

In the article *Humorous interpretations of abbreviations as a socio-cultural phenomenon*, Voolaid presents the types of abbreviation riddles and their formation formulae. These are based on humour and therefore she uses humour theories to interpret them. Most of the older examples are connected with different phenomena of the Soviet era. Voolaid adopts the idea of code-mixing for acronyms based on Russian but being interpreted with Estonian words. This seems a linguistically plausible solution.

In the article *Narratiivsed piltmõistatused – mitme folkloorižanri piirinähtus* [Narrative Droodles or Droodle Tales – a Border Case of Riddles and Narratives], Voolaid describes narrative droodles as a combination of riddle + tale + drawing + humour + play, which presuppose an interactive act of communication between the one posing the question and the one answering it. They have also been called pseudo-riddles or quasi-riddles by earlier researchers. Voolaid has tried to analyse this odd genre with relatively different methods than in case of other riddles. I do not find the comparison with Vladimir Propp's or Alan Dundes' theories too fruitful, but the author does not seem to be very happy with them, either.

The last article, *Carrying a wolf, a goat, and a cabbage across the stream. Metamorphoses of ATU 1579*, brings us to the second life of folklore postulated by Lauri Honko. It gives a picture of the narrative being formed into a droodle, and the life of the droodle in different Internet games and websites, i.e. the second life of droodles as computer games. Voolaid sees in this the multi-modality or multi-mediality or creolity of folklore.

Piret Voolaid's thesis offers very interesting insights on less studied subgenres of riddles, which have become very popular during the last four decades, she presents a valid analysis and, at the same time, creates a taxonomy of these subgenres.

Sirkka Saarinen

FRAGMENTS FROM THE CONVENTION OF ETHNOGRAPHERS AND FOLKLORISTS

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P103. Uneasy places: shifting research boundaries and displacing selves.

P203. Narrative space in a multicultural city.

The panel on *Uneasy places* aimed at interdisciplinary discussion on the connection on how social action and the places shaped by way of this are mutually interrelated, proceeding from a theoretical standpoint that socially framed places are not shaped merely by the free will of people, and more often than not do not speak of neutral feeling of belonging. Rather, the decisions about the associations of belonging are disputable, as this is to do with a constantly changing process due to social interaction, and can be assessed from several viewpoints at a time, and these assessments may refer to the belonging that has not been strived for, and to a wish to belong together, yet this desire has not been achieved. Research on the spaces with concrete boundaries, and the ac-

tivities associated with these places (e.g. religious acts, diasporic communities, criminogenic areas, tourism sites, etc.) attempts to describe these places in the context of the reciprocal relationships of the social groups therein, and also in relation to power, etc.

All ten presentations in this panel represented an ethnographic or cultural anthropology related research, whereas the most frequently used methods comprised interview, participant observation, ethnographic description, etc. As the speakers were mainly either from Brazil or Massachusetts, USA, the focus of observation was also put on the Americas. In general, the presentations fell into four larger categories with regard to their subject matter: **tourism and travel, youth culture and socio-symbolic borders in urban space; confined space; migration, race and identity**. The papers based on the research of tourism and travelogues highlighted the constructed nature of spaces – the person visiting a place created this place from the fragments of urban life, i.e. from the details characteristic of today's middle class, by way of re-sequencing these details. However, contemporary interpretation of the 19th century travel journals leads to generalisations: the descriptions of towns and cities do not only include the pictures seen and experienced during the trip, but instead, this can also be understood as a structural whole, encompassing the elements of the described town and also the values attributed to the latter, which, in turn, depend on local, national and supra-national contexts. This particular process is positioned in, e.g., a colonial or other type of historical context. The presentations dwelling upon youth culture underlined the issue of urban spaces and confinement experience. The specific characteristic of places concerning youth culture, and the moulding of social and symbolic boundaries, simultaneously refer to the confinement of this group and the relevant “place”, and to the inevitable openness, to communication beyond the boundaries. As an example of such a situation, **Otávio Raposo** showed, using the example of the Maré district of Rio de Janeiro, how a relatively confined area of illegal activities (drug dealing, etc.) has at the same time become an open space – because of the youth group of break-dancers, as these dancers have created contacts with those involved in this activity in other regions. **Ioana Florea**, presenting the mutual relationships between the youth groups in post-socialist Bucharest, showed that the listening to music is one of the markers of group boundaries in public urban space, however, when doing so, unwritten rules, valid in this particular region, are being followed. If usually, listening to music is a coping practice in uneasy public spaces, the habit of one youth group – to listen to *manele*, a type of music of the Roma, and generally stigmatised – paradoxically tends to create additional tension between different social groups.

