explicit* montage, however, is based on the juxtaposition of units emanating from different semantic domains. In the new context these elements appear to have something in common at some level which, Lotman writes, creates a common modality

(1976: 58), an example being Eisenstein's film *The Strike* (*Zabastovka*) where negative characters appear with animal heads. The unifying contextual agent may be a common mood, a setting or element, even a repeated noise, which, by its association with certain dissimilar objects in the text, imparts a new meaning. *Explicit* montage is like plot because it clearly violates traditional orders, boundaries, and expectations, changes by addition of new elements, and is linear. Lotman's montage corresponds to Jakobson's metonymic metaphors, though Jakobson did not distinguish "implied" and "explicit."

In a broad sense then, both types of montage that belong, according to Lotman, to two forms of narration, permeate both artistic and mythological texts. Of course, such processes, which are aspects of metaphorical thinking, are not absent in non-narrative, non-artistic texts, but they are not dominant. I will show, in examples in this study, that ethnic texts, since they always combine at least two cultural worlds, demonstrate exceptionally well the artistic principle of montage, so well expressed in the carnival.

Lotman's *semiosphere* provides a semiotic term for a total culture and in this sense is very useful. Lotman writes "We shall define the semiotic space necessary for the existence and functioning of languages, not the sum total of different languages. In a sense, the semiosphere has a prior existence and is in constant interaction with languages" (1979: 123). One can compare this concept with Peirce's *phaneron* and with Jakobson's *universe of discourse*. All these concepts are in part a reaction against atomistic and additive approaches.

5. Semiotics of every-day behavior

Bakhtin's outlook resonates with Lotman and Uspenskij's semiotics of every-day behavior, humor, parody. An example of the semiotics of everyday behavior is taken by Lotman and Uspenskij from eighteenth century culture of the Russian nobility. During the reign of Peter the Great (1672–1725) every-day behavior, normally subconscious and considered natural by the actors, became something new to be learned since traditional every-day behavior had been replaced by imperial edict by new patterns modeled on European aristocratic culture (Lotman and Uspenskij 1984: 232). As a result, various Russian "styles" of every-day behavior coexisted from which the nobility

could choose; and eventually such new patterns became theatrical in the sense that “an eighteenth century man would choose a certain type of behavior for himself. This role as a rule involved the selection of an historical figure” or other types, such as a character from literature, to emulate (241). The “role,” then, is a kind of “mask.” The next step is a transition to “plot”, which means “to regard one’s life as a text which is organized according to the rules of a particular plot that emphasizes the ‘unity of action’ and focusing one’s life on one immutable goal” (245). Plot introduces the idea of ending. “Death and destruction, as the subject of constant reflection, came to be seen as the crowning event of a life” (245).

Such role playing, adopting European styles by Russians, is a form a plot involving boundary crossing in Lotman’s sense, which I see as an internalized transnationalism, a tension between two contrasting cultural traditions, one of which the individual attempts to suppress and one of which becomes the semantic dominant which the individual tries to enact.

Lotman and Uspenskij counterpose Bakhtin’s concept of laughter in culture, based on Western European traditions, to the world of laughter in early Russian literature which was described by Lichaëv and Panëenko (1976 in Lotman and Uspenskij 1984: 39–52). Whereas laughter in Western culture freed individuals from religious and social constraints and transported them into a world of popular carnival utopia that reversed and parodied dominant socio-ethical hierarchies, in Russian medieval culture, “some laughter images ... bear no trace of ambivalence and do not lie outside the bounds of the of the official ... culture” (40), thereby resembling Turner’s liminal world of reversals and the grotesque in tribal society which remains within the sacred realm (Turner 1964). Other studies of humor in tribal societies also see laughter as part of the sacred realm (cf. Bricker’s study of the highland Chiapas (1973), Such performances are ritualized and not marked by irony and do not threaten the social order. In contrast Turner’s liminoid, which he finds in modern post-tribal society (1982), which is not part of the sacred realm and recalls Bakhtin’s carnival reversals of the social order in medieval Western society.

