

THE 14TH CONFERENCE OF THE NORDIC ASSOCIATION FOR  
SEMIOTIC STUDIES ALONG WITH THE 15TH ANNUAL LOTMAN DAYS

***“Creativity – Complexity – Intelligence”***

*Tallinn University, Estonia, June 11–13, 2025*



# ***BOOK OF ABSTRACTS***



TALLINN UNIVERSITY

**Conference chairs:**  
Lauri Linask, Merit Maran

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Studies along with the 15th Annual Lotman Days

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2025

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For more information, please visit [nordicsemiotics.org/nass-tallinn-2025/](https://nordicsemiotics.org/nass-tallinn-2025/) or write to [nass14lotmandays2025@gmail.com](mailto:nass14lotmandays2025@gmail.com)

Participating in the conference implies expressing support for the freedom and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

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# Welcome!

Dear friends, colleagues, participants at the 14th conference of the Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies, organized jointly with the 15th Annual Lotman Days,

This conference is themed as “Creativity – Complexity – Intelligence“. The intricate interplay of signs with the processes of creativity, complexity, and intelligence is immersed in all varieties, modalities, and ecologies of meaning-making. Meaning-making is always creative, complex, and intelligent, in both its agreements, alignments, and continuums, as well as its incompatibilities, controversies, and contradictions.

According to Juri Lotman, one of the defining characteristics of an intelligent semiotic system is its ability to be creative, i.e. the ability to produce new and unpredictable meanings. Lotman noted that this ability is not exclusive to the human mind but can occur in various other systems and at multiple scales, where a sufficient degree of complexity is present.

The role of creativity in learning and development, be it in humans or non-humans, is integrative within patterns of emergence, reproduction, and decay in complex systems, such as nature, culture, or the individual mind. Intelligence – be it organic or artificial, individual or collective – manifests in various signs and sign systems and is in time creatively transformed through meaning-making.

The conference is organized by the Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies, Tallinn University School of Humanities, and the Juri Lotman Semiotics Repository. The official languages of the conference are English and Russian. The purpose of NASS is to promote the advancement of semiotics as an academic discipline and research domain in the Nordic and Baltic countries and within the international semiotic community. The Lotman Days are an annual conference series that has been held at Tallinn University since 2009. The aim of the Lotman Days is to provide an interdisciplinary platform for scholars who wish to examine the dynamics of our semiotic world from different perspectives and to explore together questions that were central to Juri Lotman’s scholarship.

We wish you happy explorations!

Sincerely yours,

The organizing committee

## Plenary talks

Joanna Rączaszek-Leonardi

University of Warsaw, Poland

### **Timescales and tensions for creativity in language**

The study of the interpersonal aspects of language use have been for years overshadowed by research on individual linguistic capacities. However the complexity and creative nature of language reveals itself best in live interactions with others and within first- and second-person experience. Meanings are made in interactions, and language can be seen as shaping interactive process, both constraining it and enabling novel organizations. Linguistic meaning is essentially underdetermined, relying on probing, coordination, and negotiation in interactions, navigating inherent tensions.

I will illustrate such an agentive, enactive and open character of interactions with examples from language development and propose the methodological strategy needed to study them. Focus on the processual and dynamical aspects of interactions opens them to dynamical systems analyses, which should, however, be used together with methods for studying experience. I will also use the talk as a test of compatibility of these ideas and research strategies with the semiotic conceptual framework, which seems useful for understanding the infrastructure of symbolic meaning.

## Terrence W. Deacon

University of California, Berkeley, USA

### **The semiotic emergence of nucleotide information — or how RNA got its aboutness**

The Last Universal Common Ancestor (LUCA) of all life was not the first life form. Rather it marks a critical bottleneck in the history of life on earth when all prior forms of molecular information but one became extinct. What remained was a single extremely complex nucleotide “language” that is now used by all remaining life forms, from viruses to us.

Though the triplet genetic code is now taught in beginning biology texts, it is the extensive synergistic complexity of the interpretive system that it depends on that is the real evolutionary miracle. It is the evolution of a universal interpreting process embodied by the ribosome and its highly organized army of dozens of RNA and protein molecules that are precisely synergistically matched to one another. Without interpretation there is no semiosis. So, RNA replication without interpretation is just chemistry. RNA-world models merely beg the question: How can the structure of one molecule come to be about the structure and relationships between other molecules?

The origin of genetic information must ultimately be traced to the evolution of the interpretive mechanism that endowed nucleotide molecules with the capacity to be “about” other molecules. This requires that an explanation of molecular semiosis must begin by treating the molecular representamina (polynucleotide sequences) as secondary derived features and the interpretive process as primary. In other words, explaining the genealogy of genetics necessarily involves reversing the logic of current genetic informational functions.

In this presentation I outline 9 plausible evolutionary steps that could have initially endowed RNA with semiotic capacity, led to semiotic displacement and information storage, and drove synergistic evolution toward a single genetic “language”:

1. beginning with an “autogenic virus” = a proto-living system lacking nucleic acids,
2. the production of nucleotide monomers providing energy transduction,
3. RNA polynucleotide formation for nucleotide storage
4. single-stranded RNA folding geometry catalyzing other molecular interactions,
5. RNA nucleotide sequence determining folding and thus providing catalytic information,
6. cycling between folded catalytic phases and unfolded sequence replication phases,
7. population-level horizontal combinatorial exchange of RNA+peptide variants,
8. selection for combinatorial synergy,
9. offloading nucleotide sequence replication onto non-folding relatively inert DNA.

The presentation will conclude with a discussion of the relevance of this analysis of semiotic evolution for semiotic theory in general.

## Aaro Toomela

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **How and why we create signs?**

According to Lotman, the fundamental question of the semiotics of culture is the problem of meaning generation. He proposed that the minimal structure of a meaning-generating mechanism consists minimally of three parts: a binary system consisting of two semiotic mechanisms modeling the same extra-semiotic reality in a relationship of mutual untranslatability, and a device that allows to carry out the operation of “translation” in the situation of untranslatability. A novel text emerges in this process of translation. In the first part of my talk, I discuss Lotman’s principles of meaning-generating as a special case of a more general epistemology I have called “structural-systemic.” Next, in the second part, I discuss some biological and psychological principles without which emergence of signs cannot be fully understood. Theory of the essence of the mechanisms underlying the emergence of novel texts becomes more coherent in this background. Finally, in the third part of my talk, I describe a developmental-psychological theory of the essence of the information-processing mechanisms of the modeling of extra-semiotic reality. I provide data about the emergence and development of image-making over qualitatively different stages in ontogenesis and cultural evolution to demonstrate the validity of the theory.

# Abstracts in the alphabetical order

Epp Adler

Tartu University, Estonia

## **Unveiling the Complexity of Teaching Dynamics: Modeling Possibilities and Impact**

The teacher teaches and the learner learns. The process of teaching and learning is often oversimplified as a clear binary exchange. However, this portrayal fails to capture the intricate dynamics inherent in educational interactions. Viewing learning as an ongoing process of interpretation—or as the construction of semiotic scaffolding—suggests that learning is constant. Yet, is the knowledge or scaffolding acquired always aligned with the teacher's intentions?

Educational settings are complex environments shaped by numerous internal and external factors that intertwine and remain open to interpretation. While it is commonly assumed that teaching occurs between two independent agents, we must also question the consistent presence of subjectivity and agency. Despite the physical co-presence of both teacher and learner, agency within the teaching space may be lacking.

In this talk, I propose a triadic perspective to model how teachers structure the teaching environment and how this affects tangible teaching and learning experiences. This triadic model offers a framework for understanding the complexity and fluidity of variables within the teaching space, and how educators navigate them. While the teacher occupies one position and the learner another, the crucial question arises: who—or what—occupies the third position?

**Keywords:** learning, teaching, modelling, scaffolding, agency

**Epp Adler** is an enquiring practitioner and student of semiotics in the fields of becoming self and enabling learning. Her work is inspired by the problem of a “missing person,” where here-and-now acting humans are reduced to functionality, organs, statistics, or assumptions. Her research focuses on the possibilities of modeling and retaining the dynamic complexity of participating humans and their interactions, with the aim of supporting self-development, teaching, and leadership in practice. Professionally, she works as a personal coach, trainer, and facilitator for individuals and organizations. She is the founder of the youth empowerment association HeadEst.

## Sven Anderson

University of Tartu, Estonia

### Answering Semic Marketing Questions Computationally

In marketing, asking creative and often complex questions is essential, as most behaviour-revealing decisions today are based on data. Many marketing questions are framed within a semic context—for example: “If my product X is declined, will it be replaced by one of the alternatives?” In such cases, it is crucial to understand whether the relationships underlying the question are complementary or adversarial, as this affects the feasibility of obtaining answers.

A general framework for marketing innovation can be described as a coordinated space of choice and time, which forms the underlying structure for novelty. This space–time of choice is based on Lotman’s idea of the explosion of meaning. The space becomes visible only when the innovation map and its calculations are applicable. An explosion of meaning can be studied through formal constraints based on the time *after* the explosion, since the explosion itself represents a state of unpredictability. It marks the point of origin for a system, which may be either open or closed.

Semic analytics, when applied within the framework of formal logic (modal logic, etc.), offers an effective tool for modelling marketing questions without relying on large-scale big data analytics. The semiotic square—highly isomorphic to the logical square and its n-dimensional derivatives—enables the modelling of questions ranging from simple to complex, using formal logic and semes to find answers. This system also works in reverse, allowing semic questions to be computationally processed and answered precisely within a logical framework.

In my presentation, I will demonstrate the practical steps of this system, with a focus on its applications in marketing.

**Keywords:** creative questioning, brand, semes, semiotic model, automatization

**Sven Anderson** is a doctoral student in semiotics and cultural studies at the University of Tartu, specializing in marketing semiotics. He has developed comprehensive course materials in Estonian and created an introductory course titled *Semiotics of Marketing*. Previously, Sven co-founded the startup Brandlyse and served as vice-chairman of the University of Tartu Student Council. He has also worked as marketing manager at the University of Tartu Investment Club (NGO) and contributed to the university’s mentorship program, where alumni assist students in developing their skills and knowledge.

## Marina Aptekman

Tufts University, USA

### **The Role of Linguistic Code-Switching in the Construction of Identity in the Immigrant Narrative**

The paper examines the function and significance of linguistic code-switching (language alteration) in literature and film, produced by Jewish immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Israel and the USA in the last three decades. In the early 1990s, more than 3 million Jews have left FSU. Before their leave, they primarily shared a typical Soviet middle-class identity, which combined nearly total cultural and linguistic assimilation with a complex sense of Jewishness, perceived as ethnicity rather than religion. After the emigration most ex-Soviet Jews settled primarily in Israel, Canada, and the USA, and over the years, while still sharing cultural past, have gradually started to develop new identities, which have been largely grounded on the specific cultural environment of their new countries of residence. The anthropological, social, and literary analysis of this phenomenon will be the primary focus of my paper. The paper will address it by examining how linguistic code-switching in the immigrant narrative in literature and film is used to make the distinction between the 'insider' and 'outsider,' employing the concept of alterity as a creative device and allowing the film directors and writers to present intercultural contacts and conflicts while simultaneously emphasizing the identity crisis in fictional works and highlighting different identities and relationships.

**Keywords:** immigration, other, alterity, identity, film, literature

**Marina Aptekman** is a Senior Lecturer in Russian and Jewish Studies and the Coordinator of the Russian Language Program at Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts. She is the author of numerous articles and book chapters on Russian and East European literature and culture, Soviet Jewish literature, and immigrant and multicultural narratives in the USA and Israel. She lives with her family in Boston, Massachusetts.

## Prisca Augustyn

Florida Atlantic University, USA

### **Emergence, Explosion, Massification, and Extrusion of a Work of Art**

The *Scream* by Edvard Munch (1863–1944) is undeniably one of the most famous works of art, recognized and seemingly understood by people of all ages and backgrounds. Its origin reflects the hallmarks of unpredictable explosion (Lotman 2009 [1992]); its iconic magnetism drew in boundary-crossing individuals while repelling the conservative elites of the late 19th century. Some have described the work as “capable of manifold, almost infinite interpretations” (Prideaux 2005:152), while others see in it a single, straightforward message.

Meteorologists have speculated that the red sky depicted in the painting may have resulted from the dissipation of volcanic dust from the 1883 eruption in Indonesia or from nacreous clouds common in Norway (Prata et al. 2018). An Italian anthropologist has proposed that the central figure was inspired by an Incan mummy Munch may have encountered in Florence or Paris (cf. Nici 2015). The *Scream* caused a scandal at the Verein Berliner Künstler in 1892 and is often interpreted in light of Munch’s biography, whose emotional complexity perhaps found its most potent expression in *The Frieze of Life*—a series of paintings including *The Scream*, exhibited in Berlin in 1893.

The German title *Das Geschrei* might have mitigated a common misinterpretation that the figure in the painting is screaming. This reading reduced the work’s explosive complexity to a simple, digestible message, contributing to its endless reproduction, massification, commodification, and, ultimately, its extrusion into a bite-sized cultural symbol. The industrial invention of extrusion in the 1950s serves as a metaphor for this process—a powerful denaturing under pressure. This transformation now hinders engagement with the painting’s original aura (cf. Benjamin 1936), especially at institutions like the Munch Museum or the National Museum in Oslo, where viewers must navigate crowds taking selfies or posing with hands on their faces.

This paper examines the emergence, explosion, massification, and extrusion of *The Scream* to explore how commercialization (e.g., Horkheimer & Adorno 1947; Jameson 1991), mass media, and digital technologies reshape our relationship with art.

**Keywords:** Munch, *The Scream*, explosion, massification of art, extrusion

**Prisca Augustyn** is a Professor of Linguistics and German Studies in the Department of Languages, Linguistics, and Comparative Literature at Florida Atlantic University, where she teaches courses in linguistics, semiotics, and German studies. Her research interests include the role of language in shaping beliefs, everyday pragmatism, and attitudes toward the living world.



**Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Semiotic Creativity, Complexity  
and Intelligence**

This presentation summarizes the necessary and sufficient conditions for creativity, the adaptive accretion of complexity, and intelligence in living semiotic agents. These conditions form a set of co-constitutive dynamical constraints. The system includes a finite population of diversely sympathetic, or resonant, nodes immersed in a common continuous medium. This medium has the intrinsic capacity to embody a transfinite number of patterns (Firstness). These relatively ephemeral patterns emerge as the superposed result of diverse nodal responses to both one another and the dynamic activity of the medium itself (Secondness). The nodes re-form themselves to in-form themselves by growing along the sparse asymmetric order—understood metaphorically as the emergent froth on the sea of chaotic noise within the medium. This process is termed armoniataxis (Thirdness). The structural accretion of this order from virtual noise forms the basis for emergent creativity and complexity.

In living semiosis, including intelligence, this system of co-constraints must self-regulate a sustained tension between the emergence of dynamical attractors—physical manifestations of Peircean habits (West 2015)—and their dissipation by the transfinite sea of noise from which they arose. To physically sustain this dynamic, a continual tension at criticality must be maintained between kinetic and potential energies.

These necessary and sufficient conditions for semiosis serve to ground Lotman's concepts of tension and the creative function in realizable physical processes. Purely functional models of creativity, complexity, and intelligence—such as digital machines or certain semiotic models—do not entail these underlying dynamics. This presentation aims to initiate a discussion that moves beyond such legacy functional approaches to semiosis.

\*Inspired by G. Cantor, the transfinite refers to a constrained infinity between any two points (Cantor 1955). Peirce also addressed this concept. In the presented model, it is realized physically: a constrained finite continuous medium—such as waves in water, air, or space—can entail an infinite number of superposed patterns. This is a physical manifestation of Peirce's synechism, a continuum necessary for veritable semiosis.

**Keywords:** resonance, emergent dynamics, continuum, tension

**J. Augustus Bacigalupi** is a PhD candidate at the University of Tartu in the Department of Semiotics and Culture Studies. He is supervised by Kalevi Kull and Donald Favareau. His research in biosemiotics focuses on semiogenesis, exploring the unbounded virtual potential of relevant noise within the continuous, irreducible, and irreversible process of semiosis.

## Merja Bauters

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **Practical abduction enhancing a draft design framework**

In recent years, discussions about design approaches, their purposes, and failures have become more prominent, particularly regarding future-oriented strategies and inclusivity. This increase can be attributed to various factors, including growing complexity, the rapid pace of change driven by emerging technologies, and the need for innovation, where creativity is often highlighted.

Pragmatism may offer a framework that provides an umbrella for different design approaches, enabling a better selection of appropriate methods to address increased complexity while considering the need for creativity and cultural diversity.

This paper explores the concept of scientific inquiry through the lens of pragmatism, focusing specifically on abduction. It examines Paavola's (2021) development of practical abduction, which derives from Peirce's multitude of descriptions of abduction in scientific inquiry and is seen by Paavola as a weak form of inference. Paavola enhances Peirce's concept of abduction with Dewey's notion of a working hypothesis—a form of abduction that is iteratively refined within an inquiry cycle. This process moves between abstract concepts and concrete context and situations, having affinities with various design approaches such as participatory design, human-centric design, and design thinking.

In addition, the meaning–creation or meaning–making as semiosis, the scientific inquiry process has affinities with design processes such as using prompts and spotting anomalies and patterns. The goal is to develop a draft design framework that enables design researchers, stakeholders, and practitioners to ground and improve their selection of methodologies, methods, and tools to address the growing complexity, diversity and creativity needs of complex systems such as cultures, societies and practices.

**Keywords:** abduction, creativity, complexity, diversity, iterations

**Merja Bauters** is a research professor in Digital Transformation and Lifelong Learning at Tallinn University, where she leads an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Programme, Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Societies, is a research investigator in an Estonian-funded Transform project and leads a research team. Bauters is a docent of semiotics at the University of Helsinki. Bauters has been involved in executed research, planned and guided co-design, and participatory and design thinking processes in multiple EU- and national projects on technology-enhanced learning at workplaces. Her PhD is from the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies, University of Helsinki, 2007, discussing Charles Peirce's thoughts on interpretation.

## Heidi Campana Piva and Michele Cerutti

University of Turin, Italy; University of Turin, Italy, University of Tartu, Estonia

### Everything is Connected: Signs of a Conspiracy

One place where complexity, creativity and intelligence come into conflict is in the particular sign production of conspiracy theories. In the present work we will consider a case study whereby a conspiracy theory evidence board is correlated to a professional investigative Anacapa chart. An Anacapa chart, also known as an “evidence board” or a “murder map”, is a common tool used for network analysis and inquiry within law enforcement. As a creative device for visualizing and organizing thoughts into narrative (through pinned pictures and keywords connected with string — often in classic red), it has been incorporated into the practice of conspiracy theorizing. We rely on Peirce’s definition of ‘diagram’: a type of icon (a sign that shares a certain quality with the object it represents) in which the quality that is shared between object and icon are patterns of relations. In other words, diagrams make visible relations of similarity - which is why they are such great tools for thinking through complex problems. In particular, this work explores Peirce’s two iconicity notions: the operational and the optimal (as identified by Stjernfelt in his 2007 book "Diagrammatology: An Investigation On The Borderlines Of Phenomenology, Ontology, And Semiotics"). The operational notion keeps Peirce’s concept of icon from falling into the circularity problem of the notion of similarity (as described by Goodman's "Languages of Art" from 1976), according to which everything can be similar to anything under a certain respect. Similarly, we propose that Peirce’s notion of diagram can be usefully applied to the analysis of diagrams used in conspiracy theories which, according to an established opinion in semiotics, are in most cases texts or discourses in which the logic of equivalence (Madisson & Ventsel, 2020, "Strategic conspiracy narratives: A semiotic approach") and hermetic semiosis (Eco, 1990, "The Limits of Interpretation") prevail. We will conclude by showing how from this discussion we can obtain the traits that describe a textual production that respects complexity and is creative in a semio-ethical manner (Danesi, 2025, “Pseudology”, Routledge).

**Keywords:** sign typology, iconicity, diagrams, conspiracy theories, complexity

**Heidi Campana Piva** is a Doctoral Fellow at the University of Turin, in the EU-funded MSCA Doctoral Network VORTEX (Coping with varieties of radicalization into terrorism and extremism). Her research interests involve anti-scientific movements on social media, information pathologies, conspiracy theories, polarization, radicalization, and science denialism.

**Michele Cerutti** is a PhD student in semiotics at the University of Turin and the University of Tartu. His research interests include the semiotics and philosophy of truth, general and political semiotics. A recent publication is *Diagrams as Centerpiece for an Enactivist Epistemology* (2023), “Semiotika”.

## Audrey Canalès

Université de Sherbrooke, Canada

### Translation, Creation and Identity Through the Lens of Ana-Stina Treumund

In post-Soviet Estonia, a generation of photographers has been reflecting on Estonian identities, using realism, naturalism, or fantasy to engage both Estonian and international audiences. These artists act as “translators who work at the boundaries of languages, cultures, and societies” (Torop 2011, 22), creating new “cultural memory” (Assmann 1995) that contributes to evolving understandings of Estonian identity.

This presentation draws on my research in performative translation (Canalès 2021, 2022) to explore memory manipulation in *Lilli, Reed, Frieda, Sabine, Eha, Malle, Alfred, Rein ja Mari* (2014), a series of photographs and archival materials by Ana-Stina Treumund (1982–2017). Treumund was an Estonian activist known for her visual engagement with queer theory through depictions of BDSM practices, lesbian sexuality, and alternative representations of family life.

*Lilli, Reed...*, posthumously exhibited at Fotografiska in Tallinn in 2019, consists of staged photographs of women from Treumund’s circle, portrayed as historical characters to whom the artist retrospectively attributed queer identities. The photographs resonate with multilingual archival sources, including newspaper articles and Estonian folk tales, all centered on norm-defying or gender-bending women. On her website, Treumund described her work as follows: “The works assembled in one room stimulate new memories and percolate into our past as something that did happen and was” (n.d.).

This talk will examine how Treumund, as a narrator and translator capable of introducing subversive realities, appropriated Estonian history to produce a layered translation of hidden narratives, cultural taboos, and imaginary memories. Her work establishes an intergenerational dialogue in a world where queer realities continue to be negated and attacked—making the translational need and conditions for dialogue (Lotman 2000, 143–144) more crucial than ever.

**Keywords:** translation, memory, culture, creativity, identity

**Audrey Canalès** is an Assistant Professor of Audiovisual Translation at the Université de Sherbrooke, Canada. With a background in information technologies and visual arts, her work explores translational processes in artistic performance and translation studies. Her research focuses on inclusion and memory transmission, and she has published extensively on the intersections of translation and the arts. She serves on the Scientific Council of *Érudit*, is Vice-President of the Canadian Association for Translation Studies, and co-directs *Axis 1 — Digital Writings and Editorialization* at the CRIHN (Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur les humanités numériques).

## Davide Castiglione

Vilnius University, Lithuania

### Teasing Intelligence: Mimetic and Structural Complexity in Poetry

According to Riffaterre (1984 [1978]: 2), literary texts are complex at the level of mimesis. At this level, readers are engaged not so much in exegetic inferencing, but in tracking local shifts as they move through the text. In psycholinguistic terms, it is bridging inferences (Harley 2014: 68) that are in charge of tracking shifts to maintain coherence. Bridging inferences, as the very name suggests, establish conceptual links across adjacent textual units. In the sentence 'we rang the bell, and waited at the gate' (attested in [skell.sketchengine.eu](http://skell.sketchengine.eu)), world knowledge that gates are equipped with bells is a sufficient condition to establish coherence. The processing is largely automatic, resulting in a smooth reading experience.

Poetry, however, often de-automatises such links, promoting instead a discontinuous reading experience. Nowhere is this truer than in the case of modernist and postmodernist experiments. Marianne Moore's "The Mind is an Enchanting Thing" and John Ashbery's "Leaving the Atocha Station" are two cases in point, since local shifts in both poems place considerable demands on readers' working memory. The experience of unpredictability that ensues, I argue, puts readers' intelligence to the test – there is indeed evidence supporting the link between intelligence and working memory capacity (Conway & Kovacs, 2019).

Such analysis of mimetic complexity is supplemented by an analysis of structural complexity, for which I borrow a definition by Zyngier and colleagues: 'the perception by the reader of a multiplicity of parts or units, forming patterns' (2007: 656). Such patterns – stylistic habits, intra-textual links, repetitions at various levels – underpin structural complexity, enriching meaning-making through elaborative inferences based on iconicity assumptions.

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**Keywords:** coherence, complexity, inferences, poetry, working memory

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in poetics and stylistics, having published the monograph *Difficulty in Poetry: A Stylistic Model* (Palgrave 2019) and various articles in international journals, as well as book chapters in edited collections. He is also the former recipient of a post-doctoral fellowship (2020–2022) awarded by the Lithuanian Research Council and resulting in the *Verbal Images in Literature Database (VILD)*: [ideas-block.com/verbalimagesinliterature/](https://ideas-block.com/verbalimagesinliterature/). As a poet, he has published three collections in Italian. Further information is available on his website <https://davidecastiglione.com/>

## Claudia Cicerchia, Jordan Zlatev and Filomena Diodato

La Sapienza University of Rome, Italy; Lund University, Sweden;  
La Sapienza University of Rome, Italy

### **Human and non-human semiosis: The “semiotic threshold” and levels of signification**

Umberto Eco defines semiotics not as a discipline that reveals the inherent nature of signs, but rather as a field, whose methodology is applicable even to phenomena that are not intrinsically semiotic (in Eco’s terms, phenomena can be non-semiotic and yet capable of being semiotically accounted). Within this framework, a sign is defined not as ontological features or intrinsic realities, but rather as any element that can perform a sign function and, ultimately, as the products of solely human interpretative abilities (Eco, 1975; 1984; 1997). This semiotic framework, while offering valuable tools for the development of a more exhaustive theory of semiosis stressing the role of interpretation, leaves open the field of non-human animal communication, and meaning-making in general. As suggested by Nöth (2000), the concept of a “lower semiotic threshold” has been placed too high on this account, and should therefore be lowered, so that it is possible to account for processes of semiosis in both culture and nature. But the problems of defining a clear threshold between the semiotic and non-semiotic remains.

When examined through the lens of cognitive semiotics, semiosis is neither considered as a separated, “higher level” of meaning, nor something that stands in opposition to biology. Rather, semiosis is understood as meaning-making, and the latter as co-extensive with subjectivity: any kind of qualitative experience, as thematized in phenomenology (Zlatev, 2018; in press). This, if anything is the ultimate semiotic threshold, with higher levels on the Semiotic Hierarchy functioning as planes of signification, such as those defined by pre-verbal sign use and language.

We argue that this approach carries significant implications for the study of meaning-making in non-human animals. It provides a unifying framework in which all organisms capable of a first-person, subjective experience participate in meaning-making activities, and it does so without erasing the unique features that characterize each level of

signification. Furthermore, the focus is shifted from treating the cultural and natural domains as opposed, to analyzing their interconnected character. In our presentation, we exemplify human and non-human semiosis on each of the levels of the Semiotic Hierarchy, accounting for both continuities and discontinuities.

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Zlatev, J. (2018). Meaning making from life to language: The semiotic hierarchy and phenomenology. *Cognitive Semiotics*, 11(1).

Zlatev, J. (in press). Five pillars of cognitive semiotics. *Open Semiotics*.

**Keywords:** cognitive semiotics, semiotic threshold, meaning-making

**Claudia Cicerchia** is a PhD student in Philosophy at Sapienza University of Rome. Her MA thesis focused on the relationship between theory and practice of the question of the “Animal” in the work of Jacques Derrida and Peter Singer. Her research interests extend to theories of the origins and evolution of human language, Animal studies and biosemiotics. She has presented at several international conferences, including WCP 2024, IACS-5 and ICHoLs 16. Her current studies focus on the notion of semiotic threshold and cognitive semiotics.

**Jordan Zlatev** is Professor of General Linguistics and Director of Research for the Division of Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University, Sweden. He is the author of *Situated Embodiment: Studies in the Emergence of Spatial Meaning* (1997), and of over 100 articles in academic journals and anthologies. He co-edited *The Shared Mind: Perspective on Intersubjectivity* (2008), *Moving Ourselves, Moving Others: Motion and Emotion in Intersubjectivity, Consciousness, and Language* (2012) and *Meaning, Mind and Communication: Explorations in Cognitive Semiotics* (2016). His current research focuses on phenomenology and language in relation to other semiotic systems like gesture and depiction. He is editor-in-chief of *Public Journal of Semiotics*.

**Filomena Diodato** is an associate professor of Philosophy of Language at Sapienza University of Rome, where she teaches Semantics and Cognitive Semantics. She authored *Teorie semantiche. Dal segno al testo* (1997, re-edited in 2013) and *Teorie della categorizzazione* (2015). Her research, grounded in the tradition of the Roman School of Linguistics and Philosophy of Language, revisits classical issues in semiotics and structural semantics through a cognitive semiotic perspective. Her recent studies focus on the concept of the semiotic threshold, Coseriu's Integral Linguistics, Bühler's theory of metaphor, and the semiotics of political communication.



## Filomena Diodato and Jordan Zlatev

La Sapienza University of Rome, Italy; Lund University, Sweden

### **Concepts as sign-based and linguistic meanings, grounded in pre-verbal experience**

Discussions on the relationship between concepts and language have tended to fall into one of two extremes. On the one hand, cognitive psychologists and cognitive linguists have tended to define concepts as psychological structures like “schemas” (Lakoff, 1987) or “perceptual symbols” (Barsalou, 2005) that are fully independent of language, leaving the role of language as simply a means to express or externalize these structures. On the other hand, philosophers (Dennett, 1991), and some but not all structural linguists, have rather equated linguistic meanings with concepts, leading to strong forms of linguistic relativity and even determinism (Whorf 1956, under some readings). But this dichotomy is misguided, and reflects the widespread inclination in the history of linguistic thought to interpret any emphasis on the role of language in shaping concepts as an endorsement of linguistic relativism or determinism, sometimes with racist or discriminatory undertones (Diodato, 2019).

Drawing on the framework of the Semiotic Hierarchy (Zlatev, 2018, in press), we argue that concepts should be defined as the meanings (construals) of signs, either of pre-verbal signs (on the 4th level) or as verbal, lexicalized and grammaticalized meanings on the 5th and highest level. Thus, while the lower three levels of the Semiotic Hierarchy, which pertain to pre-sign semiosis, involve different kinds of categories, we propose that it is the emergence of the sign function, which implies a double asymmetry between expression and content (Sonesson 2010, 2012), that first makes concepts possible, and that it is language that enables the formation of fully articulated, structured concepts. Hence, it is through language that conceptual structures acquire internal organization, establishing implicational and semantic relations that are crucial for the uniquely human type of cognition. Further, on this account conceptualization and language are inherently intertwined without leading to deterministic or relativistic conclusions—that is, without disregarding the socio-historical and cultural physiognomy of individual language.

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**Keywords:** concepts, sign function, linguistic meaning, pre-verbal experience

**Filomena Diodato** is an associate professor of Philosophy of Language at Sapienza, University of Rome, where she teaches Semantics and Cognitive Semantics. She authored "Teorie semantiche. Dal segno al testo" (1997, re-edited in 2013) and "Teorie della categorizzazione" (2015). Her research, grounded in the tradition of the Roman School of Linguistics and Philosophy of Language, revisits classical issues in semiotics and structural semantics through a cognitive semiotic perspective. Her recent studies focus on the concept of the semiotic threshold, Coseriu's Integral Linguistics, Bühler's theory of metaphor, and the semiotics of political communication.

**Jordan Zlatev** is Professor of General Linguistics and Director of Research for the Division of Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University, Sweden. He is the author of "Situated Embodiment: Studies in the Emergence of Spatial Meaning" (1997), and of over 100 articles in academic journals and anthologies. He co-edited "The Shared Mind: Perspective on Intersubjectivity" (2008), "Moving Ourselves, Moving Others: Motion and Emotion in Intersubjectivity, Consciousness, and Language" (2012) and "Meaning, Mind and Communication: Explorations in Cognitive Semiotics" (2016). His current research focuses on phenomenology and language in relation to other semiotic systems like gesture and depiction. He is editor-in-chief of *Public Journal of Semiotics*.

