

## LOCATIONS in INTERSEMIOTIC SPACE\*

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A key concept for cultural semiotics is text. At the same time the text is simultaneously an ontological and an epistemic notion. Text is what we understand in culture and it is through the text that we understand something of culture. Yuri Lotman calls the association of the structural model of natural language and space the primordial semiotic dualism (Lotman 1978: 6). Against this background it is possible to follow the evolution of the notion of text in his works.

At first, text is a space in which a language of the material of a text becomes manifest and the structure of material becomes the structure of a text. In the case of verbal texts it is natural that levels of a language from phonemes to sentences should also turn into levels of a text. However, the logic of the disjunction of language is not suitable for the treatment of film or painting as text. In spite of the fact that cultural semiotics knows the time when linguistic units from phonemes to words and sentences were searched from very diverse branches of art, this universalisation of the linguistic treatment did not prove productive.

A more novel step was connecting the notion of text with polylinguism or polysystematism. This was accompanied by the term of the secondary modelling systems which, on the one hand, meant the intertwining of the linguistic and stylistic or poetic aspects. On the other hand it implied the addition of the compositional or narrative aspect. The Estonian language, the language of romanticism, genre, author on the one hand, and the compositional or narrative structure of a work on the other. In the case of nonverbal texts, the more abstract segmentation into the continual and the discrete systems of language became important. Hereby it is important that a text with the continual dominant creates its meaning through the whole, or in the deductive way, and a text with a discrete dominant through its elements, or in the inductive manner. At the same time, a general principle is that continuity and discreteness are two co-existing parameters.

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As the third stage, we can name the treatment of text as a mechanism generating language i.e., as a dialogic whole. Lotman consciously replaced the notion of reception with the term of communication, and thus insisted upon the dialogic activity of text. At the meeting of a text with the addressee there can appear several communicative levels, simultaneously or separately: text as a message means communication between the addressee and the addressant, text as a bearer of the collective cultural memory means communication between the cultural tradition and the audience, text as a mediator influencing the shaping of personality means communication of the reader with him/herself, text as an independent intellectual conglomeration and an autonomous dialogue partner means communication of the reader with the text, and text as a full-value partner in a communication act means communication between the text and cultural context (Lotman 1981: 6).

In the case of dialogical treatment of text, space has changed – the textual space has turned into a cultural space, and the text as an artefact produced from a material, has become a cultural text. This change has been put into written form already in the theses of the Tartu-Moscow cultural semiotics (1973): ‘In defining culture as a certain secondary language, we introduce the concept of a ‘culture text’, a text in this secondary language. So long as some natural language is a part of the language of culture, there arises the question of the relationship between the text in the natural language and the verbal text of culture.’ (Theses 1973: 43.) The Theses of 1973 are also important with regard to the relation between parts and the whole: ‘The relationship of the text with the whole of culture and with its systems of codes is shown by the fact, that on different levels the same message may appear as a text, part of a text, or an entire set of texts.’ (Theses 1973: 38.)

Yuri Lotman’s evolution continues clearly homologously towards the notion of the semiosphere. First, semiosphere establishes the dynamics between the part and the whole: ‘Since all the levels of the semiosphere – ranging from a human individual or an individual text to global semiotic unities – are all like semiospheres inserted into each other, then each and one of them is both a participant in the dialogue (a part of the semiosphere) as well as the space of the dialogue (an entire semiosphere).’ (Lotman 1984: 22.) Second, this whole–part relationship is joined, in turn, by the dynamics between the subjective and objective: ‘The structural parallelism between semiotic characteristics of a text and of a personality enables us to define any text on any level as a semiotic personality, and to regard any personality on any sociocultural level as a text.’ (Lotman 1992: 116.)

However, in the conception of the semiosphere, the dimension of time is far more important. One of the founders of the Tartu-Moscow semiotic school, Vjatsheslav Ivanov, has created the historiosophic dimension for the whole semiotics through the use of the notion of semiosphere: 'The task of semiotics is to describe the semiosphere without which the noosphere is inconceivable. Semiotics has to help us in orienting in history. The joint effort of all those who have been active in this science or the whole cycle of sciences must contribute to the ultimate future establishment of semiotics.' (Ivanov 1998: 792.) Still, Lotman locates himself in the context of semiology and explains, in connection with the notion of time, relationships between diachrony and synchrony. In his book *Universe of the Mind* (1990) he has claimed that synchrony is homeostatic and that diachrony is a sequence of external and accidental disturbances, reacting to which synchrony restores its integral wholeness (Lotman 1990: 6).