I can only mention here the close relation of Bakhtin’s world to Jakobson’s metonymic metaphors (1960) and Lotman’s related implicit and explicit montages (Lotman 1976a), all of which confront images from two different domains or cultures and give rise to new

reflection on their possible similarities, again opening new avenues of meanings and increased information and dynamics and typical of every-day behavior, most often not realized by the actor (cf. Portis-Winner 1982, 1987).

6. History

The questioning of traditional concepts of history is a singularly modern concern. The issue is why are official concepts of history so inadequate? The shattering critique by B. A. Uspenskij (manuscript 1989: 324) of the nineteenth century view of history as a monolithic, homogenous and linear progression of events demands a rethinking of how history is conceptualized and perceived by, to use Bakhtin's terms, official and nonofficial *personae*. A semiotic approach focuses on how participants ascribe meaning to historical events from their subjective points of view and their cultural traditions. It is the different readings of these texts, dependent on differing "languages," that themselves reflect differing ideas and conceptions of space-time, which concern Uspenskij. He also probes the relation between dream time and historical time that demonstrates the inadequacy of a solely linear and chronological model.

In Lotman's discussion of historical fact in his *The Universe of the Mind* (1990), he notes that since the historian is condemned to deal with texts that stand between the event as it happened and himself, his task is to decode something encoded originally by someone with a purpose (217). Thus the historian creates facts from a story. It is insufficient to translate the text into the language of the day, rejecting whatever does not accord with the decoder's norms and the science of the day, relegating such aspects to "the fruit of ignorance and fantasy" (218). From the semiotic point of view,

the code (or set of codes) which the creator of the text used has to be reconstructed and then correlated with the codes used by the researcher ...
A decoding is always a reconstruction" (218).

For Lotman, considering the relation of science and history, chance and determinacy are not incompatible, but are two possible states. Thus history and science, though inseparable, also differ. History, as opposed to physical science, "is a process which takes place with

interference from a thinking being.” Thus in historical processes not only chance but conscious choice becomes the most important objective factor (232). Accordingly, historical semiotics must analyze how humans who make choices look at the world, and reconstruct different ethno-cultural types of consciousness (Lotman 231–232). For Lotman as for Uspenskij history is a dynamic process since the

interrelationship between cultural memory and its self-reflections is like a constant dialogue: texts from...earlier periods are brought into culture, and, interacting with contemporary mechanisms, generate an *image* of the historical past, which culture transfers into the past and which like an equal partner in a dialogue, affects the present. But as it transforms the present, the past too changes its shape (Lotman 272).

Thus the dynamics of history from unofficial and official positions and their contrasts, and the role of memory in reconstructions of history, impel the researcher of the past to travel down many avenues.

7. The semiosphere, boundaries

Lotman’s term *semiosphere* subsumes all aspects of semiotics of culture, all the heterogenous semiotic systems or “languages” that are in constant process of change and at a deep level have some unifying qualities. The term semiosphere is a refiguration of Lotman’s statement that culture itself is a large text.

The unit of semiosis, the smallest functioning mechanism, is not the separate language but the whole semiotic space of the culture in question. This is the space we term the *semiosphere* (Lotman 1990: 125).

“Smallest” here is meant to imply an overall organization which of course subsumes smaller interrelated units or texts. For Lotman the semiosphere is not isolated from the rest of nature and is compared by analogy to V. I. Vernadsky’s *biosphere*, “namely the totality and the organic whole of living matter, and also the condition for the continuation of life” (Lotman 1990: 125 commenting on Vernadsky 1960: 102).

The semiosphere is asymmetrical, marked by strong differences between the center and the periphery (127), and involves Lotman’s notion of boundary, which he defined as “the outer limits of a first-person form.” “Our” space is safe and harmonious, as opposed to

“their” space, which is hostile and chaotic (131). The basic divisions within the semiosphere arise from human biophysical and universals and fundamental culturally perceived differences, such as the distinction of the living from the dead, the settled from the nomadic, towns from countryside, the asymmetry of the brain, the rotation of earth, the movement of stars, the cycle of seasons, constants of human body weight in relation to gravity, the opposition of up and down, right and left, male and female, hot and cold, etc.

