Andrey Bogatyrev (Russia, Tver State University):
**Esoteric versus Esoterical in Communication as Sense Constructing.**


01. The concept of meaning as well as those of culture and understanding is one of the frame concepts necessary to treat the processes of Man's orientation in the world around him and the world within him. Meanings appear in the range of intentional set of Man's consciousness towards the world, regarded throughout the scope of human interest. Meanings as signified (opposed to signifier) rest in signs of human language (the superior level of written texts as complex language signs included), in human practice and in a rather subtle form in the interpretative schemata of social and individual Man. Shared meanings form the continuity of ideal purposes of human race in general and correspondingly of national cultures in particular.

The opposition of the terms 'Meaning' ('Bedeutung') and 'Sense' ('Sinn'), introduced by Gotlob Frege (Frege: 1882) made it clear that there is a still closer to human understanding 'meaning of meaning', called Sense ('Sinn'). Somehow Sense construction widely employs different types of meaning, often treated as 'abstracted model of sense' (Shchedrovitsky: 1974). So Sense actually exists 'ibi et nunc' (here and now) and then it becomes a meaning, an interpretative construct to spot new intentional subjects. On the other hand the process of Sense constructing is being performed by instrumentality of various types of meaning. So the term meaning serves as a frame for potential senses in communication. Different categorizations of meaning open different expectations in Sense constructing.

Meanings are fixed in notions of language, naming the concepts signified. The bulk of meanings fixed in signs makes the bounds of Symbolical universe of Man and Humanity. Travelling concepts expand the instrumentality of understanding in different fields of Sense construction and contribute to the development of generic human ability of 'Verstehen' (as ultimate highest level of understanding).

So far as human abilities of understanding and communicating are concerned the question of implicit meanings and oblique techniques of translating them in speech arises. One of the most active on the book market subsequent ideas is that of esoterism of every true knowledge and wisdom, for "there are no profane spheres of life, but there are profane points of view".

The ghostly notion of esoterism has pervaded all spheres of life of modern Man from learned lectures to cuisine and brought about a mess in the house of cultural meanings, but does not seem to yield fully to a philologician's grasp. Here we are trying to share our point of view on the confusion in term of esoterism that occurred in European culture for good and for bad due to various reasons of History.

02. The notion of esoteric meaning first appears (as is generally believed) within legendary Pythagorean school of most ancient Greek philosophy. The interpretations of the proper meaning of the term referred to the time of Pythagoras may differ, though all of them recognize its affinity with the doctrine of multy-layered spheres of being and meaning within 'κοσμος' as a harmonic universe. The

spiritual power and aristocratic value of man is considered dependent on the depth of his insight into the deep of 'κοσμος' order.

The common meaning of 'εσωτερικος' in ancient Greek is that of internal, secret, essential, appertaining to the meanings of religious mysteries. The opposition of the former to 'εξωτερικος' as external, accessible for everyone, popular (democratic even) has given rise to many metaphoric reinterpretations of the term.

The neo-Pythagoreans of Alexandria aimed at filling the soul of disciples with wisdom irrational. So verbal expressions of conscience lost any value, but not on the primitive pretext of non-announcing to profanes, yet for the reason that matters regarded were considered inexpressible, unspeakable par excellence. Words of human language were considered unable to penetrate the essence of the ideas and experience shared between the representatives of ethical and metaphysical elite.

Many now regard every specific knowledge to inevitably possess some certain degree of (a certain level of) esoterism or just esoterism as an inherent attribute of any progressive branch of knowledge (G. Bachelard).

As esoteric is always followed by exoteric as its shade, the question of true value of these two opposite facets of each teaching is come shortly. The question is that of choice between the shell and the pearl (as Mohiddin Ibn Arabi put it "El Qishr wa el-Lobb"; or as Thomas Aquinas treated it in "De ente et essentia" "quiddity and accidence"; in Kabbala they speak of the world of "clippot" – world of shells).

"Tear down the integument!"; "Break the husk!" – Meister Eckhart used to appeal. Yet it was one of most widely known ideas of Meister Eckhart – the idea of inexpressibility of intimate mystic experience in direct names of human language: "Wie die Gottheit namenlos ist und jeder Nennung fern, so ist auch die Seele namenlos. Denn sie ist dasselbe wie Gott." (Meister Eckhart: 1912).

Here below we display a list of meaning projections of the name 'Esoterism' in different aspects of its usage in speech, we have collected and grouped into six major clusters of meaning, guided by practice, intuition and common sense:

•<u>theological</u>: spiritual, mystic, cabalistic, Gnostic, dealing with "living knowledge", apophatic, irrational...

