TEXT AS CULTURE IN POSTMODERNISM:
INTERRELATION OF NARRATIVES AND DISCOURSES

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Annotations:

Власова Тетяна. Текст як культура у постмодерні: взаємодія наративів та дискурсів
Логоцентристській традиції, яка прагне в усьому знайти теологічну істину, постмодерністи протиставляють деконструктивістську модель інтерпретації, яка припускає, що культура – це текст. При цьому межі літературного тексту розширюються, включаючи найрізноманітніші культурні явища й артефакти. У цьому новому культурному ландшафті особливої ролі набуває візуальність, втілена насамперед у кінематографі. Постмодерний кінематограф демонструє унікальну ситуацію: фундаментальна й масова культура включають часто один і той самий інтертекст: психоаналіз, міфологію, віртуальну реальність тощо. Інтертекстуальністю насичені такі фільми як «Бійцівський клуб» Д. Фінчера, «Револьвер» Г. Річчі, «Убити Білла» К. Тарантіно та багато інших, але, безумовно, найяскравішим прикладом лишається «Матриця» Вачовські – поєднання філософської притчі, трилера та фантастичної утопії. У фільмі, який «за визначенням» другорядний і оперує відпрацьованою технікою, багато складних інтертекстуальних зв'язків із культурою фундаментальною. Очевидно, що сьогодні масова культура робить крок на відповідь у бік культури елітарної, тобто у масової й фундаментальної культур загальний інтертекст. Останнє – свідчення того, які серйозні зміни відбуваються на наших очах, зміни, які одночасно відображають «ситуацію постмодерну» та надають їй легітимності.

Власова Татьяна. Текст как культура в постмодерне: взаимодействие нарративов и дискурсов
Логоцентристской традиции, стремящейся во всем отыскать телеологическую истину, постмодернисты противопоставляют деконструктивистскую модель интерпретации, предполагающую, что культура – это текст. При этом границы литературного текста расширяются, включая самые разные культурные явления и артефакты. В этом новом культурном ландшафте особую роль приобретает визуальность, воплощенная прежде всего в кинематографе. Постмодерный кинематограф демонстрирует уникальную ситуацию: фундаментальная и массовая культура включают зачастую один и тот же интертекст – психоанализ, мифологию, виртуальную реальность и т. д. Интертекстуальностью пропитаны такие фильмы, как «Бойцовский клуб» Д. Финчера, «Револьвер» Г. Риччи, «Убить Билла» К. Тарантино и многие другие, но, безусловно, самым ярким примером остается «Матрица» Вачовски – сочетание философской притчи, триллера и фантастической утопии. В фильме, который «по определению» вторичен и оперирует отработанной техникой, много сложных интертекстуальных связей с культурой фундаментальной. Очевидно, что сегодня массовая культура делает ответный шаг в сторону культуры элитарной, т. е. у массовой и фундаментальной культуры общий интертекст. Последнее – свидетельство того, какие серьезные изменения происходят на наших глазах, изменения, одновременно отражающие «ситуацию постмодерна» и придающие ей легитимность.

Vlasova Tetyana. Text as culture in postmodernism: interrelation o narratives and discourses
Postmodernists oppose the tradition of logocentrism, which is aimed at seeking a theological truth, to deconstructive interpretation model, which presumes that the culture is the text. Furthermore the boundaries of the literary text are extended including a variety of cultural events and artifacts. In this new cultural landscape, a special role belongs to visual image which is primarily embodied in the cinematograph. Postmodern cinematograph demonstrates a unique situation: the fundamental and popular cultures often include the same intertext – psychoanalysis, mythology, virtual reality, etc. Such films as «The Fight Club» by D. Fincher, «The Revolver» by G. Ritchie, «To Kill Bill» by K. Tarantino and others are full of intertextuality. However, the most vivid among them is «The Matrix» by Vachowskiy – a combination of the philosophic parable, thriller and fantastic utopia. Being a secondary by definition and operating a proven technique, the movie includes a lot of complex intertextual links with the fundamental culture. It's obvious that mass culture of today makes a responsive step towards the elite culture, i.e. mass and fundamental cultures have a common intertext. This proves the fact what serious changes are happening right in front of our eyes, the changes which reflect the «situation of postmodern» and make it legitimate.