The notion of the boundary separating the internal space of the semiosphere from the external is just a rough primary distinction. In fact, the entire space of the semiosphere is transected by boundaries of different levels, boundaries of different languages and even of texts, and the internal space of each of these sub-semiospheres has its own semiotic which is realized as the relationship of any language, group of texts, or separate texts to a metastructural space which describes them, always bearing in mind that languages and texts are hierarchically disposed on different levels [creating] a multileveled system (138).

Within this framework Lotman develops a semiotic notion of *personality* embedded in the cultural milieu. Thus a personality is not identified with a physical person alone but may include a group, and even property, social, religious or moral positions, etc. For example, a master’s personality may encompass his wife, children, slaves, etc. Clearly then, when differing views of the boundaries of individuals collide, disturbances occur, as Lotman writes:

The ... notion of collective personality, and not individual personality, lies behind the idea of blood feud, according to which the whole clan of the murderer is perceived to be responsible (139).

Lotman suggests the model I-I when the subject transmits a message to himself. A reformulation of the message from sender to receiver in internal communication brings additional meaning to the message. In this process, the addressor internally restructures himself to act simultaneously as the addressee (Lotman 1976: 229). Peirce, Lotman, and Jakobson and Bakhtin are united in finding that the fundamental activity of semiosis underlying all texts is auto-communication or inner dialogue. Culture, as Lotman writes, can be treated as “one message transmitted by the collective 'I' of humanity itself From this point of view human culture is a vast example of autocommunication” (1990: 33).

8. Conclusion

The main exponents of the programs discussed here are no longer living. Peirce died in 1914, Bakhtin in 1975, Jakobson in 1982, and Lotman in 1995. It is hoped that students of these towering personalities review their many heuristic insights and carry them further. It would be unfortunate if ethnologists did not join in this endeavor at a far greater intensity than is evident today, and were to leave this work to philosophers, poeticsians and Slavists. This task is being facilitated since Lotman's complete works are now being published in Russian, and translations of Lotman's and Bakhtin's works into English are increasing. The Peirce Publication Project at Indiana University is now publishing all of Peirce's works, and most of Jakobson's works have appeared in his *Selected Writings* and elsewhere. Thus sources are becoming increasingly available.

I conclude with a general comment on the present state of the dynamics of semiotics of culture. Particularly relevant to today's transnationalism is the issue of "cultural explosions" as Lotman calls it. (1994: 379). Lotman's cultural explosion goes farther than gradual change. As he writes,

The powerful external textual eruptions in a culture conceived of as a huge text not only lead the culture to adapt outside messages and to introduce them into its memory but also stimulate the culture's self-development, with unpredictable results. (Lotman 1994: 379).

Lotman urges the "comparative study of the semantics of different 'cultural explosions' in world history" (*loc. cit.*), and argues that

“(A)ccelerated development” reduces the variety and complexity of world civilization and, as a result, diminishes it to a monotonal Text; in other words, the process is one of informational degradation. However, this hypothesis is not confirmed by empirical reality: such a leveling does not take place in the course of the cultural explosions in world history. What does occur are processes that are diametrically opposed to each other (*loc. cit.*).

Lotman asserts that the more complex cultures in contact with other cultures do not always play a positive role.

... the more complex culture does not always play the role of stimulus for the more archaic one; the opposite tendency is also possible. Thus in the twentieth century texts from archaic and primitive cultures powerfully

erupted into European civilization, which consequently displayed increasing dynamic excitation. It is precisely the differences among cultural potentials, the difficulties in deciphering texts by means of languages of existing cultures, that are essential to bringing about such transformations (*loc. cit.*).

Finally, Lotman's theory of texts is similar to Peirce's remarks that conclude this paper. For Lotman a Text

is a mechanism constituting a system of heterogeneous semiotic spaces, in whose continuum the message [associated with the first textual function] circulates. We do not perceive this message to be the manifestation of a single language: a minimum of two languages is required to create it (*ibid.*: 377).

