

# THE UNIVERSE CONCEPT IN KATE SILVERTON'S WORK «THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS "NAUGHTY"» IN THE CONTEXT OF PROBLEMS OF SEMIOTICS OF CULTURE

## Abstract.

The article is devoted to concept «cosmos» in the worldview of a modern scientist examined at the example of «There's no such thing as "naughty"» by Kate Silverton. The book is considered in the background of cultural contexts and problems of intercultural communication. The study is based on the works of O. Spengler, Levi-Strauss, R. Barthes, M. Lotman, A. F. Losev and others. Based on the achievements of these scientists, researchers use the **methodological** principles of the semiotic approach to the study of culture. The study is based on methods of description, interpretation, questioning, correlation of the concept "universe" with the rhetoric of actions. The connecting link of the modern semiotics of culture and the tradition of medieval realists and nominalists is noted. The authors raise an issue of semiotic translation of the text inscribed in the structure of culture, which is perceived as a system not so much of texts as of actions, with their rhetoric and axiology.

On this scientific basis, the researchers **aim** to indicate the place of the concept "universe" in contemporary culture. This concept can be tested by referring to scientific papers and factual material cited in this work.

The concept "universe" remains unstudied in the context of semiotics problems. Thus, the article has some **novelty**. The novelty of the research is based on the systematization of already existing the universe concepts. The authors of the study develop the tradition and strive to supplement it with new, strictly substantiated conclusions.

As a result, the researchers **conclude** that there is an archetypal connection between representations of the universe, the Heavenly Father and the earthly

The concept "universe" is in direct interaction with the concept "personality". Based on the works by A. Losev, researchers point out that ancient man correlated himself with the cosmos and comprehended his personal existence through the cosmos. For the Middle Ages, the antithesis of the impersonal cosmic darkness and the Christian personality was relevant. Human being identifies himself/herself as a individuality and became a Christian personality because he stopped associating himself with the cosmos and his internal processes with its processes

The "psychological" parallelism typical for ancient cultures, full of plots of metamorphosis, has been broken, and ancient cosmopolitanism has been overcome. Without destroying the semiotic system of culture established during the period of antique Christianity to its foundations, modern culture has begun to turn back to the antique type of mentality. Culture-forming antithesis of the Creator's heavenly person and man's earthly person remains, being modified into the antithesis of the earthly and the heavenly, with the personality being moved to the periphery of culture. The impersonality of the universe leads to a crisis of man's personal consciousness, which manifests itself in the rhetoric of his action.

In Kate Silverton's work, universe has become the highest substance with which man communicates. O. Spengler argued that modern man replaced God by universe. If in the modern semiotic system of culture the impersonal cosmos takes the place of the Creator, who is a Personality and who is now located on the periphery of culture, then the human personality does not acquire a correlate, it is lonely, experiencing a crisis. The semiotic system of culture determines the crisis state of the individual.

**Keywords:** Space, personality, modern scientific worldview, Silverton, semiotics, Lotman.

## Introduction

In intercultural communication in the context of academic discourse, it is important to adequately understand and correctly translate different concepts and realities. However, culture as an independent semiotic system implementing its

own axiology and hierarchy of meanings in signs and concepts implies that a word or concept has a unique semantics in it, which takes into account the interaction of the whole semiotic system and its part - that is, the individual concept. Understanding a concept is inseparable from understanding entire system of the semiotic.

According to Y.M. Lotman, Culture, is a set of texts ("a complexly constructed text" [12,28] or their functions, characterised by a syntagmatic or paradigmatic distribution of textual elements. The system is dynamic: extra-systemic and systemic elements are in a state of constant rotation: inclusion in the system or exclusion from it. Binary oppositions, in their unambiguity (V.J. Propp) or ambivalence ( M.M. Bakhtin), are the basic principle of structuring elements, which can also be manifested in the opposition of core and periphery, described and undescribed, primary and secondary codification, necessary and superfluous, etc.

The most important for the creation of the structure are the binary oppositions which Lévi-Strauss singled out when he sought to create a universal scheme of culture: "This scheme can correspond neither to any particular pattern of institutions nor to any arbitrary sum of features inherent in the various forms of dual organization. It leads to certain relations of correlation and opposition, relations, of course, unconscious even in peoples with dual organization, but which, being unconscious, must necessarily be present also in those who have never been familiar with this social establishment..." [7,32].

Thus, the ideal translation does not interpret a particular text, but offers an interpretation of a part, homeomorphic to the whole semiotic system. The particular text in relation to the cultural context can, according to Lotman, appear as a full-fledged subject of communication, entering "into decoding and structuring relations with some metalanguage formation" [11,132], as well as in the role of metaphorical or metonymic denotation of the whole. Lotman specifies: "The part is homeomorphic to the whole: it represents not a fraction of the whole, but its symbol" [12,160]. Homeomorphism is characteristic of the semantic ("symbolic") type of culture [12,157]. And this element of the symbolic codes of culture remains relevant today, so we can apply the principle of homeomorphism of the part to the whole in the practice of translation studies.

According to Y.M. Lotman, a statement becomes a culturally significant text if it is correlated with the cultural code, which turns a linguistic text into a culturally significant one. This concept correlates with R. Barthes' ideas about Myth. According to Barthes, connotative meaning appears as a result of the mortification of the original semantic completeness of a word and the birth of new superstructural meanings in it, which give it other meanings, transforming it into a myth.

