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Неэгоцентричность как характеристика масонских текстов

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Аннотация: Настоящая статья посвящена специфическим особенностям текстов, составленных масонами только для «внутреннего пользования» или для широкой публики, на протяжении более трех веков. Актуальность темы исследования определяется рядом взаимосвязанных положений теоретического и прикладного характера, которые до настоящего времени в рамках языкознания не получили последовательной интерпретации. Целью исследования является обнаружение и экспликация специфических черт масонских текстов, характеризующих специфику восприятия их авторами масонских доктрин. Осуществление цели достигается при помощи текстового анализа, заключающегося в сегментации текста на самостоятельные в содержательном отношении фрагменты и позволяющего эксплицировать семантику текста или его отдельного сегмента. В результате анализа была сформулирована авторская дефиниция масонских текстов и описаны их центр и периферия, различающиеся между собой степенью полноты и достоверности реализации масонской картины мира. Авторы выделили основную характеристику масонских текстов – их неэгоцентричность, способствующую предельной абстракции категорий лица, места и времени. Благодаря этому масонский текст напрямую практически не координируется с реальным (материальным) планом существования своих авторов и адресатов. В статье приведено большое количество примеров из древних и современных масонских текстов, демонстрирующих тот специфический вид, который семантика трех базовых категорий приобретает в центре масонского текста. Неэгоцентричность текста придает универсальный статус содержащейся в нем информации, которая становится применимой к любой личности, любому времени и пространству.
Ключевые слова: масонский текст; центр; периферия; неэгоцентричность; лицо; место; время.
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Non-egocentricity as a characteristic of Masonic texts

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Abstract. The article deals with the specific features of texts compiled by masons only for "internal use" or for the general public for more than three centuries. The relevance of the research topic is determined by a number of interrelated provisions of a theoretical and applied nature, which so far have not received a consistent interpretation within the framework of linguistics. The aim of the research is to detect and explicate specific features of the Masonic texts, which characterize the specificity of their perception of the Masonic doctrines. The goal is achieved through the textual analysis, which consists in segmentation of the text into independent fragments of meaningful content for explicating the semantics of the text or its individual segment. As a result of the analysis, the authors' definition of Masonic texts was formulated and their center and periphery were described as differing from each other by the degree of completeness and reliability of the realization of the Masonic worldview. The authors identified the main characteristic of Masonic texts – their non-egocentricity, which contributes to the maximum abstraction of the categories of person, place, and time. Due to this, the Masonic text is not coordinated directly with the real (material) plane of its authors and recipients' existence. The article contains a large number of examples from ancient and modern Masonic texts, demonstrating the specific form that the semantics of the three basic categories acquire in the center of the Masonic text. Non-egocentricity of the text gives the universal status to the information contained in it, which becomes applicable to any person, any time and space.
Key words: Masonic text; centre; periphery; non-egocentricity; person; place; time.

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Introduction

The semiotic perception of the term 'Masonic text' assumes an object that is voluminous and heterogeneous due to the nature of the signs organizing it. It includes a large number of *non-verbalized texts* (various images, emblems, furnishings and architectural details, elements of masonic attire and the decoration of masonic lodges, gestures, stamps, signs of the lodges, jewelry); *partially verbalized* (rites and rituals) and *verbalized texts*. In this study, attention is focused on verbalized texts, that is, on texts in the linguistic sense of the word: "<...> a result of a speech-making process that has completeness, objectified in the form of a written document, literally processed according to the type of this document" (Halperin, 2007: 18). The remaining types of texts are considered only as a background to emphasize their common features.

The textual heritage of Masons is large and diverse. It includes diplomas and certificates, diaries and memoirs, original and translated books and articles, official and unofficial correspondence, official reports, rituals or acts regulating the work of Masonic lodges, patents and constitutions of various Masonic lodges, minutes of meetings of lodges, speeches and lectures, lists of lodge members, statutes and laws of various hierarchical structures of Freemasonry (Vernadsky, 2001: 11-22), as well as poetic texts of Masons. This diversity, presented here only nominally and at the level of generic characteristics, shows that the texts refer to different genres, and, therefore, it is problematic to detect a single invariant trait in all of them.