Thus Lotman's dialogic concept of cultural explosion raises the challenge of the particular complexities of our days, not new to world history but increasing by quantum leaps, and in Peirce's comprehensive metaphor

The universe as an argument is necessarily a great work of art, a great poem — for every fine argument is a poem and a symphony — just as every poem is a sound argument. Thus dialogue is built into the very conception of reality (CP. 5.119).

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Динамика семиотики культуры, ее важность для антропологии

В статье предлагается обзор тех понятий семиотики (культуры), которые могут оказаться продуктивными в семиотически ориентированной антропологии. Например, в некоторых антропологических направлениях применяется понятие текста культуры. По Ю. Лотману текст культуры является механизмом, формирующим систему семиотических пространств. В описании явления культуры исходят из динамики его генезиса и сущности, из диалогичности данного явления. Таким образом, для антрополога становятся важными его собственное влияние на исследуемое явление, соотношение официальной и неофициальной версий истории и ранее незамеченные аспекты исследуемого явления. При учете всего контекста расширяется круг потенциальных значений текста культуры.

Дается обзор работ ученых, влияние которых на Западе до сих пор было ограниченным: Ч. С. Пирс, Р. Якобсон, Ю. Лотман, В. В. Иванов, Б. А. Успенский, М. М. Бахтин.

В работах Пирса автор подчеркивает его отношение к человеку как знаку — носителю рефлексивности и семиозиса, ученику внешней реальности. С такой позиции было бы антропологу хорошо начинать свою работу. Во взглядах Якобсона подчеркивается эстетический принцип, позволяющий более глубоко осмыслить соотношение объекта и знака. В концепции культуры Бахтина выделяется принцип

диалогичности, причем характер диалога зависит от *горизонта* (хронотопа) участников. Позиция этнолога также зависит от его горизонта. Учение Бахтина лежит в основе концепции диалогической антропологии, в которой важную роль, наряду с диалогом, играют и нарушающие обычные иерархические отношения принципы карнавальности. В концепции Лотмана подчеркивается принцип монтажности, соединения элементов разного происхождения. Указанные авторы сравниваются на фоне концепции семиосферы.

В анализе современных культурных процессов важен аспект культурно-семиотической динамики. В основу сравнительного анализа культур могут лечь разные аспекты семиотики культуры — от понятия текста культуры до понятия взрыва в культуре.

Kultuurisemiootika dünaamika; selle olulisus antropoloogias

Artikkel annab ülevaate nendest (kultuuri) semiootika põhimõtetest, mis võiksid olla olulised semiootiliselt orienteeritud antropoloogias. Näiteks kasutatakse uue vaatenurgaga antropoloogilistes uuringutes 'kultuuriteksti' mõistet; Lotmani järgi on "(kultuuri) tekst mehhanism, mis moodustab erisuguste semiootiliste ruumide süsteemi". Kultuurinähtust vaadeldakse rõhutades selle tekkimise ja olemuse dünaamilisust, dialoogilisust. Nii omandavad antropoloogi jaoks tähtsuse tema enda mõju uuritavale, ametliku ja mitteametliku ajalooversiooni suhe ja mingi nähtuse teised, varem tähelepanuta jäänud tahud. Kultuuriteksti potentsiaalsete tähenduste hulk avardub kui arvestatakse kultuuri konteksti.

Ülevaade tehakse just nende teadlaste töödest, keda on Läänes avaldatud alles viimasel ajal või kelle mõju on olnud pärsitud: Charles S. Peirce, Roman Jakobson, Juri Lotman, V. V. Ivanov, B. A. Uspenski, M. M. Bahtin.

Artikli autor arvab, et nendele kõikidele on omane kultuurinähtuse dünaamika ja mitmepalgelisuse väljatoomine, samas ei lähe nad kaasa postmodernismi kalduvusega teha kõik suhteliseks; mille näitena on toodud Derrida arvamus, et keskuse või päritolu puudumisel muutub kõik diskursuseks.