Presentations on confined spaces (prisons, urban areas of illegal activities) revealed the connectedness between the temporal places (either time-wise, as prison or concerning a specific action, such as drug-dealing) with neighbouring areas (incl., e.g., prison and outside the prison). The speakers focusing on the migration, race and the identity created there from, highlighted the categorisations concurrent with symbolic racial and ethnic boundaries, and the subject matter of neighbourhood, a logical co-theme when talking about boundaries. For example, **Graça Cordeiro** analysed the identity of the Portuguese-speaking community in Boston: they are linked by way of their place of residence (Boston) and language (Portuguese), yet distinguished by their historical past (they originate from different continents and have come to Boston due to different circumstances); this is the reason why the observed communities do not perceive themselves as a uniform linguistic community. Hence the focus of research –

now, when living in the new environment, how is the new identity being created by way of the common language, i.e. how symbolic boundaries are being repositioned proceeding from the new context. **Isabel Rodrigues** referred to the problems concerning race and ethnicity as clearly defined categories, and to the politicisation of race in statistical records. Her research questions were associated with the differences between census data and ethnographic observations: although in both occasions, people are asked to determine themselves racially or ethnically, the ways to interpret these responses are indeed variable. In the particular case, the focus was on the category “another race”: how the respondents had interpreted this and what were the conditions for them to make the particular choice they made (e.g. the desire of the Portuguese to be distinct from the Spanish – the Latinos). **Bethan Harries** asked a methodological question: how to investigate racial boundaries at a community level in a case where this topic is kept under wraps in public. According to research results, it is still possible to learn about these existing racial or ethnic boundaries, by way of the mutual positioning of these groups, or in other words – race related issues can be studied by way of studying the space.

The presumable inter-disciplinary nature of this panel was not evident as the majority of presentations were rather case studies than generalisations instilling theoretical discussion. Nevertheless, what was revealed was the dynamics of places, generated by the social practice which is of great significance in the creation of these places. Research examples reflected the domains not perceptible and available at first glance, associated with the daily interaction of small groups, subcultures and, in some instances, with the illegal world. Irrespective of the markers used to define a group and the place created within the activity of this community, it is always associated with the neighbourhood, impacting on the communication with other groups and places. Thus, the close observation of these communities (groups of minorities, subcultures and illegitimate groups, i.e. less prestigious communities) was a cross-section of the relatively concealed levels in society. However when the construction involved the permitted and valued social places (tourism, travelling), what prevailed were the models associated with thinking, and these models could even be more dominant than the actual real place.

The panel on *Narrative space in a multicultural city* analysed the place of migration and globalisation in modern urban culture. The urban cultures of different backgrounds (particularly in cases when such cultures have evolved due to migration) might not always act polyphonically, as different lifestyles need to function in a cooperative, and sometimes in a competitive manner. The presenters argued that the places created by minority groups (museums, churches, monuments, ethnic cuisines and shops, etc.) have remarkable symbolic relevance, besides the practical function of these places. The discussion centred around the question as to how are these above-mentioned places opened and understandable to the “other”, including the tourists; would these spaces, created by minorities, yet striving towards openness, nevertheless remain the places associated solely with the minority groups, or can they also become a shared space? The presentations prevalently proceeded from the ethnographic analysis of narratives, other types of texts, or that of museums and monuments. The observed areas mainly concerned Eastern and Southern Europe and Israel. The speakers demonstrated the construction of space from the viewpoint of migrating lifestyle (e.g. Russian “places” in Helsinki which are particularly persistent and multi-layered, with tsarist and post-