Analytical (or actually scientific) identification of the features of an object which seems empirically obvious often presents great difficulties, as Ts. Todorov demonstrated by the example of the concept 'literature' (Todorov, 1983). This is also evidenced by numerous studies of textual genres conducted with the methods of various sciences. Among them there are the following works. P. Petrenz and B. Webber (Petrenz and Webber, 2011) work on developing a stable classification of text genres based on the changing topic–genre distribution. T. V. Shmeleva (Shmeleva, 2018) analyzes the interaction and interpenetration of the genres used in the modern media sphere, as a result of which they are 'condensed'. С. Pérez-Llantada (Pérez-Llantada, 2009) describes a model for discourse analysis which includes a genre perspective, a textual perspective, and a social perspective. A group of authors proposes their own way (Feldman, Marín, Medero and Ostendorf, 2009) to solve the problem of text classification using part-of-speech histograms and argue that the factored models allow finer-grained genre representing. Methods for automatic text classification by functional styles are developed (Ermakova, Abashev, Nikitin and Ushakov, 2014).

The same difficulties arise in defining the notion of a 'Masonic text'.

Results and Discussion

In thematic respect, the Masonic text is an independent text (or a segment of a larger text), the content of which is consciously oriented by the author to the value system of Freemasonry. In a different terminological system: a Masonic text is such an independent text, a segment of the text, the entire set of texts (depending on the breadth of the problem) in which the Masonic language picture of the world or its part is consistently implemented. At that the whole language picture or its part neither is subject to a predominantly negative assessment nor is the result of scientific understanding proper. An obvious characteristic can be added here, according to which the source of the textual information, as a rule, is a Mason, but the receiver of information is not necessarily a Mason (the text can be very broadly addressed). An example of such texts are the freemasons' architectural works, as "central to the process of becoming and being accepted as a freemason is the preparation,

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presentation and discussion of short essays or 'planks' on a predetermined topic" (Poulet, 2010: 795). At the same time, they are posted on the websites of the Masonic lodges in sections designed for universal access, or issued in special publications, such as "Masonic Research in South Australia". As one of the publishers of the magazine T. Pope put it: "knowledge that is not recorded is eventually lost" (Pope and Thompson, 1990-1995: 5).

In cases with the production of anti-masonic texts by former Freemasons, their attribution is determined by the evaluation plan implemented in the text, taken into account in the definition. It seems that such a definition can sufficiently perform an identifying function and allows taking into account a wide variety of existing Masonic texts.

However, such a definition, requiring an adequate knowledge of the Masonic picture of the world, is not sufficient and does not reveal the actual linguistic features of the object. In order to supplement and specify it, at the initial stage it is necessary to introduce two clarifying restrictions.

The first is connected with the fact that the Masonic text has the center and periphery, which differ in the degree of completeness and reliability of the Masonic world view. Another difference is the concentration of attention only on it or on other objects associated with it too. In the center the stress is set only on the picture of the world and its full reproduction. The periphery assumes other objects of attention and a fragmentary reproduction of the picture of the world. The semantic content and the communicative purposes of these texts differ significantly. For example, a ceremonial directly implements a picture of the world and only its center. The list of the lodge members can only indirectly indicate it if it contains the positions of brothers, and has a different target (periphery). A specific epistolary document, depending on the primary theme of the story, will occupy an intermediate position between the two.

Thus, in the framework of the classification proposed by A. I. Serkov, – (1) educational Masonic literature; (2) essays written only for "brothers"; (3) works intended "for the public"; (4) pseudo-masonic compositions; (5) Masonic literary criticism (Serkov, 1999: 174) – positions 1 and 2 will relate to the center, 4 and 5 will belong to the periphery, position 3 will occupy an intermediate place, and the above listed texts will be distributed in the center and periphery depending on their specific implementations.