However, for J.M. Lotman, the cultural code and the cultural texts that it generates is a phenomenon worthy of deep research interest, while R. Barthes, studying contemporary myth, does not attribute positive connotations to it. For example, reflecting on the two myths of the contemporary to the author recent theater, that is, the actor's simmering and "zest"-director's findings, the most important of which may be style, Barthes characterizes it as "one of the techniques for escaping reality" [1,176], and the life as well.

In the Russian tradition there is a different understanding of the worldly myth as the basis of the cultural space in which we live. We find it in A.F. Losev's works, for whom myth correlates with mystery and personality. Myth for Losev is a part of life, not a scientific abstraction. Myth speaks the language of the body, of full-blooded being and the miracle inherent in this being: "The simplest outlines of primitive ornament already contain living life and a stirring need to live <...> an expression which <...> strives for liberation from <...> a deaf and dull immateriality. Such is also mythology" [10,83].

Summarizing the above, let us note that, when describing the semisphere of culture, scholars use the terms of a dispute between medieval realists and nominalists, who were interested in the proportion of expression and content.

Y.M. Lotman as close as possible to the language of Western European medieval philosophers and theologians when he typologizes cultural codes and characterizes the semantic (symbolic) type, noting that "it is no accident for this type of modeling reality the idea that in the beginning was the word. The world is presented as a word, and the act of creation as the creation of a sign" [12, 157].

Each sign in the semantic type of the cultural code, according to Y.M. Lotman, is matched with the divine intention, or universalia, in realist terms.

Distinguishing the asemantic and asyntactic types of cultural code, J.M. Lotman writes: "The above quote from Tolstoy is interesting in another respect: it emphasizes the conventional, conventional nature of all cultural signs, from social regulations to the semantics of words". The nominalist W. Occam also believes that the universal is "an arbitrarily established sign" [15,123].

The Russian Middle Ages did not know the category of "universalism. In the terms of N.Ya. Danilevsky, the Russian man got a completely different historical upbringing. The personality was perceived as an echo of the saint whose name the person was given. It was not the sign, not the name and not the universality that was correlated with the sacred reality, but the personality itself. Russian philosophy is less abstract compared to the systems of German classical philosophy. Only in its context there may be an idea of the rhetoric of the act, or "responsible action - with some necessary categories of rhetoric" [17,76]

Complementing and developing the theory of Yu. Lotman, on whom we mainly rely, noting some white spots in it, let us say that culture is not a sum of texts or their functions, culture is a structured sum of people's actions, correlated with the hierarchy of cultural values, expressed by a whole spectrum of texts: the actions of parents and others, the text of the city or any other area, books, film texts, texts of paintings and sculptures, the universe as a universal text, which generates and includes the creature texts of human culture.

The universe is also a text from which we read out signs and symbols that influence our actions. The universe is a world of symbols.

According to Yuri M. Lotman, it is the medieval culture that is based on symbols and belongs to its semantic type, this concept is also supported by other scientists: "Symbolic thinking is one of the most ancient properties of culture" [24,4]. and modern way of thinking also reflects the features of the symbolic type of culture, implementing the principle of homeomorphism of the part to the whole at the level of art, language, etc.

Language in its semiotic plan turned out to be such a complex phenomenon that modern researchers attribute its origin not to its communicative function, but rather to the ability to reflect a myth[8,164], as a result the word in culture fixes both reality and myth, which we can observe, on the example of the concept "sky" [23,496], but the ancient myth has lost relevance for modern insight and can exist in it and in culture only in a rudimentary form.

Culture is not only and not so much textocentric, as semioticians see it, which is more in line with the Western view of the world, as it is human-centered, as cultural studies perceive the problem and which is more typical for Russia.

The semiotic system of culture includes only actual texts, i.e. those demanded by culture. Dead layers of texts live rudimentary influence on modern culture, their existence may shift to the area of the archetypal unconscious, so their influence on actions may be no less powerful.

It is natural and even fashionable for a modern Russian not to know the Bible. That is why the Book of books enters the semiotic cultural space of the majority of Russians indirectly only through the hierarchy of biblical values fixed in the Russian texts of former centuries, and only in the measure of their relevance and demand, and only through everyday etiquette and "unwritten" moral rules which are transmitted by the society mainly owing to the parental education.

The human-centered approach to culture is also found in Y.M. Lotman, who examines the semiotic meaning of, for example, honor and glory or shame and fear, which manifest themselves in human behavior.

The literary critic Sergei Borisovich Pereslygin [19] also has a clear shift in the center of his scholarly interests from the text to the rhetoric of action.

This article attempts to see the semiotics of texts through the prism of the **semiotics**. Developing the teachings of Yu. Lotman, modern semiotics studies the connection between the semiotics of culture and religion considering "culture as a

self-sufficient universe" [20, 243]. We are looking at the structure of this cultural universe and place the concept "universe" within it.

In the context of problems of semiotics, the concept "universe" remains unstudied, but there is a linguocultural study, which "noted seven motivating features of the macro-concept "universe": "earth", "live", "world", "inhabit", "inhabit", "settlement", "light"". [19, 92]

Every book must have a different view of the cosmos.