Soviet strata evolving therein; or the presence of Russian and Soviet culture in Haifa, Israel, created by the community of people who had emigrated from the Soviet Union. The construction of monuments or other facilities, on the other hand, may also apply for the opposite – to restore “our” history, as shown in **Goran Janev**’s presentation on Skopje, capital of Macedonia. Allegedly, nearly 50 monuments have been erected in city centre to symbolically emphasise mono-culturalism, instead of today’s multiculturalism. At the same time, the Old Bazaar district in ancient Skopje represents cultural diversity through religious buildings, scents and sounds. Different formats of expressed multiculturalism in the city indicate that the processes concerning the multitude of cultures encompass the activities of diasporic communities and the attitudes of the public, incl. these of the power institutions, towards cultural reality.

Tiiu Jaago

P113. Experiencing movement: subjectivity and structure in contemporary migration.

The aim of the panel on the subjective and structural aspects of contemporary migration was to underline the human facets of migration, in order to counterbalance economic and political aspects which tend to be the point of interest for a majority of articles and papers in migration related research. Ethnographic approach and the focus on personal narratives can facilitate the detection of subjective, emotional and existential dimensions of migration. Yet on the other hand, the researchers in the panel were also interested in theoretical conclusions and in a more in-depth understanding of the discussed phenomenon, rather than presenting merely illustrative examples. Such a theoretical approach was accentuated in the first presentation, given by **Knut Graw**, and observing the reciprocal implications of subjectivity and structure in migration from West Africa to Europe. Likewise, a number of other presentations in the panel looked at the migration from Africa to Southern Europe, relying on the fieldwork of the authors (in some instances, the fieldwork had been multi-local, i.e. conducted in the country of origin and country of destination).

Repeated themes of the presentations concerned uncertain temporality (lack of knowledge, not knowing the length of the stay in a particular place, and what would happen next), and the changing meanings of home in the eyes of the person. Gender-specific differences of migration were also discussed in several papers. **Francesco Bruno Bondanini** talked about the journey from Africa to Europe, referring to the camp for immigrants in Melilla, North-Africa. This site, officially a temporary centre, usually becomes a years-long “home” for the people who stay there from six months to five years, waiting for their “ticket” to Europe. And the return is also not without problems. **Stephan Duennwald**’s presentation touched upon the African migrants’ involuntary return “home” where they are not welcomed, even by their family members. The returnees (and also the emigrants) are expected in Mali to have money and be successful, this is particularly true in case of men. Migration is an opportunity for young males to quickly become a proper man: in a good case, this would mean not only experience but also money and thus the possibility to buy valued goods and provide for several women. Migration from this viewpoint is a successful return rather than going

to another society. However, for the returnee, the country of origin might not be the same as it was when he once left.

A very interesting presentation, instilling contradictory thoughts was that of **Kristin Kastner's**, focusing on the body and gender-related aspect of migration in the case of Nigerian women in Morocco and Spain. Kastner referred to the Strait of Gibraltar as today's Iron Curtain the passing of which might take several years. Kastner's material speaks of the female body as an enormous resource in the migration process. The women who have already secured their place in Spain "support" the newcomers (girls) who have to pay back the borrowed sum by prostitution and will probably be similar "sponsors" in the future for the next newcomers. On the other hand, the body can be a resource when imitating pregnancy (with a pillow under clothes), in order to make it easier to cross the border. Fake pregnancy can also prevent becoming a rape victim. At the same time, pregnancy and giving birth in Spain provide better opportunities for staying in the country. Likewise, Bondanini also underlined, in his presentation on the North-African camp, that marriage and giving birth is the quickest way out for a woman.