Key words:

знак, структура, деконструкція, текст, інтертекст, дискурс, нарратив, візуальність, уява, мас-культура.

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sign, structure, deconstruction, text, intertext, discourse, narrative, visuality, ideality, mass-culture.

As various researchers have noted, the genealogy of postmodern theory is inextricably linked to the language, "the language shift" that occurred in philosophy in the twentieth century. J. Derrida writes in this regard that the structuralist position "before the language and within the language" is not so much a moment in history, as a "surprise by the language as the beginning of history" [2, p. 12]. As it is known, the most significant thinkers of the twentieth century – B. Russell, L. Wittgenstein, M. Heidegger and others transferred their analysis from the ideas of mental activity to the language that expresses this activity. Citing the Montaigne's phrase that "it is worth doing more with the interpretation of interpretations than the interpretation of things", Derrida notes that the roots of Western science and philosophy go into the ground of ordinary language, where they are "picked up" by episteme. Thus, if classical philosophy addressed mainly to the problem of cognition – the relationship between thinking and the natural world, the philosophy of postmodern questions of knowledge and meaning become purely linguistic in nature. To the question about what makes reasonable thinking possible, philosophers-postmodernists unanimously give answers related to the structure of the language. Language is a system that allows thinking; thinking is "the product of the system", which appears in the interaction between

the subjects placed in the culture and the surrounding world, which is the object of thinking. According to Derrida, what it involves is the meaning, "thought of" in the form and the structure is the formal unity of the thought and the form.

Considering the sign and analyzing the correlation between the sign and the structure, Derrida emphasizes: we need to see what the meaning of the sign itself can be, because the sign already possesses the autonomy of philosophical discourse, it is already a relation of the meaning to the meant [2, p. 79]. What we usually call the meant – the meaning or conceptual content of the utterance is considered as an objective mirage of signification arising from the relationship of signifiers. According to Derrida, "transcendental" signified is an offshoot of the Western logocentrism philosophy. Hence there's appeared deep skepticism about the so-called metanarratives – universal and absolute truths that are used to legitimize various projects, policy and research including [9].

Postmodernists oppose deconstructivist model of the interpretation, suggesting that the culture is the text, to logocentrism tradition, seeking around to find a purpose, a teleological truth. The boundaries of the literary text are expanded, including a variety of cultural events and artifacts. For example, the architecture as the text: here it is appropriate to recall the words of I. Brodskyi about the famous architect-modernist Le Corbusier: "Corbusier has something in common with the Luftwaffe, both have worked heartily over the change of Europe image". In one cultural text we can see both as the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the destruction of the towers of the World Trade Center in New York, as a wall and a tower since the times of the ancient world, both in the West and the East, have been meaning the fortification of the city, protection from the barbarians, from an external enemy. In both the first and the second case, these symbols of protection are destroyed. It should be noted, however, that the wall has one more concept, meaning not so much protection from external enemies as "the separation" from them, "delimitation" of "the Own" from "the Alien", delimitation, aimed at consolidating "the Own", in this case their state (as it was, for example, with the Great Wall of China). The text, as it is known, is performative, a good example of what can serve a historical statement of M. Gorbachev on the extinction of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's text both in the meaning and the form is like the ones of those generals and chiefs of states, who, recognizing their defeat, declare it officially (The latter, incidentally, is one of the grounds of the USSR defeat approval in the so-called third world war).

This notion of culture as a text is the main part of the theoretical apparatus of deconstruction. According to Derrida, all in the human world is textual, all can be read and write critically from the point of view of the "interference" of the reader in the text. As the meanings internally are intrinsic neither to the signs, nor to what they relate to, but entirely arise from relations between them, Derrida makes the radical conclusion that the structures of the meaning (outside of which nothing exists for us) also include their observers. This scientific perspective suggests that language users do not just take the word from a specific thesaurus when trying to express some meaning, adjusting it under "the object". Instead, it is argued that the meanings of the words are "embedded" in the very use of language: how we speak, write or read determines what we think and how we think. As a result Derrida argues that the meaning is always elusive and incomplete in the sense that language can never express "perfectly" what the language user means.

