

TOIMETAJA EESSÖNA

Katre Väli

Kaua oodatud kevade alguses, aastal 2010, kõneleme ikka veel 2008. ja 2009. aasta masu ja kriisi järellainetest; töötute arv üha kasvab, majanduslikud ja poliitilised riigi alustalad vanguvad ning inimesed ootavad-loodavad muutusi. Need muutused võivad olla reaalsed või illusoorseid, ent ühtviisi ahvatlevad mõlemad, lootuseks naasmine eelnenud hea ja ilusa juurde. Järjekordne *Hortuse Semioticuse* number, arvult viies, vaagib mitmes mõttes ja käsitluses kriisi ning muutuseid ja murranguid meie ümber.

Seitse erinevat kriisi tekkemehhanismi ja olemust käsitlevat artiklit on mõtteliselt jagatud üldteoreetiliseimateks ning konkreetseid näiteid analüüsivateks artikliteks, ning viimasteks paigutuvad väikest MASU-sõnastikku esitlev tekst ning inglise keelne posterettekanne kriisi faasidest.

Tanel Pern on oma artiklis keskendunud kriisi vaatlemisele ajaloosemiootilises perspektiivis, milles Boriss Uspenskile tuginedes käsitletakse kriisi kui ajaloo ümbermõtestamise tingijat. Riin Magnuse artikkel seevastu annab ülevaate ökokriisi ajaloost, kolmest valdavast suunast ning püüab nendele suundadele tuginedes pakkuda võimalikke lahendusi ökokatastroofi vältimiseks. Tiit Remm käsitleb kriisi küll Pronkssõduri kaju ümber keerelnud erinevate kultuurinähtuste näitel, ent viitab teoreetiliseemale vaatele kriisist kui enesekirjelduslikust kronotoobist.

Konkreetset empiirilist materjali meediamaastikul vaatlevad kolm järgnevat artiklit. Priit Põhjala artiklis on keskseks kriisi erinevad ilmingud reklaamimaastikul, Katre Väli uurib, kuidas aitas kriis kaasa poliitilisel maastikul edukaks osutumisele Indrek Tarandi Europarlamentääriks pürgimise kampaania põhjal ning Eva Lepik käsitleb kriisi avaldumisi ajalehepealkirjades, jõudes järeldusele, et kriis on personifitseerunud koledaks monstrumiks, kes purustab, õgib, hävitab.

Mihkel Truubi artikkel annab ülevaate tuntud erinevatest MASU- teemalistest akronüümidest, taoliste nimekujude sündimise põhjustest ja kontekstidest.

Lisaks artiklitele on käesolevas numbris intervjuu Kanadas, Alberta Ülikoolis töötava kultuurisemiootiku Roger Parentiga, kes mitmel pool maailmas propageerib Tartu-Moskva koolkonna kultuurisemiootikat oma lähenemise kaudu (kultuuri)konfliktide lahendamisele.

Ülevaaterubriigis tutvustame mitmeid viimasel ajal ilmunud huvitavaid semiootilisi käsitlusi, sh Mihhail Lotmani hirmusemiootika teemalist artikliseeriat Akadeemias, mis analüüsib reaalsete ja kujutluslike hirmude, tabude ja paanika tekkemehhanisme kultuuris. Lõbusamat lugemist pakub Kadri Tüüri Vikerkaare Veljesto erinumbrist sukasemiootika käsitlus, mis püüab tõestada, et semiootika pole sugugi üliteoreetiline mõtisklemine, vaid rakendatav meetod erinevate

kultuurinähtuste tagapõhjade selgitamiseks. Priit Põhjala sulest ilmunud arbitraarsusele kui ühele semiootika alusmõistele keskenduvat artiklit tutvustab Katre Pärn.

Lisaks avaldame põhjaliku ülevaate põnevast Eesti Semiootika Seltsi Tallinna kuulajaile tutvustanud üritusest “Noored haritlased ma(send)u(se) vastu”, mis toimus 19. märtsil Solarise keskuse raamatupoes Apollo. Vestluspartnereiks olid Leenu Nigu, Luukas Ilves, Marit Rebane ja Martin Lään, diskussiooni juhtisid Tiit Kuuskmäe ja Kristiina Omri, sõna said nii poliitikud kui töötud, diskussion kulges elavalt ning lõppes muusikalise kevadet kiitva puändiga Kalev Vapperilt.

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Katre Väli

In the beginning of the longed for spring of the year 2010, we are still talking about the crisis and economic recession of the years 2008 and 2009. The aftershocks of the crisis are pretty frightening, the number of unemployed is growing, the economic and political backbones of the country are shattered, and people are yearning for changes. These changes can be either realistic or illusional, but either are tempting, in the hope of returning to the previous well-being. The current, fifth issue of *Hortus Semioticus* is dealing with different kinds of crises around us, expanding upon the shifts and changes in the socio-political landscape.