Each person also has his own unique view of space. However, culture exists because there are the universal human concepts, the linguistic picture of the world, and the values that unite people. In the first volume (chapter 5, part III, paragraph 11) Spengler writes: "Was für uns »Gott« ist, Gott als Weltatem, als die Allkraft, als die allgegenwärtige Wirkung und Vorsehung, das ist, aus dem **Weltraum** in den imaginären Seelenraum zurückgespiegelt und von uns mit Notwendigkeit als wirklich vorhanden empfunden, »Wille«" [25]. Spengler calls space/cosmos the word "Weltraum". This word is close in meaning and sound to the word "Weltatem". So space for modern man/woman can be breathable.

Spengler's concept «space» correlates with the ideas expressed in the work of Kate Silverton. Spengler's attitude towards space becomes dominant in modern Western culture.

## 1 Materials and Methods

So, the culture of communication is the basis of culture. Articulate speech and its concepts are the most important marker that distinguishes a community of people from a pack of animals. The culture of communication includes not only speech etiquette, not only morality that speaks the language of deeds. The rhetoric of actions is always the answer to the question about the meaning of life and man's place in the universe.

Objective of the study:

- - to determine the place of the concept "universe" in the synchronous and diachronic section of the semiotic system of culture, indicating what system of opposition and association it forms with other concepts;
- - to find out to what extent the concept "universe" can be considered a part, homeomorphic to the whole, i.e. the semiotic system of culture in which we live as a natural habitat;
  - to understand how this concept characterizes the system as a whole and what rhetoric of actions it leads to.

The main methodological principle of the article is the correlation of the text and the rhetoric of actions. Descriptive and interpretive methods are also used.

This article is based on the book "There's no such thing as 'naughty'. The groundbreaking guide for parents with children aged 0-5" by Kate Silverton. It examines the relationship between the concept of "universe" and the behaviors described only in this book.

In addition, in the course of the study, a questionnaire survey of first year students of the Kosygin Russian State University (Moscow) took place. As a result, 28 questionnaires were collected and processed. Each questionnaire contained a Russian-language and an English-language part.

In the first stage of the study, the question was: "What do you associate the concept of Space with? Please list these concepts".

The questionnaires were subjected to linguistic and statistical analyses. The lexemes-concepts were analyzed in terms of their positive or negative connotations. The most common lexemes were identified and the number of their uses was counted.

The article aims to touch upon complex semiotic issues, limiting their consideration to the experience of intercultural communication in the process of perception of the concept "universe".

The concept "universe" is included in the nearest semiotic oppositions of synchronic and diachronic existence of culture, such as

- The Universe and the Person
- The modern conception of this opposition and the ancient one.

Culture is the source of a person's worldview. The correlation of actions and worldview is described in the context of the semiotic approach to the problem.

The diachronic approach to the solution allows us to rely on ancient cultural asset. The etalons of ancient cultural codes are fixed in the Philokalia. This cultural asset can be considered as an anthology of ancient cultural codes, which received precise and capacious formulations.

The article attempts to define the phenomenon of culture, based on its tradition of perception.

The authors of the Philokalia taught that human life is the art of art. Life is the ultimate work of art, so the definition of culture must center on human life as a work of art

Let us offer a working definition of culture as used in this article.

Culture is a semiotic structure supported by actual texts of natural (universe) and "man-made" (a system of texts or their functions) origin, which exist in the sphere of human consciousness and form the unconscious sphere, and which determine the rhetoric of actions and everyday behavior, which includes the genre of "everyday installations". Home interior culture models a multitude of complex, unique, individual texts that define the rhetoric of action and fix it.

This definition, reflecting the relationship of worldview and action - defines the methodological basis of the study. The methodological basis of the study also attempts to remove the contradiction between the view of the semiotic system of culture by philologists and cultural scientists. Culture is human-centered, not text-centered.

Text is a way of maintaining cultural memory, but the medium and source of memory will only be the individual.

Culture is defined by the rhetoric of a person's actions. A person's life and behavior is also a text. An individual concept can reflect the overall meaning of the processes that go on in a culture.

One of the subjects of research in this article is the processes of crosscultural communication. When translating Kate Silverton's work for a publishing house, one of the authors of this article encountered the concept "universe", interpretation of which was not typical for the accepting language and its picture of the world, therefore one of the goals of the article is to comprehend the concept of "universe" in Kate Silverton's work and in her cultural and linguistic picture of the world. Each concept can be fully comprehended only as part of the semiotic system of culture. The principles of semiotic analysis of culture are an important method of our research.

## 2 Results and Discussion

### 2.1 Kate Silverton's universum

The concept "universe" in modern scientific discourse may have a positive connotation, which should be reflected in the translation:

From Kate Silverton's perspective, the universe can do good: "When I finally became a mother, after many years of heartache, with four failed IVFs, two miscarriages and total emotional exhaustion, I was overjoyed! I had fallen pregnant naturally, at the age of 40, which seemed amazing given that even the doctors seemed to have given up hope; then, at 43, I conceived naturally again. My children, Clemency and Wilbur, honestly felt like gifts from the universe" [22,1].

As this example shows, the universe in modern atheistic scientific discourse becomes the source of life, realizing an impersonal goodness in itself and replacing the Creator in theological discourse. This substitution is a consequence of the triumph of evolutionism in science, this point of view is taken by Kate Silverton. The universe itself has become the source of life.