The second restriction is related to the fact that the Masonic text is one of the manifestations of mystical discourse, a feature of which is formulated by Charles W. Morris: "Insofar as discourse is based on analytic implicates, it is analytic formative discourse; and insofar as it is based on contradictory implicates, it is contradictory formative discourse. Mathematical discourse often (or always) is of the former sort, and mystical discourse is often (or always) of the second sort" (Morris, 1971: 412).

Next comes the discussion of the linguistic features of Masonic text's center as a representative of the mystical discourse.

In order to formulate the linguistic peculiarity of the Masonic text in the above understanding, it is necessary to refer to the idea of egocentric words. In linguistics and semiotics, this term refers to signs (Shuneyko and Chibisova, 2016), which, performing the function of location, carry out and determine coordination between the source of information, text and medium in the personal, spatial and temporal planes; for example, *I – here – now*.

The presence of egocentric words in the text results in the fact that it appears to be defined with a sufficient (more or less high) degree of clarity in spatial, temporal and personal relations. It can be a letter with its special details denoting the author, time and place of writing. Most of the texts contain egocentric words and therefore can be called egocentric texts.

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The texts of all functional styles are egocentric. In the artistic text the coordination gets complicated, but still it is present in the overwhelming majority of cases. The egocentric nature of the texts is manifested in the fact that the receiver can always define what time and spatial intervals the reported information relates to and by whom it is produced. Moreover, in one text, as a rule, there are several coordinations, and the markers themselves can be implicit or explicit. For example, the ironic lines of I. Irtenev from "Imitations of the Ancients" "The same old man imparted that Masons are to blame for everything. // For something, comrades, yes, but far from everything" are coordinated with reality in such a way: they have two parties – the author and a generalized image of a person, belonging to the older generation; the same time – the years of perestroika and the single space – Russia.

Masonic texts can be classified as non-egocentric, that is, those for which egocentric words prove to be irrelevant. The latter is shown in the fact that even if such a text exists (because it is hard to imagine a text devoid of designations of a person, adverbial modifiers of place and time), the egocentric words in it do not function as specifiers, they do not clarify the content of the three categories mentioned. The semantics of egocentric words turns out to be extremely abstract (blurred). The information reported in the Masonic text is presented as existing outside the categories of authorship (source, person), time and place. It is placed in a non-localized, metaphysical plane.

Let us illustrate this position with examples of catechisms of various Masonic lodges. One of the definitions of the word "catechism" is given by Dr. John S. Nagy: "A word whose first recorded use was in 1502, rooted in French by way of Latin and originating in Late Greek with the following meaning: to teach by word of mouth. <…>. It is a book or manual of basic instruction giving a brief summary of the basic

principles of a subject, usually by means of rote, formulaic statement or repetition in question and answer form" (Nagy, 2009: V). Note that the genre of the catechism is customary for Masons and is perceived by them as a monument to the preceding esoteric tradition, on which they are oriented. Suffice it to say that the creation of the first one dates back to 1696, this is "The Edinburgh Register House MS". According to H. Carr, the first ten Masonic catechisms also include "The Chetwode Crawly MS." (1700), "The Sloane MS., 3329" (1710), "The Domfries No. 4 MS." (1710), "the Trinity College Dublin MS." (1711), "A Mason's Examination" (1723), "The Grand Mystery of Free-Mason's Discover'd" (1723), "The Whole Institution of Masonry" (1724), "Institution of Free-Masons" (1725), "The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened" (1725) (Carr, 1946: 5). The following is an example from the catechism "The Edinburgh Register House MS": "Q 1. Are you a mason? – Yes" (Carr, 1946: 9); "Q 2. How shall I know it? – You shall know it in time and place convenient / By signs tokens and points of my entry" (Carr, 1946: 10); "Q 3. What is the first point? – Tell me the first point ile tell you the second" (Carr, 1946: 11).

Currently, the catechism tradition is observed on all Masonic sites in sections "Frequently Asked Questions": "What is Freemasonry? – Freemasonry means different things to each of those who join. <…>. Why do Freemasons take oaths? – New members make solemn promises concerning their behaviour both in the Lodge and in society. <…>. Why do you wear regalia? – Wearing regalia is historic and symbolic. Like a uniform, the regalia indicates the rank of the wearer in the organisation" (United Grand Lodge of England).