### **The Complex Simplicity of Ernest Hemingway's Style**

Ernest Hemingway, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for his powerful, style-forming mastery of the art of modern narration, presents a point of special interest from the perspective of such processes as creativity, complexity, and visuality.

Hemingway wrote books which, for the most part, became iconic. His prose is often considered cinematic due to its accuracy, factuality, authenticity, and the ability to evoke a sense of reality in the reader [Phillips 1980; Laurence 1982; Letord 2013]. An analysis of Hemingway's works shows that certain clearly defined vocabulary choices are of particular importance. In my presentation, I will focus on the lexical groups that contribute significantly to the visualization and cinematic effects in his works: concrete-descriptive words, color words, sensory words, action words, gestures, and sound-imitating words.

However, the writer's creative originality cannot be reduced to vocabulary alone. For Hemingway, form was content, and he shaped all stories into a distinctive structure using various stylistic devices and following his famous "iceberg theory." "The simplicity of Hemingway's style was the conscious product of a complex and evolving practice," writes Donald F. Bouchard in his book *Hemingway: So Far From Simple* [2010].

Furthermore, I will highlight Hemingway's writing techniques—such as repetition, dialogue, syntax, and symbolism—that create the complex "subtext" of his works.

Finally, when it comes to the latent senses in fiction, I will demonstrate how Hemingway creates additional dimensions, thus enriching the inimitable artistic value of his prose.

**Keywords:** Hemingway, visualization, cinematic effects, subtext

**Ruslana Dovahchyna**, PhD in Translation Studies from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine, is currently a research fellow at the School of Humanities, Tallinn University, Estonia. She studies the possibilities and limits of screen adaptations of Hemingway's war narratives. In 2024, she was a Fulbright visiting scholar at UMass Amherst, USA, pursuing research on reader responses to Hemingway's war narratives in Ukraine and the USA. She is co-author of the monograph *Iceberg in the Ocean of Translation: Rendering Hemingway's Idiosyncrasy in Translation* (2014) and the author of more than 30 academic articles.

## Kapitolina Fedorova and Vlada Baranova

Tallinn University, Estonia; University of Hamburg, Germany

### **Are There World Russians? Reclaiming Russian from the Russian State**

For the Russian state, the use of the Russian language to reinforce its influence both within and outside of Russia—and to strengthen the diaspora's connection to the country—has been a longstanding strategy. With the onset of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, this approach has taken on a more threatening dimension, both domestically and internationally.

Internally, the Russian language is used as a tool to consolidate citizens in the name of national or civic unity during wartime. By referring to all citizens as "Russian" (employing an ethnic rather than civic term) and by tightening language requirements for migrants, the state exercises control over public discourse through language regulation.

Externally, Russian diasporas are increasingly perceived as extensions of the Russian state. This allows the authorities to portray Russian-speaking individuals abroad as conduits of Russian ideology and, in extreme cases, to claim that regions where Russian is spoken should be considered part of the Russian Federation. At the same time, political actors in Europe often equate Russian speakers with the Russian state, treating them as a potential threat and followers of its propaganda.

However, Russian speakers—even within a single country—do not form a unified group. They may differ greatly in ethnic origin, life trajectories, cultural consumption, political stance, and linguistic choices. Moreover, the varieties of Russian they use can vary widely. Despite Russian's reputation as a centralized and highly standardized language, linguistic practices both inside and outside Russia often diverge significantly from the so-called "Moscow standard." Viewing these diverse forms of Russian as separate entities challenges not only the dominant monocentric linguistic paradigm but also the political narrative promoted by the Russian state.

This paper will open the panel "World Russians: Language, Creativity, and Identity," focusing on both non-mainstream variants of Russian and the people who use them, thereby laying the groundwork for further discussion.

**Keywords:** Russian, migration, language ideology, identity, variation

**Kapitolina Fedorova** graduated from St. Petersburg State University (Department of Russian and Department of General Linguistics) in 1999 and the European University at St. Petersburg (Department of Ethnology) in 2001. She received her PhD in Philology in 2002. From 2003 to 2018, she worked at the European University at St. Petersburg and at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, South Korea. Since 2020, she has been affiliated with

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**Vlada Baranova** graduated from St. Petersburg State University (Department of Russian) in 2002 and from the European University at St. Petersburg (Department of Ethnology) in 2005. She received her PhD in Anthropology in 2007. Until 2022, she worked at the National Research University – Higher School of Economics in St. Petersburg and at the Institute for Linguistic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. She is currently affiliated with the University of Hamburg. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, language policy, minority languages, migration studies, and languages such as Kalmyk and Chuvash.

## Kapitolina Fedorova and Natalia Tšaikina

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **Language as a Problem and as a Decisive Argument: Metalinguistic Debates in Estonian Russian-speaking Facebook Groups**

The role of language in shaping social and cultural identities has long been a focal point of sociolinguistic research, particularly in multilingual societies where linguistic boundaries often overlap with social, ethnic, and political divides. This study investigates metalinguistic debates in Estonian Russian-speaking Facebook groups, exploring how language functions both as a contentious issue and as a strategic tool for argumentation. By analyzing online discussions within these groups, the paper seeks to understand the complex ways in which language is problematized and simultaneously leveraged as a decisive argument in negotiating cultural belonging and social power, norms, and norm violations.

Drawing on a qualitative content analysis of posts and comments in selected Facebook groups, this study identifies recurring themes in discussions about language standards, policies, and identities. The analysis reveals that participants frequently engage in metalinguistic arguments to assert their perspectives, invoking historical, emotional, and pragmatic dimensions of language use. Language becomes both the object of contention—highlighting tensions related to linguistic rights, discrimination, and integration policies—and a rhetorical device, employed to validate viewpoints, challenge opposing positions, and construct social identities.

This paper contributes to the understanding of language ideologies in digitally mediated spaces, emphasizing how social media facilitates both the amplification and contestation of metalinguistic discourses. It highlights the dynamic interplay between personal experiences and broader sociopolitical frameworks, illustrating how language serves as a lens through which Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia negotiate their place within society. Furthermore, the findings underscore the potential of online platforms as spaces for critical dialogue, while also shedding light on the limitations and polarizing effects of such interactions.

**Keywords:** online communication, Russian in Estonia, Facebook groups, metalinguistic debates, language ideology

**Kapitolina Fedorova** graduated from St. Petersburg State University (Department of Russian and Department of General Linguistics) in 1999, and from the European University at St. Petersburg (Department of Ethnology) in 2001. She received her PhD in Philology in 2002. From 2003 to 2018 she worked at the European University at St. Petersburg and later at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, South Korea. Since 2020, she has worked at Tallinn University, Estonia. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, language contacts, migration studies, border studies, and linguistic landscape.

**Natalia Tšaikina** graduated from St. Petersburg University (Department of Russian Philology) in 1996 and received her PhD in Philology in 2000. Since 2002, she has worked at Tallinn University. Her research interests include linguistic creativity, linguistic landscape, language and culture, bilingualism, and Russian as a foreign and heritage language.

## Daniel Galaretta

Centre national d'études spatiales, France

### **Deciding in a complex system as a creative process: A semiotic interpretation of the decision-making process**

How does one decide in a complex environment, i.e. when the number of factors to be taken into account is very large and these factors are not independent?

We will try to show that in this case, the decision-making process corresponds to an exercise in creativity, at least when interpreted according to a semiotics of complex systems. A complex system is characterized by the presence of different, mutually irreducible languages, that we referred to as viewpoints. The corresponding semiotics we will be using is a multi-viewpoints semiotics, referring initially to Louis Hjelmslev's theory of language, from which it borrows some of its concepts. This semiotics turns out to be a constructivist methodology.

Deciding consists in producing an object of knowledge that is likely of being called into question by the irruption of one or more viewpoints that we had not anticipated, or by the manifestation, on the part of a viewpoint that we thought was under control, of a critical or literally iconoclastic position, with regard to the project concerned.

Compared to a situation where the objective would be to rationally produce a decision, the decision-maker seems obliged to build a conviction with the “means” at his or her disposal – data or forecasts – at the moment when he or she is forced to make the decision. Decision-making is a process that produces meaning, and therefore requires semiotic analysis.

In our contribution, we will explore a very particular approach to decision-making in complex situations: one in which the decision is based on the interpretation of statements drawn at random and intended to give advice to the person undergoing the exercise.

We will take as our corpus the “Book of Changes” or I Ching, a classic of Chinese thought, and show how its use can be considered as a process of knowledge creation. More precisely, we will try to explain why the I Ching often provides an answer of astonishing truth to a question. We will give an example of a Serious Game for collaborative design based on this process.

**Keywords:** complex systems, multi-viewpoints semiotics, creativity, decision

**Daniel Galarreta** is an expert in Knowledge Engineering and a semiotician involved in the semiotics of complex systems at the French Space agency. Over many years, he has developed a semiotic theory that borrows a number of concepts from Louis Hjelmslev's theory of language. This approach has proved highly epistemic for analyzing the problems involved in designing complex systems.

## Remo Gramigna and Caterina Marrone

La Sapienza University of Rome, Italy; University of Turin, Italy

### **The creativity of natural-historical languages in the semantic classification of codes**

The propensity for novelty is a human prerogative and, even if the term creativity is recently coined (indeed, it only appeared in 1951), this proclivity has increasingly strengthened in recent decades, encouraging analysis and research on inventiveness and problem solving. In this paper we seek to address the problem of linguistic creativity, a characteristic that distinguishes the systems of historical-natural languages in comparison to other codes and other sign systems. In order to do this, we will start from the semantic classification of codes proposed by Tullio De Mauro in his "Minisemantica" published in 1982, still the most reliable today. Through a discussion of the criteria that De Mauro proposed to identify the various types of code, our goal is to arrive at the comparison between linguistic system and numerical system or calculation, a very appropriate and topical comparison especially in light of today's Artificial Intelligence. The linguistic system, identified in its specificities, precisely because it is the primary modeling system, as Juri Lotman would put it, is the most complex and most powerful of the systems (indeed being the condition of existence of all the others) presents five types of creativity, of change or innovative (apparent) stasis, which will be illustrated in the present work.

**Keywords:** novelty, language, linguistic creativity, De Mauro, AI, semantic codes

**Remo Gramigna** is a Tenure-track Assistant Professor in Semiotics at the University of Turin, Italy. Before arriving at Turin in 2020, where he spent five years working as postdoctoral researcher within the ERC project FACETS, he studied at the University of Tartu, in Estonia, where he received his Ph.D Semiotics and Culture Studies. His academic research to date has mainly focused on semiotics and culture studies, cognitive theory, communication studies and the history of semiotics. His interests encompass both lying and deception in human interactions, fakes, and manipulation as well as general semiotics and the semiotics of culture. His recent publications include *Augustine and the Study of Signs, Signification, and Lying* (2020, De Gruyter), *Imagining others: deception, prediction, and disguised intentions in strategic interactions* (2020). He has published in such journals as *Semiotica*, *Versus*, *Frontiers of Narrative Studies*, *Lexia*, *Sign Systems Studies*, *DeSignis*, and many others. In the past years, he has worked in the editorial team of *Sign Systems Studies*, the oldest international semiotic journal in the world.

Senior Professor of Philosophy, member of the Sapienza Foundation, **Caterina Marrone** has taught Semiotics and Language Theory at La Sapienza University in Rome. A scholar of the semiotics of the literary and figurative text, she has written numerous essays including the volumes: *I geroglifici fantastici di Athanasius Kircher* (Viterbo 2002); *Le lingue utopiche* (Viterbo 2004); *I segni dell'inganno. Semiotica della crittografia* (Viterbo 2010, winner of the Castiglioncello Prize for Communication 2011). Recent works include: *Encoding/Decoding/Trascoding Sherlock Holmes*, in A. Calanchi, S. Knight (ed.), *His Everlasting Bow* (Fano 2016); *La passeggiata* (1966) sonora di Tommaso Landolfi, in A. Laquidara (ed.), *In cammino verso il silenzio* (Giulianova 2018); *Le condizioni della traduzione*, in 'Bollettino di italianistica', new series, year XV, no. 2, 2018; *Le scritture segrete e la loro traduzione*, in 'Versus', 1/2020, no. 130.

**Riku Haapaniemi**

Tampere University, Finland

### **InterReal: Exploring Interreal Translation in the Media Multiverse**

The *InterReal* research project investigates the ongoing proliferation of the media multiverse through the concept of interreal translation. The media multiverse consists of various media-generated alternate realities that are integrated with and co-exist alongside physical reality—from immersive Virtual Reality (VR) and layers of Augmented Reality (AR) to the persistent worlds of digital games. *Interreal translation* refers to the semiotic mechanisms that operate within this multiverse: specific forms of intersemiotic translation that transfer objects, spaces, and subjects across different realities.

The project aims to merge approaches from speculative research and translation studies to deepen our empirical understanding of interreal translation, enhance methodological tools for studying it, and develop a theoretical framework to interpret the media multiverse.

This presentation offers an overview of how the *InterReal* research team plans to achieve these goals. We propose that a semiotic perspective on translational phenomena can offer detailed insight into the mechanisms of interreal translation—its participants, products, processes, and contexts—while a speculative approach provides critical engagement with current and future possibilities of media multiverse development. *InterReal* combines these approaches into an innovative methodology that:

1. applies semiotic and translation-theoretical methods to a new object of study;
2. incorporates speculative design methodologies from human-computer interaction into translation studies using a semiotic framework.

*InterReal* aims to expand the research horizons of multiple disciplines—semiotics, translation studies, media studies, and digital humanities—into what we call *multiversal research*. The project explores creative work as a mode of critical engagement through speculative design and maps the complex interrelations between physical spaces and objects, digital media, and human experience. In doing so, *InterReal* places semiotics at the core of a new and emerging field of scientific inquiry.

**Keywords:** translation, digital media, extended reality, speculative research

**Riku Haapaniemi** is a researcher in translation studies at Tampere University and project coordinator of the ERC-funded *InterReal* project. His work focuses on intersemiotic transfers between the physical world and digital media as forms of translation. His doctoral dissertation explores the concept of *materiality* and its implications for the theoretical understanding of translation processes across different textual media.

Yue Han

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

### **Russia's Digital Public Diplomacy with the U.S. and China**

This research examines the strategies employed in Russia's public diplomacy on digital platforms toward the U.S. (Russia's primary challenger, at least before 2025) and China (its strongest ally), from its inception in 2011 until the beginning of Trump's second presidency in 2025. The study approaches the topic from linguistic and communication perspectives and compares Russia's practices across three periods: before the Sochi Olympics (2011–2014), after the Sochi Olympics (2014–2022), and during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine (2022–2025).

In the pre-Sochi period, Russia aimed to gain popularity and lay the groundwork through soft-power content, particularly Sochi Olympics-related topics, as a foundation for its later narratives in the Russo-Ukrainian War. After the Sochi Games, Russia significantly increased its hard-power messaging to garner support from audiences in the U.S. and



China, with Ukraine-related topics becoming increasingly prominent. During the full-scale invasion, Russia shifted to wartime diplomacy.

The analysis reveals distinct strategies tailored to American and Chinese audiences, taking into account their languages, cultures, and social contexts. The study evaluates Russia's digital content strategies, including content framing, lexical choices, language style, ideological values, and instances of linguistic impoliteness. Additionally, it explores the rationale behind Russia's divergent communication approaches toward the U.S. and China during the different periods.

**Keywords:** digital public diplomacy, soft power, hard power

**Yue Han** is a doctoral researcher at the Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä. His research focuses on Russian studies and journalism. He speaks English, Russian, and Chinese. Previously, he worked at Nokia (Finland), Shanghai International Studies University (China), and Xinhua News Agency (China).

**Mark Allen Holm**

University of Wyoming, USA

### **A Semiotics of Omens: A Warning for The Future**

The premise of this work is that we are assailed with the age-old art of divination, now with even more sinister intention. It is based on an essential error of the cultural context which mistakes the index for the symbol. In doing so, it replaces the unmotivated symptom or clue with the assumption of a motivated symbol pre-coded either by culture or a supernatural entity. Many indexical signs have cultural significance which could lead to confusion and the unintentional confusion between the two. Contemporary science and phenomenological philosophy, however, helps us parse the difference between the motivated and unmotivated sign. Individualism as well as a revisionist cynicism has led to a revival of the index/symbol swap. "Swap," because it is now intentional. Practitioners of contemporary divination muddy the cultural waters, deliberately confusing human intentionality with divine, precoded meaning. Further, this allows them to control the signifier-signified relationship. In other words, they control the code. This paper's goal is to establish a description of a semiotics of omens as an early attempt to wrestle with the seemly ineffable as well as a contemporary attempt to hijack the meaning-making process. The outcome is that this applies not only to so-called fortune tellers, but to propaganda in political and capitalist spheres as well.

**Keywords:** omens, divination, politics, index, symbol

**Mark Allen Holm** is a graduate instructor and student in English at the University of Wyoming. His thesis focus is on the semiotics of positionality and reality navigation of ontologically uncertain texts. He is also writing about narrative theory and the semiotics of propaganda. Upon completion of his current program he plans to pursue a PhD in semiotics.

**Indrek Ibrus**

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **Mapping the Semiosphere: Knowledge Graphs as Tools for Understanding Cultural Complexity and Innovation**

This paper explores how knowledge graphs can serve as novel methodological tools for studying the complexity, dynamics, and innovation of cultural systems within the framework of cultural semiotics. Building on Juri Lotman's concept of the semiosphere—an interconnected space of cultural meaning-making—the study argues that emerging linked-data infrastructures provide a new means of modeling cultural transformations by capturing relationships, recontextualizations, and emergent structures within media and heritage data.

The research draws on an ongoing project developing the Estonian Knowledge Graph, which integrates diverse cultural datasets—including the audiovisual archives of Estonian Public Broadcasting and the digitized records of the Estonian National Library—into a dynamic, interconnected system. Through semantic enrichment, including named entity recognition and topic modeling, this initiative enables the tracing of cultural dialogues, intertextual references, and the evolution of meaning over time. The paper demonstrates how knowledge graphs allow researchers to analyze the formation, diffusion, and contestation of cultural models, revealing the tensions and negotiations that shape cultural memory and institutional narratives.

By operationalizing the semiosphere as a computational framework, the study proposes that knowledge graphs make it possible to investigate how new discourses and cultural forms emerge, how values shift through dialogue and adaptation, and how innovations in meaning and form propagate within media ecosystems. This datafied approach to cultural semiotics highlights the dynamic interplay of stability and change, center and periphery, dominant and marginal discourses. It also offers practical applications for cultural heritage institutions, policymakers, and media scholars by providing tools for mapping creative networks, monitoring long-term cultural evolution processes, and fostering a more inclusive, participatory understanding of cultural knowledge.

Ultimately, this paper argues that knowledge graphs, by structuring the vast relational complexity of cultural data, open new avenues for studying the mechanisms of cultural

evolution, offering a pragmatic yet theoretically grounded approach to understanding how societies continually remake their meaning-making environments.

**Keywords:** knowledge graphs, linked data, semiosphere, cultural semiotics

**Indrek Ibrus** is Professor of Media Innovation at Tallinn University's Baltic Film, Media and Arts School (BFM), Estonia, where he also curates the BFM doctoral programme. His research interests include media innovation, the evolution of the internet, media datafication, and the public value of media services and data. He has co-edited *Crossmedia Innovations* (with Carlos A. Scolari, Peter Lang, 2012), edited *Emergence of Cross-Innovation Systems* (Emerald, 2019), and co-authored *On the Digital Semiosphere* (with John Hartley and Maarja Ojamaa, Bloomsbury, 2020). He is editor of *Baltic Screen Media Review*.

**Alena Ivanova**

Charles University, Czech Republic

### ***Picture This! The Playful Art of Metaphor in Scientific Illustrations***

Illustrations are capable of communicating complex scientific ideas to both experts and the general public. Beyond merely accompanying text, images explain, frame, and sometimes even shape the understanding of new knowledge. A particular type of illustration—article cover illustrations in scientific magazines—serves not only to attract attention but also to introduce topics in a visually engaging way. These images are often metaphorical.

While there is extensive research on the use of images in science communication and on the role of metaphors in scientific discourse, less attention has been given to the intersection of the two. More specifically, this paper addresses the central question: How do creative metaphorical illustrations introduce new knowledge to the reader? It examines the role of metaphor in scientific illustrations, focusing on how these images convey meaning and enhance reader engagement.

The research analyzes a corpus of article cover illustrations from *Scientific American* magazine, applying close analysis of selected images across various scientific fields. The findings highlight how metaphor and creative wordplay shape visual representation, demonstrating their ability to simplify complex topics while maintaining intellectual depth. Ultimately, this study emphasizes the role of creative illustrations in making science more thought-provoking, evoking curiosity, and setting the interpretative tone for the accompanying article. The paper draws on the concept of metaphor as understood within the semiotic theory of Charles S. Peirce.

**Keywords:** visual metaphor, creativity, illustration, science communication

**Alena Ivanova** is a PhD student in the program *Semiotics and Philosophy of Communication* at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University in Prague. Her current research focuses on how scientific knowledge interacts with its visual representations—how such images are created and how knowledge is transformed into visual form, with a focus on infographics. She holds a Master's degree in Electronic Culture and Semiotics, where her thesis explored the notion of visual metaphor in the context of Peircean semiotics. Her research interests also include new media studies, science communication, and education.

## Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz

The Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Krakow, Poland

### Music as Verb:

#### Krzysztof Penderecki and His Strategy of Creating Emotions and Meanings

“I am always looking for an overarching form of emotion. Sound is only a means of expression,” repeated Krzysztof Penderecki (1933–2020). Even in his avant-garde compositions, he was not satisfied with sound alone: works such as *Polymorphia* (1961) and *Fluorescences* (1962) became dramatised narratives, shaping the current of expressive sonorism. Always creatively surprising, Penderecki embodied the role of an engaged artist at the centre of historical and cultural events. For this reason, it is fitting to describe Penderecki's music, using Ryszard Nycz's term, as a verb—where perception itself becomes action.

*The Passion According to St Luke* (1966), a piece that marked Penderecki's departure from avant-garde orthodoxy, symbolically anticipated the affective turn that emerged in culture and the humanities by the late 1980s. Drawing on the archetype of genre, the composer engaged with the memory of Johann Sebastian Bach's passions and rhetorical narrative forms. As Juri Lotman noted, rhetoric reflects “the universal principle of both individual and collective consciousness.”

Penderecki's compositional identity increasingly became defined by a romanticised relationship with the past and by an imperative to develop a language of affective communication with audiences. This is evident in works such as the opera *Black Mask* (1986), the Second Violin Concerto *Metamorphoses* (1995), and the song cycle *Songs of Reverie and Nostalgia. A Sea of Dreams Has Blown Upon Me* (2010). His music reflects a semiotic era in which expressive, appellative, phatic, and symbolic functions gained new interpretative depth. Creativity became a vehicle for communication, and the act of composition itself a mode of address embedded in a poetic, or “topoidal,” structure, as described by Mieczysław Tomaszewski.

Penderecki's music is carefully crafted to shape and direct the listener's perception toward intense affective responses. As Constantin Floros remarked, “No art manages to express

emotions as strong as music. Thus, since time immemorial it has been considered the speech of the heart, of affects, of sensations, of feelings.”

**Keywords:** music, Krzysztof Penderecki, expression, meaning, message

**Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz** is Professor at the Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Kraków, where she serves as Head of the Department of Theory and Interpretation of Musical Works. A music theoretician and scholar, she is the author of the books *Vytautas Bacevičius and His Ideas of Cosmic Music* (2001) and *Karol Szymanowski's Musical Poetics: Studies and Interpretations* (2013), along with more than 60 articles in Polish and international volumes. She is the Programme Curator at the Karol Szymanowski Museum in the Villa Atma in Zakopane, a branch of the National Museum in Krakow. In 2024, she was honoured with the Małopolska Award of Creativity.

Aleksandr Fadeev

KU Leuven, Belgium

### **Sources of Creation Processes in Inner Speech: Semiotic and Cognitive Foundations**

One of the unique phenomena of human cognition that relates to meaning-making and where creativity, complexity and intelligence thrive is inner speech. These three keywords are the reason why inner speech emerges through semiotic development of a human mind and are at the same time the results of the activity of inner speech.

Inner speech is “the subjective experience of language in the absence of overt and audible articulation” (Alderson-Day & Fernyhough, 2015: 931), and according to Vygotsky is also “a union of word and thought” (Vygotsky, 1986: 212) and “a close amalgam of thought and language” (ibid.: 225). Inner speech represents human’s ability to acquire sign systems that are emerged in culture such as a natural language to form the unique internal sign system that makes conditions for the language-driven meaning-making, autocommunication, self-reflection, planning, self-awareness, self-regulation, problem solving, or memory (Perrone-Bertolotti et al., 2014: 221; Fadeev, 2022: 311). This unique phenomenon of culture and cognition creates the necessary conditions for both semiosis and creativity (Kuznetsov et al., 2023). Inner speech with its autocommunicative nature, specific character of its syntax and semantics is a creative process per se. In addition, it is involved in various processes and phenomena that are related to creativity.

The presentation will address the author’s recent publication “Sources of Creation Processes in Inner Speech: Semiotic and Cognitive Foundations” that presents the epistemological foundation for the sources of creativity in human inner speech as a condition for semiosis, and that provides both the semiotic and cognitive perspectives. The

research addresses the sources of creation in inner speech through the specific structure of the internalised language, its autocommunicative function, and through the role of inner speech in creative process on the example of problem solving.

The presentation also discusses the theoretical foundations of Fadeev's current MSCA post-doc project "Empirical and theoretical assessment of the links between inner speech and insight" at KU Leuven (Belgium) that aims at researching how different dimensions of inner speech (inner speaking and inner hearing) and its phenomenological properties (dialogic, condensed, etc.) are involved in the insight and analytical type of problem solving.

**Keywords:** inner speech, creativity, problem solving, autocommunication, meaning-making

**Aleksandr Fadeev** (PhD) is a researcher at KU Leuven's (Belgium) Cognitive Control in Context lab. His work focuses on inner speech, Vygotsky's semiotics, and the role of (digital) culture in cognitive processes. Dr Fadeev has been a member of the Transmedia Research Group (University of Tartu) and the Inner Speech Research Group, which incorporates a semiotic approach to studying inner speech. Currently Dr Fadeev is pursuing MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship at KU Leuven. His project "Empirical and theoretical assessment of the links between inner speech and insight" explores the connections between inner speech and different forms of problem solving.

## Matthew Kalkman and Terrence Deacon

University of Tartu, Estonia and University of Rome 'Tor Vergata', Italy;  
University of California, Berkeley, USA

### Evolution as Inference

Darwin's 1838 insight that gave birth to his concept of natural selection was stimulated by his realization that Malthus' statistical analysis of competition for limited resources could be applied to the natural history of species. It explained how the subtractive logic of competitive elimination could hone the fit of organism traits to their local environments. But with the advance of molecular and cell biology at the dawn of the current millennium, we have become aware that a somewhat different logic characterizes evolution within organisms. In this context, the duplication of genes, molecules, and cells provides functional redundancy that allows degenerate duplicates to accumulate as though neutral. This vastly increases the probability of the evolution of otherwise improbable synergistic effects. We show that this inverse Darwinian effect is formally analogous to the iconically-based generative mode of inference that Peirce called abduction. This exemplifies the semiotic nature of the evolutionary process.

**Keywords:** semiosis, Darwinism, inference, complementarity

**Matthew Kalkman** is a PhD student with both the University of Tartu and the University of Rome Tor Vergata. He has a master's from the London School of Economics and a law degree from Durham University. The focus of his work is on sovereignty and human rights in the postsecular age. His work utilizes semiosis in order to explore the importance of individuation and complementary difference in both the process of meaning-making and as a catalyst towards societal evolution. A key aspect of this research is understanding how inferential processes evolved from the chemical material-energetic substrates that compose life towards emergent processes that can explain the creativity, complexity and intelligence that ground human value.

## Rene Kiis

Tartu University, Estonia

### Tartu text in Estonian literature

The concept of city text has been discussed in cultural semiotics already few decades. In the 1984 special volume of Sign System Studies about city semiotics was issued. In that volume, Vladimir Toporov – one of the Tartu-Moscow semiotics school members – published an article about “Peterburg text”, an analysis of Peterburg’s meaning and image in Russian literature.

The presentation will introduce the Toporov’s interpretation of Petersburg text, which according to him, from one hand reflects the city and its life, but on the other hand transforms its physical world into spiritual values. Toporov argues that: “Like any other city, St. Petersburg has its own “language”. It speaks to us with its streets, squares, waters, islands, gardens, buildings, monuments, people, history, ideas and can be understood as a kind of heterogeneous text to which a certain general meaning is attributed and on the basis of which a certain system of signs can be reconstructed, implemented in the text” (2003: 22).

Like Petersburg, Tartu is a city with similar position and importance in Estonian literature. Special kind of Tartu text along with the notion of "spirit of Tartu" can be identified and described. It is centered mainly around three places – river Emajõgi, hill Toomemägi and Tartu University, which main building sits between them. Tartu text is also described by combining different spheres from nature and culture, classical architecture and traditional wooden architecture, rationalism and romanticism. The spirit of Tartu, a widely used concept about Tartu, can be seen as a symbol that is combining Tartu values and meanings into one spiritual figure or genius loci of Tartu.

**Keywords:** city text, genius loci, Tartu



**Rene Kiis** is a junior researcher and PhD student in Tartu University semiotics department, focusing mainly on different relations between city and literature, how city is represented in the literature, but also how literature is present in the city and alters our understanding of the environment.

Sofya Khagi

University of Michigan, USA

### **Creativity, Complexity, and Intelligence in AI: Lotman, Turing, Pelevin**

In the 1970s, Yuri Lotman, along with other Soviet scientists and humanities scholars, became increasingly interested in cybernetics and theories of non-human intelligence. Nearly half a century later, and decades after the collapse of the Soviet state, Victor Pelevin, one of Russia's preeminent contemporary authors, has populated his texts with technologically enhanced human beings and humanized robots. Experimentally blurring the boundaries between humans on the one hand and data or machines on the other, Pelevin brings into focus a series of existential, political, and ethical questions that engage with debates on the human mind and artificial intelligence, including those advanced by Anglophone thinkers such as Alan Turing, John Searle, David Chalmers, and Daniel Dennett.

While Pelevin's artistic responses to Western theories of AI have already received scholarly attention, this presentation aims to place Lotman's late Soviet theories of cybernetics and artificial intelligence in dialogue with Pelevin's recent cultural responses to AI. The discussion centers on Lotman's works from the 1970s and 1980s, particularly "Artificial Intelligence and the Workings of Culture" and "Brain-Text-Culture-Artificial Intelligence." These writings, along with more widely known theories by Turing, provide a framework for analyzing Pelevin's recent transhumanist tetralogy (2021–2024).

As argued in this paper, Pelevin, like Lotman, is simultaneously fascinated by the meaning-making potential of AI and cautious about the dangers posed by hyper-computerization of culture. In the spirit of Lotman, Pelevin explores the role of AI as a potential co-creator of art and delves into the implications of AI-driven creative processes. Central to his recent texts is the extent to which AI acts as a surrogate for human creativity, with broad consequences for culture and society.

Key questions addressed include: How do creativity, complexity, and intelligence function in AI-assisted or AI-driven artistic processes? How does meaning-making in artificial systems compare to that in organic systems? And finally, how and why does the decay of creativity, complexity, and intelligence occur in the hyper-technologized societies depicted in Pelevin's recent dystopian works?

**Keywords:** Lotman, Pelevin, Turing, artificial intelligence



**Sofya Khagi** is Professor of Russian Literature in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is the author of the monographs *Silence and the Rest: Verbal Skepticism in Russian Poetry* (Northwestern UP, 2013) and *Pelevin and Unfreedom: Poetics, Politics, Metaphysics* (Northwestern UP, 2021), also published in Russian as *Пелевин и несвобода: поэтика, политика, метафизика* (Новое Литературное Обозрение, 2023). She is the editor of *Companion to Victor Pelevin* (Academic Studies Press, 2022). Her research focuses on twentieth- and twenty-first-century Russian poetry, contemporary Russian fiction, the intersection of literature and philosophy, and Baltic literatures and cultures.