The rapid and primarily technological development of the cultural environment has brought along change in the ontological boundaries of texts. This, in turn, is a challenge for analysts. Let us, for example, consider a children's story-book that contains, in addition to a fairy tale, lots of information, ranging from dictionary to encyclopaedia, and also pictures and photographs. All this is presented to contemporary children in hypertextual design. Printed media has become close to hypermedia, and forces the reader to make links in addition to linear movement. As a second example, let us take a film on DVD that contains a longer version of a film than VHS, added by episodes left out from the final version, the trailer, interview with the director, and a documentary about the making of the film.

The juvenile book is an example of a metacommunicative whole in which the prototext is supplemented by a range of verbal and visual metatexts. While in culture the metacommunicative connections of a single prototext are usually separated and they are connected by time, or collective cultural memory, then in the book as a cultural text it is possible to create coherence in terms of space and time. In the case of the film, however, several important aspects are raised.

The first one connects to the topic of prototext, since under the same title there can exist several versions, and we do not know if the original is in the shape of a movie, VHS, or DVD. We can analyse this as a string rather as a process, for the temporal sequence has been set. The second aspect is related to the creation process and blueprints. In culture there has appeared the fusion of the processes

of reception and creation. A blueprint or a fragment of a work not yet completed is consciously brought to the addressee in the marketing process or as a pre-advert. What earlier used to belong to the sphere of textology or the reconstruction of the creative process, is now part of the functioning of the text in culture. Text therefore locates into a wide intersemiotic space, and the analysis of it demands complex inspection of its creation, construction, and reception. Thus a text is a process in intersemiotic space.

A process taking place in intersemiotic space can be compared to a textologist who tries to sense, through notes, blueprints and versions, the working of the writer's mind and the story of the creation of his work. In the case of literature we can talk about the macrotime of the manuscript and the microtime of a concrete page of the manuscript. The macrotime of the manuscript is first related with the possibility to create a complete diachronic string, i.e. to arrange all the materials of the manuscript chronologically. Second, in the case of the impossibility of reconstructing the diachronic string, all the material can be divided into the stages or periods of the creation of a work or the realisation of an intention. This means that concrete time is replaced by an interval in the frame of which the material is arranged according to the psychosemantic principle, i.e., in accordance with a vision of the given creative process. The microtime first relates to the sequence of the filling of a concrete page of the manuscript as a holistic unit of the manuscript. Second, microtime connects to the psychosemantic sensing of the filling sequence of this page; during this every single entry becomes a minimal unit. In this case the importance of relations between different entries on the same time is replaced by the importance of the psychosemantic connection between repetitive entries of a certain type that link up different pages of the manuscript. In addition to the macro- and microtime of the manuscript there is also reason to distinguish the achrony of the manuscript, which means the understanding of the manuscript as an archive document in which the minimal unit is formed by the whole manuscript or its holistic part as a fascicle, notebook or the like.

Thus any text is, on the one hand the result of a creative process, and a starting point of the reception process, on the other. Bringing the creative process and blueprints into theoretical discussion seems to be necessary in spite of the fact that during the age of computers the ordinary blueprint has changed. Ossip Mandelstam, the Russian poet and thinker, has written about the permanence of

the blueprint: 'Blueprints never perish. In poetry, plastics, and art in general there are no completed things ... Thus the permanence of the blueprint is the law of conservation of the energy of the work.' (Mandelstam 1967: 27–28.) The study of the blueprint, like the conscious bringing of the blueprint into culture increases teleology in the creative process. A blueprint researcher is usually familiar with the final text and can, through blueprints, follow the generation of the text both on the level of diverse sign systems and as the emergence of a conceptual whole.

Blueprint is like culture. In blueprint we can distinguish the complementarity of sign systems in the creative process, follow the shaping of an intention into a conceptual work of art, analyse the world of thought of the creator and his location in the intertextual space. For example, Fyodor Dostoyevsky's notebooks contain ideas, pictures, blueprints of others, but alongside them also details of attacks of epilepsy, facts connected with housekeeping, and also social and political thoughts. Being a notebook belonging to the pre-material of a novel, it contains a lot of information that is seemingly of secondary importance, though belonging to the same era. The result of complex study of a blueprint is the peculiarity of the creation process, and together with that, understanding the specific nature of the final text. Analysis of the creative process is holistic by nature, since the final result is already known.