Catechism texts contain all three groups of egocentric words that name a person, a place, and a time, but the location of textual semantics, thanks to these words, is carried out in a peculiar way.

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Place Name: "I: Where might we read about the Almighty Wisdom, Strength and Beauty? – R: It is alluded to by what is held atop a Pillar found on the Porch of King Solomon's Temple. – I: To what does it allude? – R: To the Heavens Above, where we find Almighty Wisdom, Strength and Beauty when we seek it" (Nagy, 2009: 53). The place in this case is named and characterized, but not localized, because 'the porch of the Temple of King Solomon' and 'Heaven Above' are extremely abstract areas, which together cover almost the whole space, which is close to 'everywhere'.

The name of time can be traced in the following poem:

"When is a Man a Mason?

M – When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response.

A – When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be.

S – When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond sin.

O – When he knows how to pray how to love how to hope.

N – When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellowman, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of song – glad to live, but not afraid to die!" (North Raleigh Masonic Lodge)

Time in this case is named and characterized, but not localized, because it is indicated by reference to a relative point, the presence of which can only be manifested through the accomplishment of a specific action. The performance of a specific action in the temporal plane is not localized either. Taken together, this allows perceiving the category of time through the characteristic '*always*' or '*at any moment*', provided certain actions are taken.

Face names are most frequent in the catechism: "A Mason is not necessarily a member of a lodge. In a broad sense, he is any person who daily tries to live the Masonic life, and to serve intelligently the needs of the Great Architect" (The Masonic Trowel). The person in this and other cases is named and characterized, but not localized. General semantics of it: '*any person who responds to the combination of the listed characteristics*' or '*anyone*'.

It is noteworthy that nonlocalized names of a person, place and time periodically fall into the positions in which they define each other: "33. How is the Meridian found out? A. When the Sun leaves the South, & breaks in at the West End of the Lodge" (The Masonic Trowel).

"40. When will all labour and toil stop? – When there is *not a single will on the Earth* that does not completely surrender to God; when the golden age, which God wants to reestablish in his small chosen people first internally, will spread *everywhere* and appear externally, and when *the realm of nature* itself will be freed from curses and return to the heart of the Sun" (Longinov, 1867: 466). The non-localized relative time in this case is determined through a non-localized place (on the Earth, everywhere, the realm of nature, the heart of the Sun) and a non-localized person (not a single will). This emphasizes the unified invariant characteristic of categories, asserts and increases the degree of abstractness of their implementation.

Thus, the categories of person, place and time in the Masonic text are extremely abstract. Thanks to this, the Masonic text is not directly coordinated with the real (material) plane of its authors' and recipients' existence. The absence of this coordination is related straight to the fact that the ideological doctrine of the Masons suggests the concept of internal self-improvement, and it is rather difficult to express the categories of the individual's spiritual work through specific concepts of traditionally perceived time and space.

The traditional egocentric words '*I*', '*here*', '*now*' in the space of the Masonic text are replaced by '*everyone*', '*everywhere*', '*always*'. It should be emphasized that such universal abstractness

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in coordination with reality may also be present in segments of non-Masonic texts, for example, the Ten Commandments. But it is in the center of the Masonic text that the universal abstractness becomes a dominant feature and trait that is characteristic of the text as a whole, and not of its component.

Varying the methods of removing temporal, spatial and personal localization in the Masonic text, that is, choosing between (1) eliminating specific coordinates from the text and making them extremely abstract, or (2) replacing specific coordinates in relation to this segment of the story with several coordinates, depends on the tradition in which the text is created, the targeted orientation of the text and the narrative of the author.

Masonic texts almost always contain Masonic symbols, but the coordination of text and Masonic symbols acquires qualitatively and quantitatively different forms.