## Piotr Konderak

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland

### **The roots of embodied experiences in utero: a cognitive-semiotic perspective**

Cognitive semiotics addressed meaning-making processes at different levels of the Semiotic Hierarchy (Zlatev 2018). This hierarchy itself reflects various levels of consciousness. As I have argued elsewhere, understanding of gestural meaning-making crucially requires addressing the issue of pre-reflective self-consciousness (Sartre 1943, Zahavi 2005). Accepting the claim that understanding of experiencing, acting (gesturing) subjects must be considered “on the basis of a history of the variety of actions that a being in world performs” (Varela et al. 1991: 9), we may need to reach the earliest stages of human life to find the primal and pre-reflective basis of conscious experiences. Consequently, instead of focusing on adult, vision-based consciousness, I would like to adopt a bottom-up, developmental perspective on subjective experiences, and address their roots and emergence. I draw on results of studies on the emergence of experiences in early human life, i.e. in utero. I discuss three experiencing-related claims. First, experiences are rooted in sensory-motor integrative activity of the human foetus (Quintero & De Jaegher 2020). Second, experiences are not just rooted in embodiment, but in the co-embodiment of mother and foetus (Ciaunica et al. 2021). In other words, it is important that experiences first develop within another human body. Finally, foetal perceptual experiences emerge out of activity of proximal tactile, olfactory and proprioceptive systems (Piontelli 2015). These ideas assume an enactive view on meaning-making and may contribute understanding the distinction between the first and second layers of the Semiotic Hierarchy (e.g. Zlatev & Konderak 2023).

Ciaunica, A., Constant, A., Preissl, H. & Fotopoulou, A. (2021). The first prior: From co-embodiment to co-homeostasis in early life. *Consciousness and Cognition* 91(5): 103117.

Quintero, A. M., & De Jaegher, H. (2020). Pregnant Agencies: Movement and Participation in Maternal–Fetal Interactions. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Sec. Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology. Vol. 11, 01977.

Piontelli, A. (2015). Development of Normal Fetal Movements: The Last 15 Weeks of Gestation. Berlin: Springer.

Varela, F., Thompson, E., Rosch, E. (1991), *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Zahavi, D., (2005). *Subjectivity and Selfhood: Investigating the first-person perspective*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

**Keywords:** cognitive semiotics, pre-reflective self-consciousness, experience, the semiotic hierarchy

**Piotr Konderak**, Associate Professor at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Head of the Dept. of Logic and Cognitive Science and the Director of the Institute of Philosophy. His research interests concern problems of philosophy of mind, cognitive semiotics as well as empirical and conceptual approaches to multimodality. He is a co-editor (with Jordan Zlatev and Göran Sonesson) of the first anthology of papers in cognitive semiotics: *Meaning, Mind and Communication: Explorations in Cognitive Semiotics* (Peter Lang 2016). He is the author of a monograph on cognitive semiotics: *Mind, Cognition, Semiosis: Ways to Cognitive Semiotics* (Lublin 2018).

Nuran Kır

Istanbul University, Türkiye

### **Text within a Text: A Lotmanian Analysis of Orhan Pamuk's *The New Life***

According to Juri Lotman, a text goes beyond linguistic interpretation and functions as a cultural unit that gains meaning through its interaction with other cultural and semiotic codes. A text cannot be separated from its own linguistic and metaphorical signs, nor can it be detached from its historical and cultural reality. This aligns with what Lotman terms the *semiosphere*—a shared space of codes, symbols, and signs within a community that shapes how people perceive the world. Literary texts, as creative productions of the semiosphere, lack rigid boundaries; they acquire meaning through interaction with other semiospheres.

In Lotmanian terms, the creativity of a text arises when existing codes are reinterpreted in relation to other semiospheres—an “explosion” of meaning. This is particularly evident in postmodernist literature, where semiospheric boundaries are crossed through intertextual elements. This study explores how intertextuality contributes to creativity in the

interpretation of *The New Life*, a postmodern novel by Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk. The novel is rich in references to other texts and depicts a protagonist who reads a mysterious book and begins to pursue a new life both literally and metaphorically.

Pamuk synthesizes Western and Eastern literary traditions, drawing from figures like Dante and Ibn Arabi. Accordingly, this study focuses on how intertextuality fosters creativity in meaning-making and demonstrates how intercultural literary engagement unites different semiospheres through Lotman's semiotic framework.

**Keywords:** semiosphere, Lotman, Orhan Pamuk, *The New Life*

**Nuran Kır** is a PhD Candidate in Linguistics at Istanbul University. Her research areas include literary semiotics, film semiotics, and literary translation studies. She is also a university lecturer in the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Istanbul Aydin University.

**Mihail Kopotev**

University of Helsinki, Finland

### **ChatGPT Speaks: Examining Post-Human Language Policy**

The concept of the "Russian literary language" (*литературный язык*), defined during the Soviet era as the primary, supradialectal form of the language, is a social construct rooted in power dynamics rather than linguistic reality. This presentation examines how the institution of the literary language was reinforced by Soviet state mechanisms and how it continues to hold prominence in contemporary Russia. This persistence endures despite competing forces, such as diasporic adaptations, language activism, and technological innovations like ChatGPT.

Drawing on methods from conceptual history and computational linguistics, the study focuses on the modern context in which large language models become widely accessible. It explores how these technologies expose or reshape the institutional forces that sustain the literary language in the 21st century. The findings aim to shed light on broader implications for language policy and social stratification in post-Soviet spaces and beyond.

**Keywords:** conceptual history, language policy, AI-generated, ChatGPT

**Mihail Kopotev** is a linguist specializing in diachronic and computational linguistics and language acquisition. He has published extensively on historical and corpus linguistics, and his recent projects contribute to international debates on linguistic identity and policy in post-Soviet countries. His current research focuses on the evolution of the Russian literary language as a social and political institution, combining data-driven analysis with intellectual history.

## Kara Erika Koskinen

University of the Arts, Helsinki

### **Creation of Patriotism in Putin's Russia: The Case of Two Classical Music Capitals**

This study aims to understand and explain how classical music in St. Petersburg and Moscow fosters citizens' sense of patriotism since Vladimir Putin's return to power in 2012. During this period, cultural policy discourse has become more conservative and increasingly reinforces patriotic events in state concert institutions. The research focuses on patriotic concert events and programs held between 2012 and 2027 at major institutions, including the St. Petersburg and Moscow State Philharmonics, as well as the Mariinsky and Bolshoi Theaters.

This pioneering work introduces a new theoretical field—sociopolitical semiotics in classical music (e.g., Salgar, 2016; Tagg, 1999; Lotman, 1984)—which helps reveal the role of deliberate concert programming in evoking patriotic emotions among audiences. The study's theoretical foundation draws on Russian cultural policy papers from 2014 onward and patriotic literature (e.g., Fomin, 2024; Horina, 2018), outlining the broader socio-cultural landscape of the nation. The second part of the study builds on musical semiotics (e.g., Tagg, 1999; Tarasti, 1994) and its sociopolitical applications (e.g., Salgar, 2016), offering a flexible approach to interpreting political messaging embedded in classical music. Using a multiple case study design (Stake, 1995), the research compiles concert programs of patriotic events in selected institutions through theoretical sampling (Mason, 2002). These programs are then subjected to time series analysis (Box & Jenkins, 1970) to track the frequency and recurrence of specific musical works over time. The results are analyzed through the lens of sociopolitical semiotics to address the central research question. By uncovering how classical music is used in times of societal turbulence to support the political elite, the study holds social relevance. Additionally, its theoretical contribution to the emerging field of sociopolitical semiotics in classical music may serve as a model for future academic research both in Russia and globally.

**Keywords:** Russia, patriotism, classical music, musical semiotics

**Kara Koskinen** is a classical musician and cultural researcher. She holds a Master of Music in symphonic conducting from the Sibelius Academy (2011–2017) and the Saint Petersburg Conservatory (2017–2021), as well as a Master of Arts in Arts Management from the University of the Arts Helsinki (2022–2024). During her studies, Kara began her work as a researcher of Russian cultural policy, focusing on the creation of ideological narratives through classical music in St. Petersburg and Moscow. She has presented her research at the ENCATC Congress and the Finnish Cultural Policy Days in 2024. As a conductor, she has worked with the Hämeenlinna Orchestra (2015–2020) and as a violist in the Kymi Sinfonietta and Helsinki Metropolitan Orchestra.

**The semiotic and the symbolic. Transmedia ontology and praxis**

Tone, gestures, rhythm, colour, and odours differ from the structured, logical system of language and words we use to communicate. They may not signify if taken separately, but if approached within a particular chain of signification (narrative, poetic text, performance art), they can transgress the established meanings. Both sides of language, pre-linguistic and linguistic, are conflated in poetry (Kristeva 1984). In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva reflects on the potential of rhythm, timbres, and phonetic devices of poetic language to disturb the logic that dominates the social order (ibid).

Tone, gestures, rhythm, colour, odours (as examples of the semiotic) and linguistic structures (the symbolic) are rooted in archaic practices, including rituals (ibid), with which performance bears similarities (Schechner 1994). Thus, we say that the semiotic and the symbolic are already — by genesis — transmedia, even if not labelled as such.

A talk regards the semiotic and the symbolic as transmedia concepts, i.e., qualities “of phenomena that appear in more than one medium without being, or being viewed as, specific to, or having an origin in, any of them” (Wolf 2022: 215). The question of how and when the semiotic can transcend settled meanings was covered extensively, albeit not invariably coherently, in *Revolution in Poetic Language* (Kristeva 1984). The talk intends to elaborate on the potential of the semiotic to disturb established chains of signification and the conditions under which this potential can be realised, drawing examples from performing arts and cinema.

Kristeva, Julia. (1984). *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Columbia University Press.

Schechner, Richard. (1994). Ritual and performance. In T. Ingold (ed.), *Companion encyclopedia of anthropology*, 613–47. London: Routledge.

Wolf, Werner. (2022). "The Concept 'Transmediality', and an Example: Repetition across Arts/Media". In: *Aletria* 32.1, 212–31.

**Keywords:** the semiotic, the symbolic, transmediality, performing arts

**Nina Kozachynska** is a Junior Research Fellow and a PhD student at the University of Tartu. Her interests revolve around boundless concepts and their more concrete embodiment: the semiotic and the symbolic (Kristeva) — cultural autocommunication — intersemiotic translation from poetry and prose into performance arts.

## Kalevi Kull

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Steps towards the physiology of semiosis and umwelt: the conditions for atemporal relations and logic in organisms**

The connection between semiotic and physiological concepts was made only occasionally or superficially. The aim of this paper is to analyse the links between physiological and semiotic approaches to the processes responsible for meaning-making in organisms, or, in other terms, the relation-process duality. Our conceptual analysis of conditions for meaning-making exemplifies the features of physiological system that are necessary for meaning-making to emerge. Moreover, what requires physiological explanation is the emergence of logical incompatibility in a living system. Paradoxically, following the principle of ontological non-contradiction which characterises physical models, the logical incompatibility is excluded, which implies that there cannot be difference-making and momentary umwelt as such and accordingly meaning making would be impossible. This is related to the problem of naturalization of minimal phenomenology from the perspective of theoretical semiotics together with posing questions for physiology. Since semiotic relations are at the same time logical relations, the physiological basis of semiosis is equivalent to the physiological basis of logic, particularly in the organisms without nervous system. Our analysis leads to the conclusion that the emergence of semiosis is coextensive with the emergence of subjective time, which is necessary for incompatibilities and contradictions as such to occur. Thus the problem to be understood and the phenomenon explained is the physiological conditions for atemporality or nowness (specious present or time window).

**Keywords:** umwelt, semiotic window, time, contradiction

**Kalevi Kull** is a biologist and semiotician, who studies the semiotic processes in living systems and theoretical problems of both general semiotics and general biology. His interests also concern the stability conditions of ecological and semiotic systems.

## Kristina Kõrver

Arvo Pärt Centre / University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Translating the Untranslatable: Some (Inter)Semiotic Aspects in the Sketches of Arvo Pärt's Musical Works**

Drafts and sketches of artworks are usually studied to identify the chronological axis of a completed work and to trace the development of material from idea to final result. From a semiotic perspective, however, drafts can serve as a window into the artist's creative

psychology, offering an opportunity to observe their processes of meaning-making, use of signs, and autocommunication. This presentation examines the creative process of composer Arvo Pärt (1935), particularly its textological and intersemiotic aspects. The analysis focuses on his choral cycle *Sieben Magnificat-Antiphonen* (1988) and is based on handwritten and oral sources found in the archives of the Arvo Pärt Centre, which have not been studied before. The main research material is Pärt's sketchbooks—so-called musical diaries—unique archival documents that contain, alongside musical notation, rich verbal and pictorial material. Drawing on the works of Vygotsky, Lotman, Zhinkin, Torop, and others, these diaries can be interpreted as the composer's inner speech in sound, word, and image, reflecting the autocommunicative aspects, code transitions, and the artistic choices that stem from these processes.

The examined sketches allow us to trace how the conceptual idea of a musical work is born ("the explosion in meaning" described by Lotman). They also reveal how the idea finds its first expression through specific graphic symbols ("translatability of the untranslatable") and demonstrate the complex modelling techniques that ultimately shape the idea into its final embodiment in sound and musical notation. The analysis highlights that Pärt's creative process constantly oscillates between sound, word, and pictorial codes, constituting an ongoing translation process between different sign systems. Moreover, in the verbal commentary preserved in his diaries, the theological context of Pärt's work emerges, allowing us to interpret both his drafts and the whole oeuvre as reflections of the author's personal worldview, modelled and translated into the language of art.

**Keywords:** creative process, sketches, intersemiotic translation, autocommunication, inner speech

**Kristina Kõrver** is a musicologist, a researcher and archive specialist at the Arvo Pärt Centre, and a PhD student in semiotics at the University of Tartu. Her primary focus is on exploring Arvo Pärt's creative process and the archival materials related to it. In addition, she conducts educational programmes, curates exhibitions, and provides archival consulting to researchers studying Pärt's work at the Centre.

**Daiya Kuryu, Jordan Zlatev and Harry Polfeldt**

Lund University, Sweden

**Where pan-human embodiment and social sedimentation intersect: Universality and culture-specificity in recurrent gesture**

Recurrent gestures, a topic that has recently received significant attention within the field of gesture studies, are characterized as "hybrids of idiosyncratic and conventional elements" (Müller, 2017, p. 280). They resemble emblems like THUMB-UP, but are less

conventionalized, and constitute “sedimented social acts, [...] affirming their meanings when being enacted but also creating novel significance that emerges from the particular situations” (Ladewig, 2024, pp. 37–38). Given that their meanings have been argued to be grounded in embodied experiences, including manual actions and visual perceptions of movement (e.g., Mittelberg, 2017; Müller, 2017), we propose that recurrent gestures can be adequately analyzed using the Motivation & Sedimentation Model (MSM; Zlatev, Jacobsson & Paju, 2021; Zlatev, 2023), a cognitive-semiotic model of meaning-making that operates across three interlinked levels: the Embodied (pan-human cognitive processes and structures derived from bodily experiences), Sedimented (community-specific norms and beliefs), and Situated level (specific contexts of interaction).

By employing MSM, we explore the universal and culture-specific dimensions of recurrent gestures, with a particular focus on Two-handed Alternation gestures on the Sagittal axis (2HAS; Bressemer & Müller, 2014, p. 1580). Based on Kuryu’s (2024) findings that 2HAS was motivated by basic manual actions GIVE and RECEIVE when combined with the English expression ‘back and forth,’ we have collected data from semi-spontaneous conversations made by Japanese and Swedish speakers in their own languages, where we provided each dyad with the same set of everyday questions concerning both 2HAS-prompting and non-prompting topics.

Our findings indicate that both Swedish and Japanese speakers performed 2HAS when talking about COMMUNICATION, likely motivated by the action-based schemas GIVE and RECEIVE at the Embodied level. However, culture-specific aspects have also emerged, particularly in how 2HAS is polysemiotically combined with idiomatic phrases unique to each language. For instance, Swedish speakers used 2HAS in conjunction with the verb ‘att bolla’ (literally ‘to ball’, but metaphorically ‘to discuss’), arguably motivated by a Sedimented level metaphoreme (Zlatev et al. 2021). In our presentation we will provide qualitative and quantitative analysis of the structural and semiotic parameters of 2HAS in the two language groups, in the spirit of cognitive semiotics.

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**Keywords:** recurrent gestures, Motivation & Sedimentation Model (MSM), 2HAS, cognitive semiotics

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**Jordan Zlatev** is Professor of General Linguistics and Director of Research for the Division of Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University, Sweden. His current research focuses on polysemiotic communication, and more generally on the nature of language in relation to other semiotic systems like gesture and depiction. His approach to cognitive semiotics is strongly influenced by phenomenology, the philosophy and methodology of lived experience. He is editor-in-chief of *Public Journal of Semiotics*.

**Harry Polfeldt** is a research assistant at Lund University. His research focuses on gestures in political rhetoric.

**Mika-Petri Laakkonen**

University of Haifa, Israel

### **Nature-Inspired AI: Decoding Bionoise for Enhanced Biosemiotic Communication**

This study explores the intersection of bionoise and nature-inspired artificial intelligence models to enhance communication within the field of biosemiotics. By examining the processes that illuminate the modes of communication, I aim to develop innovative methods for interpreting and utilizing biodiversity databanks. My research highlights the potential of AI to decode complex biological signals, offering new ways to communicate across species and ecosystems. This interdisciplinary approach not only advances

theoretical knowledge but also provides practical applications for biodiversity conservation and ecological research.

**Keywords:** bionoise, nature-inspired artificial intelligence models, biodiversity databank, communication, biosemiotics

**Mika-Petri Laakkonen**, PhD (2007), is a Full Professor at the University of Haifa in Israel and a Leading / Principal Research Scientist at the Oulu University of Applied Sciences since 2023. He previously worked as a Research Director (2020–2021), Visiting Professor at the Sorbonne University (University of Pierre et Marie Curie Campus) in the computer science laboratory (2018–2019), Associate Professor at the Department of Information Technology at the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines in Paris, and Associate Professor of Applied Information Technology and Head of the Department of Industrial Design at the University of Lapland (2011–2012).

**Sara Lenninger**

Kristianstad University, Lund University

### **Creativity in the Indexical and Iconic Dimensions of Sonesson's Rhetorical Model**

Creativity is often defined as the process of generating something novel and useful (Sawyer, 2006; Sternberg & O'Hara, 1999), and as that which provokes thought (Koestler, 1964; Lotman, 2009). Within semiotics, creativity can be examined through Sonesson's rhetorical model, which integrates Peirce's triadic sign relations—iconicity, indexicality, and symbolicity—into the analysis of pictorial meaning. This presentation explores how creativity manifests within and between the indexical and iconic dimensions of this model, emphasising how these semiotic modifiers enable the emergence of thought-provoking meanings and enhance the communicative potential of pictures.

A foundational aspect of pictorial representation is its mode of iconicity, which relies on perceptual similarity to its object while simultaneously allowing deviation from it (Sonesson, 2010). Iconicity not only underpins recognition through resemblance but also facilitates new interpretative possibilities and thought experiments, particularly through diagrammatic iconicity (Stjernfelt, 2007). Stjernfelt argues that in the Lifeworld, it is primarily diagrammatic iconicity that guides our actions and fosters creative thinking. Unlike the Lifeworld, where meaning typically arises from lived experience, pictorial meaning is inherently shaped by its function within sign relations—as differentiated signs. I suggest that this shift in the predominance of iconicity can be discussed as an inverse relationship, which establishes specific prerequisites for the interaction between iconicity and indexicality in visual rhetoric, as implied in Sonesson's model.

In the Lifeworld, certain qualities or parts are expected to be contiguous with specific elements, but not with others. By grounding meaning in contiguity, indexicality in pictoriality broadens the discursive and narrative possibilities of images. This is why Sonesson designates indexicality as the "first dimension" of his pictorial rhetoric model. Some visual experiences are expected to appear similar, others different. Pictorial utterances are expected to clearly manifest the sign-character of the picture. These expectations are disrupted both by an excess of reality in an image and by the emergence of deeper layers of fiction within its pictorial content. Since this disruption pertains directly to the picture's sign character, it constitutes the dimension of symbolicity—the third dimension in Sonesson's model.

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**Keywords:** visual rhetoric, picture, iconicity, primary iconicity, indexicality

**Sara Lenninger**, PhD, is a Docent in Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University and Assistant Professor at Kristianstad University. Her research focuses on children's semiotic development and visual semiotics. She is active in several semiotic associations, serves on the boards of NASS and AISV-IAVS, represents Sweden on the IASS/AIS Executive Committee, and is an Associate Editor for *Cognitive Semiotics*.

Hélène Levasseur

Université Paris Cité, France

#### **To live within the boundary, meaning-making processes against nonplace inside a semiosphere**

How does one live inside a boundary? The dilatation of the boundary into a place where people live for years questions the possibility of the creation of a semiotic space inside the semiosphere's boundary itself. Studying the meaning-making processes that allow the emergence of a semiosphere enclaved inside a semiosphere's boundary is crucial to understanding migration and more broadly of a world system characterized by mobility and

exchange. On the one hand, social studies propose an analysis of this particular space with the concept of “nonplace” (Auger) defining a particular kind of in-between space that does not belong to any “proper place” or territory. While, migration studies show migrants camps are often an impassable “threshold” where most people are held for years without being part of any proper cultural system anymore, except for the one they create inside (Nuselovici). On the another hand, semiotics gives us tools regarding strategic aspects of the organisation of migration borderland with both the state’s “strategies” of relocation, confiscation, and even destruction of material and the migrants’ “tactics” to build a place in this nonplace (De Certeau). In addition, semiotics provides concepts concerning the strategic management of the conflictual filtering process (Landowski) explaining why the boundary is prone to be a complex system creator of “new zones” of different “extension and orientation” inside the semiosphere (Bassano). Yet, there is still a lack of understanding of the consequences of such phenomena on the boundary internal organisation itself. In this regard, we follow Lotman’s heritage and focus on the ambiguous connection the boundary holds to the filtering and self-description processes of the core. This approach gives us a better comprehension of the contradictions and incompatibilities within the boundary and therefore explains the emergence and “creation of interstitial spaces of resistance” (Marini) such as the creation of a school, a theatre, a library, a church, restaurants, and markets inside Calais Jungle. In this way, constructing an interdisciplinary study of the inside of the boundary in the context of migration allows a deeper understanding of an unstable, complex, and yet omnipresent space in the contemporary world system.

**Keywords:** boundary, nonplace, semiosphere, strategy

**Hélène Levasseur** is a PhD student in semiotics in the research unit PHILÉPOL, Université Paris Cité, France. Her current research topic is boundary crossing and its influence on meaning-making processes at an individual level (identity) and systemic level (semiosphere’s reorganization). She has published two papers: “Transition and Transgression” in *Actes Sémiotiques* and “The Figure of the ‘Mexican Standoff’ as Micro-representation” in *E/C – Rivista dell’Associazione Italiana Studi Semiotici*. Her research mainly focuses on space, strategy, and narrativity.

**Lauri Linask**

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **The Dialogical Self and Crib Speech in the Dynamics of Autocommunication**

The Dialogical Self Theory (DST), prominent in cultural psychology since the 1990s through the work of Hubert Hermans, posits that the “dialogical self,” described as “a society of mind,” is characterized by the mind’s disposition to enact internal dialogues involving a plurality of self-positions as interacting participants. In semiotics, Juri Lotman’s concept of autocommunication—communication with oneself—articulates a similar idea, building on the theories of Roman Jakobson and, in turn, C.S. Peirce, who suggests that thinking in

general takes place as internal dialogues. Specifically, the “I-I” type of autocommunication (as Lotman referred to it), relevant to personal diaries, internal monologues, and other forms of self-talk, involves a communicating subject actively interacting with and interpreting themselves.

This paper argues that “I-I” type autocommunication and the concept of secondary modeling systems may serve as valuable frameworks for explaining dialogical processes within an individual’s mind. The study of the self as a textual phenomenon—where textual devices within discourse guide communicative interaction with oneself, as well as the subjective positioning within the discourse—proves beneficial for understanding the psychological self as a semiotic phenomenon.

This convergence of theories is exemplified through the analysis of “crib speech.” Crib speech is a form of self-talk that occurs among young children aged 1.5 to 3 years. It typically takes place at bedtime, distinctly when the child feels alone just before falling asleep. As a speech genre, it has distinct characteristics in both form and content, which have been difficult to explain to date. Firstly, crib speech has not been studied from the perspective of DST. Secondly, this paper demonstrates that studying crib speech as an I-I type-textual phenomenon offers various insights into the interactions within the “dialogical self.”

**Keywords:** crib speech, self-talk, the dialogical self, autocommunication

**Lauri Linask** is a lecturer in cultural theory and the curator of the Theory of Culture BA program at Tallinn University. He is a recent graduate of the doctoral program in Semiotics and Theory of Culture at the University of Tartu. His research interests encompass the theory of semiotics, culture, and cognition, particularly focusing on their interrelations in children from a semiotic perspective. Lauri Linask also serves as the president of the Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies and is one of the main organizers of the 14th conference of the NASS, which takes place jointly with the 15th Annual Lotman Days.

**Irina Liskovets**

Independent researcher

### **The Russian language in Belarusian social mobilization**

The presentation is meant to examine the role of the Russian language within the system of values of the western-oriented Belarusian intelligentsia, spanning the period from Belarus's gaining independence in 1991 to the present. Particular attention is given to the events of the Belarusian Revolution of Dignity (2020) and its aftermath. The analysis is based on longitudinal field research conducted in Minsk from 1999 to 2025, supplemented by data from media and online sources.

**Keywords:** Belarusian, Russian, identity, opposition

**Irina Liskovets**, PhD in Linguistics, is an independent researcher specializing in urban linguistics and Belarusian-Russian language contacts. She graduated from St. Petersburg State University (dpt of philology) in 1992 and from the European University at St. Petersburg (dpt of Ethnology) in 2002. Dr. Liskovets has authored numerous articles. Her research interests encompass sociolinguistics, language contacts, language attitudes, urban multilingualism, the language situation in Belarus, and second language acquisition.

## Inna Livytska

Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany

### **Agency, Beauty, and Telos in Literary Artistic Discourse**

The presentation explores three interconnected concepts within the context of literature and art. Art and teleology are deeply intertwined (Alexander, 1997). Narrative poetics, as a form of literary art, can be understood as a complex teleological system, since teleology encompasses representation, design, meaning, and creativity.

Biosemiotics, as developed by Thomas Sebeok and Jesper Hoffmeyer (2000), identifies the poetic organisation of nature as a foundational principle of all semiotic processes in life and culture. In this context, *telos* refers to an “end” or function that explains the existence of a phenomenon or the rationale behind prior actions. Telic action requires a representation of its goal in order to be realised (Alexander, 1997).

This presentation argues that narrative poetics follows teleological principles and is driven by a *telos* that aspires toward *Beauty*. The aim is to apply biosemiotic principles of teleology and creativity to experimental fictional genres, viewing them as forms of creative meaning-making within a biosemiotic, emergent world. The formal organisation of fiction will be examined through a biosemiotic lens, informed by the principles of chance, Beauty, emergence, and self-organisation. The outcome will be a proposed biosemiotic model of narrative agency in fictional discourse.

**Keywords:** beauty, telos, emergence, agency, chance

**Inna Livytska**, PhD, is a postdoctoral researcher at Justus Liebig University Giessen, where she is developing a biosemiotic approach to multimodal narrative discourse as part of her research on female agency in English fiction. She is a member of the Executive Board of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (since 2024), as well as a member of the International Society for Biosemiotic Studies and the International Society for the Study of Narrative. She holds a PhD in Philology, with a focus on semiotics and psycho-narration in literature. Her areas of expertise include biosemiotics, cognitive stylistics, and Umwelt theory as applied to the cultural-cognition-language-emotion axis in verbal and non-verbal complex systems.

Yekaterina Lukina

Tartu University, Estonia

**The emergence of aesthetic experience through the lens of biosemiotic-enactivist framework**

Since John Dewey proposed to consider the phenomenon of aesthetics as fundamentally rooted in the course of general experience, the concept of aesthetic experience has been extensively analysed in various scholarly fields. However, in the domain of biosemiotics, the systematic studies on aesthetic experience are relatively rare, which provides various directions for further exploration of the phenomenon from the biosemiotic points of view. Given the lack of a mature theoretical approach that can provide a more comprehensive and coherent view on the phenomenon in this scholarly field, expanding on the biosemiotic understanding of the various aspects of aesthetic experience is specifically important.

This presentation in particular will focus on understanding the nascent phases of the phenomenon from a biosemiotic-enactivist perspective, specifically exploring how the aesthetic experience emerges as applied to human beings. It will take John Dewey's perspective on the phenomenon of aesthetic experience as a starting point and will integrate notions of semiotic fitting and rhythm, a biosemiotic theory of Umwelt, along with ecological psychology's concept of affordances.

**Keywords:** aesthetic experience, biosemiotic enactivism, rhythm

**Yekaterina Lukina** graduated from Tartu University with the Master's Degree in Semiotics and she is currently conducting her PhD research in the same field. Her research interests are in the areas of eco- and biosemiotics, embodied aesthetic experience and art-based research methodologies.

Katarzyna Machtyl

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland

**The complexity of semiotic landscapes. Figures of spatiotemporal sign relations within umwelten**

The presentation offers a discussion on the complexity of semiotic landscapes, increased especially on the boundary between inner and outer (when space is considered) and in the moment of now (when time is considered). In the semiotic discourse, the zone of inner-outer relations has been considered as that of – both time and space – higher informativity of a given system where the translation processes take place (Lotman [1992] 2009; [1990] 2001). Translation, in turn, results in the incompatibility of meanings and codes. Taking this as a



point of departure I will examine selected semiotic landscape theories in the understanding proposed by Lindström and Kull (2014) considering especially the categories of space (inner-outer) and time (now, anticipation and future) in the subject-oriented optics the umwelt theory provides. Starting with the semiotic square introduced by Greimas, I will examine to what extent alethic modalities may inform the discussion on nature-culture complexity in reference to time and space. Further, the Tarasti's zemic model – as a reformulation of Greimasian square – will be analysed in relation to both inner-outer and time context. Finally, the discussion will be moved forward towards models borrowed from nonsemiotic discourses, i.e., the so called Möbius strip and Klein surface (known as a Klein bottle). The first one, applied by Hoffmeyer (1998) to the discussion he proposed on inner-outer relation in the reference to umwelt, may serve as a model of spatiotemporal entanglement. The second, i.e., Klein surface, as a model resulting from taking together two Möbius strips, illustrates the complexity of surfaces in relation to both time and space in even more complex manner. While Tarasti's model is culture-oriented (i.e., human-oriented), the models of Möbius strip and Klein surface can serve to overcome the anthropocentric limitations and offer a promising model of the complexity of spatiotemporal relations within nature-culture umwelten.

**Keywords:** Landscape, spatiotemporal complexity, umwelt, model, biosemiotics

**Katarzyna Machtyl**, PhD, is a cultural semiotician, Doctor of Philosophy in Cultural Studies, Assistant Professor in the Department of Cultural Semiotics at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. A member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies, Nordic Association for Semiotic Studies, International Society for Intermedial Studies and the Polish Semiotic Society. Her research interests include general theory of semiotics, cultural semiotics, biosemiotics, contemporary semiotic discourses, and nature-culture relation in the view of semiotics. She is the author of research papers and co-editor of collected volumes on visual semiotics, ontological status of sign systems, history and theory of semiotics, biosemiotics, and existential semiotics.

**Merit Maran**

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **Revisiting Lotman's Concept of 'Intelligence' in the Age of AI**

This paper explores Juri Lotman's engagement with the phenomenon of artificial intelligence, a topic he explicitly addressed in several writings from the 1970s. Lotman's approach did not focus on AI as a technological innovation but rather as a heuristic model for understanding the fundamental characteristics of thinking systems. His interest lay in the creative capacities of such systems, and he sought to delineate the semiotic and structural principles that govern intellectual activity. He repeatedly discussed the idea that art, as the most complex system known to humankind, could serve as a model for developing artificial intelligence. He even proposed that new branches of research could



emerge: culturonics, as the cybernetics of culture, and artonics, as the cybernetics of art—both of which could open new avenues for developing intelligent technology.