The semiotic system of culture has an instinct for self-preservation. But this is a figurative expression. The instinct of self-preservation is possessed by people who are carriers of this culture, which exists at the intersection of two vectors or forces. On the one hand, it is the vector of progress, and on the other hand, cultural memory, which provides the system with stability and the ability to be transmitted from generation to generation, transmitting a worldview that contributes to the survival of man in society.

Universe is close in sound and spelling to the concept of "universal. Universals are the divine intentions of being, existing before being. General categories separated from matter define being. Every earthly phenomenon and living being, every human being has its own universal, its own generic concept that defines all particular and concrete forms.

The birth of a child is correlated by Kate Silverton with the gift of the universe, but not cosmos or world. A word chosen from many synonyms preserves the memory of universals and their source - Our Lord.

He loss of the Creator concept is destructive for the semiotic unite of culture, for cultural memory and for the principles of interpersonal interaction in society. In order to keep the integrity of the cultural semiotic system unchanged, the concept of the universe takes the place of the Creator, so without having a personal beginning, it turns out to be an important subject for the dialogue.

Just as man of classical culture had a prayerful dialogue with the Father in heaven, so modern man needs a dialogue with the universe.

The singer and poet Lana Del Rey, who starsts her book with the following words: «Dedicated to whomever’s worn, warm afternoon hands come upon these pages— wherever you may find them—and that you may remember that the world is conspiring for you and to act in a manner as such» [6] enters into a dialogue with the world as a synonym of the universe.

It’s important that world is conspiring for you, but not against. The plan of the world is secret, but the poetess teaches us to remember and feel it for ourselves. Life, if it is read in the context of a dialogue with the world, makes it more stable and gives it a coordinate system.

Poetess humanizes the universe in her verses «Quiet Waiter — Blue forever», «LA Who am I to Love You?», «The Land of 1000 fires», «Happy», «Paradise is Very Fragile » [6].

The dialogue with the universe becomes a culturally significant phenomenon, testifying to the desire of culture and its bearers to keep its system intact. Other members of contemporary culture also enter into this dialogue. Thus, Kate Silverton relies on the views of Dr. Gabor Maté, who suggests that the crying infant transforms the attitude of the parent who does not want to comfort him at night into an experience of interaction with the universe, which appears as an indifferent beginning: «When an infant falls asleep after a period of wailing and frustrated cries for help, it is not that she has learned the “skill” of falling asleep. What has happened is that her brain, to escape the overwhelming pain of abandonment, shuts down. It’s an automatic neurological mechanism. In effect, the baby gives up. The short-term goal of the exhausted parents has been achieved, but at the price of harming the child’s long-term emotional vulnerability. Encoded in her cortex is an implicit sense of a non-caring universe» [21,108].

## **2.2 The problem of punishment of children and peoples in the context of discussion of the universe concept**

In the case of these examples, we see the interchangeability of the concepts of parent, heavenly father, and universe. By communicating with their parents, the child gains experience of interacting with the universe and establishes a perception of it as a helpful or indifferent beginning. It is natural to assume that difficult children, communicate with equally difficult parents. In the Old Testament Scriptures, we see that there is an immutable punishing law at the heart of history that continues to apply in our day. The law is this: when people obey the commandments and love each another, everyone prospers, the land yields abundant crops, and the enemy dare not trespass the borders of the state. If people do not live according to their conscience, violate the commandments, and people do not treat each other with love and patience, then divine grace withdraws from people and pestilence, plagues, wars, earthquakes and other disruptions occur.. The spiritual law of history is outwardly perceived as the law of admonition through punishment, but it is wrong. God is never the source of evil and violence, but if a person or people are left out of His care and providence, the world itself turns on its troubled side. This is the reality described in the Old Testament, which is the basis of our cultural code.

Kate Silverton replaces the concept of the Father punishing and embodying the Law with Grace. Parents should never leave their child alone. During tantrums, the parent is called upon to repeat, words like Mom understands everything or everything will be fine. Shame as a consequence of punishments is considered by

the researcher to be a destructive feeling. Strikingly, it is shame, according to Lévi-Strauss, that lies at the heart of culture. Culture is born with prohibition, and shame is an important means of regulating this process.

The researcher repeats over and over again that a child should not be punished because punishment is destructive to the mind, and every parent should aim to raise a child with a healthy brain. Indeed, the punishments mentioned by Kate Silverton can only be regarded as destructive. However, the renunciation of punishment is possible not so much through science, which testifies to its danger, as through a fundamental change in the semiotic system of culture. The image of the Father, earthly and heavenly, who corrects through punishments, must be replaced by the image of an impersonal universe, which as if created man, so it cannot be evil to him, but can be indifferent to him. Kate Silverton appreciates traditional societies, so punishment should be considered in retrospect. The ideal conception of punishment carries no evil in it; it is intended to serve the same purpose as the punishment-free parenting system advocated by the researcher. The purpose of punishment is to reunite the soul with the Father. In traditional medieval society, punishment was called penance. And penance (contrary to the etymology) is not really a punishment, but a healing of the soul. The penance involves doing the opposite of sin. For example, a thief commits himself to works of mercy, while a fornicator commits himself to the practice of abstinence. Even if the penance imposed is a bowing on the ground, it is not a punishment but a means of teaching a person to pray, that is, to reunite with the Father. The penance of excommunication from the Eucharist is the medieval equivalent of the secular death penalty, a fear that was supposed to keep from committing the worst sins. Its purpose is to mark the boundary between the permissible and the impermissible, not to torment the sinner.