•<u>metaphysical</u>: substantial (non-accidental), intrinsic, deep, profound, manifold...

•<u>sociological</u>: elitist, (intra-)cultural, exotic...

•<u>pragmatic</u>: covert, occult, for initiates' use only, ad usum philosophorum, for consecrate elite (cf. 'esoteric' as a noun in English), secret, hidden, cliquey knowledge.

•<u>linguistic</u> (from the formal point of view): opaque, veiled, cyphered, enigmatic, named in oblique way or left unmentiomed, metaphoric, put into words only by means of a most rough approximation to the essence...

•<u>semantic</u>: implicit, obscure, mysterious, ambiguous, manifold...

May we deduce from this variety of correspondent meanings one all-relevant invariant seme? Maybe one can do so, but the list is open and incomplete and new items to come may overturn the exacting construction. Yet there is still another way of elucidation of the concept of esoterism. As F. Schlegel mentioned about poetry that is better by far to define the final tendency of poetry than call poetry anything people used to name thus for this or that obscure reason (Fragment №395). The way of (re-)constructing the concept of esoterism through the limbeck of communicative intentions seems to us a possible (though not unique!) solution.

03. To start with we'll state openly on the basis of our preliminary observations that we have come to conclusion that the seme of alternativity (opposition to official doctrines and institutions) is becoming more and more predominant over other in this term in spheres of religion and science and even in pedagogics (take Anthroposophy). Here below we would prefer to treat the application of the concept of esoterism to aesthetic communication.

When the time of Romanticism comes it brings along a new reflection on the problem of comprehension and translativity of Sense and meaning. F. Schlegel claims it necessary for a real work of art to rock the Philistine and never let itself be completely understood. Arthur Schopenhauer affirms that a real work of a genius must forever remain a sealed book for the stupid majority of readers (Schopenhauer). Finally we arrive at Oswald Spengler's saying "Each culture possesses its own degree of esoterism" (Spengler 1918). At the same time it is noteworthy that the idea of Esoterism is one of crucial and most pathetically treated in Spengler's work.

The crucial peculiarity of artistic (aesthetic sensu stricto) communication is its intention of communicating the artistic idea to all humanity by means of aesthetic properties of the artistic text itself. Here appears a contradiction between the ontological exoteric quality of artistic text and its sociologically treated existence. In this connection we hold a point of view, that the meaning of the term Esoterical splits into two, according to different nature and way of existence of two different types of Esoterism, often erroneously confused.

04. Before entering the details of different trends in esoterism of Meaning one needs to establish the bounds of exoterical (flat, profane) Meaning. The first question here to arise is whether all implications in human speech are esoterical. Medieval opposition of 'patet/latet' – overt/covert seems not to know any plausible reasons for one person not to share the world of meanings of another person but that of badly organized speech (see S. Aurelii Augustini De Dialectica Liber).

Let us be not overfascinated by still popular among linguists theories of implicit meanings as implicated (that is logically deduced) meaning. The notion of implicit in general stems back to the Latin expression of *'in plicis textus'* – '(hidden) in the plies of textile' (the metaphor of a 'texture' still being popular with French post-stucturalists).

The origin of the term "implication" is somewhat different from the notion of implicit, it goes back to interpretation by the logicians of the Latin verb 'implico' [I conj.] – 'to fasten tightly'. The latter deals with implicit meanings, *tightly connected with* (logically derived from) the surface meaning. One of specific diversities of implication is presupposition – a tacit assumption of truth conditions of a sentence: if one affirms that 'the king of France is bald', one presupposes that France has a king.

All kind of knowledge objectively derived from the surface expression due to the so called mechanism of logical deduction may righteously be called 'implicated'. Yet there are cases in reading practice when implicit meanings of the text derive not from treadling the implication mechanisms. In fact we may affirm that artistic idea cannot be deduced in the guts of strict logical implication. Implicated meaning can be defined as a notion, whilst artistic idea is above any notion for it feeds in itself a principle of irony ('G□ttliche Ironie' as German Aesthetic tradition names it). Such irony is due to major gaps of contradictions between what is and what should be (S. Kirkegaard), between Will and Mental Representation (A. Schopenhauer) and suchlike .

Personal inferences of a reader of a text in the final analysis are rooted deep in individual subjectivity. G. Marcel treats the mystery of personal identity ('ontologic mystery') as 'meta-problem', as a problem of defining the grounds of the problem thinking (Marcel: 1967). Here the reflective ability of Man draws into a trend of infinite (for the reason of inadequacy of human language) regression towards the ultimate starting point in intimate Sense constructing ability.