In general, the criticism of metaphysics in the postmodern takes the form of criticism of its discourse or discursive practices (like Foucault). Discourse as a set of verbal manifestations, oral or written, reflecting the ideology of a certain age, exists in the form of stories (narratives); each man as a personality is born in the "stories": from the moment of his or her appearing around the man there occur a great number of events. However, the surrounding him or her historical, social, family and other contexts are favourable for remembering and telling the stories of some events, while forgetting others, without taking them to the area of the said that makes them "non-discursive". A collection of narratives shapes the world outlook of the person, and the discourse determines his or her choice: what events in life to turn into the narratives and how to do it [3, p. 14]. Theorists argue that the lesson of postmodernism is that both literature and history are the discourses that constitute the system signification through which we can understand the past. In other words, the meaning and the form are not in "the events", but in the systems that turn these past "events" into the existing historical "facts" [6, p. 89].

While the reality of the first order is the text: the text "seizes" the ontology. Post-modernists interpret the human activity in general as reading the endless text of the world. According to Derrida, philosophy turns into a form of literature, fiction. When everything becomes the textuality and intertextuality, the real world of human practice disappears into "the black hole" of free-floating signifiers. For Derrida there are only "distinctions" and "traces of traces" everywhere. Because, in Derrida's opinion, nothing doesn't means something, he comes to the conclusion that, ultimately, nothing means nothing [10, p. 24].

Such criticism is the most significant side of poststructuralism. Certainly, Derrida realizes that one cannot simply discard metaphysics, the objectives of deconstruction require "the skill of a rope-walker". But it is also clear that deconstructivists replace essentialism with functionality. Modern society

is a social performance, as scientists say, it is the society of "shaws and performances" [4, p. 176]. Postmodern culture, the stage of "destruction of the form" in the history of all-destroying modernity, gave an unprecedented opportunity for actors to find a social niche and settle there, following the rules of conduct defined as fair and appropriate for the social location. This means, according to Z. Bauman, that now we are moving from the era of pre-defined reference groups in the epoch of universal comparison, in which "the aim of human efforts to build their lives hopelessly is not defined, is not specified in advance and may be put to numerous and profound changes before these efforts reach their true end, i.e. the end of human life" [1, p. 13].

Postmodern society is known to be very dependent on the production of the reality "truer than the true", the reality simulated and focused on the mass media. Postmodernism, in fact, turns out to be captivated precisely by modeled by it "degraded" landscape of "shocks and kitsch": soap operas and culture of "Reader's Digest", of advertising and motels, night shows and movies of category "B", the so-called paraliterature and so on [7, p. 2].

The visuality, embodied primarily in the cinematograph, is definitely very important in this new cultural landscape. According to T. de Lauretis, the movie screen is a dream screen for the subject-viewer, screen, simultaneously supporting and hiding, displaying and replacing unconscious images and thoughts. In other words, we can speak about "film-work", the work in which the film makes the meaning for the viewer, linking it to psychic order, which Lacan refers to as "the imaginary", imagined as a modality, a dimension of subjectivity, largely dependent on "vision seeing", from the limits of incentives possibilities [8, p. 97].

Now in the postmodern cinema something occurs that has never been observed before. By its definition, the mass culture is deep secondary, it operates with the simplicity, practiced by cultural technique, so it was in the twentieth century, but in recent years the fundamental image of culture has changed, against which there is a mass one. Today, the mass culture makes a return step towards the elite one. This creates a unique situation: fundamental and mass culture often includes the same intertext: psychoanalysis, mythology, virtual reality, etc.

Touching upon the problem of intertextuality, it is appropriate to bring two classic quotes. J. Kristeva writes: "Every text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, every text is the transformation and absorption of other texts" [6, p. 126]. M. Foucault argues: "Borders of a book are never well-outlined: beyond the title, the first lines and the last point... it [the book] is inside the reference system related to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a junction in the network of community [6, p. 127].