Pedagogy without punishment is only possible in a semiotic system without a Heavenly Father. And the prison in modern Europe becomes the place where people come to Him. We do not mean that punishment is good, but it has not only a destructive but also a constructive function, contributing to a semiotic system in human consciousness characteristic of ancient traditional culture, which may be of interest to Kate Silverton who is interested in traditional communities.

Punishment is an important part of a complex semiotic system; refusal to punish sets the whole system in motion and completely changes it.

On the other hand, punishment should be useful to the child, developing his or her consciousness, will, and strength. And this is an important area for further study. And the types of punishment described by the researcher are really unacceptable. Thus, the Universe appears as a desirable and valuable subject of dialogue, so the man himself largely loses his personality, dissolving in the laws of the universe, obeying them.

### **2.3 Consequences of impersonification**

The semiotic system cannot help but change if such an important change - the depersonalization of Heaven - takes place. And the consequence of the denial of the idea of the personal beginning of Heaven, will be the denial of the personal beginning of man - not completely, but in some forms of behavior.

Kate Silverton repeatedly emphasizes that an infant's behavior is not personal when it is determined by brain areas that are akin to "lizard" (physiological experiences) and "baboon" (emotional experiences), which are driven by survival instincts, rudimentary fears, and other extrapersonal impulses.

As a result, the grammatical layout of Kate Silverton's text reflects the fluidity of the categories of person and number. These kinds of statements occur in the text: «When was the last time you asked your child if they wanted to play» or «But when we can get past that initial resistance it really is a healing opportunity – for you, not just for your child» [21,196].

The first example shows the diffusion of the number category (the singular noun "child" is correlated with the plural pronoun "they"), and the second example shows the diffusion of the person category (the first person pronoun "we" is correlated with the second person pronoun "you"). There are many similar examples in the book.

Since culture as a symbol-saturated semiotic system presupposes the homeomorphism of the part to the whole, the appeal to the impersonal universe and the need for dialogue with it influences the human self-perception. In both subjects of the dialogue (universe and man) the personal element is weakened,

which is reflected even in the grammatical structure of the text, leading to the diffusion of the categories of number and person of nouns and pronouns, correlated in the text with the idea of personality.

#### 2.4 Space in the culture of ancient and middle ages

The modern personality was born with Christianity. The most important condition for this process was confession and the need for self-awareness. But another important phenomenon, which we will call the "emancipation" of personality from the cosmos, also played an important role in the formation of personality. For the sake of clarity, we will further distinguish between the concept of "personality," born in the Middle Ages and which has become the cornerstone of modern culture, and the concept of "persona" of archaic cultures.

In the pre-Christian epoch man conceptualized himself in cosmic categories, and the cosmos itself seemed harmonious, mysterious, spiritualized. As a result, the human person seemed to be not separated from the universe and from the sum of its phenomena and prone to metamorphosis, and this archaic perception of the person in a rudimentary form remained for a very long time. Recall the famous example: Horace hopes to find immortality by becoming a swan, accommodating various countries and peoples under his wings as he flies. This is the final ode of the second book of odes:

iam iam residunt cruribus asperae  
pelles et album mutor in alitem  
superne nascunturque leves  
per digitos umerosque plumae» [4].

Horace's transformation into a swan is only a metaphor for the poet's attainment of immortality. The lizard and the Baboon claiming to be instead of a wise man are also metaphors. The researcher repeatedly emphasizes this, but it is the language chosen to express the thought that is important. This language retains a rudimentary kinship with the ancient type of human consciousness, not separated from the animal and plant world. As a result, pure metaphor as a convention and as a poetic device turns into a rudimentary metaphor, indicating a partial reanimation of archaic mythological thinking. Man is not separated from the cosmos. Man is a gift of the universe and a part of it. Psychological parallelism and the metamorphosis of humans into other beings is possible. This human cosmopolitanism is incomparably brighter in ancient Greek culture. To understand it we have to take a step back - into the depths of history - following A.F. Losev, who writes: "It is also necessary to distinguish antiquity from the millennium of medieval culture, which is based on monotheism, based on the recognition of a divine personality. Yes, yes, according to medieval conceptions, an absolute person reigns over the world, over man, who creates the cosmos from nothing, helps it and saves it. In short, the absolute person stands over all history. This does not exist in ancient culture, although there is an absolute there as well. But what is it? The starry sky, for example. That is, the absolute that we see with our eyes, hear, touch. The sensual cosmos, the sensual-material cosmology is the basis of ancient culture" [9].

Man learns from the cosmos inner harmony, or, as the ancient Greek would say, learns *sophrosune* "It is interesting that even idealists looked with tenderness at the starry sky, at the sensuous cosmos. Plato (or his disciple Philip of Opuntia) states: the most important thing for the human soul is to imitate the motion of the heavenly bodies. They rotate perfectly for all eternity: always equally, symmetrically, harmoniously, without any disturbance. Such should be the human soul" [9].