05.<u>Esoterical</u> comprises all kinds of meanings circulating within narrow range of some small group of humans united by a particular and transient interest against the background of crucial meanings of [for] all humanity. Here we may draw a parallel to a distinction "cultural/ subcultural (marginal, enjoyed by cultural minorities) meanings".

So far as long as esoterical meanings are not shared by anyone beyond the bounds of a small group of people, they appear in the first approximation not to demand any cyphered forms. Somehow they most often deal with such forms as means of detecting partners in the game. One may even sadly affirm that painting of the XX-th century in general is esoterical for its most part (for not all people intuitively share artistic ideas at seeing blue-nosed madonnas with triangular child in screw-driver-like hands). Esoterical expressions often possess some 'perpendicular' grammar like that of a legendary missing (not ever written, but read by chosen cabbalists) secret twenty-third letter in ancient Jewish alphabet.

It is often the case of literary criticism to elucidate the esoterical implicated meanings of the text (Kamchatnov: 1988). For example Jury Lotman (1980) explains Alexandre Pushkin's comparison of seething champaign with fascinating "semblance of this and that" (Eugene Onegin, Chapter IV, XLV) by the fact that one of the author's friends had to omit (on censor's request) in his verses the comparison of Champaign with a proud mind. This Pushkin's quiz is usually treated as a part of author's intention in the text, though common sense whispers it

can't be grasped by a common reader without special reference to footnotes even at a very close reading of the whole text of the celebrated poem. Special explanation (provided in the commentary) made this meaning, addressed to few, accesible for everyone. It made this vaguely forwarded in the text meaning obvious, that is exoterical to readers of the commentary. Yet even in this case it adds little to understanding of the major, most exoterically displayed, intention of the text itself.

Esoterical sensu stricto meanings find no place in the generic mainstream of reproduction of cultural meanings. Esoterica is the province of esoterical. Esoterical meanings tend to circulate within the confines of particular groups of people playing specific 'language games' (in sense of Ludwig Wittgestein) according to language game rules unknown or inappropriate for profanes. Does this necessarily signify some radical superiority of an esoterical language personality over an exoterical one? By no means, for this gap in communication stems not from (non-)mastering any linguistically treated language abilities. Is this then the case of a divergence in hermeneutic abilities? By no means, for according to H.G. Gadamer the basic hermeneutic principle of any interpretation is to understand the text on the grounds of the text itself. As there are no indications in the text in favour of one understanding confronted with innumerable other understandings, esoterical interpretation involves no hermeneutic in proper sense techniques to validate its preferable meaning. So far the difference lies in divergence between symbolic (meaningful) universe of a generic man and the meaning horizons of an opposed to the first specific man.

Esoterical demands explication (showing the extra-textual supporting points for implications), whilst esoteric needs interpretation as constructing of algorithms of Meaning processing on the base of text data and language structures viewed through generic Man's experience.

Esotericity (Latin esotericitas) is the generic quality for all possible esoteric meanings. This quality might be defined as covert and profound in one, if one does not object to uniting the ideas of elevated and deep like it used to be the case with Latin noun 'altus', which signified both deep and high (and produced the notion of 'altitude' in English).

06. The artistic principle according to Kant is that of animating impact for poetry (as well as painting and sculpture) "derive the soul that animates their work wholly from the aesthetic attributes of the objects ... [to] give the imagination an impetus to bring more thought into play in the matter, though in more an undeveloped manner, than allows of being brought within the embrace of a concept, or, therefore, of being definitely formulated in language." (Kant 1928, par. 49: 7).

The poetic principle in the meaning construction according to E.A. Poe is that of sublime, elevating the soul of a reader of the text: "It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a physical necessity, brief." "Within this limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation to its merit — in other words, to the excitement or elevation — again in other words, to the

degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing.";  "When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect — they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of soul."(Poe 1846: 164). "A poem must intensely excite Excitemcat is its province, its essentiality. Its value is in the ratio of its (elevating) excitement." (Poe 1847: 254). "I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. .. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement of the soul" (Poe1850: 2). "It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this principle [Poetic Principle] itself is strictly and simply the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in an elevating excitement of the soul." (Poe 1850: 18). Here is a just and direct indication of evanescent fixation of artistic idea in written text.