It is significant that the mere existence of Masonic terminology and symbolism cannot be perceived as an identifier of the Masonic text, since they are also attributes of the historical studies of Freemasonry and anti-masonic writings. Anti-Masonic essays, assuming the outward form (mainly transformed terminology) of the Masonic ones, are all egocentric texts already because their narrative is always localized to describe a certain group of people at a certain time. For example, "The Mystery of the Anti-absurd Society, discovered by a non-participant in it", by Catherine II (or attributed to her) (Catherine II, 1990) contains attempts to burlesque non-egocentricity: "This society originated at the very time in which the general mind entered the light. Its mystery would be revealed to a very small number of mortals, in retaliation of their hardness, with which they stuck to the direct discourse. The ruling lodge is on the mountain of truth lying north of the jokes' mountain. It has always been there" (Catherine II, 1990: 111). But these attempts directly indicate that parodists are aware of

the presence of these features and are in the context of the narration, which is defined in personal, temporal and spatial terms. "But the initiation into the 'masters' is furnished with as extraordinary as silly solemnity. The hall where the ceremony takes place is covered with black materials; the dead heads (skulls) stand on the tables. In the hall they open the coffin of 'Hiram', on which with a special ritual a new master is seated. <...>. After a handful of lycopodium (sic!) has been burned in a special pipe, the new master declares that he is already sufficiently enlightened by the light of the 'third room'" (M.A.G., 1912: 9). The presence of a negative evaluation field is essential for anti-mason texts.

Interestingly, the work of S. Prichard "Masonry Dissected" is widely known as an anti-mason pamphlet, especially since the author himself admits that he "was induced to publish this mighty Secret for the public Good at the Request of several Masons, and it will, I hope, give entire Satisfaction, and have its desired effect in preventing so many credulous Persons being drawn into so pernicious a Society" (Prichard, 1730). At the same time, H. Bogdan casts doubt on the fact that there were Masons who wanted to publish their "mighty Secret" to stop people from enrolling in their "pernicious" society. He claims that "the obvious result of Prichard's text is the establishment of the three degrees and their related rituals. Since there were no official ritual handbooks at this time – all rituals were supposed to be learned by heart – what better way might there be of implementing a new degree than by making it readily available through its publication?" (Bogdan and Snoek, 2014: 294).

In the Masonic texts themselves, direct nominations of Masonic symbols may be absent, being replaced by their descriptive fixation, or present in single cases. For example: Robert Burns, who was a Mason all of his adult life and Senior Warden of Lodge St. Andrew, Dumfries when he died (Grand Lodge of Scotland), in his poem "A

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Man's A Man for A 'That" did not use any direct designations of Masonic symbols. In the article from the Moscow Monthly Edition (No. 4, 1781) "On the main reasons relating to the increment of arts and sciences" there is only one Masonic symbol – liberty (Novikov, 1951: 414–416). But in all these cases, the features of non-egocentricity are represented. Robert Burns did it by representing the surreal modal plan, including dreams in the present about the future, addressed to past experience with the uncertainty of the place: "Then let us pray that come it may, // (As come it will for a' that,) // That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth, // Shall bear the gree, an' a' that. // For a' that, an' a' that, // That man to man, the world o'er, // Shall brithers be for a' that" (Grand Lodge of Scotland).

N. I. Novikov did it by stating a general abstract provision "The long-term state gives sciences a chance to come to perfection; they thrive on liberty"(Novikov 1951: 415), supported by an example from history and acquiring the status of a thesis that applies to all times, individuals and spaces. It is noteworthy that the author's category of a person expands so as to include objects from the animal world: "In a state where natural freedom reigns, the elephant is revered as a citizen, and the beaver is an architect" (Novikov, 1951: 415). In the latter case, the Masonic ideas about man as an intermediate link between God and the animal world, natural law as the basis of harmonious coexistence, and extremely abstract (or absent) personal coordinate of the text are realized simultaneously.

Summarizing what has been said about Masonic texts and emphasizing that the findings are the result of analyzing a large number of texts, we can formulate the following definition: a Masonic text in the linguistic sense of the word as a representative of mystical discourse is an independent text (or a segment of a larger text), the contents of which are consciously oriented by the author on the system of

Freemasonry values, which is not subject to a predominantly negative assessment. In terms of language, this orientation is manifested in the fact that the text acquires the stable features of a non-egocentric text, that is, its content is non-localized in personal, temporal and spatial relations.