Whereas, if we start from the already created text that switches into the intersemiotic space of culture it, as a prototext, becomes a foundation for an infinite number of metatexts; it creates intertextual and other connections and loses its ontological boundaries in the end. In culture, text becomes a diffused mental whole. Evaluating a text from the side of reception we can, on the one hand, estimate the translatability of a text into other texts and into other sign systems by the comparison of the prototext and metatext. Whereas we can study the reception process as a whole, the original prototext turns, in its essence, into an arche-metatext, i.e., into a non-existing text that is reconstructible through metatexts. Non-existence or invisibility means that the reception is formed of a range of events and the study of them can lead us quite far from the actual nature of the text. Michael Riffaterre was afraid of exactly that when he opposed intertextuality to hypertextuality. According to his logic, the study of intertextual relations is yet the study of a conceptual whole. In his opinion the text itself creates the rules of intertextuality that are applicable to it. At the same time Riffaterre is afraid of hypertextuality exactly because of the diffusion of the nature of a text, and of

the replacement of the study of regular connections with the study of occasional connections (Riffaterre 1994: 779–788). On the other hand, these casualties are exactly those dialogical events that base Mikhail Bakhtin's conception of culture, or on the grounds of which Umberto Eco has written, aside with decoding in culture, about extracoding in its two manifestations – under- and overcoding (Eco 1977: 136).

One thing is culture's actual functioning and diversity in the reception processes. Another thing is an analyst's interest in the fate of a text as an artistic whole in culture, and in the comparison of the immanent peculiarity of a text with the text as a cultural text or the peculiarity of a text accepted into culture. The accepting of a text into culture and the creation of a text are both autocommunicative processes. The autocommunicativeness of culture is not much different from the autocommunicativeness of an individual creator. In neither case do we know with certainty if the case is about mnemonic autocommunication, i.e., about reporting the already known in another form or other sign systems, or with discovering autocommunication, i.e., with the creation of novel correlations in what exists in memory.

Both autocommunicative processes are also integrative. An individual author integrates blueprints into a final text. Culture integrates metatexts into a mental whole. In culture, from Yuri Lotman's viewpoint, we can distinguish between two types of integration. One of them is connected with the development of metalanguages, i.e., with the meta- and autometadescription in culture. The other is connected with creolisation, i.e., with the fusion of the object- and metalanguages (Lotman 1978). Thus it is not enough to limit ourselves to a mental whole.

Another parameter is needed still – the intersemiotic one.

The intersemiotic aspect of culture is due to the partial overlap of signs and languages or sign systems of different arts – first, on the level of independent existence of these languages and texts created in them (e.g. film and theatre). The existence of a text as different simultaneous texts (e.g. novel, film, performance, picture) on the level of mental interference is the second. The third: the level of projection to the propositional textual or intertextual background. At the intersemiotic description of culture the recognisability of signs becomes important and also the fact that this recognisability takes place not only in the reception of individual holistic texts, but also in fragmentary reception processes. In the intersemiosis of culture, making sense and the hierarchisation of signs does not

depend merely on texts — the same signs can belong to different texts and sign systems, and possess different meanings in different systems. Understanding cultural perception mechanisms is the basis for the understanding of the interlingual, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, and intermediality; thus the ontology of signs of different cultural texts is based on the nature of intersemiosis.

The result comes in the need for a functional classification of signs outside the classification of types of signs. For the purposes of recognisability, it is useful to distinguish *a priori* or generally known signs, processual or authorship signs that bear a conception and are often of an *ad hoc* nature, and *a posteriori* signs, i.e., signs making sense of the text as a whole. The functional aspect enables cultural autocommunicative sign processes and transformations to be followed, e.g. the translation of processual or authorship signs into *a priori* or conventional signs. This goes both for the translation of a verbal sign into another verbal sign, and the translation of a verbal sign into a visual or audiovisual.