Andes ülevaate Peirce'i ideedest, keskendub Portis-Winner reaalsuse ja inimtaju olemusele. Inimene sünnib maailma, mis on märgiline (esindatuna märgisese vahetu objekti poolt); väline reaalsus eksisteerib Peirce'i järgi märgiväliste dünaamiliste objektide kujul. On olemas ka vahetu ja dünaamiline interpretant ning lõplik ehk loogiline interpretant. Viimane tähendaks reaalsuse tõest tõlgendamist, kui uurimine viidaks nii kaugele.

Pole võimalik jõuda dünaamilise objekti olemuseni, küll saab tajuda nende olemasolu “kõrvutatavate kogemuste” kaudu. Tajukogemused on samuti kehastatud märkides.

Kogemust peab Peirce inimese ainsaks õpetajaks: kui oodatu või kujuteldava asemel ilmub midagi üllatuslikku, teist. Nõnda on inimese maailmatajumine kahetise iseloomuga, ego ja mitte-ego vastastikkuse mõju tulemus. Peirce käsitleb inimest kui märki (human sign). Kui mõte on väline märk, siis inimene mõtleva olendina on väliste märkide jada; inimene ise on märk — refleksiivsuse ning semioosise kandja, välise reaalsuse õpilane. See võiks olla alus, mille arvestamisega antropoloog üldse asub uurimistöö juurde. Hiljem on artiklis näha, kuidas Peirce'i eeltoodud mõtetel tekib kooskõla Bahtini mõistega ‘horisont’.

Jakobsoni puhul näitab autor ikoonilisuse kandvat osa tema töodes ning viitab esteetilisele funktsioonile, mille Praha ringi “Teesid” lisasid Bühleri kolmele funktsioonile. Kunstilises tekstis on esteetilisel funktsioonil dominandi roll; see muudab tajutavamaks objekti ja märgi suhte. Kunstiteksti märgid on mitmetähenduslikumad kui tavakeeles — tekstisisene sarnasuse printsiip on tähtsam kui piirnevuse printsiip (nt. luules, kus igal metafooril on metonüümiline varjund, ja vastupidi). Järgides loogikat, mille Portis-Winner ära toob, lisas Jakobson Peirce'i märgitriaadile neljanda osa artifice (‘kunstivõte’, ‘järeletehtu’). Selles on sarnasus kahe märgi osa vahel taotluslik, saavutatud (kui ikoonmärgi puhul on see tege-lik), nagu nt kunstilises tekstis. Artikli autor ei pea neljanda liikme lisamist tingimata vajalikuks, kuna see sisaldub juba Peirce'i süsteemi teistes märgi alatüüpides.

Liikudes edasi Bahtini kultuurikäsitluse juurde, märgib autor selle kandva osana dialoogisuhteid, mida mõjutavad osalejate ‘horisondid’ (kronotoop). Inimene näeb maailma läbi oma unikaalse välja; selles pais- tab maailm teiste jaoks ühesugusena eksisteerivat, ilma nende endi uni-kaalsete tähendusväljadeta. Etnoloogi maailmataju, tema suhtumine teise, sõltub tema horisondist. Bahtin inspireeris Ameerika etnolooge Tedlocki ja Mannheimi välja töötama dialoogilise antropoloogia programmi. Jakobson pidas samuti dialoogi monoloogist algsemaks ja fundamentaalsemaks. Tedlock ja Mannheim leiavad dialoogi ka monoloogi ja isegi üksiku sõna tasandil. Etnograafia ise sünnib kultuuride esindajate vahel toimuva dia- loogi tulemusel. Etnoloogiale on olulised Bahtini uuringud keskaegsest karnevalikultuurist; karnevalil lõhuti ametliku ja mitteametliku piiri, keela- tu pääseb esile ja sotsiaalne hierarhia pööratakse hetkeks ringi.

Bahtini dialogism on autori sõnul sarnane Jakobsoni metonüümilistele metafooridele ning Lotmani montaažikäsitlusele, Kristeva ‘intertek- stuaalsus’ on võetav selle ühe vormina. Põhimõte on ühendada kahe eri-

neva kultuuri või teksti ühikud. Saadud uue teksti uurimisel peaks arvestama avarate tõlgendusvõimalustega.