Man has been relating himself to the cosmos as long as the concept of "universe" had predominantly positive connotations. Christianity revolutionized the cosmos by saying that the world lies in evil. The world is in evil, but not evil itself. The universe is cosmic darkness (**Illustration 1**), which becomes a sensual symbol of mortality (synonymous with original sin), in which, like a tiny light, all life is immersed, so man is forced to refuse to perceive himself in cosmic categories - thus personality was born, thus psychologism was born. The canonical image of the darkness of the world appears in the icon of the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. There is the symbol of the cosmos in the center, a circular black circle of the universe with a man inside. This man is the King

Cosmos, the universe in which the preaching of the apostles will take place. But the world of the holy apostles is greater than the universe with its darkness. Man is a macrocosm in a microcosm. Man from the likeness of the cosmos becomes the likeness of God. A grandiose cultural upheaval took place. A new semiotic system was born, with the ideal of the individual at its center. Thus antiquity was replaced by the Middle Ages.



Illustration 1 Icon of the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and symbol of the Cosmos on a dark background.

Teerikorpi Pekka, Valtonen Mauri, Lehto Kirsi, Lehto Harry, Byrd Gene, Chernin Arthur devote the fourth chapter of their study to European medieval cosmology. Their research states that St. Augustine (354–430) warned against curiosity in his «Confession». The secrets of the universe lie beyond our understanding, so it is better to devote our short lives to the search for God. We see that the world is dark for the human mind in the Middle Ages and it is opposite to God. This attitude towards universe was common to the East and West in the early Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) made Aristotle's Universe of spheres revolve around the motionless earth and men/women, who was the crown of creation. [26, 37-45]

If ancient man/woman compared people with the universe, then medieval people compared the universe with man/woman.

Space was regarded as darkness not only in the Middle Ages, but also in modern Christianity: «The only thing that is required now from each of us is to bring a ray of light in a world of darkness. Light your little candle in the darkness of the Universe and it will become a little less dark. Although, perhaps, no one except God will notice this» [5,51].

The Middle Ages are often regarded as retrograde ones. It is not always so. It was able to solve some problems better than us. No evidence has reached us that there was a crisis of personal identity in the Middle Ages.

A.V.N. Pugin believed that the people of the Middle Ages had greater creative potential than bourgeois architects [2, 25-35]. V. V.Degtyarev explores and popularizes the views of A.V.N. Pugin [21, 66-88], who compared the buildings of the Middle Ages with the corresponding buildings of our day, which indicated the current decline of taste.

If the personal existence of the Creator is an actual part of the semiotic system of culture, then the personal existence of a man/woman takes its stable place. Modern culture has the right to take all the best from the Middle Ages in order to avoid the crisis that scientists are talking about [18].

## 2.5 Antique and modern universum concept

While there are many differences between ancient views of the cosmos and modern ones, there are clear similarities between them. It is as if we are returning to the ancient universe, which beckons with its harmony, and is reflected in the human soul, preserving it as an individual and a person, but shaking the foundations of its personal identity. Our semiotic system incorporates elements of the ancient system, which sets in motion its whole.

The most important difference in the perception of the universe by the ancient Greeks and us is that the category of doom, similar to the notion of punishment, for the Greek is directly related to the cosmos. Erynias are the guardians of the cosmic order, which is destroyed by people by their crimes, rocking the boat of the universe, seeking to return the cosmos to a state of chaos, so the Erynias take revenge on people who encroach on the cosmic stability and orderliness of the world. Erinyas is also part of the power that wishing evil, unwittingly does good. Erynias are ugly to the Greek, but a side effect of their evil is their opposition to sin in the human world and chaos in the universe. Space is a living organism for a Greek. He both indicates the ideal and canon of harmony and beauty, and punishes (through the erynium) violators of this canon. The cosmically harmonious man is endowed with "sophrosune," the man of chaos is possessed by "gubris".

For the Greek, the cosmos is not a person, but a persona. For the modern scientific mind, the universe carries no personality or personhood. For a Greek, the cosmos may appear as a bearer of a punishing doom, but for a modern man it is not. All these differences, however, do not negate the most important similarity between ancient and modern consciousness. This similarity is due to the fact that the universe is interesting to man, he admires it, and finds in it an interesting subject (the Greeks) or object (modern scientific consciousness) for a dialogue.

This turn of mind and partial return to antiquity is also typical for Russian youth, who are heavily influenced by modern science—that is, for students. As a result of the questionnaire survey of first-year students at the Russian State University named after A.N. Kosygin (15 questionnaires), it turned out that only 13.3% (1 out of 15) of the respondents appear words with negative connotations, such as "darkness", while for the majority "Universe" is associated with such concepts as help, love, light, inspiration. There is not a single questionnaire that does not contain life-affirming concepts, if such can be considered as such, as 'having no beginning and no end', 'enormity'. These words are found in questionnaires 6 and 14, in all others the positive connotation is more pronounced. For 13.3% (1 out of 15) of the respondents, the universe is even associated with the idea of God (2 out of 15, if the English-language answers are included), which correlates exactly with Kate Siselverton's worldview, but for her the Absolute is not a bearer of a personal beginning. The situation of questioning part-time students was somewhat different: the answers were given in the online conference chat room, so there was an element of "public opinion" formation, and after a concept with a negative-neutral connotation "unknown" appeared before our eyes, it began to move from questionnaire to questionnaire, sometimes being replaced by "unexplored" with a positive connotation. But being able to see each other's answers, oddly enough, did not greatly affect the results. In a closed questionnaire (full-time department, 15 questionnaires) "unknown" appeared 4 times, and "unexplored" - 3 times. The term "unknown" appeared 3 times and "undiscovered" 2 times in the open-ended questionnaire (part-time department, 13 questionnaires). In the first group "life" - 6 times, and "love" - 1 time, if we take into account the Russian-speaking answers. In the second group - 8 and 2 times, respectively. The general result of the survey in it is the same - there is not a single questionnaire in which there are no concepts with positive (neutral-positive) connotations, and the leading one was the concept of "life. For Kate Silverton, the universe is also a source of life. In a survey of correspondence students, as in a survey of full-time students in one of the questionnaires, the universe was associated with the concept of God. The difference was that this concept was not reflected by "public opinion" and remained the only one