Drawing on Lotman's published and unpublished articles on this topic, as well as archival materials, this presentation aims to explicate the development of his concept of intelligence and place it within the broader present-day discourse on AI. The paper examines how Lotman's work can inform contemporary discussions on AI and creativity, as it challenges reductionist conceptions of intelligence and highlights the fundamentally complex nature of thinking systems.

**Keywords:** Lotman, artificial intelligence, creativity

**Merit Maran** is the head of the Juri Lotman Semiotics Repository and a researcher at Tallinn University. She received her PhD in semiotics from the University of Tartu in 2023. Her thesis focused on developing a Lotmanian framework of complexity thinking for analysing cultural dynamics in contemporary educational systems. Her research interests include Juri Lotman's semiotics, education studies, complexity theory, and digital cultural heritage. Her latest publication is the collective volume *Semiotics of Conflict. A Lotmanian Perspective* (TLU Press, co-edited with Daniele Monticelli and Franciscu Sedda).

**Timo Maran**

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Extinctions in the Ecosemiosphere – A Sign of What?**

The ongoing mass extinction of species is part of a global environmental crisis that also threatens the survival of human civilization. While species endangerment and extinction have received considerable public attention, they are often treated either as biological facts or as symbolic references—to the disappearance of languages and cultures, human mortality, or suicide. However, such symbolic accounts tend to understate the full semiotic scope and significance of extinction.

This presentation reinterprets extinction through an ecosemiotic lens, revealing its various precultural references and layered meanings within the ecosemiosphere (Maran 2021). Here, extinction is approached as a trace or symptom of the condition of the ecosemiosphere, indicating the deterioration of its semiotic structures across different levels.

For non-human species, extinction may reflect environmental confusion (Umwelt collapse, Maran 2023), a lack of semiotic and material resources (hunger), social isolation and disrupted communication (loneliness), or empty ecological niches, all of which break the interconnected fabric of ecosystem relations. For humans, extinction may signal semiocide

(Puura 2013), the loss of cultural memory structures—such as through the disappearance of cultural keystone species (Garibaldi and Turner 2004)—alongside increasing alienation from nature and the impoverishment of the lifeworld.

Many cultural representations, communication strategies, and art and literary projects today attempt to raise awareness about extinction. These efforts could be enriched by an ecosemiotic perspective that addresses non-symbolic dimensions of extinction, thus reaching a greater semiotic depth. Within ecosemiotics, extinction is above all a diminution in the richness, depth, and significance of our shared semiotic world—threatening both cultural and ecological systems.

**Keywords:** ecosemiotics, extinction, complex systems, ecosemiosphere

**Timo Maran** is an Estonian semiotician and poet. He is Professor of Ecosemiotics and Environmental Humanities at the Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu, Estonia. His research interests include the theory and applications of ecosemiotics, ecocriticism, Estonian nature writing, and the semiotics of biological mimicry. His publications include *Mimicry and Meaning: Structure and Semiotics of Biological Mimicry* (Springer, 2017) and *Ecosemiotics: The Study of Signs in Changing Ecologies* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). As a poet, he has published six poetry collections.

Ana Marić

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Exploring the Classroom: Examples of Creativity, Complexity and Intelligence in Estonian Language Courses for Foreigners and Their Influence on Learning and Motivation**

The teaching and learning process in the classroom is inherently complex and structured to provide effective outcomes for both teachers and learners. While certain methods and regulations must be followed, creative approaches can offer more innovative and engaging ways of learning. Such methods not only support the development of complex problem-solving skills and cognitive engagement but also offer a fresh approach to studying that can enhance motivation and deepen understanding.

The main aim of this case study is to present and analyze creative methods and exercises used in Estonian language courses for foreign students at the Institute of Foreign Languages and Cultures at the University of Tartu. These methods include materials such as picture cards, board games, paper notes, videos, and songs. The study investigates how these tools influence the process of learning Estonian, explain the complexity of particular lessons, reflect linguistic comprehension, and affect learners' motivation.

The courses analyzed include beginner, pre-intermediate, advanced, web-based, and medical-specific Estonian language courses, allowing for comparative analysis across different learning levels. Observations will be complemented by interviews with both teachers and students to gain deeper insight into the effectiveness and perceived goals of these creative strategies.

The theoretical framework includes the semiotic theory of learning and the concept of the semiosphere, providing a structural lens through which the learning process will be examined.

Key questions addressed in this study include: How do creative methods influence the understanding of the Estonian language? Are they helpful in dealing with task complexity? In what ways do they test cognitive intelligence and stimulate motivation?

**Keywords:** learning, semiosphere, semiotics of education, creativity, complexity, intelligence, motivation

**Ana Marić** is a second-year MA student of Semiotics at the University of Tartu. She has presented at numerous conferences, including the 13th NASS Conference in Helsinki (2023) and the 13th Lotman Conference in Tallinn (2023). She is currently involved in a research project focused on the cultural aspects of semiotics.

**Tatjana Menise and Mari-Liis Madisson**

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Mankurtization of the Baltics: Utilization of Artistic Trope in Conspiracy Discourse**

The mankurt figure — a metaphorical image of a memoryless slave originating from Chingiz Aitmatov's novel *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years* (1980) — has been appropriated in conspiracy theories that depict the Baltic states as arenas for the systematic dismantling of Russian cultural memory. This presentation examines how the mankurt trope, reimagined within Kremlin-aligned narratives, symbolizes an orchestrated assault on collective memory and identity in the region.

By exploring this adaptation in Telegram and Facebook threads, we uncover how artistic imagery and cultural memory intertwine to construct compelling geopolitical narratives, demonstrating the enduring flexibility of such tropes in advancing ideological objectives. Rethinking classic Lotmanian theories on ontological heterogeneity and the meaning-generating function of artistic texts, we aim to demonstrate how the use of this trope lends conspiratorial narratives multilayeredness, complexity, openness to multiple interpretations, and strategic ambiguity. This perspective situates our case study within a broader discussion on cultural creativity.

**Keywords:** mankurtization of the Baltics, artistic trope, memory, ambiguity

**Tatjana Menise** is a Research Fellow at the Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu. Her postdoctoral position is part of the international REDACT (Researching Europe, Digitalisation, and Conspiracy Theories) project, supported by the CHANCE initiative. She also serves as a lecturer at the Department of Digital Humanities at Riga Technical University and as a researcher in the Language Technology Initiative project. Her research spans various fields, including the semiotics of culture, media cultures, digital discourse studies, participatory cultures, and transmedial communication. In the field of conspiracy theory research, she focuses on the use of artistic tropes and the creative dimension of conspiracy narratives.

**Mari-Liis Madisson** is a Research Fellow at the Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu. She earned her PhD in Semiotics and Culture Studies from the University of Tartu in 2016 and completed postdoctoral research at Queen's University Belfast, UK. Her research focuses on online culture, particularly conspiracy theories, information influence activities, and extreme right communication. She is the co-author of two monographs: *Strategic Conspiracy Narratives: A Semiotic Approach* (2021) and *Varjatud märgid ja salaühingud: vandenõuteooriate tähendusmaailm* (2023). Her recent publications examine the qualitative analysis of conspiracy theories, strategic narratives, and threat discourses.

**Maede Mirsonbol**

University of Turin, Italy

### **Relational Pedagogies and the Role of Semiosis in Meaning-Making and Creativity**

This paper explores the intricate relationship between creativity, intelligence, and meaning-making within educational content and contexts, with a particular focus on the application of posthuman pedagogy. Drawing on Juri Lotman's concept of the semiosphere and its implications within the educational sphere, the study examines how creativity emerges from the ability to produce new, unpredictable contexts—both in organic and artificial environments.

Within this semiotic framework, creativity is seen as integral to learning and development, shaping and transforming intelligence through sign systems and semiosis. The paper also incorporates posthuman theory in pedagogy, emphasizing its relational approach to learning. Here, the interconnectedness of human, non-human, and material agents becomes essential for fostering authentic, collaborative, and contextually meaningful educational experiences.

Through a semiosis perspective, particularly edusemiotics, the study advocates for an *educational semiosphere* where learners engage with images and objects not merely as interpretative tools but as agents that shape learning contexts. These elements enhance

communication and foster active interaction by grounding education in the lived experiences of learners.

By challenging fixed pedagogical models and embracing the fluid and relational nature of knowledge construction, this research distinguishes genuine acts of meaning-making from rigid, traditional teaching practices. It argues that relational pedagogies, as part of the pedagogy of mattering approach, offer valuable insights into cultivating creativity, subjectivity, and semiotic engagement in higher education.

**Keywords:** creativity, pedagogy, semiosis, relationality, learning

**Maede Mirsonbol** is a PhD student in Semiotics and Media at the University of Turin, Italy. Her doctoral research focuses on a multimodal study of how generative AI images influence communication skills in second language learning, approached from an edusemiotics perspective. She was a visiting researcher at Lancaster University, where she conducted the quantitative component of her study. Her academic interests lie in educational research and the application of semiotic learning models, with a strong commitment to translating theoretical approaches into practical teaching methods.

Marilyn Mitchell

Bond University, Australia

### **Creativity in Darwin's diagram of the evolutionary process**

As part of a larger project that describes how time is visually represented to meet people's needs within different domains, this research describes Charles Darwin's creativity in designing his diagram of the evolutionary process or natural selection. The visual representation of time is an important area of study since time itself required invention. Time, which can be described as our perception of change or as events occurring in succession, is a complex cognitive construct for which cultures needed thousands of years to develop designs to represent and measure it. Darwin's theory of natural selection, which he first published in 1859, is especially complex so he needed to take great care in creating a diagram that would complement his written text and be accessible to the public. Therefore, to create the diagram – which he acknowledged as imperfect -- Darwin relied upon familiar visual systems including trees of life, a generational timescale like those in family trees, the geological timescale, and a Cartesian coordinate system. In theory, the results of this research mean that innovators may combine visual signs from a range of domains to communicate their ideas. The results also show, however, that once a structure is created, it is difficult to change. For example, Ernst Haeckel's famous upwardly moving tree of life still impacts upon evolutionary tree designs even though people do not conceive of time as moving in the vertical direction. Researchers have continued to explore how

evolution occurs, and they continue to use elements from Darwin's and others' design to visually present their findings. This research explains the visual elements in Darwin's diagram and how researchers rely on his diagram and theory to present findings of their own. The most effective ways to visually represent the evolutionary process are still being researched.

**Keywords:** evolutionary trees, representation of time, family trees

**Marilyn Mitchell** researches visual designs in diagrams, signage, computer interfaces and film. She has published in Sign System Studies, Communication Research & Practice, Feminist Media Studies, Visible Language, Student Success Journal, Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety, Cogent Social Sciences, and International Journal of Literacies. Marilyn has presented on family tree diagrams at a NASS conference and was an invited speaker at a Diagrams conference workshop. She has also given many talks at International Communication Association (ICA) conferences and Australia and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA) conferences. She lectures in Mass and Popular Media and in Organizational Communication.

**Gustavo Moreira Kares**

Tampere University, Finland

### **Who Is Playing if AI Plays? – Analysis of AI-Generated Gameplay**

The omnipresence of artificial intelligence technology is undeniable, with users embracing novel ways to interact with Large Language Models (LLMs) for productivity, automation, problem-solving, and recreation. One such application is the use of LLMs as Dungeon Masters in tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs), demonstrating the adaptability of this technology in gaming contexts. This paper investigates the impact of LLMs on TTRPGs, exploring how they influence gameplay, interaction, and meaning-making when participating as active agents.

To examine this impact, the research integrates semiotics and Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as compatible analytical frameworks capable of addressing both the textual elements of gameplay and the dynamics of mediated human-machine interaction. Specifically, the narrative schema is utilized for the analysis. By treating LLMs as active agents within the actor-network, the study analyzes how interactions among humans, AI, and the game system shape narratives. The research focuses on OpenAI's ChatGPT and utilizes the *Dungeons & Dragons* 5th Edition system for its analysis.

The findings reveal that the machine's role is both that of a simulator and an active participant within the network, challenging traditional notions of play and agency in the digital age. Initial prompts significantly shape the narrative, raising questions about

authorship and agency. ChatGPT's inherent design as an assistant influences both DM and player choices, reflecting the agency of software engineers and developers in shaping AI interactions.

Practically, this research highlights the limitations of AI in understanding and performing semiosis, particularly with ambiguous language. Awareness of these limitations can enhance human-AI interactions and improve user experience. For game scholars, the study demonstrates the applicability of semiotics and ANT in analyzing complex systems like games and suggests that AI can aid in understanding models of phenomena. Despite limitations and ethical considerations, AI-mediated simulations can serve as valuable tools for self-reflection and exploration in gameplay.

**Keywords:** ChatGPT, AI, TTRPG, ANT, Greimas

**Gustavo Moreira Kares** is a PhD researcher at Tampere University, specializing in Intersemiotic Translation of Digital Cultures. He holds a Master of Social Sciences in Game Studies and has a background in game development. His research explores the intersection of semiotics and design, particularly its application in game design. Gustavo is passionate about uncovering how semiotics can enhance gameplay mechanics and player experience, bringing a unique perspective to the field by bridging theoretical insight with practical design expertise.

**Alexandra Mouratidou and Jordan Zlatev**

Lund University, Sweden

### **The Double Grounding of Poetic Expression: A Phenomenological Analysis**

What can phenomenology tell us about poetic expression, since it does not primarily deal with language but with consciousness, and the way objects are given to it? In this presentation, we offer a two-sided answer to this question.

First, according to Merleau-Ponty (1962), language and sign use in general do not translate or externalise prior thoughts, but rather *accomplish* them by bringing thoughts to a state of articulation in the act of expression. This is not to say that meaning-making does not exist prior to expression, but rather that it is predominantly realized through affective and perceptomotor forms of intentionality, in the phenomenological sense of openness to the world. Authentic expression, or “speaking” language (*langage parlant*), also presupposes an “already spoken” language (*langage parlé*), sedimented from prior acts of language (and other forms of sign) use.

Consistent with this analysis, the Motivation and Sedimentation Model (MSM), developed within cognitive semiotics (e.g., Zlatev et al., 2021; Zlatev, 2023), distinguishes three levels of meaning-making: the Embodied, Sedimented, and Situated levels, interconnected by the



processes of motivation and sedimentation. In our presentation, we explain how this model can help explicate the phenomenon of poetic expression.

Second, we propose that there are close parallels between the phenomenological method and poetic expression—from bracketing and reduction (attending to pre-given ways of experiencing the world), to ideation (capturing its invariant aspects), and intersubjective corroboration. Of course, these are realised in different ways in the two fields. On the basis of this argument, we support the need for a rapprochement between phenomenology and the study of poetic creativity.

**Keywords:** cognitive semiotics, Motivation and Sedimentation Model, phenomenological method, Merleau-Ponty

**Alexandra Mouratidou** is a doctoral candidate in Cognitive Semiotics at the Division for Cognitive Semiotics, Lund University, Sweden. She has been assistant editor for the *Public Journal of Semiotics* for the past three years. Her research focuses on polysemiotic communication, particularly in the areas of choice-making and choice manipulation, as well as on phenomenology and consciousness. Outside academia, her debut poetry book *Av-v* was published in Greece this year. Her poems have appeared in numerous digital and print literary magazines. In 2024, she received a commendation from the Association of Screenwriters of Greece for her theatre play *Viewmaster*.

**Jordan Zlatev** is Professor of General Linguistics and Director of Research at the Division of Cognitive Semiotics, Lund University, Sweden. He is the author of *Situated Embodiment: Studies in the Emergence of Spatial Meaning* (1997) and of over 100 articles in academic journals and anthologies. He co-edited *The Shared Mind: Perspectives on Intersubjectivity* (2008), *Moving Ourselves, Moving Others: Motion and Emotion in Intersubjectivity, Consciousness, and Language* (2012), and *Meaning, Mind and Communication: Explorations in Cognitive Semiotics* (2016). His current research focuses on the nature of language in relation to other semiotic systems like gesture and depiction. His approach to cognitive semiotics is strongly influenced by phenomenology, the philosophy and methodology of lived experience. He is editor-in-chief of the *Public Journal of Semiotics*.

**Eeva-Liisa Myllymäki**

Semiotic Society of Finland

### **Interpreting Cultural Otherness in and through Lawrence Durrell's Travel Literature**

Lawrence Durrell (1912–1990) is best known for his novels such as *The Alexandria Quartet* and *The Avignon Quintet*. He spent most of his life in the Mediterranean region and often worked as a writer-in-residence in different countries. His travel writings (*Prospero's Cell*,



*Reflections on a Marine Venus, Bitter Lemons, Caesar's Vast Ghost*) are deeply rooted in Mediterranean cultural space.

This presentation explores Durrell's approach to landscape, place, and cultural otherness, focusing on how he interprets signs and engages in creative meaning-making as a foreign observer. The article "Landscape and Character" (1960) encapsulates Durrell's notion of travel as a "science of intuitions" and introduces his concept of the "spirit of place."

The literary status of travel writing is often ambiguous, but as Janice Deledalle-Rhodes argues, its value lies in revealing cultural contexts and signification. Gregory Dickson (1984) also emphasizes the essential role of place in travel writing.

Juri Lotman's concept of the semiosphere, a synchronic semiotic space, provides a valuable theoretical lens. For Lotman, semiospheric boundaries are dynamic zones where the semiotic process intensifies. Recognizing signs at these boundaries enables cultural communication and engagement with the Other. Durrell's painterly and holistic representation of landscape (Stewart, 1998) aligns with Lotman's notion of semiotic space.

Through Durrell's texts, this paper examines his experience of encountering and interpreting cultural otherness. It discusses the asymmetrical and evolving nature of intercultural contact, shaped by difference, alterity, and the uncanny—as conceptualized by theorists such as Lisa Block de Behar, Lois Parkinson Zamora, Janice Deledalle-Rhodes, and Julia Kristeva.

**Keywords:** interculturality, travel literature, Lawrence Durrell

**Eeva-Liisa Myllymäki** is a political scientist (University of Turku) with postgraduate studies at UNAM (Mexico). A retired career diplomat, she has lived and worked in Latin America, Egypt, and New York. She serves on the board of the Semiotic Society of Finland and on the International Advisory Council of Fundación Equitas. She has published articles on cultural semiotics, international relations, peace and conflict, and development.

**How to Translate Words From Theater? The Intersemiotic Translation of Nikolai Gogol's Short Story *The Overcoat* into a Visual Theatre Production**

Visual theatre is a genre in which narration is conveyed primarily through physical expression—such as pantomime—or through visual tools like puppets or masks, while verbal expression is minimal. When staging a classic short story as a visual theatre production, how can one translate the text to the stage so that only its meaning remains?

This presentation explores exactly that question, analyzing the transposition of Nikolai Gogol's short story *The Overcoat* (1842) into a visual theatre performance. The analysis focuses on the topographic, psychological, and metaphysical chronotopic levels and their interrelations. The research is based on Daniil Zandberg's production *The Overcoat* at the Estonian Theatre for Young Audiences (premiered in April 2022).

The core research problem is the adaptation of a literary work—expressed in natural language—into a visual theatre performance, a traditionally non-verbal form in which the means of expression include puppets, theatre masks, pantomime, objects, multimedia, sound and lighting design, scenography, and more.

This study centers on how meaning is created through intersemiotic translation, specifically through intersemiotic transposition, and what expressive tools are used for that in visual theatre. The primary objects of analysis are the translational relationships between the original short story and the resulting theatre production.

Chronotopic analysis, introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin, serves to understand how the short story is expressed through “timespaces.” The topographic chronotope offers a perspective on the scenic design—not only portraying the city of Saint Petersburg, but everything that shapes the audience's perception of it. The psychological chronotope allows for a glimpse into the inner lives of characters, even when they are verbally incapable of expressing themselves. The metaphysical chronotope binds the previous two, casting light on the protagonist of the story—the overcoat—presented not only as an icon, but also as a symbol.

**Keywords:** visual theatre, chronotopic analysis, intersemiotic translation, transposition, Nikolai Gogol

**Karmen-Eliise Märtens** is an MA graduate of the University of Tartu's Department of Semiotics. Her main academic interests lie in the semiotics of theatre and translation, with a focus on intersemiotic translation in visual theatre. She currently works as the Curator of Education Programmes at the Museum of Puppetry Arts, where she uses semiotic tools to introduce visual theatre and the history of Estonian puppetry to kindergarteners and schoolchildren.

### **Multimodal Conflict as a Lotmanian Mechanism for Creating New Information**

While in the context of humanities the notion of ‘multimodality’ has been widely used for the last three decades, multimodal processes are concurrent with the development of life and culture, and therefore much older than any layer of terminology. Semiotic study of multimodality has developed various perspectives, from Roman Jakobson’s interest in syncretic messages to Gunther Kress’s sociosemiotics, which frames ‘semiotic modes’ as central units of analysis. Still, synthesis between different components has remained a key concern.

As argued in my PhD thesis *Semiotics of Multimodal Conflict* and in the article “Conflicting Modalities in Feature Film” (Semiotica 2024: 259), insights from psychology and cognitive neuroscience on sensory modalities can complement the sociosemiotic perspective. The emerging subfield of neurosemiotics allows us to revisit and reassess key ideas in cultural semiotics. For instance, Juri Lotman’s model of two incompatible languages as a mechanism for generating new information can be reinterpreted through multimodal research. Lotman’s broad definition of language makes it possible to treat sensory modalities as distinct languages.

Accordingly, conflicting sensory modalities serve specific functions in meaning-making. In feature films, incongruence between visual and auditory modalities can create estrangement, prompt more active engagement from viewers, or highlight narrative turning points. In film trailers, such audio-visual incongruence is sometimes used deliberately to mislead audiences about the film’s genre.

**Keywords:** multimodality, incompatibility, Lotman, sensory modalities

**Martin Oja** defended his PhD thesis, *Semiotics of Multimodal Conflict: Modes, Modalities and Audio-Visual Incongruence in Feature Film*, in December 2024 at the University of Tartu. His research focuses on cultural semiotics and cognitive film theory. He also serves as the manager of the Centre of Semiotic Applications at the University of Tartu.

**Compositional *techne* Serves Narrative *Praxis* in Creating Complexity from Simple Materials: The Case of BWV 849**

Valsiner (2016: 190) observes that “creativity has been presumed to be there in anything that becomes classified as art, and not observed in the mundane everyday events.” The year 1750 marked both the publication of Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* and the death of Johann Sebastian Bach. Despite deserved criticism, Baumgarten’s treatise continues to shape modern perceptions of works originating in periods where music was more often a form of skilled craft than an art form striving for beauty or sublimity.

This presentation addresses two central questions of artistic creation: What is the material? And what is done with it? Drawing on Lotman’s notion of the semiotic system (Lotman 1977; Talvet 2009) and Eco’s conception of creativity as the selection of “a new material continuum” (Eco 1979: 245), the study explores embodied and cultural meaning-making in the context of pre-modern and post-modern understandings of art. The analysis brings together Valsiner’s (2016) theory of semiotic mediation, Tarasti’s (1998) network of alternative event chains, Dewey’s (1934) pragmatist aesthetics, Peircean semiotics, and the semiotics of musical metaphor (e.g., Larson 2012).

The case study focuses on *Fuga IV*, BWV 849, in C-sharp minor from *The Well-Tempered Clavier I*. The fugue’s three main themes have distinct qualities and identities, grounded in both embodied experience and culturally embedded meanings. These themes function both sequentially and simultaneously, carefully woven together by the composer’s craftsmanship to produce a complex narrative.

Rather than invoking divine inspiration, the abductive analysis presented here points to a compositional process rooted in logical derivation and tradition. The result is a rich musical texture that transforms simple material into an intricate narrative. For modern listeners, the experience of this complexity depends on their awareness of interpretative possibilities and their chosen strategies of listening—strategies that may either enable or obscure access to the work’s deeper layers.

**Keywords:** musical signification, material, counterpoint, aesthetic experience, metaphor

**Juha Ojala** is Professor of Music Performance Research at the DocMus Doctoral School of the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. His research interests include musical semiotics, performance and composition, music learning and education, and the intersections of music and cognitive science.

## Tuuli Pern

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Finding a place for human imagination and diversity in umwelt theory**

My paper focuses on ways umwelt theory can be applied or adapted to make sense of the flexibility, diversity and changeability of human umwelts. The concept of umwelt as the subjective world of an organism has great promise for modelling the subjective differences of meaning creation – starting with Uexküll's own sketches of the umwelts of an astronomer, a physicist, a deep-sea researcher and others. However, Umwelt theory, in its classical Uexküllian form, adheres to a rather static harmony as the underlying principle of the natural world. What if the physicist suffers a psychological trauma or the deep-sea researcher finds herself unable to cope with the ongoing polluting of the oceans mentally? The question of Umwelt flexibility in the face of environmental change has been addressed most prominently by Morten Tonnessen with the concept of umwelt transition and Timo Maran with the idea of umwelt collapse. The functioning of human umwelts in the face of trauma, disability, neurodiversity and crises is much less studied. „More complex Umwelten integrate higher levels of transformation and mutability, and, with that, a higher vulnerability towards crises“, argues Ombre Tarragnat. I propose that a crucial component of the complexity of the human umwelt is imagination – with its implications for the diversity of affective, perceptual, and rational sensemaking.

**Keywords:** human umwelt, umwelt transition, umwelt diversity, imagination, umwelt collapse, trauma

**Tuuli Pern** works at the Department of Semiotics at the University of Tartu. Her past research focuses on the imaginative dimension of human sensemaking and she has explored the relation of imagining to affective semiosis as understood in cultural psychology. Her publications include "Affective-imaginative modelling in semiotic context: A Vichian perspective" and "Interpreting Giambattista Vico for a new psychological science: Towards a semiotic imaginative approach". She is currently exploring the topic of the diversity of human umwelts in relation to neurodiversity, trauma and environmental crisis.

## Annette Persson and Sara Lenninger

Kristianstad University, Sweden

### Exploring Visual Meaning-Making in Teacher Education through Interactive Picture Analysis

Understanding and interpreting pictures is a fundamental skill in contemporary education. Yet, structured and interactive activities with visual material are often underrepresented in teacher education. Students are frequently exposed to tasks that either focus exclusively on picture-making or on the theoretical interpretation of visual material, rarely bridging the two.

This presentation introduces an interactive workshop format designed to enhance students' collaborative engagement and reflection on visual materials through a semiotic and aesthetic lens. The approach foregrounds the semiotic elements of pictoriality by focusing on plastic, iconic, and socio-conventional features—either individually or in combination.

As part of a classroom-based intervention with art teacher education students, participants engaged in an exercise using a custom set of “domino images.” Each domino featured two visually distinct components—ranging from photographs and art reproductions to abstract patterns. Students were tasked with collaboratively arranging the dominos based on associative, visual, or narrative links between the images.

The analysis draws on Jean-Marie Floch's (2000) distinction between the plastic and pictorial (iconic) dimensions of images, as well as Göran Sonesson's (2010) categorization of pictorial kinds—constructional, functional, and circulatory—based on the social norms that govern image use.

We consider whether this workshop fosters creativity, challenges habitual interpretive patterns, and promotes alternative perceptual frameworks. The activity's open-ended structure leverages the rich potential of pictures as both signs and aesthetic displays, encouraging divergent thinking and multi-perspective exploration. Ultimately, students develop not only their analytical skills but also a more flexible and imaginative approach to visual meaning-making.

**Keywords:** visual meaning-making, semiotics of pictures, pictures, aesthetics, art teacher's education

**Annette Persson** is a lecturer in art and aesthetics at Kristianstad University. She holds an M.A. in Education and a B.A. Hons. in Fine Art. With a background in theoretical and applied aesthetics, her research focuses on the semiotics of pictures, exploring intersections between semiotics, aesthetics, and education, particularly in relation to the aesthetic turn in general didactics.

**Dr. Sara Lenninger** holds a PhD in Semiotics and is a Docent in Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University. She is also an Assistant Professor at Kristianstad University. Her research centers on children's semiotic development and visual semiotics.

## Eléa Jessica Pertusati

University of Tartu, Estonia; Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, France

### **The inequivalence between Sense and Meaning in Enactivism**

In the enactivist framework, from Merleau-Ponty to DiPaolo and De Jaegher, notions related to meaning and sense have been widely used but seldom analyzed in themselves. These notions seem to be presupposed, while they have a true potential that has mainly been addressed by biosemiotics. Both frameworks attempt to understand the continuity between life and processes attributed to human cognition, and these attempts are starting to have an impact on the understanding of life itself in theoretical biology. For instance, in autonomy theory, inherited from Varela and strongly linked to enactivism, the integration of meaning into the understanding of living systems as intrinsically able of agency has become increasingly important (Mossio, 2023).

However, a true synthesis between enactivist views and semiotics is still missing, despite the rare attempts to reach it beyond the identification of similarities (De Jesus 2018; Cardenas-Garcia 2020). We believe that the emergence of meaning-related notions in enactivism and the theory of autonomy in theoretical biology covers something deeper than shared intuitions with biosemiotics, that goes toward the integration of meaning-making as a necessary act of a biological system having intrinsic agency. This is why I propose a critical analysis of meaning related notions in the enactivist framework, as the necessary prerequisite for the rigorous integration of 'meaning-making' in the understanding of intrinsic biological agency.

To this end, I first want to show that the two main expressions used by enactivists, “meaning-making” and “sense-making”, as opposed to what they appear to be and how they are explicitly used, are in fact not equivalent. That's what I'd like to focus on in this contribution. First, I'll draw the historical roots of these expressions, showing that meaning-making has been taken from linguistics whereas sense-making has been taken from phenomenology. This will allow me to develop problematics revolving around referentiality and autoreferentiality in organic semiosis, which, as I'll defend, are decisive for the sustainable integration of meaning-making to the study of biological systems.

**Keywords:** enactivism, agency, meaning-making, sense, living systems

**Eléa Pertusati** is a Junior Research Fellow and PhD candidate at the University of Tartu in Estonia and the University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne in France, where she's working on a

thesis called "Agency and signification: understanding purposefulness in biology". She previously obtained a MA in Contemporary Philosophy, with a specialization in Phenomenology and Analytical Philosophy from Panthéon-Sorbonne, and is now focusing on Philosophy of Science and Semiotics. Her main areas of interest are Biological Agency, Intrinsic Teleology in Living Systems, Emergence, and meaning-making.

**Katja Pettinen and Myrdene Anderson**

Mount Royal University, Canada; Purdue University, USA

### **Intelligence Nests in Relations: Creativity as Ecological Attunement**

This paper examines how human semiotic capacities, such as intelligence and creativity, each more complex than complicated, emerge through deep interplay of bodily experience (inclusive cognition), ecological awareness, and eventual narrative expression. We explore how early humans engaged in complex and complicated meaning-making through coordinated representations of inspired movement and feeling that transcended mere decoration, even though their marks may resist interpretation today. These prehistoric expressions show how creativity and intelligence emerge through embodied engagement with the world, long before any language was made durable through formal marks, eventually recognized as "writing". Those later writing systems would come to represent images, concepts, or sounds of language, or more accurately, languaging. The evolution of human expressive capacities— from the immediacy of gestural communication through cave incisions, applications, and stencils, to early writing—shows how meaning-making has always been grounded in the dynamic interactions between the all-inclusive body, its *umwelt*, and other living creatures. Those others include our social and anti-social conspecifics, macroscopic organisms, but also plants and microscopic biomes.

All human groups—whether ancient or current—living through varied cultural habits of subsistence (foraging, food production, barter, purchase) exhibit significant social and ecological literacy, in their acute ability to read and respond to socioecological affordances within *umwelten* and across interlocutors and even species. We suggest that human creativity emerges not as an abstract cognitive capacity, but rather through what we call "embodied storying"—the ability to connect sensory and perceptive experience, physical gesture, and shared narrative forms. Early narrative forms included expressions integrated across multiple modalities: the hand that both creates and points, the voice that emerges from interior gesture, and the eye that both sees and shares.

Like most semiotic concepts central to human transaction and transformation, intelligence and creativity resist reduction to formula or definition, and consequently to translation. We examine how each is shaped by the synergistic intersections of inductive embodied, multi-sensorial engagements within *umwelten*, with habitual deductive sociocultural assumptions and anticipations, each finding articulation via abduction before their mutual fertilization at other levels.



**Keywords:** narrative, language, prehistoric expression, embodiment, sensing

**Katja Pettinen** (PhD) works at the intersection of cultural and linguistic anthropology. Her current research projects examine the nature of embodied learning, consciousness, sensoriality, and violence through Peircean semiotics. Besides academic publications, she produces public scholarship on humans and dogs, including on the evolutionary co-emergence of both species.