Lotmani puhul esitatakse tema montaažikäsitlus; montaaž kui viis kõrvutada eri päritoluga elemendid. Implitsiitse montaaži puhul uusi elemente ei lisata, aeg ning süžee ei muutu. Eksplitsiitne montaaž aga kasutab erinevatest semantilistest sfääridest pärinevaid osasid, mis uues kontekstis saavad ühise modaalsuse (nt. korduv hääldus kui objektide ühendaja). Narratiivi erinevad vormid (nagu need kaks montaažitüüpi) domineerivad eelkõige kunstilistes ja mütoloogilistes tekstides; seda saab näidata ka karnevali puhul.

Bahtini uurimusi võrdleb autor Lotmani ja Uspenski omadega igapäevase käitumise semiootikast. Lotman ja Uspenski uurisid muu seas ka euroopalike kultuurinormide sissetungi 18. sajandi Venemaal. Tavaliselt alateadlik argikäitumine muudeti teadliku kontrolli objektiks. Võis valida erinevate rollide (nt. ajalooline, kirjanduslik) vahel. Autor peab sellist juhtumit internaliseeritud transnatsionalismi näiteks.

Kui Bahtin märkis, et naerul on Lääne kultuuris sotsiaalsetest reeglitest vabastav mõju, siis Lotmani ja Uspenski järgi kuulus naer keskaegses Vene kultuuris ametliku kultuuri piiridesse.

Klassikalist ajalookäsitlust on autori järgi kritiseeritud selle homogeense ja lineaarse sündmuste kujutamise pärast. Semiootiline lähenemine keskendub ajalooteksti taga seisnud isiku koodide taasloomisele; uurija peab leidma vastavussuhte nende ja oma koodide vahel. Ajaloosündmusele annavad osavõtjad tähenduse vastavalt oma vaadetele ja kultuurile. Lotmani arvates on ajaloos determinismi kõrval oluline objektiivne tegur inimeste teadlik valik. Ajalugu on vaadeldav ametlikust ja mitteametlikust positsioonist. Valikulisel mälul on siin kandev roll.

Muuseas on Lotmani mõiste 'semiosfäär' kõrvutatud Peirce'i phaneron'ga ja Jakobsoni 'diskursuse maailmaga'. Semiosfäär haarab endasse kõik kultuuri "keeled", samas on kultuuri semiootiline ruum vaadeldav ühe tekstina, mille sisemuses on mitmetasandiline alatekstide ja — keelte süsteem. Nõnda võib 'isiksust' semiootiliselt mõista laiemalt kui füüsiline isik. Terve kultuur on vaadeldav näitena autokommunikatsioonist, kus saatja restruktureerib end sisemise dialoogi käigus ka vastuvõtjaks, nõnda teatele uut tähendust lisades. Semiosfääri sisemine ruum on eraldatud välisest 'piiri' abil (meie-nemad) ning piiridega on semiosfäär jagatud vastavalt üldistele erinevustele ja omadustele (elus-surnud, paikne-rändav, tähtede liikumine jt.).

Tänapäeva rahvastevahelise suhete olukorras peab Porter-Winner oluliseks arvestada kultuurisemiootilise dünaamikaga. Ta toob ära Lotmani soovitusi uurida võrdlevalt kultuurilisi plahvatusi ajaloos; sellise plahvatuse mõju on etteaimamatu: see võib samal ajal olla nii kiirenenud areng

kui ka paljususe vähenemine ühe Tekstini. Arenenuma kultuuri mõju arhailisemale ei ole alati positiivne; mõju võib olla ka arenenuma kultuuri suunas. Igal juhul on Teksti loomiseks vajalik vähemalt kahe keele dialoog. Peirce kirjutab, et universum argumendina on kunstiteos nagu ka iga luuletus on argument. Sellisena esineb dialoog reaalsuse enda olemuses.