As examples, reflecting the mass (re)presentation of current postmodern themes we can mention many films. The first (in chronological order) is, obviously, "Robocop" (1987), one of those post-modern films, where we can see a mixture of images and reality, modifying and erasing of the personal history and identity. The icon of postmodern cinema of the late twentieth century, surely is A. Schwarzenegger. In "Terminator" (1984) he is a cyborg sent from the future to change the present, and the film itself essentially is a retelling of the New Testament in the genre of science fiction. Although D. Lynch can hardly be attributed to mass culture, television version of his "Twin Peaks" (1988) was watched by millions of viewers who might not have thought about that the characters in the film were not aware of where reality and fantasy are: the border between hallucinations and reality blurred, and the world outlined by the dreams of the film characters.

The intertextuality saturated the films like "The Fight Club" by D. Fincher, "Revolver" by G. Ricci, "To Kill Bill" by K. Tarantino and so on, but the most striking example is "The Matrix" by Wachowski, the film, to which, as you know, postmodernism maître S. Žižek's article was dedicated. "The Matrix" is one of the "superculture" films of the late twentieth century, the combination of a philosophical parable, a thriller and a fantastic utopia. The film includes the most relevant topics of the second half of the twentieth century: virtual reality, text, fiction, unconscious, changed consciousness, picture of the world, space, time, dreams, etc.

The main character is a hacker Neo – potential Christ, up to a certain point not knowing about it. The man with a limpid name Morpheus and his assistant, whose name is even more limpid Trinity, inform Neo: what he feels that lives, no longer exists: it is a virtual reality created under the laws, the entity of which the word "matrix" expresses. Matrix is a generator of artificial reality, a false world. The objective of Neo is to save humanity by destroying the matrix so that humanity could gain the real world. But at first he must believe that he is the Messiah, "The One ". The motive of doubt as for the identity is one of the most important here. In this sense, the traditional Evangelical understanding is superimposed on much less obvious oedipal issues: "Matrix" means "uterus, womb".

As in the gospel, the mother ("Matrix") is rejected in the sake of the father Morpheus, evoking "The Golden Slumber" to the mankind. But the poetic trope "the life is a dream" takes on a special meaning. Morpheus is not the one who evokes slumber, but he who explains that apparent reality is a slumber. The paradox is that Morpheus calls to wake up.

The falsity of all the visible personifies the importance of a telephone as a mediation between the visible and conceivable, between the false world

of artificial reality and the real world of Morpheus. The ship of Morpheus, God the Father, is surely associated with Noah's ark, etc. In the film There are a lot of complex, serious modernist intertextual and new mythological relations, boiled in the pot of the fundamental culture. S. Žižek writes that the authors of the film must have read Lacan, the adherents of the Frankfurt school see the extrapolated embodiment of Kulturindustrie in "The Matrix", the supporters of the New Age see in it a source of reflections on the fact that our world is only a mirage generated by the world mind, which is embodied in the world wide web. The essence of the film, according to S. Žižek, is not only in what Lacan calls "the great Other". The central thesis, according to the philosopher, contains in the following: when people are awakened from the immersion into the virtual reality controlled by the Matrix, this revival is not the exit into a wide space of external reality, but horrible realizing of their isolation, where each of us is like the body of the fetus, immersed in the amniotic fluid.

When analyzing the film, S. Žižek writes about his "absurdities", while noting that they are "a moment of the film truth", they signal about the antagonisms of our late-capitalism social experience, about the antagonisms that define the basic ontological duality – the reality and the pain, the freedom and the system [5].

Researchers say that the postmodern culture (and science) don't dwell now in universities, but lives in the streets, supermarkets, newspapers, glossy magazines and advertising agencies. What critics call "New York Times" post-modernism" is phenomenological postmodernism of daily life, preached by the post-war generation of educated "white collars", not trusting to ideologies and cultivating their own experiences, mediated by the mass culture. As Egger noted, European intellectuals are perfectly integrated in the "installed" pop-culture and do not only write academic works, but also publish articles in newspapers and magazines, working closely with pop press [4, p. 176]. This creates a unique situation: the fundamental and mass culture get a lot of common patterns, techniques and value orientations, i.e. a general intertext is created. The latter seems to be one more evidence of the serious changes happening before our eyes, the changes which, on the one hand, reflect "the situation of postmodernism", and, on the other hand, give it legitimacy.

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doi:10.7905/vers.v0i2.576