**Myrdene Anderson** (PhD) is best known for anthropological research among Saami reindeer-breeders in Norwegian Lapland that commenced in 1971 and continues to date. Her publications include edited volumes on human-alloanimal ethology, on semiotic modeling, on the cultural construction of trash, on mathematics education, on violence, and on the Peircean concept of “habit”.

**Karl Joosep Pihel**

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Musical Semiotics in a Minor Key: Between Deleuze and Topic Theory**

This paper stages an intervention in music semiotics through the concepts developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The concept of the musical topic—as developed by major music semioticians such as Raymond Monelle, Robert Hatten, and W. J. Allanbrook—is compared with the eminently musical concept of the **refrain** (*ritornello*) as elaborated by Deleuze and Guattari.

Considering the resonances between the musical topic and the refrain, I interrogate the implications of the refrain’s dynamics or territorial assemblage, as described in *A Thousand Plateaus*: the appropriation of milieu-elements, the formation of a stable center via the emergence of expressive qualities, and the opening of the assemblage to cosmic forces.

The result of this comparison is a reconceptualization of topics as being composed through movements of territorialization and deterritorialization, rather than as stable categories or types. The deterritorializing edge—this tendency toward change—present in musical topics is then considered both from the perspective of infra-assemblage and inter-assemblage. I refer to authors who have already identified these moments of becoming within the molar category of the topic, and sketch a tendency toward a “minor science” of music semiotics: a science oriented toward becoming and transformation.

Finally, I propose that this concept of a minor science is indispensable to a music semiotics that is sensitive to the act of listening as a complex ideal event within irreversible time—a ground for conceptual renewal.

**Keywords:** topic theory, music semiotics, refrain, Deleuze & Guattari, minor science

**Karl Joosep Pihel** is a PhD student in semiotics and culture theory at the University of Tartu. He holds a master's degree in semiotics from Tartu and a degree in musicology from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. His research focuses on music and theoretical issues in semiotics related to musical signification. He has written on the representation of space in music from the perspectives of Peircean semiotics and cognitive science, and on the narrative analysis of instrumental music. His current doctoral research explores Peircean diagrams as particularly suitable tools for studying meaning in music.

## Ekaterina Protassova

University of Helsinki, Finland

### **Evolution of Linguistic Ideologies Concerning Russian Language in Finland**

The evolution of linguistic ideologies and attitudes toward the Russian language (RL) in Finland over the past decades reflects broader sociopolitical transformations and migration patterns. Linguistic ideologies, encompassing beliefs about language roles and hierarchies, and linguistic attitudes, reflecting feelings toward specific languages (Silverstein 1979, Woolard, Schieffelin 1994), have significantly shaped RL's perception and use within Finnish society. Drawing from published sources, surveys and discussions, this study explores how beliefs and attitudes toward RL have transformed over recent decades, particularly in the context of migration and integration.

After the Soviet Union's dissolution, Finland experienced an influx of Russian-speaking migrants, making RL the largest heritage language among immigrant communities. Early perceptions of RL were shaped by historical tensions and geopolitical legacies, influencing its marginalization in public discourse. However, as migration increased, RL began to be viewed through more pragmatic and identity-oriented lenses. Linguistic ideologies shifted from associating RL solely with political history to recognizing its role in cultural preservation and personal identity (cf. Gal, Irvine 2019). The Russia's full-scale invasion in Ukraine and the waves of Ukrainian refugees changed the numbers of RL and Ukrainian speakers.

In family contexts, RL is often maintained as a heritage language, with parents emphasizing its foundational role in early development (cf. Gynne et al. 2016). Surveys reveal varied beliefs about the lifespan of family languages, with some respondents valuing RL for lifelong cultural and emotional connections, while others highlight its importance primarily in childhood. These attitudes reflect evolving ideologies that prioritize context-sensitive multilingualism over fixed linguistic hierarchies. The transmission of Russian culture in Finland showcases the interplay between cultural preservation and integration. While some parents advocate comprehensive cultural education, encompassing literature, traditions, and history, others prefer selective approaches, emphasizing modern, non-coercive methods like shared activities and bilingual upbringing. These divergent perspectives

highlight critical engagement with RL and its cultural heritage, often shaped by globalized values and Finland's multilingual environment (Armstrong, Mackenzie 2012).

Recent geopolitical tensions have further influenced RL ideologies, creating ideological divides within Russian-speaking communities (cf. Mariou 2017). These shifts underscore RL's dual role as a marker of heritage and a contested symbol of identity (Seargeant 2023). The findings emphasize the dynamic interplay between linguistic ideologies and social integration, reflecting ongoing negotiations between heritage preservation and the practicalities of Finnish societal participation.

**Keywords:** cultural preservation, linguistic ideology, attitudes toward the Russian language

**Ekaterina Protassova** holds Ph.D. in Philology and Hab. in Pedagogy. She is Associate Professor at the University of Helsinki. She has authored and co-authored over 400 monographs, articles and book chapters, headed and participated in various international and national projects investigating Russophone migration, language pedagogies, child and adult bilingualism, and the role of language and culture in immigrant integration. Her service to the profession includes editorial work for various journals and publishers and organization of seminars and conference panels.

## Thomas-Andreas Pöder

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Theosemiotics: Exploring Creativity, Complexity, and Intelligence in Religious Sign Systems**

In contemporary Estonian and broader European perceptions, religion is often associated with tradition, order, stability, continuity, immutability, and timelessness. Consequently, it is perceived not as linked to creativity, but to repetition, conformity, and stasis – not to complexity, but to simplicity and simplification – not to intelligence, but to obedience, following, and unconditional affirmation. Thus, religion appears to lie outside the conference's theme. Conversely, religion is also perceived as a source of chaos, destruction, and violence – disrupting, nullifying, or transcending what is considered normal, expected, or rational. In this sense, religion represents unpredictability within culture – manifesting and amplifying its complexity – whose logic and intelligence may not be immediately transparent and require investigation, yet should not be dismissed a priori.

This presentation comprises two sections. Without adhering to any essentialist definition of religion, but rather by referring to what is regarded as religion, the first section develops a general semiotic perspective on creativity, complexity, and intelligence in religion as a sign system, through a dialogue between cultural semiotics, philosophy of religion, and theology. The second, applied section employs this perspective to analyse the

autocommunication of Christian religion. The presentation demonstrates how the dynamic identity of Christian religion within culture is connected to extra-systemic creativity, complexity, and intelligence, semiotised through and as the Trinity – as a communion of mutual otherness, that is, as love. It encompasses a radical critique of dualism, domination, violence, and enmity between humans (culture) and nature, within and between societies, as well as among religions and other worldviews, attitudes, and lifestyles, emphatically opposing the absolutisation of the status quo within Christian religion.

Focusing on the example of Christian religion – and the signification of God as Trinity – this presentation examines creativity, complexity, and intelligence within religious sign systems. The aim is to sharpen our perspective on how religious sign systems are not merely constructs that humans create and transform, but also entities that construct and transform humans, societies, and the world. Precisely because religions are an integral part of culture – and of its creativity, complexity, and intelligence – they require critical attention and collaborative shaping, including through semiotics of religion and theosemiotics.

**Keywords:** autocommunication, trinity, dualism, complexity, creativity

**Thomas-Andreas Pöder** is Professor of Systematic Theology at the Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church and Associate Professor of Philosophy of Religion (with special focus on Semiotics of Religion) at the University of Tartu. Pöder's scholarly interests lie in the fields of systematic and ecumenical theology, philosophy of religion and semiotics of religion. His current research focuses on advancement of a cultural theosemiotics. Selected publications: „Sign, Method and the Sacred. New Directions in Semiotic Methodologies for the Study of Religion“ (DeGruyter 2021, co-editor), special issue of „Sign Systems Studies“ on „Religion in the semiosphere“ (2023, co-editor).

**Katre Pärn**

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **A Lonely Species: Towards a More Complex View of Emergence and Complexity in the Semiotic Sphere**

One of the more distinctive aspects of semiotics that sets it apart from many other disciplines is its extension across biological, social, and cultural spheres—or, to borrow an expression from Karl Popper, “from amoeba to Einstein” (Popper 1994 [1972]: 246). This broad scope provides a privileged perspective for theorizing and studying the continuities and discontinuities of semiotic processes and structures across these domains. Understandably, the becoming or emergence of the human and of culture has been a central concern in such discussions.

While emergence has been a latent topic in many classical semiotic theories, more focused debates around emergent levels of semiotic phenomena began with Umberto Eco's notion

of *semiotic thresholds* (Eco 1979 [1976]), even if the connection between thresholds and emergence has not always been explicitly made. These discussions have since evolved into inquiries about the natural lower threshold of semiotics and various levels of organization between nature and culture—such as the emergence of life, different types of semiosis, and language—as threshold phenomena.

Human specificity is typically explained through the emergence of symbols or symbolic semiosis, often seen as coextensive with the rise of language, higher cognitive functions, and culture. However, from the perspective of culture as a semiotically complex whole, such approaches can appear somewhat one-dimensional.

This presentation explores the limits of explaining the emergence of human cognition and culture solely through qualitative changes in types of semiosis. It contrasts that view with considerations of other contributing factors, such as materiality, quantitative scale, and the organizational complexity of semiotic structures.

**Keywords:** semiotic thresholds, emergence, complexity, materiality, cultural semiotics

**Katre Pärn** is a Junior Lecturer in the Department of Semiotics at the University of Tartu, Estonia. Her main research areas are cultural and general semiotics. Her current interests include semiotic modeling, mediation, and the cognitive and cultural implications of sign systems and media—particularly from a cultural-historical perspective.

## Tiit Remm

University of Tartu, Estonia

### Creativity in Semiotic Interventions

Intervention as making a change in semiotic space is typical to semiosis in general, and it is also a specific form of action establishing its reality and significance together with having consequences. Widespread in various fields, agency and the orientation toward change are central to the concept of intervention. While interventions commonly start from and rely on subjectively defined reality and respectively modelled actions and in this sense remain monological and prescriptive, there are also endeavours of more dialogical interventions. These include some practices of artistic, participative as well as ecological projects. The aim here is to outline ‘intervention’ as a general semiotic concept, to specify conditions and limitations for dialogue and creativity in interventions and outline examples of their realisation in practices of arts and urban design.

**Keywords:** intervention, semiotic space, creativity

**Tiit Remm** is a researcher of semiotics and the head of the Department of Semiotics at the University of Tartu. His research is focused on sociosemiotics and semiotics of space,

particularly on urban semiotics and the use of spatial environment and spatial concepts for societal management, as well as semiotic aspects of spatial modelling in the humanities and social sciences more generally.

Inesa Sahakyan

University of Grenoble Alpes, France

### **The Indexical Species: the key role of icons and indices in unleashing creativity and collective intelligence**

In his seminal work “The Symbolic Species” Terrence Deacon (1997) brilliantly points to what make us humans so unique – our capacity to conceive of the signs of the highest complexity – the symbols and thereby access the semiotic apex – the symbolic thought. This conceptual paper sets to demonstrate that what unites us with other species, the capacity to interpret and use iconic and indexical signs is of no less importance, but on the contrary, serves as a basis for our capacity to surpass the indexical threshold and thrive.

Our basic instincts, our physical reaction to the environment, including people we are working with, pre-condition our mental activities. Hence, stress, anxiety and other physical factors largely impact our cognitive performance both on individual and collective levels. The way we feel determines the way we think and vice versa. Wellbeing (physical, emotional) is requisite for higher order thinking. In order to perform well on the symbolic level, the experience on the indexical level needs to be carefully thought of and designed. When it comes to creative workshops employing such methods as Design Thinking and Creative Problem Solving (CPS), at some stages of the process the symbols are deliberately kept to the minimum or discarded altogether in order to build what is referred to as creative confidence (David and Tom Kelley: 2013).

Based on the Peircean semiotics and especially the triadic relations between signs, as well as Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943), this paper adopts a transdisciplinary approach and attempts to throw light on the way indices impact cognition and thereby determine the nature and quality of higher order mental activities for individuals and groups of individuals. The research findings will help to design agile and empowering learning environments which allow for a better cognitive performance unleashing creativity and collective intelligence.

**Keywords:** creativity, Creative Problem Solving (CPS), collective intelligence, Peircean trichotomies of signs

**Inesa Sahakyan** holds a PhD in Language Sciences. She is Associate Professor at the Department of Applied Linguistics at the University of Grenoble Alpes, France and teaches English for Specific Purposes. She is in charge of a Master's degree programme in

International Trade and is the Organisational Assistant of NASS. Her research interests include multimodality; creative and innovative thought; discourse pragmatics; visual and cognitive semiotics; meaning making processes; reasoning mechanisms; arguments; perception and cognition.

## Peter Salvucci

Istanbul Technical University, State Conservatory of Turkish Music

### **The Significance of Cultural Epistemes in the Semiosis of Turkish Makam Music**

This study continues the author's previous research into the aesthetics of traditional Turkish arts and music, focusing on their relationship to cultural context, cognition, and semiotic narrativity. Beginning from the premise that traditional Turkish *makam* music is largely non-narrative in nature, the aesthetics of traditional Turkish culture are seen as representing a *semiosphere* that prioritizes typological signification over narrative development.

To exemplify the differences in signification between Classical Ottoman *makam* music and Classical European tonal music, the study presents a prolongational analysis of a composition from each genre. Drawing on Greimassian semantics—particularly the notion of actuality—the analysis identifies how prolongationally significant musical events function in both traditions.

The central hypothesis is that although similar semiotic terms and structures may be derived from deep-level analysis in both musical systems, the signification process itself is shaped by the epistemic values specific to each culture's semiosphere. The theoretical framework combines an original interpretation of Greimassian semantics with Lotman's theory of the semiosphere and Tarasti's theory of epistemes and metamodalities in existential semiotics.

In conclusion, the study argues that epistemes related to the semiosphere of a specific culture provide a higher-order contextual filter for musical signification, emphasizing that understanding musical meaning requires attention to culturally embedded ways of knowing.

**Keywords:** Turkish makam music, semiotics, Ottoman music, episteme

**Peter Salvucci** is a graduating doctoral student in Musicology and Music Theory at Istanbul Technical University's State Conservatory of Turkish Music. His main fields of interest are historical musicology, *makam* theory, cognitive musicology, and semiotics. His doctoral thesis, titled *A Generative Theory of Makam Music: An Integrated Cognitive and Semiotic Approach*, proposes a cognitive approach to the prolongational analysis of *makam* music in the Ottoman tradition. As a musician, he is trained as a saxophonist in Eurogenetic Classical and Jazz music, and has also studied Classical Turkish *makam* music on the ney.



Marco Sanna

Università di Sassari, Italy

### **Dialogical Structure of the Brain and the Ternary System of the Mind: The Neurosemiotics of Yuri Lotman**

Yuri Lotman (1922–1993) was a semiologist, literary critic, and cultural historian from Soviet Russia. He is credited with founding the multidisciplinary Tartu-Moscow School of Semiotics. As a cultural theorist and humanist, he was highly influential across many fields, but his contributions to theories about the brain as a semiotic system have often been overlooked.

Topics such as the asymmetry of the brain hemispheres, the “untranslatable” specialization of their respective “languages,” interhemispheric dialogue, and the unity of consciousness were frequently discussed within the scientific community formed around the Tartu-Moscow (and Leningrad) group. In recent years, scholars such as E. Andrews and T.V. Chernigovskaya have highlighted the influence and relevance of the “neurosemiotic” model proposed by Yu.M. Lotman in the late 1970s.

However, a fundamental aspect—which Lotman considered indispensable to the functioning of any “thinking system”—has been largely overlooked in contemporary applications of this model to neurophysiology. This aspect is the **intersemiotic translation device** that Lotman called the “**semiotic boundary**.” We may understand this as a “third” structure—an interface between the two hemispheres—that actively functions to translate specialized information systems reciprocally.

In this paper, we aim to restore the significance of the semiotic boundary according to an interpretation updated in light of recent discoveries in cognitive neuroscience.

**Keywords:** Yuri Lotman, hemispheric asymmetry, multimodal semiotics, semiotic boundary

**Marco Sanna** holds a PhD in the Semiotics of Culture and have been engaged in cognitive neuroscience for about 15 years, inspired by Yuri Lotman’s insights on the brain and mind. I am an independent researcher and a Teaching Fellow in Philosophy of Language at DUMAS, University of Sassari, Italy. I have published five articles that include Lotman’s neurosemiotic model.



Ksenia Shmydkaya

Tallinn University, Estonia

**Very intelligent letters: Epistolary corpora and production of knowledge**

When letters are called “sources of knowledge,” it usually means that they are perceived as providing information about certain aspects of historical reality relevant to the researcher’s interests. This connection of letters to the tangible worlds of their authors and addressees is, indeed, a very important one, but the knowledge that I wish to discuss in this paper cannot be limited to those worlds alone. Epistolarity as a type of writing, I argue, has its own epistemological properties that depend as much on the reality of what is written as on its textuality. To put it in Lotman’s terms, any correspondence can function as an intelligent semiotic system with incredible meaning-making potential.

Building on the theoretical work of Professor Liz Stanley, who outlined dialogical, perspectival, and emergent features of letters, I will demonstrate how knowledge is generated in and through correspondence. As a case study, I will be using the epistolarium of Stanisława Przybyszewska that is both remarkably extensive and distinctly incomplete. My paper will cover several instances of knowledge-generation: in the process of writing, in the moments of reading (by an addressee) and re-reading (by the author herself), at the stage of posthumous collection and publication of letters, and in translation. Ultimately, my goal with this presentation, it to sketch-out and test the directions for further research on the relationship between epistolarity and epistemology.

**Keywords:** epistolarity, epistemology, communication, women's writing

**Ksenia Shmydkaya** is a Lecturer in Slavic and Russian studies at Tallinn University’s School of Humanities. She is currently working on her first monograph exploring the philosophical foundations and political resonance of women-authored historical fiction in interwar Europe. Among her scholarly interests are gender history and history of knowledge in Eastern Europe, epistolarity, historical representation, and the French Revolution.

Polina Sliesarchuk

Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)

**Intellectual Mind Games: The Creative Genius Behind the Scenes of  
*Anatomie d’une Chute***

*Anatomy of a Fall*, the winner of the 2023 Palme d’Or, invites us on a journey to explore the multi-layered life of an ordinary couple. As the story unfolds, it turns out to be far from simple. The drama presents a complex web of narratives told in multiple languages and other sign systems that, when intertwined, offer multiple perspectives and an abundance of

ways to interpret the plot. We can decode this cinematic hypertext using Kristeva's "mosaic of quotations" (1980). This takes us back to Sophocles and his theme of blindness, which—though not a leitmotif—offers valuable insight into what is happening in this puzzle on the screen. The name of the film itself evokes Camus' philosophical novel, in which a series of monologues take center stage, with the protagonist standing at a bar and confessing his moral collapse to a stranger.

To fully understand the family drama, director Justine Triet—who adapted the screenplay of her partner Arthur Harari—uses perplexing music pieces from both classical and pop repertoires to draw the viewer into a maze of guesswork. The act of sharing the laurels with her husband invites us to question the whole notion of frame, or *parergon*. This term, borrowed by Derrida (1978) from Kant, explores boundaries and contexts—particularly the interplay between the frame and what exactly it frames. We are taken into a kind of *mise en abîme*, with one story embedded inside another, where the border between reality and fiction becomes ambiguous. Perhaps this could be seen as yet another type of intermediality to supplement Rajewsky's (2005) categorization—possibly as "reality permutation," an inverted and reversed subcategory of the scholar's concept of media transposition, where novels are adapted into films.

**Keywords:** intermediality, intertextuality, *carré sémiotique*, *parergon*, music

**Polina Sliesarchuk**, born in Ukraine and based in Hungary, earned her MA in Semiotics from Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest in 2025. She works as a marketing copywriter for a Finnish IT enterprise. Her fields of interest include commercial semiotics and cultural anthropology, especially as ways to localize products and services to specific markets—helping businesses speak the language of their target audiences.

**Tigran Simyan**

Yerevan State University

### **On the Problem of the Transition from Mass Culture to Elite Culture (by the Example of Niko Pirosmani)**

1. As Yuri Lotman noted, the literary canon changes diachronically, and the agents of literature and art are perceived differently across historical epochs. This paper addresses that problem through the example of Niko Pirosmani.

2. Pirosmani's case will be examined through a ternary opposition of mutual transition: mass culture – high culture – mass culture. His emergence from the mass culture of Old Tiflis will be analysed through the perspectives of the brothers Ilya and Kiril Zdanevich. Pirosmani's reception as a representative of high culture will be considered through the lens of Sergei Parajanov. His return to mass (musical) culture will be explored through the interpretations of various Soviet and post-Soviet performers of popular culture ("pops").

3. Special attention will be given to Parajanov's film *Arabesques on the Pirosmani Theme* as a cultural and semiotic translation of Pirosmani's work into Parajanov's cinematic language. In other words, the film "tells" Parajanov's own version of Pirosmani's life and artistic legacy. This analysis will be divided into two thematic blocks, focusing on the film as a semiotic translation:

- Pirosmani and Margarita's love story (Margarita's bouquet, the figure of Margarita);
- Pirosmani's habitus, the themes of love and desire, and their poetic representation (including the song *A Million Scarlet Roses*), and the issue of psychologizing in Parajanov's visual texts;
- the "spirit of the age": representations of feasting, restaurant menus in Old Tiflis, female sex workers, etc.

4. The paper also explores the reflection of Pirosmani's life in mass music culture through performances from the Soviet and post-Soviet periods (e.g. Alla Pugacheva, Ani Lorak, Dominique Moussan).

**Keywords:** semiotic translation, mass culture, elite culture, Niko Pirosmani, Old Tbilisi

**Tigran Simyan** is DrSci (Philology), Professor at the Department of Foreign Literature, Yerevan State University (Armenia). He is a member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS-AIS) and an Executive Committee Member for 2024–2026/2027. His research interests include the history of German literature (17th–20th centuries), semiotics of literature, culture, and the city, and the history of human sciences methodology. He is also Co-Editor of *Urbis et Orbis. Microhistory and Semiotics of the City*.

**Geoffrey Sykes**

*Southern Semiotic Review, Australia*

### **Creativity in the Everyday: Fulfilment of Semiotic Understanding**

Creativity signals a refreshing and overdue move from the hermeneutic foundations of modern semiotics. Creativity probes the making of texts as well as the understanding of their final form. It addresses issues of intention, consciousness, intuition, and process that are familiar to creative artists and individuals, yet typically overlooked by semiotic analysis. In terms of dictionary definition, our preference is for manipulation of objects rather than creation of something new.

This paper distinguishes *creative*, as a verb and adverb, from the noun *creator*. Gifts, expression, drive, and intelligence can be attributes of a creator—but they leave unexplained the practices that need to be understood as creative.

With its multimodal understanding of language, semiotics is well placed to offer core insights into a creative methodology that extends to a plethora of human behaviours. In this paper, we utilise the terms *semiotic transposition* or *switch* to describe the relationship

between two domains or modalities of expression, which can be argued to feature in creative processes. The creative act surprises in its switch between two separate planes, as a method for developing a sequence, argument, or narration.

This argument augments Peirce's second trichotomy of signs, which allows for transformed perception and manipulation of the complex object-sign in Firsts, through the *representamen* or sign/image in Seconds, as comprehended by the interpreter or creator in Thirds. The relationship of object-sign and *representamen* can be one-off or continuing. Creativity occurs in spaces within semiotic function.

The argument will introduce the possibility of energy at play in creativity—that in addition to cognition, meaning-making, and emotion, there is a trace or play of physical energy between material signifying fields, which can lend literal meaning to the ubiquitous phrase “creative spark.”

Examples from everyday and artistic fields will be provided to depict a creative methodology. In particular, examples derived from Peirce's first semiotic trichotomy will also be included.

Full evaluation of a creative act requires a response to its content or significance, achieved on a situational basis by comparing existing knowledge and forms of perception.

Finally, it is suggested that understanding creative practice can illuminate fundamental aspects of semiosis and provide crucial insight into Peirce's mature trichotomy.

**Keywords:** creative, multimodal, semiotic trichotomy, *representamen*

**Geoffrey Sykes** has lectured at the University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong, and the University of New South Wales, all in Australia. His doctorate was primarily an intellectual biography of Charles Peirce, with Gergard Deledalle as its reader. He has presented at numerous international conferences and is editor of the international journal *Southern Semiotic Review*. Geoffrey is also a writer and producer of theatre and video. He has over 30 professional theatre credits and several national television documentary broadcasts.

Geoffrey Sykes

*Southern Semiotic Review*, Australia

### **Semiotic Split — the Motivation of Artistic Creation**

This paper will inquire about the process of specialised creativity involved in practice of creative artists developing an oeuvre of work. In many cases the latter involves a deeper and heterogeneous sense of development and motivation of artistic works, that requires an extension of a more homogeneous or coherent view of semiosis and creativity.

The paper will point to examples of trauma, natural and religious epiphany, and political foreboding, in several performing and literary creators, that function in an aporetic or discontinuous, yet dependent, relationship to imaginary practice and content that they motivate. The paper will examine a sense for split, possible in biography, even personality, but certainly in psychological drive and semiotic expression, at play in any comprehensive understanding of sustained artistic production.

The motivation of late eighteenth century Gothic Fiction, for example, requires comprehension of political, revolutionary and social fears of the time, and how these were transmuted obliquely into fictional narratives.

There are opportunities for several levels of semiotic and creative analysis - the domain of biographical materials of an artist's life and historical context; the development of a body of artworks (in a distinct artistic form and semiotic domain) that directly or indirectly represent, transpose or redeem experience; and the continuing creative negotiation, by the interpretant reader, of the space between. It is in the space, between the representamen as a whole and its given reality, that semiosis, understood as a creative quality, occurs.

Understanding of the artistic creative process can be approached through Peirce first semiotic trichotomy, but better still through his second mature trichotomy.

**Keywords:** artistic, motivation, transposition, Peirce's semiotic trichotomy

Dr **Geoffrey Sykes** has lectured at the University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong and University of NSW, all in Australia. His doctorate was mainly an intellectual biography of Charles Peirce, and Gergard Deledalle was its reader. He has given papers at numerous international conferences. He is editor of the international journal Southern Semiotic Review. Geoffrey is also a writer and producer of theatre and video. He has over 30 professional theatre credits, and national television documentary broadcasts.

**Bianca Suárez-Puerta**

Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

**Epistemological and Semiotic Tensions in Meaning-Making: Rethinking Form, Stimulus, and Agency Across Organisms, Cognition, and Emerging Technologies**

The nexus of form, meaning, and stimulus has long constituted a site of critical inquiry within semiotic theory, yet its complexities become especially pronounced when examined through the prism of creative processes in nature, human cognition, and emergent technologies. This paper problematizes the epistemological and semiotic tensions inherent in the dynamic interplay between organisms and their environments, foregrounding the ways in which non-human entities—from microbial systems to cosmic phenomena—engage in semiosis that unsettles anthropocentric paradigms of signification.

Through an interdisciplinary synthesis of biosemiotics, cognitive semiotics, and the philosophy of technology, this study interrogates the reductionist assumption that meaning-making is an exclusively human prerogative. Instead, it positions semiosis as an emergent phenomenon contingent on a system's capacity to modulate stimuli, encode forms, and operationalize meaning. By deconstructing traditional divides between the cognitive, the biological, and the technological, the paper critically examines the ontological and epistemic implications of recognizing emerging technologies as loci of semiotic agency.

The analysis invites reflection on foundational questions: How do processes of signification materialize when divorced from human intentionality? What epistemological constraints hinder the interpretation of semiosis in non-human systems? By engaging these tensions, this paper calls for a reconceptualization of the semiotic landscape—one that resituates creativity, agency, and meaning-making within a framework attuned to the ontological plurality of actants and the techno-natural assemblages they inhabit. This critical inquiry ultimately reframes the human-nonhuman dichotomy, offering a lens through which to interrogate the semiotic ecologies of a technologically entangled world.

**Keywords:** semiotic agency, epistemological tensions, emergent meaning, techno-natural assemblages, non-human semiosis

**Bianca Suárez-Puerta** is a researcher and scholar specializing in semiotics, innovation, and sustainability. Her work focuses on exploring meaning-making processes in human and non-human interactions, particularly in the context of emerging technologies and their impact on natural and secluded landscapes. She is deeply engaged in examining the intersections of epistemological tensions, creativity, and sustainable practices in these vulnerable environments.

As a member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS-AIS) Committee, Suárez-Puerta contributes to fostering interdisciplinary dialogues and advancing research on semiotics' role in addressing global challenges, including ecological innovation and the preservation of biodiverse ecosystems. Her research bridges theoretical inquiry and practical applications, offering critical insights into sustainable development and environmental stewardship.

**Daniel Tamm**

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **How to construct a crisis: lessons from the far right in Estonia**

While it is unclear who first suggested that “a good crisis should never go to waste”, it is certain that they were on to something. The discourse of crisis is ever-present in politics as it entails a relatively simple narrative structure of an object in need of intervention via a subject in the face of a threat. Moreover, the appropriate extent of a countermeasure is often

weighed in relation to how big the threat is alleged to be, rewarding creativity rather than candour.

The aim of this presentation is to investigate the prevalence of authoritarianism (both as a threat and a countermeasure) in the language used to construct crises in Estonian parliamentary debate. In addition to content, attention is paid to the form of language use, following the paradigm of political semiotics as developed by Peeter Selg and Andreas Ventsel. According to it, evaluating trends in public communication has more to do with how something is said rather than what is said. Cf. “forcing someone to be free” and “allowing someone to obey”. This interest in patterns of reasoning is supplemented by conceptual metaphor theory and the underlying image schemas (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson) to also illustrate how abstract entities are endowed with physical properties via figurative language.

As the title suggests, the presentation is focused is on the far right section of parliament, spearheaded by the Conservative People’s Party of Estonia (EKRE). However, an effort is made to provide points of comparison with alternative construals across the aisle. Source material for the analysis comes from transcripts of parliament sessions between 2019 and 2024, an especially turbulent time in Estonian politics. Select examples will be examined in detail, generalisations will be made.

**Keywords:** political semiotics, cognitive linguistics, far right discourse

**Daniel Tamm** is a PhD student in semiotics at the University of Tartu. By the time the conference takes place, he should be just about halfway done with his thesis titled “Modelling ideology: a cognitive semiotic study of far right rhetoric in Estonia”. His other interests include cats, curating playlists, and sleeping in.

**Ganna Tashchenko**

Bordeaux Montaigne University, France

### **Shifting Borders Within and Beyond: Gender Identity and the Transformative Power of Storytelling**

The current research focuses on identity construction as a creative process of storytelling impacting both an individual’s perception of themselves and their understanding of those around. Storytelling, as a cultural practice, unfolds at the intersection between an individual and their environment. In exploring the concept of borders, Ju. Lotman described them as zones of contact that not only define what lies within but also facilitate interaction and evolution through contact with the external world. This conceptualization of borders closely aligns with the notion of the dialogical self, which characterizes the self as a complex interplay of multiple I-positions - voices in constant dialogue both within the self and with



the external environment. Through this dialogue, we are able to integrate the voices of both real and fictional others into our personal narratives.

This study will examine the influence of fictional characters on the construction of gender identities as well as gender perceptions we present to the world. Gender relations provide a vivid example of power dynamics established through interactions among I-positions of varying strength. The longer a specific I-position persists in the mind, the more deeply ingrained it becomes and the stronger its connections to other positions, which may suppress some voices while reinforcing others. While new I-positions can emerge, they take longer to penetrate established boundaries. However, when preexisting I-positions shift, changes in perception may occur naturally due to the realignment of interconnected positions.

In our transmedial and transfictional cultural landscape, the identities of many fictional characters have evolved significantly as new authors reinterpret them. Fictional others have a broader reach than immediate social environments, making them a vital source of diverse perspectives. This research will use the Doctor from Doctor Who as a case study, since the character frequently sheds old identities and adopts new personas. Historically, this role was exclusively portrayed by male actors, but more recently, the Doctor has assumed the identity of a woman, engaged with LGBTQ+ themes, and shared power with a transgender character.