Modern man strives for a cosmos, and the world for him no longer lies in evil, as was natural to the times of the birth and formation of the modern personality in the period of ancient Christianity. As a result, in the semiotic system of contemporary culture, the individual is no longer opposed to the world, which is now thought of as a creative force that can even shape the individual. And the unconditional existence of the personality itself, not determined completely and

finally by the influence of the environment and upbringing, is often not accepted by students.

All of the above can be correlated with the opinion of J.M. Lotman: "scientific texts can be used by the collective or any part of it in the function of religious" [12,36]. On the one hand, the purely scientific conception of the cosmos is relevant for our days, according to which "the fact that the universe has a past beginning (as well as the problem of the original creation in general) is only an illusion of human consciousness" [14,189].

On the other hand, modern man transfers some of the functions of the Creator to the universe. First, it is perceived as the creative source that gave birth to man, and second, it invites him to a dialogue with himself. The displacement of the scientific concept into the realm of the religious is necessary to preserve the stability of the semiotic system that emerged in the Middle Ages after the powerful cultural upheaval when cosmocentric culture placed the individual at the center of the universe. A personal beginning united the earth, where man is, and heaven, where God is. This ontological vertical formed by the concepts of Divine Heaven and earthly man, with an initially personal *modus operandi* common to them and various forms of interaction from attraction to repulsion, remains fundamental to culture until the present day.

Although modern culture is rather atheistic, it retains the structure and semiotic system of religious culture. This turns out to be possible due to the modification of the concept of "universe."

Since there is much at the level of structure that is akin to medieval culture, modern culture retains the ability to express the whole through its part. In addition, Kate Silverton's conception of personality is interesting to discuss in the context of medieval views of man. This discussion is possible because the researcher believes that the modern concept of upbringing has lost much, since ancient traditional societies had more wisdom in the field of human upbringing and views on the essence of man.

Kate Silverton emphasizes that much of a child's behavior is not personal, because it is determined by instincts that make us similar to mammals (figuratively speaking, baboons) and reptiles (lizards). Interestingly, the researcher testifies to the same threefold structure of personality as recorded in the writings of the Holy Fathers. Traditional medieval culture distinguished three powers of the soul in man, which correlate well with the three areas of the brain identified by Kate Silverton.

The Christian doctrine of man "borrowed from antiquity" [13, 197] the idea that the soul is threefold. This understanding of personality, enriched by the doctrine of the Trinity of the Creator, is developed in the ontology of Philokalia and in the "Exact Statement of Orthodox Faith" of St. John Damascene.

The holy fathers distinguished the rational, angry, and lustful powers (parts) of the human soul, which correlate with the three parts of the brain identified by Kate Silverton. The rational power of the soul corresponds to the owl, the wrathful power to the baboon, and the covetous power to the lizard.

The Fathers, the authors of Philokalia, do not set forth the doctrine of the trinity of the soul as in an anthropology textbook; this doctrine has the purely practical goal of teaching spiritual combat, so it is set forth very dynamically. Thus, the monk Evagrius first points to the trinity of the soul, and then calls for courage to unite it: «The matter of discretion consists in stirring up the part of the soul in which there is anger to the conduct of internal combat.

The function of wisdom is to excite the mind to unceasing attentive vigilance. The work of righteousness is to direct the part in which lust is placed only to virtue, yes to God. Finally, the matter of courage is to rule over the five senses, and not to allow our inner man, i.e. spirit, or our outer man, i.e. body, to be defiled by them" [2,305]. The scientific conception of the brain structure, in which three zones are distinguished, repeats the theological medieval theory of man, keeping the trinary structure of personality.

So, as a result of modification of the concepts "cosmos" and "personality" they take the same places in the semiotic system of modern culture as in the Middle Ages, on both of these concepts we can model the medieval ideas of the Creator and man as the image of God. These two concepts, which are in a juxtaposition-opposition relationship, constitute a system-forming pair, which holds the medieval cultural system and does not let it finally collapse. The concepts change,

starting to fit into the semiotic system in different ways, but retain the basic oppositions testifying to the identity of culture.

In spite of all the worldview changes, the semiotic system of the new type was not formed. The cultural change that occurred during the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages was not repeated.

The semiotic system presupposes the unity of form and content, the structure of culture and its philosophy. We see the strength and flexibility of the medieval system, which was able to absorb the new content. The destruction of the medieval system would be devastating for culture, since a new system can only be formed with the birth of a new life-affirming philosophy. It takes an impulse of tremendous power to create a new system of culture on the ruins. The new is not built through the negation of the old.