The peculiarity of an intersemiotic space is, indeed, both multiple reading and multiple interpretation carried out simultaneously through the help of different sign systems. Re-reading and interpretation in the intersemiotic space is comparable to Roman Jakobson's description of intersemiotic translation (Jakobson 1992). However, the simultaneity of translation processes in culture raises, on the one hand, questions about the perceptual unity of the translation of a concrete intersemiotic translation and, on the other hand, the perceptual vagueness as a result of the fusion of transformations in culture. On the level of both a single text or its transformation, and all possible transformations, there is reason to remember the words of Nelson Goodman: 'Conception without perception is empty, perception without conception is blind.' (Goodman 1978: 6.) Conceptualisation, de- and reconceptualisation in culture are equally probable and depend on the peculiarity of the processes of cultural autocommunicative processes, i.e., on how texts, types of texts and their transformations are understood.

Practical analysis of cultural texts, their intersemiotic nature as simultaneous existence as transformations in different sign systems raises the need to bring together two problems. One of them is the analysability of a text taken individually, and the second is the analysability of a text located in intersemiotic space. This, in turn, raises an important methodological problem about those immanent parameters of a text that are connected with material and composition, and about the universal parameters – such as the chronotope – that are independent of the

material of the text and apply to text expressed in different sign systems. Chronotopic analysis allows us to connect the analysis of a single text with textual analysis in intersemiotic space. This, however, is an independent topic.

A part of culture analysis has also been the development of concepts. The text as a key notion for cultural semiotics is also in need of refreshment. The notion of text needs to be made more precise in accordance with its location in culture. Text as a bordered, structural and coherent whole is only an elementary notion. The term of the cultural text is more dynamic and involves both the possibility of a text to be a part of culture, and culture's possibility to be a text or to be described as a text. Cultural text is certainly also a communicative notion. Description becomes more complex when approached from the perspective of metacommunication. A new parameter is mental text, or the notion of a text as a prototext with metatexts rooted in it that actualises as a mnemonic picture, and the peculiarity of which depends on the hierarchy of communication channels in culture. Mental text is not easily analysable as assembled text in the collective or individual memory. The same metacommunicative situation can also be described as a complementary text in which there is the coexistence of a text and metatexts of different types either inside the text (comments, illustrations, foreword, etc.) or outside it (criticism, advertisement, parody, staging, etc.). In addition to relations between text and metatext, description can be based on the complementary nature of perception processes that allows us to talk about the multimodal text. If multimodality sways outside the text, i.e., when text is realised in a different material, we can talk about the multimedial text (e.g. multimedial commentary on a book).

Creole text can be an umbrella-term for texts that demolish the traditional boundaries of the text. This is a notion that signifies interference in textual creation, the mixing of sign systems and channels, the annihilation of the ordinary boundaries of the text. This can be the cinegratography as the meeting of graphic and photographic trends in computer animation. It can be a book on CD-ROM or DVD in which verbal text is supported by sound and moving picture. It can be hypertextual text, for example, the writing of collective texts. It can also be the changing of an ordinary book into a heterogeneous text through the assembly of diverse information or the deconstruction of the beginning and/or the end (e.g. Boris Akunin's experiment with the book beginning from both sides).

With the help of these diverse notions we can describe the different loca-

tions of texts both in cultural space and in cultural processes. Creole text as an umbrella-term in this line signifies an important aspect of cultural dynamics. Yuri Lotman has viewed the creolisation of cultural languages alongside with the specialisation of cultural languages and has stressed that creolisation is but a temporary stage at the transfer to new specialisation (Lotman 1978: 10). Thus the notion of creole text is a conditional mark for the type of texts that seem to be heterogeneous at one historical moment, and have already been accepted as a new homogeneity at another moment. This is due to the fact that heterogeneity and homogeneity depend upon the development of the cultural environment and also on technological renewal. Thus the feature of creole text is a sphere of cultural creation.

## Conclusion

Blueprint is a perceptual and mental whole that reflects the creation process and casts some light on the secrets of creation, for the end result is already known. Text in cultural metacommunication is also a mental whole, but ambivalent perceptually and creative of mental fragmentariness. Creole text is an attempt to create new ontologies of texts, and in this cultural creative thinking becomes evident, even though we are not familiar with the final text. Thus, in contemporary culture it is worth remembering classical textology and, where possible, applying this to the processual and at the same time holistic description of culture. Indeed, I would like to stress that in today's cultural processes there is much that allows us to maintain that culture is a blueprint and analysable as a draft. This brings back the teleological dimension of culture analysis and allows us to describe and make sense of the location of texts in culture, as well as their location in the intersemiotic cultural space and simultaneously in the creative process of culture.

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