The inclusion of a diverse tapestry of fictional characters - particularly those that evolve to embrace new voices - has the potential to drive cultural change challenging the voices we used to hear.

**Keywords:** fictional character, gender, identity, self, storytelling

**Ganna Tashchenko** completed her PhD in Translation Studies at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine. She has been teaching English and translation-related subjects for over 10 years. Ganna is working at Bordeaux Montaigne University, France. Her current research interests focus on semiotics, narratology, cognitive science, and psychology.

**Leonid Tchertov**

International Association for Semiotics of Space and Time, Germany

### **Spatial Constructions in Creative Thinking**

A creation of new forms and senses in different domains of culture is performed with help of spatial thinking and its specific semiotic means. As Yu. M. Lotman had mentioned, every intelligence should have sufficient complexity and heterogeneity so that principally different semiotic systems interact in it. Interaction of verbal and non-verbal semiotic means,



including mental operation with spatial images, is peculiar not only to the creative thinking of artists or architects, but also to the intelligence of scientists, engineers and other specialists. Unlike the verbalised logical thinking, where concepts are interconnected by genus-species relations, spatial thinking belongs to the infralogical level (in Jean Piaget's terms) of mental activity, where images are connected by relations between parts and whole. Spatial codes involved in this process have the meanings of the infralogical level – as schemas of actions with objects, manipulations and locomotions in their environment, etc. Such spatial schemas elaborated in practical activity can be transposed into other spheres and become grounds for symbolic and metaphoric thinking in them. In particular, the spatial scheme of the “World Three” serves as a ground of an “universal semiotic complex”, described by V. N. Toporov. Spatial metaphors can set entire styles of thinking. So, the idea of atomism (not only physical, but also logical, as in B. Russell) is based on the spatial scheme of adding parts, in contrast to the idea of holism (for example, in F. de Saussure's concept of language), which is based on the opposite spatial image of division into parts of the whole. The spatial images of the infralogical level can be used in creative thinking intuitively or deliberately. Various scholars clarify their ideas with help of simple geometrical figures – triangle, quadrangle, circle, etc. Such figures look in this perspective not only as elements of the Euclidean geometry or even of “the language of Nature”, as G. Galileo believed, but as fundamental units of spatial codes developed in visual culture and used in creative thinking.

**Keywords:** infralogical level of thinking, spatial schemas and images, complexity

**Leonid Tchertov** (born 1949) received the degree of PhD from the Saint Petersburg State University (1996). In the same University, he gave courses on general semiotics and semiotics of space combining them with the teaching of special disciplines in the Art School. The topics of his researches include the spatial codes, their specific categories and using of these means for semiotization of diverse spaces – in the object environment, in architecture, in pictorial arts, etc. Tchertov is the author of more than a hundred publications on general and spatial semiotics; the last of his books is: “Signs, Codes, Spaces, and Arts” (2019).

**Peeter Tinitis**

Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany

### **Trends in Collective Intelligence in Early Modern Book Printing in Europe**

Special constellations of cultural practices have been argued to foster the growth of collective intelligence in Europe since the late Roman Empire (Henrich 2020). These practices include individual ownership, diminished reliance on local kinship structures, and increased trust in strangers, all of which support the formation of voluntary communities.

Together, these conditions increase the likelihood of information diffusion, preservation, and innovation (Muthukrishna & Henrich 2016).

An additional catalyst in the early modern period was the widespread adoption of literacy, encouraged by religious movements such as the Protestant Reformation (Becker & Woessmann 2009). Between 1600 and 1900, Europe saw a gradual shift from elite literacy—less than 15% of the population—to popular literacy exceeding 90% in many regions (Buringh & Van Zanden 2009). This transformation altered the societal role of the written word, as broader populations began to participate in reading and writing.

This paper investigates changes in the genre composition of printed books using data from national bibliographies—historical registers of printed works. It introduces theoretical considerations for analyzing historical metadata on printed texts and explores how such data can provide empirical insights into the flow of information and the formation of communities behind it.

Key questions include the diversification of genres in relation to rising literacy—for example, the decline of religious texts in favor of practical guides and fiction (Melton 2004)—and the dynamics of translation and reprinting across linguistic and regional communities. These trends shed light on the evolving structures of collective intelligence and information flow in early modern Europe.

**Keywords:** cultural evolution, book history, digital humanities, collective intelligence

**Peeter Tinitis** is a postdoctoral researcher in digital humanities at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, and the University of Tartu, Estonia (Estonian Research Council grant PUTJD1251). He has a background in linguistics and semiotics, and his research focuses on cultural evolution, historical sociolinguistics, and the application of data-intensive methods in the humanities. His current postdoctoral project examines the cultural evolution of books in the early modern period.

**Krista Tomson**

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Peirce's Theory of Signs in the Study of Inner Speech and Motivation**

I am researching how individuals can consciously create and use meaningful signs to guide their motivation through inner speech. The theoretical foundation of my study is Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model of the sign, which consists of three components: the sign or representamen (i.e., the created sign); the object (i.e., a created narrative constructed through inner speech); and the interpretant (i.e., the personal meaning the creator assigns to that narrative).

The scientific contribution of this study lies in a new perspective: inner speech, in addition to everything that has been studied so far, is also a semiotic process through which individuals create, shape, and recapture meaningful signs. These signs are not merely signs, but they act as a tool through which a person can influence their internal world and behavior. To demonstrate this, I focus on motivation—a cognitive function that is not permanent, but which is highly useful in people's everyday lives if it can be quickly recreated. That can be done by using one's own inner speech and signs in order to initiate processes that need to be done.

On a practical level, my work provides individuals with a framework for understanding how to self-motivate through meaningful signs rather than relying solely on external goals or outcomes. Creating and using signs through conscious narrative-based inner speech could offer people a tool to generate internal impulses strong enough to activate their intrinsic motivation.

**Keywords:** inner speech, motivation, narrative, Peirce's triadic model

**Krista Tomson** is a junior researcher at the University of Tartu. She is currently in her second year of doctoral studies at the Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics, and her research topic is "The role of human umwelt in the formation of inner speech". Previously, she has bachelor's degrees in environmental management and psychology, and a master's degree in semiotics. She also has two vocational educations in the fields of horticulture and social work. She is actively engaged in volunteer work: she is a first aid volunteer of the Estonian Red Cross (15 years) and an auxiliary police officer (two years). Currently, Krista Tomson mainly contributes to writing her doctoral thesis.

**Morten Tønnessen**

University of Stavanger, Norway

### **Ecological semiotics, lifeworld perspectives, and sustainability**

Drawing on my recently published encyclopedia chapter "Ecological semiotics" (Tønnessen 2024), in this presentation I outline how ecological complexity is underpinned by sign use and sign systems. Ecological semiotics, or ecosemiotics, can be understood as the study of sign use by organisms in an ecological context. In ecology, semiotic phenomena and sign processes occur at different levels of biological organization, and distinctive kinds of sign use is characteristic of different kinds of interspecies interaction. Ecosemiotic studies help to explain how ecological complexity can be understood in semiotic terms, and how sentient organisms interpret their environment and make choices that are informed by their sign use. I will present the basic theoretical outlook of ecological semiotics with an emphasis on lifeworld perspectives, particularly represented by the Umwelt theory of Jakob

von Uexküll (2010). This implies relating ecosemiotics to phenomenology, subjectivity and agency. In a more rudimentary sense, even plants, fungi and microorganisms have agency which can be framed in semiotic terms. In my work, I stress the relevance of a semiotic approach for human ecology and contemporary discussions concerning environmental sustainability. While ecosemiotics is amply informative applied to general ecology, it is especially pertinent in the context of understanding how human agency and sign use affects the environment at large. Ecological semiotics can help us understand how genuinely human sign use stands out from non-human sign use, and the ways in which human sign use is subject to cultural variation. Crucially, a semiotic approach to environmental issues can be informative with regard to understanding how human behaviour and sign use affects non-human lifeworlds by triggering environmental change which is experienced in sign-mediated ways. This positions ecosemiotics to address issues of environmental sustainability.

**Keywords:** ecosemiotics, Umwelt theory, complexity, sustainability, agency

**Morten Tønnessen** (born 1976) is a Professor of philosophy at University of Stavanger's Department of social studies. He has worked with Umwelt theory and bio-/eco-/zoosemiotics since his master thesis (2001). Recent publications include the book "Semiotic agency: Science beyond mechanism" (with Alexei Sharov, Springer 2021, <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-89484-9>), "Introduction to the Special Issue 'Umwelt Theory and Phenomenology'" (with Carlo Brentari, Biosemiotics, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12304-024-09583-w>), and "Ecological semiotics" (in Encyclopedia of Ecology, 3rd edition/Reference Module in Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences, Elsevier 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-443-21964-1.00018-5>). Academic (b)log: <https://utopianrealism.blogspot.com>

## Vytautas Tumėnas

Lithuanian Institute of History, Lithuania

### **The Geometric-Mathematical Principles of Creativity and Their Relation with Mythic-Folkloric Images in Čiurlionis' Art**

It is common to analyze creativity as a manifestation of the creator's originality, shaped partially by cultural codes, canons, or the broader semiosphere, and by innovations inspired by intercultural exchange. However, in the case of M. K. Čiurlionis (1875–1911)—the prominent Lithuanian theosophical artist of the early 20th century (Andrijauskas, 2021)—we encounter an unusually structured system of visual imagery. His work incorporates universal geometric principles that both surpass the Lithuanian cultural semiosphere and extend beyond conventional concepts of painting composition into other visual art forms.

This hidden universal geometricism in Čiurlionis' work also resonates with the structural logic of traditional Lithuanian textile ornamentation. His compositions, based on strict fractal geometric-ornamental structures, have only recently begun to attract scholarly attention (Tumėnas, 2019; 2024). This paper investigates the connection between the geometric-mathematical principles evident in Čiurlionis' paintings, folk textile design, and the broader field of fractal geometry—formally articulated only later in the 20th century.

While Wassily Kandinsky (1911) theorized the spiritual significance of geometric figures in painting, his practice favored expressive chaos. Later artists like Jackson Pollock, Paul Klee, and M. C. Escher each adopted geometric order in varying degrees. Čiurlionis, however, employed modular repetition of forms systematically, embedding them with metaphorical meaning aligned with his theosophical worldview and esoteric beliefs.

This presentation explores Čiurlionis' consistent use of geometric principles: in the repetition of key elements, in compositional organization, and across entire painting cycles modeled after musical structures such as the sonata. Repeated motifs like serpents, suns, and pyramids carry rich metaphorical significance, drawing on both Lithuanian folklore and universal esoteric traditions.

**Keywords:** geometry, composition, fractals, Čiurlionis, painting

**Vytautas Tumėnas** holds a PhD in ethnology and works at the Lithuanian Institute of History. He is the author of three monographs and more than 65 scientific articles. His research interests include ethnology, semiotics, art history, and mythology. He focuses on the semantics of textile geometric patterns, the visual and symbolic traditions in folklore, and regional identity. His work has been published in journals such as *Sign Systems Studies*, *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry*, *Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies*, and *Lituanistica*.

Kadri Tüür

University of Toronto, Canada / Tallinn University, Estonia

### **Autopoiesis – Application Possibilities of the Concept in Humanities**

In 1972, Chilean scholars Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela published a short book titled *Autopoiesis. The Organisation of Living* in Spanish. The English translation became available in 1980, while the Estonian edition appeared in 2021, albeit with limited critical reception. Despite its shortcomings, the Estonian publication introduces important philosophical insights into the nature of living systems. Varela and Maturana's discussions of autopoiesis extend beyond purely biological implications, although these are deliberately left underdeveloped. Particularly controversial is the idea of extrapolating biological system

explanations to human societies—a prospect that the authors themselves approach with caution.

Maturana and Varela argue that the most fundamental characteristic of life is its basis in cognition. Living systems are autopoietic—they produce and sustain themselves—through their cognition of the environment. What is semiotically significant in their theory is the recognition of *relations* as the foundational organizing principle of all living systems.

This presentation provides a brief overview of the concept of autopoiesis and considers its possible relevance to the humanities, particularly ecocriticism. It raises the question of whether the concept could be applied to literary analysis. From a literary scholar's point of view, the central inquiry becomes: can we consider storytelling a form of autopoiesis?

The presentation does not propose definitive answers or methodological models, but rather aims to invite humanities scholars to engage with this intriguing and potentially generative concept—while remaining cautious of reducing it to a metaphor or oversimplifying its theoretical richness.

**Keywords:** autopoiesis, biosemiotics, ecocriticism

**Kadri Tüür** is currently an instructor of Estonian language and culture at the University of Toronto. She is also affiliated with the research project *Memory and Environment: The Intersection of Fast and Slow Violence in Transnational European Literatures* at Tallinn University. She holds a PhD in semiotics from the University of Tartu. Her main research areas include environmental humanities, ecocriticism, ecosemiotics, and representations of nature in literature.

Ingrid Udeküll

University of Tartu, Estonia

### **Creating worlds in our dreams – Madis Kõiv's possible worlds**

Dreams are an evolutionary side-effect of sleep, although they still serve an important function – creating meaning and identity in the dreamer's mind. Dreams usually take part in the unconscious state of mind, but in the case of lucid dreaming, the dreamer gains consciousness inside the dream (Flanagan, 1991). I propose, this creates three worlds – the unconscious, the conscious and the lucid. This kind of worldmaking can be well conceptualised in postmodern literature, for example, in the works of Madis Kõiv, an Estonian physicist, philosopher and writer. In his article "What is time?" (2001), he makes a philosophical claim that through the limits of physics, time itself creates 'possible worlds' in which time, or energy, is carried through the same moment in different perceptions, or

equitations, of time. It will be argued that the before-mentioned worlds, the unconscious and the lucid, can also be seen as possible worlds.

In the prose of Madis Kõiv, these philosophical claims can be found in the complexity of narratives in a text. Narrative complexity can be defined through multiple definable stories in one metanarrative, which are connected through a variety of ways and which require a bigger cognitive effort to interpret (Grishakova & Poulaki, 2019). The sense-making of these texts often leads to playful confusion – like a puzzle. It is not necessary to interpret all the elements of the puzzle on their own; it is more important to see the bigger picture while not forgetting the individuality of the small puzzle pieces. It is also possible to see Kõiv's possible worlds as puzzle pieces of one's reality, or in a lot of his prose, as the dream worlds of the narrative I. With such a premise, I try to conceptualise the possible worlds of dreams in the narratives of Kõiv, which could help define the multiplicity and complexity of how we create world identity in our minds.

Flanagan, O. (1999). *Dreaming souls: Sleep, dreams, and the evolution of the conscious mind*. Oxford University Press.

Grishakova, M., & Poulaki, M. (Eds.). (2019). *Narrative Complexity: Cognition, Embodiment, Evolution*. UNP - Nebraska.

Kõiv, M., & Kuusk, P. (2001). What is Time? In R. Vihalemm (Ed.), *Estonian Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* (pp. 231–246). Springer.

**Keywords:** dreams, possible worlds, narrative complexity, Madis Kõiv

**Ingrid Udeküll** is a first year Master's student in Semiotics and Culture studies at University of Tartu, Estonia. Her previous and current research topics revolve around Estonian postmodern literature and the ontology of such literature's realities, which are presented through various elements of the narratives.

**Emiliano Vargas**

Università degli Studi di Urbino "Carlo Bo", Italy

### **Co-evolution in the Musical Semiosphere-Technosphere: Complexity, Creativity, and Enunciative Praxis Between Digital Platforms and AI Technologies for Music Composition**

This paper addresses the evolution of forms of life in popular music through the increasing integration of digital platforms and generative AI technologies for musical composition in situated environments. It explores the relationships among complexity thinking, creativity, and enunciative practices.



First, musical composition is identified as a creative process located at the intersection of intelligence, memory, and technological mediation. Second, the paper differentiates between two processes of musical composition: one based on the dynamic interplay of improvisation, composition, and performance; the other shaped primarily by the nature of technological mediation involved in each case.

The research adopts an interdisciplinary approach, combining semiotics, anthropology, and mediatization studies. The results reveal traces of evolution in enunciative practices and their implications for the semiotic dimensions of creativity within the interrelation of the **semiosphere** and **technosphere**.

**Keywords:** digital culture, AI technologies, music, creativity, enunciation

**Emiliano Vargas** is a PhD student in Humanities at the Università degli Studi di Urbino “Carlo Bo,” as well as a musician and composer of popular music. He has held scholarships at the University of Turin and the University of Buenos Aires. He previously served as a professor at the Institute for the Rescue and Revaluation of Cultural Heritage at the National University of Tucumán. He is currently a visiting student at Kaunas University of Technology (Lithuania). His research interests focus on the media-cultural co-evolution of different forms of life in artistic expression and practice.

**Andrey V. Vdovichenko**

Orthodox St. Tikhon University for Humanities

### **Artificial Intelligence’s “Speech” on the Background of Natural Word-Containing Semiosis: SIGNUM TEXTUMQUE CAVE**

Natural intelligence (NI) and artificial intelligence (AI) both use words, fulfill grammatical rules for combining words, know dictionary meanings, and are often assumed to “think in words” by default.

If NI and AI verbal texts appear equally intelligent, it might follow that AI and NI are equally intelligent. The Turing test, for instance, evaluates machine intelligence based on the verbal texts a machine produces—implicitly equating verbal “speech” with intelligence.

Assigning meaning to verbal elements (e.g., “form-meaning modules,” “language algorithms”) is central to the structural paradigm of language—a “language model” for describing verbal data. However, this model is misleading due to two core assumptions: the autonomy of Sign and Text. The fallacy lies in attributing independent meaning to elements of word-containing semiotic processes.



One of the most dangerous consequences of this paradigm is the reduction of psycho-cognitive processes to mere correlates of verbal structures. This view is echoed in various traditions: Humboldt, the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, the notion of a “linguistic worldview,” Saussure’s *langue*, Barthes’ “Death of the Author,” the idea of “self-explanatory writing,” the “hieroglyphic consciousness” of Chinese-speaking persons, and the “Russian World” (defined largely by the Russian language). All of these can be seen as forms of sign- and text-exaltation, cf. Lotman’s view of the text as an “information generator possessing the characteristics of an intellectual personality” [Lotman 1992].

To counteract this exaltation, the communicative model of the word-containing process (Vdovichenko 2008, 2017, 2018, etc.) offers an alternative:

- Meaning formation in a semiotic act (word-containing or not) is an attempt to influence or transform an external cognitive state.
- Semiotic impact is produced and understood based on the actional cognitive states of the semiotic actor (e.g., attentional focus, connections, values, imagined addressees, emotional background).
- The semiotic (including verbal) impact does not coincide with the symbolic material it contains.
- What is understandable is not the signs themselves, but the procedure of semiotic impact.
- Identity arises from conceived psycho-cognitive states shaped by the impact.

Two key claims from the communication model are crucial for distinguishing between natural and artificial word-containing semiosis:

1. Cognitive states do not have symbolic form. They represent subjective experiences—ideas, links, memories, emotions—which are real for the individual but not directly accessible to others (cf. *qualia*; Dennett 1996).
2. Cognitive and symbolic processes in natural intelligence are separate (cf. experiment-observation; Vdovichenko 2019, etc.).

Because of this essential difference, signs in NI are only hints—not direct expressions—of cognitive states. A sign-containing text is thus a sequence of hints at the non-sign, actional states of the semiotic actor. NI engages with cognitive states (even when using signs), while AI only manipulates sign-bodies, which have no intrinsic identity without cognition.

Therefore, claims that neural networks can perform meaningful semiotic acts (like speaking or writing) are based on an incorrect language model of semiosis—characterized by text-centrism, language-centrism, and sign-centrism.

**Keywords:** artificial and natural intelligences, misleading text-centrism, language-centrism, sign-centrism

**Andrey V. Vdovichenko** holds a Diploma in Classics from Moscow State University (1992), completed a postgraduate program at the Free University of Amsterdam (1998), earned a PhD in General Linguistics (2003), and received his Doctor Habilitatus in Classics and General Linguistics (2014) from the Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences. His research interests include the philosophy of language, semiotics, communication, logic, AI-generated content, theoretical models for describing verbal data, experimental and psycholinguistics, and classical studies including the Septuagint and New Testament. He has authored five monographs and over 150 academic articles. He is the developer of the communicative model of sign processes.

Inga Vidugirytė

Vilnius University, Lithuania

### **On the Creativity of Literary Mapping**

In the fields of literary geography and literary urban studies, the mapping of literature is understood as a tool for representing the geographical data embedded in a text. It serves both as an analytical method for exploring spatial relations and as a way of visualizing the natural or constructed space depicted in literature. Proponents of literary mapping argue that it offers insights not readily accessible through traditional textual analysis.

From a cultural semiotics perspective, mapping a literary text involves translating a dynamic narrative process into the static visual form of a map—a translation between two distinct semiotic systems. It also entails navigating between physical and fictional worlds, since literary maps are often superimposed on representations of the natural world, which is presumed to be ‘real’. However, fiction typically constructs its own imaginative geographies, diverging significantly from real-world cartographies. The translation between literature and cartography is thus intricate, involving multiple levels of semiosis.

Despite these complexities, the practice of literary mapping continues to evolve. Researchers are expanding thematic approaches, developing methodologies for mapping interior spaces, and integrating advanced digital technologies. These developments support the core claim of mapping advocates: that mapping not only provides a new geographical lens on literary texts but also transforms the researcher’s spatial imagination. As such, mapping functions as a stimulus for creative engagement, enabling new interpretations and analytical possibilities.

This paper analyzes literary maps created for the study of spatial relations in contemporary Lithuanian women's writing. It examines the mapping/translation process from a semiotic perspective and outlines how this approach yields new insights into literary texts.

**Keywords:** literary mapping, translation, creativity

**Inga Vidugirytė** is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the Institute of Literary, Cultural and Translation Studies, Vilnius University (Lithuania). She is the author of *Culture of Laughter* (Vilnius University Press, 2012, in Lithuanian) and *Gogol and the Geographical Imagination of Romanticism* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2019). From 2011 to 2015, she led the research project *Geography of Literature: Textual Territories and Imaginary Maps* and directed the digital mapping project *Vilnius Literature* ([www.vilniusliterature.flf.vu.lt](http://www.vilniusliterature.flf.vu.lt)). She is currently working on a book about urban imaginaries in contemporary Lithuanian women's literature.

## Maria Yelenevskaya

Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Israel

### **Russian Language in the Swiss Context**

Over the last 35 years, the presence and perception of the Russian language (RL) in Switzerland have undergone significant transformations, reflecting broader sociopolitical, cultural, and migratory dynamics. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, a wave of Russian-speaking migrants from former Soviet states brought RL to Switzerland, diversifying its linguistic landscape. In the soviet period the Russian-speaking community in Switzerland was relatively small, comprising primarily dissidents, scientists, and artists. However, migration flows in the post-Soviet era introduced a more diverse group of speakers, including professionals, students, and individuals seeking refuge from political or economic instability.

This demographic shift resulted in the establishment of Russian as a heritage language, maintained within families, and emergence of community schools and cultural organizations. Russian-speaking communities adapted to Switzerland's multilingual environment, where French, German, Italian, and Romansh are official languages. The integration of RL into private and semi-public spheres highlights its evolving role in identity negotiation and Russophones' transnational connectivity. At the same time, younger generations of Russian speakers often experienced language attrition and favor dominant Swiss languages or English for education, professional advancement and social networking.

The past decade has seen additional shifts due to geopolitical tensions and the war in Ukraine, further polarizing Russian-speaking communities. Language attitudes within Switzerland have been influenced by these events, leading to a nuanced interplay between RL's symbolic significance and its practical applications. Efforts to preserve the language through cultural and educational initiatives have continued, while some communities have distanced themselves not only from their home country but also from RL, emphasizing local languages or Ukrainian as a marker of distinct identity.

This paper examines how RL in the Swiss context has adapted to changing sociopolitical realities shaped by migration patterns, generational dynamics, and global events. Drawing on linguistic landscape analysis, interviews and analysis of online forums, it explores how RL functions as a medium for cultural preservation and social integration, as well as a site of ideological contestation in a rapidly shifting global environment.

**Keywords:** russophone diaspora, Switzerland, language attrition, transnationalism, multilingualism, hybrid identities

Dr. **Maria Yelenevskaya** is affiliated with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. She has taught at universities in Russia, Israel, China and Switzerland. Her research is devoted to multilingualism, linguo-cultural aspects of migration, humor and language pedagogies. She has authored and co-authored over 100 scholarly articles and six monographs. She has participated in over 110 international scholarly conferences. She is a member of editorial boards of two international journals and the Israeli Association for the Study of Language and Society. She serves her profession by organizing panels at scholarly conferences, writing book reviews and peer-reviews for various international journals.

Shion Yokoo

Tallinn University, Estonia

### **Creativity and signs of signs in contemporary performing arts**

In this paper, I propose that contemporary performing arts present creativity and complexity in signs that are intellectually formulated by doers (performers) and onlookers (spectators) through various approaches to signs of signs. Juri Lotman distinguishes primary and secondary modelling systems. Performing arts belong to the secondary modelling system and it presents a clear structure of unique meaning-making thanks to its practical overlaps with everyday life. It is not wrongful to place one's daily activity such as an actual family dinner in a performance context, especially in contemporary performing arts. Lotman discusses specifically this form of art as the semiotics of stage. Performing arts not only use artistic languages but also structurally and inevitably depend on the unique sign structure to be as such. One looks at what is conceptually and practically formulated and placed on stage as a performance, distinguishing it from daily life outside the stage. It is one of the particularities of performing arts that the same daily functional signs could turn into artistic signs that refer to signs in dailiness. That mechanism is explained by Petr Bogatyrev and Erika Fischer-Lichte as a sign of signs. I am focusing on how this meaning-making and its dynamics in contemporary performing arts are approached concerning creativity relying on literature in the semiotics of culture, performance studies and theatre studies. Today, these signs of signs in performing arts are not necessarily present in a simple and distinguishable manner but some approach them more in a complex way. Some artists instead seek to

create signs, i.e. quasi-signs, and others may consciously, even ironically, utilise this meaning-making structure as a tool of expression. Such cases could be observed as creative and innovative. Compared to the traditional play format with natural languages, it may leave room for unpredictable meanings since such usages of signs of signs are yet to be standardised. Followingly, creativity owes its appearance to both artists'/performers' expression and the audience's reception. I thus suggest that some pieces of contemporary performing arts rely its creativity on the conceptual treatment of signs of signs by doers and onlookers.

**Keywords:** performing arts, secondary modelling system, signs of signs

**Shion Yokoo** is a PhD student and Junior Research Fellow in Cultural Studies at Tallinn University, Estonia. She obtained her BA in dance from Viljandi Culture Academy and MA in semiotics from the University of Tartu. Her research focuses on antitheatricity as a reaction to conventionalities in performing arts.

As an active contemporary performing artist, her recent artworks include a performative installation “Peal kiri peal” with Keisuke Sugawara at Tartu 2024, and installation works were shown at Court Gallery Kunitachi, Tokyo.

Jun Yu

Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China; Lund University, Sweden

### **Culture-Specific "Items" in Intersemiotic Translation: Translating Chinese Culture into LEGO Playsets**

In this presentation, I analyze the intersemiotic translation of *culture-specific items* (Franco Aixelá, 1996) in all major LEGO playsets related to Chinese culture released between 2020 and 2024. The study combines social semiotic and cognitive semiotic approaches to examine how culture-specific items (CSIs) are translated by toy designers and players. It explores how verbal, visual/audiovisual, and physical elements in buildable toys interact in the meaning-making process; how tactile elements bring new dynamics to translation; and how they give agency not only to translators, but also to recipients.

LEGO's Chinese culture playsets include sets related to traditional festivals and the *Monkie Kid* theme, which is based on the Chinese classic *Journey to the West*. Chinese culture is both presented and re-presented through buildable blocks (tactile elements), stickers and illustrations (tactile and visual), written or spoken introductions (textual, verbal, and audiovisual), and videos (audiovisual). These diverse elements engage in multi-dimensional semiotic interplay, creating and transferring meaning.

The research shows that LEGO playsets function as semiotic artefacts and products of intersemiotic translation, providing players with creative meaning-making resources. Traditional barriers in the interlingual translation of CSIs are mitigated in this participatory intersemiotic process, where abstract source “texts” are directly translated into target messages that are not (only) linguistic but also physical—appearing as *items* in the form of miniatures or icons.

By incorporating tangible and buildable entities, intersemiotic translation becomes more concrete and accessible. It empowers both translators and recipients and opens up new possibilities for cultural communication and engagement with broader audiences.

**Keywords:** intersemiotic translation; creativity; tactility; buildable toys; culture-specific items

**Jun Yu** is a PhD candidate at Shanghai Jiao Tong University in China and a visiting researcher at Lund University in Sweden.

Nicola Zengiaro

University of Bologna, Italy

### **Lithosemiotics. Exploring Creativity, Complexity, and Intelligence in Inorganic Matter**

Creativity is often seen as a hallmark of living systems, characterized by memory, agency, learning, and evolution. In biosemiotics, where life and semiosis are coextensive, the boundary between life and non-life becomes a pivotal question. This presentation challenges conventional views by exploring whether inorganic matter, particularly minerals, also exhibits creativity, memory, intelligence, and evolution.

Drawing on complexity theory, semiotics, and ecological perspectives, it argues that the regularities governing inorganic matter reflect a natural habit, enabling meaningful interactions with the creative processes of life and culture. Minerals, with their structured forms, growth patterns, and transformative dynamics, exemplify how non-living systems establish boundaries and interact with their surroundings in ways analogous to negotiation. Matter, under this hypothesis, can transmit, generate, store, and reproduce information. This process is not entirely algorithmic or predictable, suggesting that matter operates like a semiotic system with its own memory.

Informed by Juri Lotman’s semiotic theory, which frames evolution as negotiating constraints to achieve greater autonomy, this presentation introduces “lithosemiotics,” highlighting how inorganic systems contribute to semiosis traditionally associated with living entities. The Mineral Evolution framework serves as a case study, showing how

minerals diversified and gained complexity through interactions with geological and environmental factors over Earth's history.

This raises the provocative question: can inorganic matter be creative? If so, how does intelligence manifest across different material systems depending on their complexity? By examining the lithosphere's inherent creativity, the presentation seeks to expand the scope of semiosis beyond living systems. It proposes that the creation of meaning encompasses non-living entities, offering a broader perspective on the interrelations of signs, creativity, and complexity.

This lithosemiotical framework invites interdisciplinary research into the semiotic potentials of matter, reframing the boundary between life and non-life and advancing our understanding of how meaning emerges across the spectrum of existence.

**Keywords:** biosemiotics, inorganic agency, lithosemiotics, material creativity

**Nicola Zengiaro** is a PhD candidate in Semiotics at the University of Bologna, focusing on biosemiotics and ecosemiotics. His research explores how complexity theories challenge and redefine the boundaries between life and non-life in semiotics and biology. He is part of the Landscape and Environmental Semiotics research group at TraMe and the team in the CULT-UP project, studying the relationships between plastic materials and cultural heritage. He has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals, including *Biosemiotics*, *Sign Systems Studies*, *Lexia*, *Versus*, *Punctum*, *Ocula* and *Linguistic Frontiers*.

**Nicola Zengiaro and Daria Arkhipova**

University of Bologna, University of Turin, Italy

### **Beyond Human Intelligence: Artificial Intelligence Creativity Tools to Translate the Complexity of Animal and Plant Sign Systems**

This study investigates the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to model and interpret the intelligence of animals and plants through computational creativity, emphasizing its relevance in expanding our understanding of non-human intelligence. Computational creativity, within this research, is defined as the use of AI tools to provide translation and descriptive analysis through non-linguistic-based pattern visualizations of data collected from non-human animals and plants, rendering it comprehensible to human observers.

Drawing on Juri Lotman's semiotic theory, the research views intelligent semiotic systems as those capable of creativity—the ability to generate new and unpredictable meanings. This capacity is not exclusive to the human mind but can emerge across diverse systems and

scales, wherever sufficient complexity exists, encompassing both alignments and contradictions.

The intricate interplay of signs, creativity, and intelligence unfolds across various modalities and ecologies of meaning-making, raising questions about how intelligence manifests in non-human systems and its implications for meaning. By integrating Lotman's concept of the *semiosphere* with AI modeling methodologies, this research explores how non-human intelligences engage in communication and meaning-making. These processes—characterized by emergence, reproduction, and decay—demonstrate how intelligence, whether organic or artificial, manifests dynamically over time and across sign systems.