Emphasizing the novelty of our concept, we state that we've not picked it up from someone else's research.

The semiotic system of culture at a new stage of its development is based on the achievements of previous stages. Firstly, it returns a person to a dialogue with the impersonal cosmos, as it was in antiquity. Secondly, Cosmos occupies a place in the semiotic system of culture similar to place occupied by Divine personality in medieval culture. Modern culture does not completely destroy Christian medieval culture. Kate Silverton actively modifies it, but does not completely destroy it.

However, it is significant that the Divine Person has been replaced by the impersonal principle of the universe; as a result, the semiotic system of culture can provoke a crisis of personal identity.

### 3 Conclusion

**We tried to achieve the goals set in the work and came to the following conclusions.**

The perception of the concept "Universe" in the cultures of different countries and centuries will be different in a diachronic mode. Antiquity thought of man in cosmic categories.

We believe that the conclusion is the most important part of the article, so some important proof of the concept is included in it.

A. Losev proves that a person thinks of his body, personality and destiny in cosmic categories. His 12th thesis goes like this:

"It turns out that what was the basic idea of the world among the Greeks?

This is a theater stage! And people are actors who appear on this stage, plays their role and leaves. Where do they come from? It is unknown where they go, it is unknown, but they play their role. However, how is it possible to not know where they come from and where they go? They come from the sky, they are an emanation of the cosmos and the cosmic ether, and go there and dissolve there, like a drop in the ocean. What about on earth? And the earth is the stage where they play their role. Someone will say: but what kind of play are these actors performing? I'll answer: but why do you care? Are you space? Cosmic broadcast? The cosmos itself composes the dramas and comedies that we we do. The philosopher understands this, but all he needs to know is one thing: that he is an actor, and nothing more" [9].

The ancient Greek Erinyes (an analogue of Conscience) is not an inner voice, but a cosmic force. This is how A. Losev [9] regard Erinyes and fate. Man/woman thought of himself/herself in the context of the cosmos, compared himself with it and idealized it. Let us add that for modern readers of ancient Greek tragedies, Erinnia becomes the personification of conscience. But the Greeks had no conscience. It was the cosmos that made them moral, and not the inner voice of conscience.

Christian culture dramatically changed the cultural code; man/woman emancipated himself/herself from the universe and began to oppose himself/herself to it, like light to darkness [26, 37-45].

Medieval culture opposed the personality to the cosmos. The universe was unfolding as darkness, evil. We see such an image on the canonical icons of the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, in the center of which is the symbol of

cosmic darkness (Illustration 1). The feeling of universal evil made a person focus on his personal existence and seek support in the personal existence of the Creator.

If we consider the concept of "Universe" in a synchronous mode, then it ceased to be perceived as darkness and evil, the personality began to admit the influences of the external world and perceive them as a creative principle capable of forming the personality itself; modern thinking at a new stage of development has partially returned to the ancient perception of the universe, rehabilitated the cosmos. A person no longer thinks of himself in cosmic categories, but turns to cosmos as to Life spring in search of a dialogue to it. Now the European cultural systems are modifications of the Christian medieval basic type of culture, dramatically changing it, but not creating a new type of culture. A transformation system has been created for use in conceptual systems.

Such concepts as the Creator, father, personality are included in the core of the semantic system formed by the concept of "Cosmos".

After conducting the research and obtaining the result, we came to the conclusion that modern culture retains the features of that one with the symbolic code, therefore the homeomorphism of the part to the whole is possible. It is the "Universe" that becomes such an important concept, reflecting the properties of the semiotic system of culture as a whole with its axiology and hierarchy of values: replacing a personal God and remaining an impersonal category, it contributes to a crisis of personal identity. We see this in the work by Kate Silverton, who often draws the reader's attention to the fact that much in human behavior remains impersonal.

The concept "universe" characterizes the system as a whole and leads to a certain rhetoric of actions: a person can be viewed as a revived text. The personality realizes in its behavior the textual potential of culture, mainly drawing knowledge about it from the rhetoric of human actions, which themselves become a text and part of the semiotic system of culture. Modern culture believes that people are not born a person, but become a person. As a result, abortion is so widespread, because the mass consciousness does not see the personality in the embryo. Abortion is becoming part of the rhetoric of the actions of a modern person. These actions are predetermined by the concept of "Universe". An impersonal, but kind universe projects its impersonality onto a person, so he does not recognize himself angry, denying the personality in an unborn baby.

We also had a task to touch upon the problems of crosscultural communication in the process of perception of the concept "universe".

Personality generates texts and becomes a product of texts, our cultural communication with the West is so dense that, judging by the student's questionnaire, our perception of the Universe is approaching that of the West.

Research prospects:

the concepts that form the core of the semiotic system that is constituted around the concept of "universe" and is part of the whole of semiotic system of the culture are analyzed in this article. It is supposed to continue the study of the concepts of the periphery, such as life, love, the unknown. These concepts were often named in the questionnaires, but they have not yet taken their place in the system;

The article poses the problem of the influence of the concept "universe" on the rhetoric of actions - and the continuation of research in this direction seems to us the most promising as the concept of "universe" largely determines the self-consciousness of a modern person and the rhetoric of his actions.

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