There is a correspondence between difficulty in naming as means of conceptualization (that of 'being brought within the embrace of a concept' with Kant) and that of 'elevating' experience (a synonym to German 'Erlebnis'), described by Poe. Tenacity of experience goes hand in hand with naming capacity in plain words of a language. It is usually easier to fix verbally the denotation of a specific notion than that of a generic one. It is even harder to draw the line between intersecting generic notion like in case of those of Blackness and Darkness. It's next to impossible to name directly an idea, the whole, which embraces all generic notions in the text, those of Light and of Darkness and Blackness and so on. The Esoteric signified becomes in some sense 'meta-conceptual'.

In artistic discourse the esoteric is closely connected with the phenomenon of intervality in the text (Bogatyrev: 1996). The intervality is a substantial notion referred to the accidental notion of Sense interval. The Sense Interval is defined as presented to the reader's consciousness (by objectively fixed self-identical textual data) conflicting non-identity of meaning perspectives of the verbal expression in the text. The conflict of possible interpretations so pre-programmed is aimed at stimulating the reflective ability of the reader to critically reconsider and reinterpret the starting points of his prejudiced meaning expectations. As in fact the realm of artistic text deals par excellence with the realm of human subjectivity, the matters of the final meaning horizons of individual human being are involved in the question of the "right interpretation".

There is a rather popular definition of artisticity as meaning lost in translation of the artistic text from original to another language. So artisticity deals not only with form as is generally accepted, but predominantly with meaning. Here below we'll speak on the artistic meaning, missing in all translations of famous Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher" into Russian by the present day. Our major idea will be that the artistic idea develops in a text by means of intervalization of textual data.

The text narrative begins this way:

*"During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher."* (Poe, 1993: 148).

There is almost always a question, whether a belles-lettres writer uses metaphors as means of Sense constructing or sheer embellishment for the story in the text. The convergence of consonance and developed metaphor, boarding on catachresis and etymological figure as well (in a summarized form -- one evening of the day in the autumn of the year). We don't find such in any French or Russian translation of this text. If we assume that meaning plays the role of a substance that determines the form there is yet another source of meaning processing that lies not in province of rhetoric figures, but in the province of Verstehen schemata. The slant towards fabulaic in Sense constructing in translations of M. Engelgardt, N. Gal, V. Rogov etc. makes the esoteric idea of the text at best semi-developed. Yet there are means, that don't depend so much on idiomaticity of language. The confrontation of artistic and 'detective' intentions of the text as its possible meanings shows itself at vast extent and by variety of means.

The category of reflectivity is constantly being involved due to manifest objective insolubility of revolving in the field of reading Sense interval. The more arguments one collects out of personal experience of reading, social existence and understanding pro one scale of the balance, the more one meets for the contrary. So majevtically works the principle of reciprocal implication of truth and falsehood. Contradiction is the seed of (the starting point for provoking) reflectivity in reception. Reflectivity is a true mode of existence for an artistic idea, whilst the artistic idea is Esoteric Sense, fixed in most adequate form of language expression.

Here below we witness a case of most pure demonstration of Poe's set towards (never translated!) intervalization of textual data:

*"Beyond this indication of the extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn."* (Poe, 1993: 150).

A reader, that has adopted detective generic Meaning as means of Sense constructing, would see a fissure get lost in the dark tarn, whist a reader, that has adopted symbolic generic Meaning, would see the very building of the House of Usher get lost in the dark tarn. The latter version is far from 'detective' understanding, but closer to the linguistic rule of as short 'referential distance' between the name and  substituting it pronoun as possible. However eccentric the second version (based on the generic schema of intervality) may seem, it works in the long run most infallibly:

*"...and the deep and dark tarn at my feet closed suddenly and silently over the fragments of the House of Usher"* (Poe, 1993: 163).

No schema works well in the process of Verstehen unless it is interacting with various other schemata of different kind. Reflectivity provoked makes them matters to reconsider and to revise. Our demonstration of predicting power of a schema would be relentless if the matter tackled by Poe were something less than an idea of generic Man's gradual progressive destruction, resolving into annihilation. Somehow it is no proper name for the artistic idea in the long run for all great ideas are connected. To take esoteric (implicit and deep) as such and not to pretend to fix it by some resolute obscure esoterical term seems to us hermeneutically adequate. There certainly are other schemata of identifying esotericty in artistic texts besides that of intervality treated here (some under our construction lately), and they deserve special description.

The notion of implicit is wider than that of implication. It comprises not only implicated meanings but also esoterical and esoteric meanings, referring to two different types of Esoterism in Sense constucting. No article can stop people giving names they like to things they discover, but still there is some sense in distinguishing between different facets of meaningful universe.

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