This area of study has yet to fully address the complexities of how computational creativity can offer descriptive and analytical insights into non-human intelligences. Through an interdisciplinary approach, the research examines the relationships among signs, creativity, and intelligence within ecological and technological contexts. The aim is to develop tools for describing how computational creativity can illuminate the complexity of animal and plant intelligence, while also challenging cultural thresholds of meaning-making. The study contributes to a broader understanding of how patterns in nature and culture intersect with evolving conceptions of intelligence and complexity across non-human and human sign systems using AI creativity tools.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, non-human intelligence, AI creative tools

**Nicola Zengiaro** is a biosemiotician specializing in ecosemiotics and complexity theory. His Ph.D. dissertation investigates the threshold between life and non-life through an ecosystemic lens. He has published articles in several peer-reviewed journals, including *Biosemiotics*, *Sign Systems Studies*, *Lexia*, *Versus*, *Punctum*, *Ocula*, and *Linguistic Frontiers*.

**Daria Arkhipova** is a semiotician specializing in digital communication, with a focus on Artificial Intelligence. Her Ph.D. dissertation examines how AI impacts human decision-making. She has published in peer-reviewed journals including *Biosemiotics*, *Semiotica*, *E/C*, among others.

Vladislav Zlov and Jordan Zlatev

Lund University, Sweden

### **Quest for the essence of irony: A cognitive-semiotic approach**

Irony is a popular topic within pragmatics, where it is most often discussed if ironic utterances like “What a smart person you turned out to be!” should be primarily understood as “echoing” an idea that the speaker does not believe in or as “pretending” to be someone



the speaker does not identify with. In both cases, there is an attitude of dissociation: “a crucial aspect of what is communicated” (Barnden, 2021, p. 141). Although some authors have proposed unified accounts of “verbal irony” (Popa-Wyatt, 2014), it remains unclear how to integrate so-called “situational irony”, where there is no speaker at all, and it is rather some state-of-affairs that is construed to be ironic. Ruiz de Mendoza and Lozano-Palacio (2021) have, in fact, attempted to integrate situational irony into a unified model, claiming that “irony is a single phenomenon involving a cross-scenario clash giving rise to attitude of dissociation” (ibid: 232).

We applaud these authors’ effort to find the essence of the phenomenon of irony, and their acknowledging that the term “verbal irony” is inadequate and should be substituted with “communicated irony”, since an ironic utterance can just as well be expressed in, for example, a thumbs-up gesture (when someone has done something embarrassing). However, we argue that their common denominator of a “cross-scenario clash” is much too general: this is present in many cases, without ensuring irony. In our presentation, we propose that irony of any kind is a semiotic phenomenon that essentially, or at least prototypically, involves a sense of diminishment when something good or neutral at first glance turns out bad. The “something” in question could be an event, as in situational irony, or a mono- or polysemiotic utterance, in communicated irony. “Good” and “bad” are of course evaluative terms, implying perspective talking and construal. The key difference is that in situational irony, it is “fate” or “life” that is (metaphorically) construed as being ironical, with classic cases like Oedipus, or modern ones like those in Alanis Morissette’s song Irony. In our presentation, we elaborate the concept of irony based on the idea of diminishment and demonstrate its essentially (poly)semiotic and creative nature, often requiring multiple levels of interpretation.

Barnden, J. (2021). Metaphor and irony: Messy when mixed. In A. Soares da Silva (Ed.), *Figurative language–intersubjectivity and usage* (pp. 139–174). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Popa-Wyatt, M. (2014). Pretence and echo: Towards an integrated account of verbal irony. *International Review of Pragmatics*, 6(1), 127–168.

Ruiz de Mendoza, F. J., & Lozano-Palacio, I. (2021). On verbal and situational irony. In A. S. da Silva (Ed.), *Figurative Language – Intersubjectivity and Usage* (Vol. 11, pp. 213–240). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

**Keywords:** irony, diminishment, cognitive semiotics, unified approach

**Vladislav Zlov** is a PhD student at Lund University. His MA thesis project on impoliteness in language and gesture (2019) resulted in a joint article with Jordan Zlatev called "A cognitive-semiotic approach to impoliteness: Effects of conventionality and semiotic system on judgements of impoliteness by Russian and Swedish speakers", which was published in 2023 in the *Journal of Politeness Research*. He is now interested in irony from a cognitive-semiotic perspective. He focuses on the role of different semiotic systems such as

language, gestures, and depiction in expressing and understanding irony, and working on a unified approach to irony.

**Jordan Zlatev** is Professor of General Linguistics and Director of Research for the Division of Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University, Sweden. He is the author of *Situated Embodiment: Studies in the Emergence of Spatial Meaning* (1997), and of over 100 articles in academic journals and anthologies. He co-edited *The Shared Mind: Perspective on Intersubjectivity* (2008), *Moving Ourselves, Moving Others: Motion and Emotion in Intersubjectivity, Consciousness, and Language* (2012) and *Meaning, Mind and Communication: Explorations in Cognitive Semiotics* (2016). His current research focuses on phenomenology and language in relation to other semiotic systems like gesture and depiction. He is editor-in-chief of *Public Journal of Semiotics*.

Vera Zvereva

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

### **NGOs in Finland: the Changing Socio-Cultural and Political Meanings of the Russian Language**

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a connection between the Russian language, the 'Russian World' ideology, and the war has become more salient in European socio-political discourse. In Finland (2022-2024), political statements, media coverage, and public discussions have raised concerns about Russian-speaking residents as potential security threats. This growing suspicion, fuelled by reports of military actions and atrocities in Ukraine, has led to a decline in Russian language studies in Finnish schools, discussions about closing Russian-language classes and schools, and hate speech and threats directed at Finnish organizations using Russian language, including NGOs and the state broadcaster YLE.

Between 2022 and 2024, with my colleagues Tatiana Romashko and Rasa Zakeviciute, I researched Finnish NGOs that use Russian in their socio-cultural projects. We conducted interviews where respondents discussed their organizations' goals, missions, activities, and the changing role of Russian in Finland, especially in light of Russia's war in Ukraine. These interviews reveal a complex and nuanced picture of how these NGOs use the Russian language and the messages they convey.

In this presentation, I will explore the socio-cultural and political meanings attributed to the Russian language by NGOs in Finland engaged in social and cultural projects. Drawing on interviews from the 'Russian World Next Door' project at the University of Jyväskylä (2022-2025), I will use critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1993; Wodak & Meyer, 2001) to examine how Russian is seen as a language of identity, memory, community building, mutual

support, and integration in Finnish society. Additionally, I will discuss how different generations of Russian speakers in Finland invest their own meanings in the language (Blommaert, 2013), whether through nostalgia, intergenerational communication, Russian as a lingua franca, or as a tool for successful socialization in Finland.

**Keywords:** Russian language in Finland, language policy, identity, critical discourse analysis

**Vera Zvereva**, PhD, Senior lecturer in Russian language and culture, University of Jyväskylä. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8071-6380> Author and co-editor of books and publications in Russian television and digital media studies; member of the steering board of the research journal “Digital Icons Studies in Russian, Eurasian and Central European New Media”. Sphere of research and teaching: Russian media studies; state propaganda and information warfare in Russian digital media; Russian speakers in Finland. Funded projects: ‘Russian World’ Next Door: Discourses of the Russian Political Communication and Cultural Diplomacy in Finland (PI) (2022–2026).

## Rasa Žakevičiūtė and Tatiana Romashko

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

### Meaning-making through colingual Russian-speaking organisations in Finland

Integration in Finland is strongly associated with local language proficiency and participation in the Finnish labour market. However, our study highlights the crucial role of Russian-speaking socio-cultural organisations in facilitating inter-community ties among Russian speakers and serving as a bridge to the wider Finnish society. Such organisations provide opportunities for people to cultivate a sense of purpose and connectedness through meaning-making in a new and unfamiliar environment. With the ultimate goal of integrating Russian speakers into Finnish society, it unleashes their potential, empowers them and facilitates psychological and social adaptation.

The invasion of Ukraine in 2022 created additional conditions, as Russian-speaking populations faced attempts to politicise and politically label their group identity from various sides. This led to efforts to reconstruct group identity, its culturally established meanings and even the choice of spoken language in public places. Our study shows that Russian-speaking socio-cultural organisations in Finland strive to provide a safe space to negotiate newly emerging identities by facilitating psychological and social adaptation to the host society. Our findings demonstrate that these organisations use the Russian language as a working tool and a unifying element, setting them apart from similar organisations affiliated with Russian authorities or public institutions. The latter typically

emphasise the ideological aspects of the Russian language and its significance as defined by Kremlin leadership.

As such, our research highlights the importance of Russian-speaking organisations in the integration landscape and point to practical implications. It suggests that policy approaches to integration and inclusive societies should focus on initiatives aimed at building trust between organisations, open networking and creating opportunities for identity negotiation. Empowering the Russian-speaking community through public organisations not only strengthens individual identities, but also weaves a more cohesive social fabric that resonates with the broader dynamics of meaning-making in an increasingly diverse world.

**Keywords:** Russian language, socio-cultural organisations, Finland, safe space, identity negotiation

**Rasa Žakevičiūtė** and **Tatiana Romashko** (DSocSc) are currently working on the research project “Russian World” Next Door: discourses of the Russian political communication and cultural diplomacy in Finland. This research is based on the analysis of over thirty semi-structured interviews conducted with Russian-speaking non-profit organisations of various socio-cultural profile and targeted age group. The data were collected in 2023–2024 across four regions in Finland.

Инна Адамсон

Таллиннский университет, Эстония

### **Городское пространство как среда для изучения русского (или другого) языка как иностранного**

В последнее время наряду с традиционными, известными методами преподавания и изучения языков применяют интерактивные задания в реальной среде.

Автор сообщения в свое время принимала участие в составлении настольной игры CONTACT GAME, которая предполагает симуляцию погружения в городскую среду для усовершенствования коммуникации на изучаемом языке, также проводились экскурсии по определенной теме и затем выполнялись задания. Сообщение посвящено обогащению данной темы, а также пополнению словаря «Русский язык в Эстонии», куда могут быть включены локальные номинации, понятные жителям конкретного города, в частности Таллинна.

Городская среда может способствовать интеграции языкового и культурного опыта. Различные городские объекты, в частности культурные и исторические, могут стать основой для языковых упражнений. В ходе «познания» города можно столкнуться со специфическими номинациями, которые обогатят знания о языковом ландшафте.

**Ключевые слова:** городская среда, изучение иностранного языка, культурные объекты

**Инна Адамсон** — доцент Института гуманитарных наук Таллиннского университета. Научные интересы: лексикология, семантика, грамматика, сопоставительное изучение языков, социолингвистика, язык и культура диаспоры. Читала лекции и доклады на конференциях в зарубежных университетах: Бельгия, Германия, Италия, Чехия, Австрия, Китай, Россия (Москва, Санкт-Петербург, Омск), Латвия, Литва, Финляндия, Венгрия, Черногория, Великобритания, Польша. Автор более 50 научных публикаций.

## Илария Алетто

Университет Рома Тре, Италия

### **Сверхсложность границы: паратексты к переводам Герберта Уэллса в СССР в 1930-е годы**

Согласно Ю. М. Лотману, «граница» семиосферы — это зона ускоренных семиотических процессов, особенно активных на периферии культуры и стремящихся к перестройке ее центра. Паратексты, которые Жерар Женетт определяет как «пороги» произведения, представляют собой граничные пространства *par excellence* и играют ключевую роль в медиаторстве между текстом и читателем, что делает их важным инструментом для анализа семиотической сверхсложности переводов.

Доклад, подготовленный в рамках проекта “Rewriting European Literatures in the Stalinist Era: Defense of European Culture or Mediation of the Regime’s Ideology?”, будет посвящен паратекстам произведений Герберта Уэллса, переведенных в СССР в 1930-е годы, как показательному примеру диалектики между ассимиляцией и отторжением культуры. Один из самых популярных писателей в Советском Союзе, Уэллс активно переводился и переиздавался, особенно его романы «Машина времени» (1895), «Остров доктора Моро» (1896) и «Война миров» (1897). Однако его статус в СССР был неоднозначным: если вначале его приветствовали за антифашистские взгляды и интерес к социальному прогрессу, то с усилением культурных репрессий его восприятие кардинально изменилось.

Через анализ паратекстов того периода, включая статьи В. Б. Шкловского и Ю. К. Олеши, в докладе исследуются текстовые стратегии, с помощью которых Уэллс постепенно переосмыслился в идеологическом ключе вплоть до двойственного статуса — одновременно «свой» и «чужой». Цель доклада — реконструировать литературные и социополитические процессы, повлиявшие на эту эволюцию, и понять, какую роль играл паратекст в формировании советского литературного канона.

**Ключевые слова:** сверхсложность, граница, паратекст, перевод, Герберт Уэллс

**Илария Алетто**, PhD — научный сотрудник по русскому языку на факультете иностранных языков, литератур и культур Университета Рома Тре (Рим). Защитила докторскую диссертацию по сравнительным культурам и литературам, посвященную интерпретации творчества Дж. Джойса режиссером С. М. Эйзенштейном. Ее исследования охватывают русскую и советскую литературу, включая рецепцию Джойса в СССР, паратекст произведений («Маскарад» Лермонтова, «Зоо, или Письма не о любви» Шкловского) и связи с переводами (итальянские переводы Хармса). Заместитель руководителя и руководитель исследовательской группы проекта “Rewriting European Literatures in the Stalinist Era: Defense of European Culture or Mediation of the Regime’s Ideology?” (PRIN 2022 PNRR).

## **Ольга Бурдакова, Елена Нымм**

Нарвский колледж Тартуского университета, Эстония

### **Центр и периферия города в локальном тексте (на примере локального текста Нарвы)**

В городской антропологии локальный текст понимается как система устойчивых сюжетов, образов, стереотипов о городе, ритуалов и традиционных коммуникативных практик, связанных с городским пространством и известных жителям города, идентифицирующим себя с ним. Термин «текст» по отношению к существующему только умозрительно комплексу представлений горожан о городе используется условно. Реконструируемый исследователем локальный текст характеризуется подвижностью, многослойностью, неоднородностью и дискретностью. Понятие «локальный текст» включает в себя устойчивые среди горожан нарративы о событиях городской истории разной степени значимости, рассказы об исторических лицах и современниках, обладающих разной репутацией, сюжеты из реальной или легендарной истории градообразующих предприятий, общие для горожан представления о пространственном членении города, репутации районов, местную микротопонику и другое.

В локальном тексте важнейшим в представлении жителей о городском пространстве является понятие «центр города». Будучи структурообразующим компонентом пространства для горожан, центр служит географическим и ценностным ориентиром, относительно центра выстраивается представление о периферии и городских окраинах.

В докладе предлагается методология исторической реконструкции представлений горожан о городском центре, которая предполагает последовательный поиск ответов на пять главных вопросов:

1. вопрос о локализации центра (где находится центр — не на официальной карте административного устройства, а в сознании горожан) в определенный исторический период;

2. вопрос о «геометризации» центра (какими геометрическими фигурами он аппроксимирован на ментальных «картах» жителей города) в определенный исторический период;
3. вопрос о функционале центра (какие функции выполняет городской центр в определенный исторический период);
4. вопрос о связи «геометрии» центра и функционала в определенный исторический период;
5. вопрос об изменении этих характеристик (локализация, «геометризация» и функционал центра) во времени и связи между расширением или переносом границ центра и перераспределением функций.

Ответ на третий вопрос позволяет понять, почему в определенный исторический период в сознании горожан за каким-то местом закрепляется статус центрального и существует ли некий минимальный универсальный набор функций, достаточный для признания того или иного места центральным жителями любого (малого или большого) города.

В докладе в ходе исторической реконструкции представлений русскоязычных горожан о центре Нарвы в 1920-е гг. будут даны ответы на пять заявленных выше вопросов. Реконструкция проводится на материале нарвских русскоязычных газет 1920-х гг.: «Старый Нарвский листок» (1923, 1925–1929), «Нарвский листок» (1923–1926, 1928), «Былой Нарвский листок» (1924–1925).

**Ключевые слова:** локальный текст, ментальные стереотипы, центр города, городское пространство, историческая реконструкция

**Ольга Бурдакова**, PhD — доцент (русский язык) в Нарвском колледже Тартуского университета, заведующая отделением иностранных языков, автор более 80 научных публикаций. В круг научных интересов входят городская антропология, корпусная лингвистика, грамматика русского языка, методика преподавания русского языка как иностранного и русского языка как родного.

**Елена Нымм**, PhD — лектор по русской культуре в Нарвском колледже Тартуского университета, автор более 80 научных публикаций. Круг научных интересов составляют городская антропология, корпусная лингвистика, русско-эстонские культурные связи, русская литература и культура второй половины XIX века, межкультурная коммуникация и мультикультурное образование.

## Камила Веверкова

Карлов университет в Праге, Чехия

### Истина как категория — смена парадигмы

Определение истины в философии неоднозначно. Истина — это либо то, что мы познаем (процесс), либо то, что является результатом нашего познания. Несмотря на неоднозначность определения, истина является одной из центральных тем философии. В базовой классификации выделяют несколько теорий истины: когерентная истина, истина соответствия, перформативная истина, прагматическая истина и семантическая истина. Истиной занимаются как формальная логика, так и эпистемология. В зависимости от вида истина может быть абсолютной или относительной, объективной и субъективной. Расширенные теории истины затрагивают лишь часть реальности. Истина лежит под поверхностью явлений и должна быть раскрыта, в чем и заключается суть интеллектуальной работы. И это раскрытие не всегда и не при всех обстоятельствах одинаково. Вся реальность относительна, потому что реальность сама по себе не является абсолютной истиной. Существуют инструменты, которые помогают нам приблизиться к истине, но они всегда зависят от предмета, места и времени. Это относится и к методу познания научной истины. Эти инструменты очень чувствительны и подвержены злоупотреблениям. Прелесть философского раскрытия истины в том, что несокрытость не может быть полностью постигнута, но каждый подход к ней (с разных точек зрения) вносит свой вклад в познание смысла и бытия в целом. Во второй половине XX века только-только пришло осознание того, что эти различные перспективы имеют решающее значение для дальнейшего развития человека и мира. То, что мы переживаем, многогранно. Невозможно однозначно понять, что такое несокрытость.

**Ключевые слова:** истина, несокрытость, относительность познания, многогранность

**Камила Веверкова** — читает лекции по исторической теологии и церковной истории на гуситском теологическом факультете Карлова университета в Праге. Занимается вопросами чешской Реформации (Я. А. Коменский) и наследием реформаторского движения католического духовенства, особенно философа, математика и теолога Бернарда Больцано и его учеников. Возглавляет кафедру исторического богословия и церковной истории, а также является заместителем декана по организации учебного процесса на своем родном факультете.



## Вадим Витковский

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Klassische Philologie

### **Креативность и сверхсложность в Новом Завете: Диалогия евангелиста Луки**

Хотя семиотика не так часто занимается текстами древних литератур, темы нынешней конференции актуальны и для изучения текстов, написанных много веков назад. В частности, книги Библии богаты текстами, которым в разные эпохи в разных культурных и религиозных обществах приписывались разные смыслы. При этом креативность и (сверх)сложность некоторым из этих текстов была не чужда уже на стадии возникновения, то есть они задумывались и создавались как сложные литературные произведения, а вовсе не как безыскусные свидетельства современников о некоторых исторических событиях. В первую очередь это относится к повествованиям евангелистов, один из которых, известный под именем Луки, создал даже двухчастное сочинение (дилогию, состоящую из Евангелия от Луки и Книги Деяний апостолов; общепринятое английское наименование: Luke–Acts) с чрезвычайно сложным соотношением отдельных разделов и эпизодов (т. н. перикоп).

Именно в последние годы в мировой новозаветной науке стало осознаваться, насколько креативны и сложны тексты, созданные евангелистами и особенно Лукой. Следует отметить, что представители скандинавских стран играют значительную роль в изучении этих вопросов. Достаточно сказать, что конференция по теме «Литературная креативность Луки» прошла летом 2014 г. в древней датской столице Роскилле, а организовали ее сотрудники Копенгагенского университета во главе с профессором Моэнсом Мюллером, который тогда заведовал кафедрой Нового Завета (см.: Müller, M., & Nielsen, J. T. (Eds.). *Luke's Literary Creativity*. London – New York: Bloomsbury – T&T Clark, 2016). Эта уникальная для того времени конференция, в которой мне довелось принять участие, придала сильнейший импульс моим собственным исследованиям в указанном направлении, что привело к написанию целого ряда научных статей и обширной монографии о композиции и литературных источниках сочинения Луки (см.: Витковский В. *Диалогия Луки: композиция и синоптические источники*. Москва: ББИ, 2022), а также изданию сборника статей (см.: Kahl, W., & Wittkowsky, V. (Eds.). *Das lukanische Doppelwerk in neuen internationalen Perspektiven / Luke–Acts in New International Perspectives*. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2024). В моем выступлении я планирую дать краткое описание композиционного устройства Дилогии, где автором искусно совмещены разные системы соответствий между разделами и эпизодами, что, по моему глубокому убеждению, придает этим книгам, созданным почти две тысячи лет назад, характер сверхсложного креативного произведения.

**Ключевые слова:** Диалогия Луки, композиция, источники, креативность, сверхсложность

**Вадим Витковский** — филолог-классик, исследователь литературы античного иудаизма, Нового Завета и раннего христианства, переводчик научной литературы. Кандидат филологических наук (МГУ, 2005). Хабилизированный доктор (2019) и приват-доцент Берлинского университета имени Гумбольдта (с 2020).

## Тимур Гузаиров

Таллиннский университет, Эстония

### **Советское в школах ЭССР: практики — язык — тексты**

В докладе на основе архивных документов и устных интервью будет рассмотрен субстрат «советского» в повседневной школьной жизни ЭССР. Мы проанализируем отдельные конфликтные ситуации, отношение к политинформации, антирелигиозной пропаганде и урокам по началам военной подготовки. Мы обратим внимание также на примеры употребления советского языка в протоколах различных собраний. Нас интересуют вопросы: как организовывалась советская социальная действительность в школе и как она воспринималась; сопряжение своего и чужого; организация и практики советской пропаганды; казусы неожиданной сопротивляемости и несоветского поведения среди советских учеников.

**Ключевые слова:** идеология, язык, школьная повседневность, ЭССР

**Тимур Гузаиров** — работает в проекте по изучению советской повседневности в ЭССР (период: после смерти Сталина до начала Перестройки). Главное направление — советская школьная жизнь. Основные области научных интересов — история повседневной жизни в ЭССР, изучение репрессий русскоязычных жителей Эстонии (на материале следственных дел НКВД ЭССР), творчество В. А. Жуковского и Яна Каплинского, история русской и современной эстонской русской литературы.

## Александр Данилевский

Независимый исследователь, Эстония

### **Функция интертекстуальности в «Безбожном переулке» Марины Степновой**

Речь в докладе пойдет об особом рода «отлитературности» третьего романа М. Л. Степновой — «Безбожный переулок» (2014). Первоначальное внимание мы намерены уделить фиксации и статистике упоминаний в повествовании: а) различных писателей — отечественных и зарубежных; б) наименований литературных произведений — русских и иностранных; в) литературных персонажей.

Затем планируется представить наиболее репрезентативные случаи интертекстуальности в романе и способы ее экспликации. Особое внимание придется также уделить случаям металитературности в «Безбожном переулке».

В итоге речь пойдет о прагматике такого рода «сверхлитературности» (прежде всего в плане расширения семантики текста) и о связях романа с литературной традицией.

**Ключевые слова:** М. Л. Степнова, интертекстуальность, смыслопорождение

**Александр Данилевский**, PhD — выпускник Тартуского университета, преподаватель Тартуского и Таллиннского университетов, автор многочисленных работ по истории русской литературы и философии второй половины XIX – XX века, культуры и литературы русской эмиграции первой волны, русской культуры в Эстонии, публикатор и комментатор текстов А. М. Ремизова, Ю. П. Анненкова, Дона Аминадо, Бориса Вильде, М. Д. Иванникова.

## Александра Данциг

Еврейский университет в Иерусалиме, Израиль

### Фотографический палимпсест: стирание и цифровая фотография

Значение акта стирания в фотографии нельзя недооценивать. Явное или скрытое, намеренное или непреднамеренное — акты стирания занимают центральное место в процессе создания фотографий, но с появлением цифровых технологий они стали все больше определять фотографическое изображение. Важность стирания, возможно, иллюстрируют «Скрипка Энгра» Ман Рэя и «Рейн II» Андреаса Гурски — две самые дорогие фотографии в мире на сегодняшний день. Несмотря на значительные различия между ними (одна аналоговая, другая цифровая), обе сильно зависят от стираний в контексте создания композиционных и повествовательных эффектов.

В предлагаемом исследовании я изучаю стирание в аналоговой и цифровой фотографии, исследуя его типы и виды визуальных выражений. Я предлагаю типологию проявлений стирания, общих для аналоговых и цифровых фотографий (уничтожение, невидимость) и специфичных для цифровых изображений (недоступность, изменение значений, добавление слоев). Эти категории не являются взаимоисключающими и могут пересекаться в одной фотографии. Стирание также рассматривается как перформанс, подчеркивающий взаимоотношения человека и технологии в создании и просмотре фотографий. Рассматриваются три перформативные измерения: намерение, заметность и временность.

Наконец, я утверждаю, что цифровую фотографию можно концептуализировать как палимпсест, состоящий из знаков и значений, добавляемых и удаляемых в переплетенных слоях стирания и обработки изображений с течением времени. Эта метафора подчеркивает динамическую, многослойную природу цифровых изображений и их эволюцию через использование и взаимодействие. Концепция

палимпсеста подчеркивает процесс обработки изображений и, в частности, стирания как творческое действие и призывает рассматривать цифровое изображение не только через его последнее визуальное воплощение, но и через накопление истории его проявлений.

**Ключевые слова:** фотография, манипуляция изображений, стирание, наложение, визуальная культура

**Александра Данциг** — аспирант кафедры коммуникации и журналистики Еврейского университета в Иерусалиме. Ее исследование сосредоточено на вопросах, связанных с фотографией и визуальной культурой. Также она художник и фотограф.

## Анастасия Зиневич

Polonsky Academy, Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

### К вопросу о соотношении визуального и вербального текстов в фотографии

Задачей настоящей работы является попытка применить методы структурно-семантического подхода к анализу фотографии.

Фотография рассматривается как текст (с семиотической точки зрения) в ряду других изображений, таких как картина, лубок, диафильм, дагерротип, гобелен, карта, татуировка и т. п. Для анализа подобного ряда объектов выделяются следующие элементы: образ, лейтобраз, мотив, лейтмотив, сюжет и канон — и рассматривается динамика взаимоотношения этих элементов. Под образом мы понимаем зрительно воспринимаемый объект. Мотив — это сочетание образа и предиката, он может быть выделен в каждой отдельной фотографии. Сюжет — сочетание пучков мотивов, соединенных между собой каузацией. Лейтмотив — стабильно повторяющиеся мотивы. Канон понимается как ситуация, при которой образы, мотивы (лейтмотивы) и сюжеты жестко фиксированы культурной традицией, что делает изображение сакральных фигур максимально узнаваемым путем использования общего кода.

Будут проанализированы 4 варианта сюжетизации (emplotment):

1. вчитывание смысла,
2. гиперсемиотизация,
3. подпись (подпись под изображением рассматривается с этой позиции как элемент, дающий возможность произвести emplotment и придать смысл изображению),
4. создание серии (серия фотографий может рассматриваться как визуальное предложение, в котором пучки мотивов, выявленных в каждой отдельной фотографии, соединяются каузацией согласно авторскому порядку).

«Итак, для рассказа необходима серия соединенных между собой картин (фотографий). Слово „серия“ означает, что их должно быть не менее двух, желательно

— более. Однако каким образом получается соединение? Что заставляет нас считать, что показанная нам последовательность кадров сознательно соединена между собой, а не просто является их случайным скоплением?» (Лотман Ю. М. Природа киноповествования // Лотман Ю. М., Цивьян Ю. Г. Диалог с экраном. Таллинн: Александра, 1994. С. 160).

**Ключевые слова:** сюжетизация, мотив, сюжет, серия, подпись

**Анастасия Зиневич** — постдокторант Академии Полонского в Иерусалиме, защитила докторскую диссертацию по экзистенциальной философии в Институте философии им. Григория Сковороды НАН Украины, магистр психологии, голосующий член Европейской Федерации экзистенциальной терапии (Federation for Existential Therapy in Europe, FETE). Область интересов: философия психологии и психотерапии, антропология, герменевтика, death studies, транскультуральная психиатрия.

## Иосиф Зислин

Независимый исследователь, Израиль

### Фотография как образ и сообщение

Суть фотографирования можно рассматривать как копирование (умножение) реальности, но одновременно как знак, текст и сообщение. Само фотографирование (но не фотография) является доказательством существования «вне-меня-реальности», но эта реальность станет знаком и/или текстом только после того, как будет вычленена и маркирована. Рассматривая фотографию как знак, нетрудно выделить в ней, как и в любом знаке, денотат и коннотат. Подобный подход дает возможность довольно просто описывать денотат как сюжетную структуру, однако не дает возможности подойти к вопросу об истинности и ложности фотографии. Решение может быть найдено, если мы применим структурно-семиотический подход и будем рассматривать фотографический образ одновременно и как текст, и как высказывание. По сути, мы можем, используя совместно структурно-семиотический подход и антропологическую оптику, говорить о двух типах языков фотографии и двух типах высказывания:

А. Два типа языка:

1. авторский язык фотографа («эмный язык фотографа-аборигена»), чьими глазами мы смотрим на реальность, лежащую за образом;
2. язык понимания/описания («этний язык реципиента»).

В. Два типа высказывания:

1. Фотография как сообщение или авторское высказывание. Здесь фотография рассматривается как прямое высказывание, которое может быть сформулировано как двойное предложение: «Я фотографирую» и «Я фотографирую X». В стандартной ситуации денотаты обоих этих

предложений сливаются воедино и кажутся неотделимыми друг от друга. В обоих денотатом будет истинность или ложность. Однако мы можем представить себе ситуацию, когда присутствует только одно из этих предложений. Предложение «Я фотографирую» исчезает, когда снимки производит автоматическая камера (например, камера дорожного движения), а предложение «Я фотографирую X» исчезает тогда, когда фотограф не знает, что именно он снимает (случай слепого фотографа). Подобное разделение дает возможность говорить об интенциональной семантике.

2. Фотографии как авторскому высказыванию противостоит высказывание о фотографии. В данном случае придание смысла изображению происходит через сюжетизацию (emplotment). При этом восприятие изображения можно рассматривать как сочетание прямого высказывания: «Я вижу фотографию, которую сделал F» — и косвенного высказывания: «F говорит/показывает, что он фотографировал X», где денотатом выступает смысл высказывания. В таком свете роль подписи под изображением есть попытка перевода косвенного предложения в прямое (в поле истинности).

**Ключевые слова:** фотография, денотат, высказывание, сюжетизация

**Иосиф Мейерович Зислин** — психиатр, независимый исследователь. Основные работы посвящены антропологической психиатрии и транскультуральным исследованиям в психиатрии. Автор более 120 опубликованных работ на русском, английском и иврите. Автор книг «Очерки антропологической психиатрии» (М., 2003) и «Безумство глазами историков» (М., 2024). Соорганизатор международного междисциплинарного семинара «Языки психиатрии» (с 2019 г.). Участник Лотмановских конференций с 2000 г.

## Алессандра Карбоне

Сиенский университет, Италия

### **«Затушеванность событий»: Марсель Пруст в паратекстах Надежды Рыковой 1936–1939 годов**

Предлагается исследование о Надежде Рыковой — комментаторе творчества Марселя Пруста. Как известно, в контексте литературной критики переводных литературных текстов (т. е. в паратекстах: предисловиях, вступительных статьях, университетских пособиях) основополагающим является творческий подход, а также определенная герменевтическая гибкость и интуиция; именно они позволяют явно «чуждому», почти «враждебному» тексту/автору (напр., западной модернистской, декадентской литературе в СССР сталинской эпохи) быть принятым и начать

взаимодействие в рамках иной литературной полисистемы. Так часто происходило с текстами французской литературы в русских переводах 1930–1953 годов.