The issue contains seven articles on the evolvement mechanisms and essence of crises in various areas of life, that are divided in two larger parts: more generally theoretical and more empirical case study-based articles. The last article by Mihkel Truup contains a short dictionary of acronyms that came forth during the period of economic crisis, and besides there is also a poster / article on different phases of the crisis based on a group work by the doctoral students of the Department of Semiotics. Most of the authors are also doctoral students of semiotics and culture studies, except Mihkel Truup who is a MA student of the same department.

Tanel Pern's article deals with the crisis from the perspective of semiotics of history. He states that from a semiotic point of view, the perspectives of the crisis are less related to its "objective" reasons and more to how these reasons are perceived at the current point in time. If we describe history (after Boris Uspensky) as a process of communication, we can interpret crisis situations as circumstances that the "language" – or ideology (in the Geertzian sense) – of the group is not sufficient to describe. Therefore crisis requires rewording and remediating previous events in new terms and 'language'.

Riin Magnus gives an overview of the history of ecological crisis, concentrating on the three main approaches to the causes of the ecological crisis, offering possibilities to avoid and overcome them. She states that we should combine social questions with ecological ones and bring the ones who centre on solving the problems together with those who are tracing the sources of ecological crisis. Her article aims on

a more transdisciplinary approach, asking whether this could be useful for combining various scientific views.

Tiit Remm 's article postulates that crisis can be considered as a model in self-descriptions that could be used to conceptualize specific phenomena, or one's own society as a whole. Every social phenomenon (e.g. crisis) is related to certain spatio-temporal contexts, and moreover, the specific ways of conceptualization of each involves specific organization of space and time. Tiit Remm uses the much-debated sculpture called the Bronze Soldier and other cultural phenomena linked to it as his empirical material.

More concrete empirical materials mainly from the mediasphere in Estonia are disserted in the following three articles. Priit Põhjala focuses on the presentation of crisis in the advertisements. He argues that the role advertising plays in contemporary society is similar to the one that was played by art, religion and myth in the so-called primitive societies. For example, advertising offers clear explanations for and solutions to crisis – difficult situation that occurs suddenly or pivotal moment resulting in the worsening of circumstances in some way.

Katre Väli looks at the case of Indrek Tarand, who created a successful contra campaign for the elections of the European Parliament, using the surrounding political crisis as a way to transform himself to a successful brand. A case study on his campaign shows how one can use the general self-descriptive model of crisis in politics, economy and social sphere for building a case against all of the competitors and finally acquiring a lot of 'protest votes' as it was stated – he was favored by all those, who wanted to protest against the current situation in Estonia, not necessarily support his statements or program.

Eva Lepik has done a research on the newspaper titles analyzing the personification of crisis. It appears that crisis is a dangerous greedy and strong creature, which has great demolition powers and unpredictable character. At the same time it is clear that the "explanation" offered by the personification is only a part of the discourse of the crisis mythology, a strategy, which has been described by Roland Barthes.

Mihkel Truup's article gives an overview of different acronyms that appeared during the crisis' period, and questions about the reasons, contexts and consequences of such acronyms. The complications of cognizing economic and societal processes in the context of post-industrial society connect the manifestations of crisis also with economical discussion, fear, anxiety, and, in contrast, social therapy. As such representations tend to be used over-excessively, the risk of reductive causality arises. An alternative (positive) perspective would describe the representations as means of grasping the changed social situation - a certain type of therapeutic name giving.

In addition to the articles the issue contains an interview (in English) with a Canadian cultural semiotician Roger Parent from the University of Alberta. He is known for his theory of semiotics of conflict and conflict management tools, and has stood out as a strong supporter of the semiotic ideas of the Tartu-Moscow School.

The section of overviews introduces several interesting semiotic articles which have been published recently, including Mihhail Lotman's series of articles based on the semiotics of fear, analyzing the evolvment of realistic and imaginary fears, taboos and panic in culture. A more joyful text is Kadri Tüür's article on the semiotics of stockings, which proves that semiotic theory (John Deely's ideas) can be applied very well to explain and analyze different cultural phenomena. Katre Pärn introduces Priit Põhjala's article on the notion of arbitrariness as one of the basic terms in semiotic theory.

Besides the above-mentioned texts, the issue contains also an overview and conclusion of a fascinating seminar that was held in Tallinn, in a book shop Apollo of a shopping centre called Solaris. The seminar was intended as an introduction of the Estonian Semiotic Association, to discuss the abilities of researchers to analyze, predict and to an extent solve the situation caused by the crisis. The seminar was called “Noored haritlased ma(send)u(se) vastu” (the more or less accurate English translation would be “Young researchers against the crunch”). The participants were Leenu Nigu, Luukas Ilves, Marit Rebane and Martin Lään, the discussion was lead by Tiit Kuuskmäe and Kristiina Omri. Among the audience were several members of the Estonian Parliament, politicians, students and others. The discussion was pretty lively and ended with a musical punch-line by Kalev Vapper.