Michael Westrich's presentation on illegal immigrants on the southern border of the European Union, where the refugees are given shelter by political activists, focused on the embodied experience of migration. The migrants had intentionally tried to change their body and its "codes" by self-mutilation to make it impossible to give fingerprints. Resistance, creativity and subjectivity were the other keywords of this presentation. Westrich underlined the creativity of the immigrants in coping with daily difficulties, attempting to access the sensual aspects of these experiences. I was deeply inspired by the way of presenting visual material in Kastner's and Westrich's research. Kastner had given the informants an opportunity to pose for photographs, in a place and with attributes chosen by themselves. Afterwards she sent the photos in a letter to the address given by the informants (e.g. to the family members and friends at home). On frequent occasions, the migrants wanted to be photographed with the so-called European attributes. This was as if a factory of dreams where they could present themselves in a way they wished to be seen by their close ones at home. Hence the question as to what a photo marks – whether a moment in the migration road (part of the process) or does it indicate a fact that the person has already got somewhere (*I am done*). People could tell their (dream) story by way of a photographic staging. Westrich showed beautiful film clips during his presentation and is intending to include these in his Doctoral thesis. Part of the clips were taken in cooperation with the informants, similarly to Kastner, e.g., a dance performed by a young man, combining the elements of traditional dance and that of modern dance acquired in the country of destination. This young man had personally asked the researcher to film him, with an aim to share the clip with his friends in Facebook. Such staged settings are an interesting object for analysis – how do the immigrants want to be seen and presented. What happens during the encounter of the expectations, the myth about Europe and the reality? It is also interesting to analyse these projects bearing in mind the dynamics of the relationship between the researcher and the person being researched: in this case the informant is also an initiator, he/she is more than an object of photographing, and can, to a certain extent, use the researcher in achieving his/her goals. Thus, both parties benefit from this encounter.

P206. Be-longing: ethnographic explorations of self and place.

Coexistence of belonging and longing was one of the permeating themes in this panel. The focus was also on narratives and construction of places in the course of social interaction: how are people affected by the stories associated with different places, and how do these narratives mould their attitude towards the surroundings? How do people position themselves somewhere, merging the memories of the past, activities of the present, and the longing projected towards the future? The presentations also touched upon the role of the already non-existent places, imagined places and virtual places in people's lives. As in the previous panel, the papers mainly observed the recent migrants, yet this time mostly in Eastern rather than Southern Europe. The main issue was centred on the changing meaning of home, and discussion about the possibility of return. When do relationships with home alter to such an extent that return is no longer conceivable? How do people maintain contact with their old homeland when going back is not possible? The means for preserving these ties are not necessarily modern: **Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj** referred to cases of having seen one's home in a dream. Likewise, in the panel on the day before, mention was made of a woman who had climbed a high mountain to be "in contact" with her son living on the other side of the world. All presentations were based on ethnographic fieldwork or life histories. One worthwhile to be mentioned was the research by **Petri Hautaniemi** who studied the second generation of Somalians in Finland – the author has had contacts with these men, currently in their thirties, since the beginning of the 1990s – having the opportunity to observe them growing up as adults in the diaspora. Transnational identity has not always been perceived positively; it is of great significance in this context whether the person has been forced to move or has instead gone voluntarily (in this case the term "mobility" is used). Such mobility was represented by German-speaking pensioners – studied by **Martina Kleinert** – whose lifestyle was to cruise on yachts in the vicinity of New Zealand. This was a very interesting example of how the feeling of home and locality is being created when the person is *settling in motion*, i.e. constantly moving from one place to another, without any intention to stay somewhere permanently.

Pihla Siim

TAKING MALTA OUT OF THE BOX

The second interdisciplinary Island Dynamics Conference took place in Valletta, capital of Malta, on May 11–15, 2011. The conference was dedicated to the memory of recently departed Maltese folklorist G. Mifsud-Chircop. The main organiser and island research network leader Adam Grydehøj (Aberdeen University) was proud to present more than a hundred lectures from scholars representing 39 countries. The scope of research topics ranged widely – from archaeology to folkloristics, from history to economics, from musical studies to anthropology. The conference keynote speeches, delivered by David Lowenthal, Godfrey Baldacchino and Henry Glassie were colourful