При этом если такие авторы, как Оноре де Бальзак и Жан-Батист Мольер, с легкостью находили место в культуре социалистического реализма, то судьба западных модернистских авторов, таких как Марсель Пруст, складывалась сложнее. Рецепция романа «В поисках утраченного времени» в России — тема, уже получившая частичное исследование в литературоведении. Вместе с тем интеллектуальная роль некоторых важных участников процесса рецепции советским читателем данного произведения никогда не изучалась, в том числе «прустовская» работа Надежды Рыковой, переводчицы, сотрудницы, с 1937 г. главы иностранного отдела ГИХЛ, соспособствовавшей своим тонким предисловием (*captatio benevolentiae*) публикации русского перевода «Поисков» (Пруст в издании ГИХЛ 1934–1938 гг.) в трудные 1930-е годы. Примечательно, что Н. Рыкова смогла глубоко проанализировать творчество Пруста во вступительной статье к 3 тому этого собрания сочинений в непростом 1936 году, а также — с определенной долей смелости — в изданной в 1939 году монографии о современной французской литературе.

Предлагаемое исследование будет посвящено анализу интеллектуальных и герменевтических стратегий, лежащих в основе написания «прустовских» паратекстов Надежды Рыковой (а также ее концепции «затушеванности событий» и прустовского реализма), в том числе с учетом директив советской культурной политики этого периода. Доклад и исследование предлагаются в рамках тематической панели национального грантового проекта “*Rewriting European Literatures in the Stalinist Era: Defense of European Culture or Mediation of the Regime’s Ideology?*” (Италия, PRIN 2022 PNRR).

**Ключевые слова:** литературный перевод, паратексты, рецепция Пруста в России

**Алессандра Карбоне** — доцент (*professore associato*) Сиенского университета. Преполагает русскую литературу. В сфере интересов в основном русская литература XIX и XX веков (в 2017 году опубликовала монографию о М. Ю. Лермонтове и французской «либертенской» литературе в итальянском издательстве Pisa University Press). С 2019 по 2021 год изучала рецепцию «Жизнеописаний» Джорджо Вазари в России в XIX веке и опубликовала монографию «Вазари в России. Первые русские переводы „Жизнеописаний наиболее знаменитых живописцев, ваятелей и зодчих“» (Рим: WriteUp Books, 2021). В настоящее время исследует рецепцию и переводы французской литературы в 1930–1953 гг. и возглавляет исследовательскую группу национального грантового проекта “*Rewriting European Literatures in the Stalinist Era: Defense of European Culture or Mediation of the Regime’s Ideology?*” (Италия, PRIN 2022 PNRR).



## Анна Красникова, Юлия Волохова

Университет eCampus, Италия; независимая исследовательница

### **Путевые заметки и их эпистолярные авантексты: к сопоставительному анализу «Добро вам!» и корреспонденции Василия Гроссмана**

Путевые заметки Василия Гроссмана «Добро вам!», написанные после его поездки в Армению осенью 1961 года и впервые опубликованные уже после его смерти, — одна из самых известных поздних работ писателя. Из этой же поездки Гроссман отправлял письма с рассказами о путешествии своим самым близким людям: жене Ольге Губер, близкому другу Семену Липкину и возлюбленной Екатерине Заболоцкой (письма находятся в частном архиве и пока не опубликованы). Многие люди и события, впервые описанные в корреспонденции, затем появляются и в «Добро вам!».

В докладе предлагается анализ художественного жанра путевых заметок — в сопоставлении с письмами Гроссмана. Чем отличаются структура текста, система персонажей, язык «Добро вам!» от эпистолярных описаний? Как трансформируется семиотический код при переходе от корреспонденции к художественному произведению, какие дополнительные смыслы формируются? Какое влияние на текст оказывает смена адресата?

**Ключевые слова:** Василий Гроссман, путевые заметки, корреспонденция, авантекст

**Анна Красникова** — лингвист, филолог; одна из основных областей исследований — текстология русской литературы XX века; с 2019 года занимается наследием Василия Гроссмана; в соавторстве с Юлией Волоховой — составитель тома неизданной корреспонденции Гроссмана (Письма Василия Гроссмана: отцу, Ольге Губер, Екатерине Заболоцкой / Составление, публикация, подготовка текста, комментарии Ю. Волоховой и А. Красниковой. М.: КоЛибри, 2025 [в печати]).

**Юлия Волохова** — филолог; с 2014 года занимается наследием Василия Гроссмана, работает в государственных и частных архивах; в соавторстве с Анной Красниковой — составитель тома неизданной корреспонденции Гроссмана (Письма Василия Гроссмана: отцу, Ольге Губер, Екатерине Заболоцкой / Составление, публикация, подготовка текста, комментарии Ю. Волоховой и А. Красниковой. М.: КоЛибри, 2025 [в печати]).



## Татьяна Кузовкина, Тигран Симян

Лотмановский архив Таллиннского университета, Эстония;  
Ереванский государственный университет, Армения

### Рецепция семиотических идей Ю. М. Лотмана в Армении

В докладе на основе материалов из Лотмановского архива и личных архивов армянских ученых будут рассмотрены научные контакты Ю. М. Лотмана с Казаром Айвазяном, Левонем Абрамяном, Рафаэлем Папаяном и Суреном Золяном, реконструированы подробности поездки Ю. М. Лотмана в Ереван в 1969 году и его планов переезда в Армению. Речь пойдет также о рецензиях Ю. М. Лотмана на фильмы Сергея Параджанова и Артавазда Пелешяна. Изучение научных контактов эстонских и армянских ученых расширит и дополнит картину развития гуманитарного знания в контексте давления советской идеологии.

**Ключевые слова:** Ю. М. Лотман, Армения, рецепция идей, научные контакты

**Татьяна Кузовкина** — работает в архиве Ю. М. Лотмана в Таллиннском университете, разбирает и каталогизирует архив, публикует архивные материалы. Основные области научных интересов: наследие и биография Ю. М. Лотмана, история русской литературы и журналистики первой половины XIX века.

**Тигран Симян** — преподает семиотику, теорию литературы, теорию коммуникации в Ереванском университете, участвует в ряде исследовательских проектов, член научного совета журналов «Семиотика и критика» (с 2016 г.) и «Praxema. Journal of Visual Semiotics», ассоциированный член Немецкого научного общества семиотики (с 2015 г.). Основные области научных интересов: история немецкой литературы, семиотика культуры, семиотика города, история гуманитарных наук.

## Кристина Ланда

Болонский университет, Италия

### Католические смыслы романа «Обрученные» Алессандро Манцони в советских и итальянских паратекстах 1930-х годов

По сравнению с 1934 годом, который является наиболее урожайным на выпуск переводов итальянской художественной литературы в СССР, годы больших репрессий могут похвастаться гораздо меньшим количеством изданий итальянских авторов. С 1936 по 1939 г. издательство Academia (накануне своего закрытия в 1937 г.) и ГИХЛ (унаследовавшее проекты «Академии») публикуют переводы лишь нескольких текстов: «Спартак» Джованьоли, «Аминта» Тассо, отдельные комедии и второй том собрания сочинений Карло Гольдони, «Ад» Данте и «Обрученные» Алессандро

Мандзони (в транскрипции: «Манцони»). Если первых трех авторов нетрудно адаптировать к социально-политической повестке (пафос восстания угнетенных классов, создание советского мифа о Ренессансе и пропаганда народных, низовых корней классической литературы), то Данте и Манцони, в чьих произведениях преобладает «поэзия католичества» (А. Н. Веселовский), представляются менее оправданным выбором для указанного периода, а следовательно, их переводы представляют больший интерес для изучения процессов адаптации.

Функцию адаптации в советской переводной литературе выполняют паратексты: предисловия к переводам, рецензии и другие факты истории литературы, которые нельзя недооценивать в контексте взаимодействия культур. Как указывает Сергей Зенкин, «определяющая функция паратекста — метатекстуальная, то есть он задает в кратком или развернутом виде программу чтения текста, его код» (Зенкин С. Теория литературы: проблемы и результаты. М.: Новое литературное обозрение, 2018. С. 149).

В нашем докладе мы предлагаем рассмотреть стратегии, к которым прибегают авторы паратекстов к роману Манцони (1936 и 1937 гг.), чтобы примирить идеи католицизма с требованиями редакторов и цензоров в годы больших репрессий. Паратексты будут рассмотрены в контексте: 1) директив «Литературной газеты» этих лет, касающихся литературной критики; 2) итальянских паратекстов к роману «Обрученные» тридцатых годов. Особое внимание будет уделено темам соотношения романтизма и реализма, патриотизма и антирелигиозной сатиры, которые появлялись на первых полосах «Литературной газеты» в ходе проведения пушкинского юбилея, подготовки к выборам в Верховный совет СССР, гражданской войны в Испании и полемики с итальянским и немецким фашизмом в культурном поле. Гипотеза нашего исследования состоит в том, что в советских паратекстах, служащих апроприации Манцони советской культурой наряду с другими итальянскими классиками, уделяется особое внимание интерпретации католического содержания романа не столько в рамках антирелигиозной агитации в СССР, сколько в рамках кампании против культурных инициатив муссолиниевского режима, которая была призвана служить пропаганде «побеждающей» культуры советского строя.

**Ключевые слова:** Алессандро Манцони, А. К. Дживелегов, Academia, «Обрученные», романтизм

**Кристина Ланда**, PhD — старший научный сотрудник Департамента устного и письменного перевода Болонского университета. Ее научные интересы лежат в области русско-итальянских связей, символизма и акмеизма. Она является автором двух монографий («„Божественная комедия“ в зеркалах русских переводов: к истории рецепции дантовского творчества в России», 2020, и «Поэтика радости в „Комедии“ Данте: оригинальный текст и канонический перевод», 2021), а также ряда статей в русских и зарубежных изданиях. В настоящее время руководит национальным грантовым проектом по теме “Rewriting European Literatures in the Stalinist Era: Defense of European Culture or Mediation of the Regime’s Ideology?”, отвечая в нем за раздел итальянской литературы.

## Марта Леховска

Ягеллонский университет, Польша

### **Современный русскоязычный театр: новые смыслы — новый язык**

Целью доклада является анализ выбранных театральных спектаклей последних лет (после 2022), созданных русскими художниками в эмиграции. Для анализа используется теория культуры и искусства Ю. М. Лотмана, в основном его концепция двух языков, лежащих в основе каждого художественного произведения (билингвальная структура искусства).

**Ключевые слова:** русская культура эмиграции, русский театр

**Марта Леховска** — окончила факультеты философии и культурологии в Ягеллонском университете; кандидатскую степень по гуманитарным наукам получила на основании диссертации «Мистерия в драме и в театре (пример русской культуры)». В настоящее время является преподавателем кафедры руссиеведения Ягеллонского университета; читает лекции по истории философии, русскому искусству, теории культуры и современному русскоязычному театру.

## Михаил Лотман

Тартуский университет, Таллиннский университет, Эстония

### **Рене Жирар и семиотика культуры**

Рене Жирар (1923–2015) является видной фигурой на интеллектуальном ландшафте. Он оставил заметный след в областях литературной критики, социальной философии и др. Его последователи называют его область исследований глубинной антропологией (не путать с глубинной антропологией Хайдеггера).

Анализируя различные произведения художественной литературы, описывая героев произведений и характер их действий, Жирар сформулировал то, что стали называть миметической теорией. Романтизм утверждает свободу чувств и действий, и романтический герой реализует эту свободу. В этом, согласно Жирару, заключается неправда романтизма. Правду же, помимо воли автора, содержат их произведения, герои которых находятся во власти метафизических страстей: все желания и действия подчинены подражанию некоему образцу. Герой влюбляется не потому, что ему нравится женщина сама по себе, а потому, что она нравится некоему (возможно — лишь воображаемому) сопернику. Ревность является необходимым компонентом любви. Позже Жирар назовет это миметическим желанием.

В следующих работах, из которых важнейшая — «Насилие и священное», Жирар делает два важных обобщения: за миметическим подражанием скрывается

насилие, а насилие является неотъемлемой частью некоего целого, которое оно образует совместно со священным. Священное насилие является основой всех религий, заместительной жертвы. В последующих книгах («Козел отпущения» и «Вещи, сокрытые...») Жирар уточняет и развивает эту теорию. В двух последних книгах он помещает свою концепцию в апокалиптическую перспективу; для семиотики культуры они представляют меньший интерес.

Не разделяя убеждения Жирара в тотальности миметизма, следует признать важность утверждаемой им триадичной модели страсти (до Жирара сходную модель описал Фрейд как один из типов влечения). Имеет смысл выделить различные типы страсти:

1. унарная модель — стремление к чему-то неопределенному, объект стремления вторичен по отношению к самому стремлению (тоска, беспричинное беспокойство и т. п.);
2. бинарная модель, включающая как субъект желания, так и его объект;
3. триадичная модель Жирара, включающая кроме субъекта и объекта еще и медиатора желания.

Различные типы стремлений представляется перспективным обобщить и спроецировать на уровень культуры. Приводятся примеры социальных стремлений различного типа в истории русской культуры.

**Ключевые слова:** Рене Жирар, миметическая теория, семиотика

**Михаил Лотман** — автор многочисленных работ по семиотике, теории текста, истории русской литературы (преимущественно поэзии XX века), акмеизму, русскому и эстонскому стиховедению.

## Маргерита Де Микиель, Карин Платтнер

Университет Триеста, Италия

### ***КультУра!, или Игра в перевод(е)***

«Культурный квадрат» (Quadrato Culturale T.E.T.R.I.S.S.) — в противовес узким «кружкам» по интересам — это междисциплинарная и межэпистемическая творческая лаборатория, действующая при кафедре русского языка и литературы Высшей школы перевода Университета Триеста.

Его акроним — дань самой известной в мире видеоигре (родившейся, напомним, совершенно серендипно в ходе исследований по искусственному интеллекту в рамках Академии Наук СССР), своеобразному символу преодоления барьеров во имя универсальности науки. В нем намеренно содержится и отсылка к Тартуско-московской семиотической школе, а именно к понятию текста, по Лотману, как «носителя целостного значения и целостной функции», и к знаменитым «Трудам по знаковым системам», где теории Школы нашли свое наивысшее выражение. Но “-

I.S.S.” по-нашему расшифровывается и как “Intercultural Semiotic Space” — межкультурный космос, объединяющий точные и гуманитарные науки в стремлении вернуть университету его роль пространства для творческого диалога, способного генерировать новые смыслы.

Деятельность «Квадрата» направлена на создание инновационных способов обмена знаниями: его конкретная цель — разработка оригинальных средств распространения текстов в переводе; его общая цель — формулирование расширенной модели перевода как quantum-based парадигмы современного знания (разработанной в сотрудничестве с кафедрой теоретической физики Веронского университета). «Квадрат» творит в «палиндромном» жанре ©TRADAJT, где межнаучный (мультимедийный) подход ведет от искусства перевода к переводу как искусству самому по себе.

Цель выступления, которое будет вестись от лица научного руководителя проекта и его студенческого оргкомитета (ЦУПа, или Центра управления переводами), — представить теоретические исследования этой «мастерской непредсказуемости», а также «Культурные игральные карты в переводе *Поехали!*» — инновационное образовательное средство, где взаимодействие слова и изображения порождает оригинальные семиотические тексты на русские темы. Это адаптированные, с графическим дизайном собственного изобретения карты, которые «Квадрат» выпустит в сотрудничестве с брендом Modiano Industrie Carte da Gioco e Affini S.p.A.

Море, кошки, космос, инклюзивные языки, лингвистическая доступность — разнообразные «мыслящие миры» (Лотман) между синхронией и диахронией, в калейдоскопе внутриязыковых, межъязыковых, межсемиотических переводов (по Якобсону). Но структура оригинальной игры ©Tetris вдохновляет и структуру самого «Квадрата», подсказывая возможность расширения его первоначальной формы путем добавления различных «тетрамин»: других языков, других культур, а также других дисциплин. Для новой экологии слова своего рода проект «тотального перевода» (Тороп), инновационное пространство «инонаучности» (по Бахтину) — в убеждении, по Лотману же, что «художественные модели представляют собой единственное в своем роде соединение научной и игровой модели, организуя интеллект и поведение одновременно».

**Ключевые слова:** тотальный перевод, семиотические игры, русская культура, итальянский язык, квантовые кошки

**Маргерита Де Микиель** — доцент русского языка и литературы на факультете правоведения, лингвистики, устного и письменного перевода Университета Триеста. Ее научная деятельность сосредоточена на семиотике, переводоведении, лингвистике, философии языка, главным образом в связи с современной и новейшей русской культурой. Переводила и курировала издания работ Ю. М. Лотмана, Тартуско-московской семиотической школы, М. М. Бахтина и Бахтинского кружка, Г. О. Винокура. Член редакционного совета журнала *Slavica Tergestina* (European Slavic Studies Science Journal) и «Временника русского формализма» (*Journal of Literary Criticism, Literary Theory, and Philosophy of Literature*). Член научного совета *Enthymema*

(журнала по литературной критике, теории литературы и философии литературы).  
Научный руководитель проекта Университета Триеста Quadrato Culturale T.E.T.R.I.S.S.,  
финансируемого автономной областью Фриули-Венеция-Джулия.

## Карин Платтнер, Маргерита Де Микиель, Клаудия Даффара

Университет Триеста, Университет Удине, Италия

### ***Поехали!, или Квантовые игры в перевод(е)***

Потребность в сплетении «точных» и «неточных» наук возвращается сегодня с новой силой, требуя пересмотра нашего прочтения мира в его многочисленных (пере)писаниях, — отсюда и наше предположение о ©Квантовой Модели Перевода как парадигме современного знания. Если онтологический статус исходного текста определяется тем, что он «уникален и синтетичен», тогда как переводной текст «аналитичен и множественен» (Тороп), то перевод как результат — это всего лишь один из бесконечных вариантов реального и возможного, прошлого, настоящего и будущего «переписывания» (Лефевр) исходного текста. Более того, перевод как процесс — это герменевтический акт, который не может быть априорно определен вне отдельных актуализаций субъектно-объектного отношения. Отсюда и парадокс присутствующего-отсутствующего автора и невидимого (по предполагаемым методологическим требованиям) переводчика, который на деле становится единственной объективной реальностью переводного текста.

Акт перевода, похоже, смоделирован на основе общей квантовой теории. Слова кодируются в квантовые состояния; каждому отдельному слову соответствует множество значений (состояние суперпозиции); при наблюдении (переводе) одно из «возможных» значений становится единственно «реальным», конкретным значением, актуализируя процесс квантового измерения во взаимодействии текста и переводчика. Наш аргумент доказывается на основе трех уровней перевода с русского на итальянский в порядке возрастающей сложности через анализ: 1) изолированной лексемы, состоящей из одной фонемы (case study: виньетка из комикса Кот О. Тищенко); 2) паратактического текста, состоящего из трех омонимичных и полисемичных лексем в межсемиотическом переводе (case study: триптих «Мир Мир Мир», выполненный проектом Quadrato Culturale T.E.T.R.I.S.S.); 3) синтаксически маркированного и коннотированного текста (case study: начало повести Ф. М. Достоевского «Записки из подполья»).

Артефакты (колода карт ©Quantum Cards in Translation *Poechali!*) разработаны в рамках научной деятельности проекта Quadrato Culturale T.E.T.R.I.S.S. (Testi E Traduzioni: Ricerche + Invenzioni di Sistemi Segnici) / «Культурный квадрат T.E.T.R.I.S.S.» (Тексты и переводы: исследования + изобретения знаковых систем) — междисциплинарной и межэпистемической творческой лаборатории, действующей при кафедре русского языка и литературы Высшей школы перевода Университета



Триеста (в сотрудничестве с кафедрой теоретической физики Веронского университета).

С тройной точки зрения квантовой теории, теории перевода и практики перевода как «точного искусства» (Чуковский) достигается метатеоретический синтез в рамках «семиотики перевода» как пространства интерэпистемической, по Эпштейну, «реляционной этики» между (как выразился Слуцкий) «физиками» и «лириками».

**Ключевые слова:** семиотика текста, теоретическая физика, русская культура, итальянский язык, квантовый перевод

**Карин Платтнер** — аспирантка по специальности «Лингвистика и литература» (направление: лингвистика, устный и письменный перевод) в университетах Удине и Триеста. Ее исследования посвящены изучению феномена «диалога с классикой» в современной русской драматургии с переводоведческой перспективы. Ее научные интересы касаются современной и новейшей русской культуры с точки зрения теории и практики перевода, с фокусом на процессы адаптации и интертекстуальности. Член редакционного совета журнала *Slavica Tergestina* (European Slavic Studies Science Journal). Координатор студенческого оргкомитета проекта Университета Триеста *Quadrato Culturale T.E.T.R.I.S.S.* (научный руководитель: Маргерита Де Микиель).

## Мария Пшечишевска

Национальная библиотека Польши

### **Школьная библиотека как текст: библиотеки средних учебных заведений Царства Польского и русский имперский дискурс**

Под влиянием структуралистских, а особенно семиотических лингвистических теорий, появившихся в 60–70-х годах XX века, текст принято рассматривать как единое целое, упорядоченное по определенным правилам, а также как инструмент передачи информации. Такой подход объединяет лингвистический анализ текста с социальным анализом контекста. Цель моего выступления — представить школьные библиотеки средних учебных заведений Варшавского учебного округа как текст. Подбор книг и идеологическая направленность этих учреждений, определенные российскими властями в «польских губерниях», рассматриваются как способ создания имперского дискурса. Этот дискурс был направлен как на поляков, которым предписывалось признать власть России над Привислинским краем, так и на русских, которые должны были гордиться этими «оплотами русскости».

**Ключевые слова:** Российская Империя, Царство Польское, библиотека, имперский дискурс, русификация

**Мария Пшечишевска** — кандидат исторических наук (PhD), выпускница исторического факультета Варшавского университета. С 2014 года работает в Национальной библиотеке Польши, где занимается исследованиями российской культурной политики в Царстве Польском. Ее основной сферой интересов является история книги, библиотек и чтения как инструментов российской имперской политики. Автор почти 20 статей, посвященных следующим темам: 1) русские журналы в Царстве Польском; 2) конструирование образа «русского» поляка в польскоязычных журналах; 3) российский имперский дискурс в учебниках истории, географии и русского языка; 4) народные библиотеки Седлецкой и Люблинской губерний; 5) польский школьный канон в гимназиях Варшавского учебного округа.

## Инесе Рунце

Латвийский университет, Латвия

### **Современный контекст конспиративного антисемитизма: глобальный и цифровой**

Британский теоретик конспирации Джован Байфорд указывает, что каждая теория конспирации имеет прямую и длительную связь с антисемитизмом. Подобно тому, как большинство современных теорий антисемитизма являются конспиративными и связаны с этим образом мышления и идеологией, самая большая «вина» евреев в глазах антисемитов состоит в том, что они обладают значительным богатством, властью и влиянием, которые они используют для осуществления контроля над демократическими правительствами, международными организациями, финансовыми учреждениями, медиакорпорациями и культурными учреждениями.

Современные IT-технологические решения открывают новые и беспрецедентные возможности для распространения антисемитских идей — возникла новая форма антисемитизма, отражающая сегодняшнюю токсичную цифровую среду, в которой он развился. Посткритическое общество в условиях социальной нестабильности уже не в состоянии заниматься анализом и содержанием этих сообщений, принимая их как одну из возможных версий объяснения всех причин. Антисемитские послания стали более глобальными по форме, легкодоступными и легко передаваемыми, но по содержанию они остаются такими же единообразными и шаблонными, как и в древних устных традициях.

В докладе будут проанализированы текущие распространенные сообщения о конспиративном антисемитизме в цифровой среде — с уделением особого внимания примерам из Латвии.

**Ключевые слова:** антисемитизм, заговор, евреи, технологии, конспирация

**Инесе Рунце** — имеет докторскую степень по истории. Окончила Резекненский университетский колледж (факультет гуманитарных наук), школу религии и



религиозного образования Фордхэмского университета (Нью-Йорк, США) и Латвийский университет (факультет истории и философии). Сейчас она является ведущим научным сотрудником Латвийского университета, преподавателем истории стран Балтии, культуры, религии и этнических исследований на факультете гуманитарных наук. Области исследований и специализации: отношения между государством и церковью, история церкви в Латвии, регионоведение и религиоведение, еврейская история.

## Анастасия Рыко, Алессандра Деци

Тартуский университет, Эстония

### **Коммодификация наследия и идентичности: молодые русскоязычные старообрядцы в Эстонии**

Старообрядцы в Эстонии на протяжении веков представляли собой устойчивую этнорелигиозную группу, говорящую на своем особом варианте русского языка. На протяжении последних 300 лет они проживали на западном берегу Чудского озера, поселившись там после бегства от преследований в России. Строгое соблюдение религиозных традиций, связанных с ними норм поведения и исторической памяти — ключевые факторы, формирующие идентичность старообрядцев по всему миру. Это, как правило, делает их довольно изолированным и консервативным сообществом в разных странах. Со временем, однако, в условиях глобализации сообщество эстонских старообрядцев столкнулось с процессом децентрализации. Молодые поколения все чаще мигрируют в города, принимая альтернативные стили жизни, которые отходят от традиционных практик старообрядцев. В результате эту группу больше нельзя строго определять как этническое или языковое сообщество.

В данной работе представлен пилотный исследовательский проект, направленный на изучение основных дискурсивных векторов, формирующих идентичность русскоязычной старообрядческой молодежи в Эстонии. Используя сочетание методов картирования тела и полуструктурированных интервью, мы применяем биографический подход, связывающий языковой репертуар каждого индивида с его жизненным путем. С этой точки зрения идентичность рассматривается как множественная, динамичная и подверженная трансформациям в пространстве и времени.

В ходе исследования мы стремимся выяснить, сохраняет ли молодое поколение определенную старообрядческую самоидентификацию, какие факторы ее определяют и существует ли (и если да, какую роль играет) языковой компонент в этом процессе. В частности, мы фокусируемся на наследии как на процессе осмысления множества значений, приписываемых прошлому, и его проявлениях в дискурсе информантов. Кроме того, в данной работе предлагается методологический инструментарий для разработки более масштабного исследования, направленного на

изучение дискурса принадлежности среди молодежи старообрядческого происхождения в Эстонии.

**Ключевые слова:** старообрядцы, язык, идентичность, молодежь

**Анастасия Рыко** — окончила Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет и преподавала в нем на кафедре русского языка до 2021 года, когда она начала работу в Тартуском университете. Научные интересы: история русского языка, диалектология.

**Алессандра Деци** — окончила магистратуру и докторантуру в Тартуском университете, защитила диссертацию на тему иноязычных вкраплений в онлайн-коммуникации русскоязычных жителей Италии и Эстонии.

## Юлия Хлыстун

Нарвский музей, Эстония

### Семиотическая креативность в иконографии и храмовой росписи

Креативность в искусстве выражается не только в создании новых форм, но и в способах передачи смыслов через символы и знаки. Семиотическая креативность — это способность преобразовывать традиционные знаковые системы, наполняя их новыми смыслами или выстраивая сложные семиотические структуры. В контексте иконографии и храмовой росписи это проявляется через инновации в композиции, цветовой палитре, символике и пространственной организации. Иконография и храмовая роспись — это не просто украшение, но сложная семиотическая система, которая отражает богословские идеи, духовные переживания и культурный контекст эпохи. Понимание семиотической креативности в храмовой росписи важно, потому что эти образы создавались как «тексты», которые нужно было читать. Они направляли верующих к осмыслению духовных истин, создавали связь между светским и сакральным. Современное осмысление таких росписей позволяет не только глубже понять мировоззрение определенной эпохи, но и выявить универсальные духовные послания, актуальные до сих пор. Умение «читать» храмовые росписи помогает исследователям раскрывать многоуровневые семантические структуры, а верующим — укреплять связь с традицией, что позволяет сохранять культурное наследие, ведь каждая деталь росписи несет уникальный смысл, который можно утратить без глубокого анализа. Семиотическая креативность в иконографии и росписи храмов показывает, как искусство может одновременно сохранять традицию и обновлять ее через символическое выражение.

**Ключевые слова:** семиотика, креативность, иконография, храмовая роспись, программа росписи храма

**Юлия Хлыстун** — последние 5 лет изучает церковное искусство с точки зрения культурологии, используя семиотический подход. В конце 2024 года защитила диссертацию на тему «Программы росписи православных храмов Востока Украины конца XX – начала XXI века: культурологическое измерение».

Цзяо Ду

Нанкинский университет, Китай

**Трансмутация палиндромного пространства  
в теории семиосферы Ю. М. Лотмана**

Данное исследование посвящено формированию и функционированию палиндромного пространства в теории семиосферы Ю. М. Лотмана. Целью является выявление центрального положения палиндрома в семиотическом, когнитивном и культурном измерениях.

В докладе рассматриваются различные формы и особенности палиндрома, такие как зеркальная симметричность, согласованность прямого и обратного прочтений, семантическая многослойность и целостная инновационность. Далее с помощью параллельных аналогий в нейробиологии и генетической информатике исследуется связь палиндрома с дискретно-континуальными семиотическими механизмами, что доказывает его ключевое значение в генерации «семиотической монады» и построении симметричных и асимметричных структур семиосферы.

Установлено, что палиндром не только генерирует новую текстовую информацию и возможности перевода, но и отображает «циклически-линейную» связь между биологической эволюцией и историко-культурными изменениями. Благодаря симметричности и динамической эволюции палиндрома мы можем получить представление о взаимодействии и обновлении различных моделей мышления, нарративных форм и культурных границ в семиосфере.

Исходя из этого, мы утверждаем, что палиндром следует рассматривать как междисциплинарный аналитический инструмент, который может не только точно представить логику формирования семантических, грамматических и культурных коннотаций семиосферы, но и дать новые теоретические ориентиры для понимания исторической эволюции, идеологической конвергенции и ценностной реконструкции человеческого общества на фоне мультикультурализма.

В заключение в докладе предлагаются направления будущих исследований с целью расширения применимости теории семиосферы.

**Ключевые слова:** палиндромное пространство, семиосфера, зеркальная симметрия, дискретность и континуальность, культурная эволюция

**Цзяо Ду** — в настоящее время учится на факультете русского языка Нанкинского университета, занимается семиотикой и теорией литературы и искусства Ю. М. Лотмана. Название магистерской диссертации: «Проникновение в тайну ключевого понятия „граница“ в теории семиосферы Ю. М. Лотмана». Опубликовала около десяти научных работ, в том числе статьи на русском языке: «Исследование социальных сетей персонажей второго плана и центральных героев в литературных произведениях на примере пьесы „Ревизор“», «Учение о Софии в богословской мысли П. А. Флоренского», «Интерпретация гуманитарной мысли в произведении „Дочь Бухары“ Л. Улицкой» и др.

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### **Проблемы и возможности описания архива Ю. М. Лотмана и З. Г. Минц в перспективе дигитализации**

Архив Ю. М. Лотмана — это не просто набор документов, а сверхсложная система, работа с которой требует креативного аналитического подхода. Для понимания и описания документов необходимо реконструировать контекст их создания, однако по прошествии времени не представляется возможным достоверно воссоздать ход мысли ученого. Например, часто вызывает вопросы порядок расположения материалов: был ли он намеренно задан самим Ю. М. Лотманом или имело место позднейшее вмешательство других лиц? Таким образом, устанавливая связи между элементами системы, архивист фактически создает собственный нарратив.

Дигитализация открывает новые возможности описания и структурирования материала, например, благодаря перекрестным ссылкам можно связывать документы между собой, что делает поиск информации удобнее.

Однако вместе с новыми возможностями появляются и новые вызовы. В процессе создания дигитальных архивов возникает необходимость в разработке единой системы метаданных для описания различных типов документов. Обычно документ помещается в конкретный раздел описания в зависимости от того, как интерпретирован его жанр, но иногда на одном листе соседствуют несколько жанров, например конспекты и замыслы, поэтому нельзя однозначно определить место документа в структуре описания.

Опыт нашей архивной работы может способствовать дальнейшему развитию методов сохранения культурного наследия в эпоху дигитализации.

**Ключевые слова:** Ю. М. Лотман, архив, дигитализация, метаданные

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