At the same time, it is essential that in the center of the Masonic text the semantics of the three basic categories takes on a specific form.

Category of person:

1. It can be removed altogether, which happens in the cases traditional for Freemasonry when the narrators are anonymous without individually manifesting themselves or in the cases where the described objects are abstract categories and the actor is not mentioned. In such texts there is neither a narrator, nor a person-subject, that is, the personal coordinate is simply absent. H. F. W. Hard describes the "North Star Program", aimed at helping prospects know what they are getting involved into and lodges realize who they are accepting, as follows: "No specific author is attributed to the North Star Program, so the document takes on the quality of a religious text or some other kind of official document, wherein the contents transcend any one man's pen" (Hard, 2018: 35).

2. It can take a very abstract character, embodying the meaning of '*any person*'. According to B. Raschke, the arcanum, created for the work of the Order of the Happy Hermits (1739-1758) runs, that "After a short session one would go for dinner into another of the four hermitages. One would place the members of the Order around the table <…>. One could distinguish the four hermitages according to the four principal divertissements of the Order <…>. During the stay of the court at Fredericwert, one will have one circle or one meeting of the Order every week" (Raschke, 2008: 35).

In the 20th century, the direct verbalization of the egocentric category *'I'*

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is represented, for example, in the texts of A. Bely, a writer whose oeuvre in its particular part is focused on Freemasonry (Silard, 2015: 204–225): "<...> we go from ourselves, like an insignificant grain of life, to ourselves, as Adam Kadmon, as the universe, where I, you, he is one thing, where father, mother and son is one thing, according to the word of the holy book 'Dzyan': 'Because father, mother, and son became one thing again' (1st stanza). And this one thing is the symbol of a non-revealing mystery" (Bely, 1994: 39). Such a fact demonstrates the sustainability of translating tradition, the conversion of textual characteristics into verbal forms or their lexicalization, use in linguistic meaning, leveling various speech implementations.

3. In a number of cases, it can be wider than the concept of a person and approaches the meaning of '*being*', which contains both objects of living nature and elements of deity. For example, A. Bely writes: "Creating yourself? But it is in transforming yourself into the image and likeness of the gods" (Bely, 1994: 46). Or: "God has inspired in man a sense of that which time cannot diminish: man is made in the spiritual image of God" (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 160); "For the Fatherhood of God implies the Brotherhood of Man, and, conversely, he who devotes himself to the service of his fellow creatures proves, through his brotherly relationship, his descent from the Father of All" (Ward, 2008: 5).

The category of time turns out to be not just vague, that is, representing the meaning of "any time", but also combining in itself real and irreal (mythological time). "Brother first Warden, what time is it?" he replied "very W(orshipful) it is midnight." – "Since it is midnight," said the master, "it is time to finish our labours" (Snoek, 2006: 91).

The meaning 'any time' can be indicated in the following ways:

1. Through the absence of time coordinates. "Thus we see that the actual point, where participants experience the start or the end of a ceremony, may vary. Yet, none of them would be unable to indicate some point where for them it starts, resp. stops" (Snoek, 2006: 102).

2. Through direct actualization of the meaning *'at all times, always'*. "The Book of Constitutions you are to search *at all times*. Cause it to be read in your Lodge, that all may be aware of the excellent precepts it enjoins (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 112). "For these and many other reasons, one can generally *always* tell a Mason by his character" (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 100).

3. Through the use of definitions *eternal, firm, unshakable, unchanging, continually, imperishable, everlasting, permanent, immutable* for the characteristics of objects relevant to the narrative and circumstances characterizing the actions of these objects, with similar semantics. "The symbolic presence of Hiram Abiff *continually* reminds Master Masons that their craft must always be a creation of Beauty" (Nagy, 2009: 51). "We are again admonished of the uncertainty of life, the *immutable* certainty of death, and the vanity of all human pursuits" (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 171). "There, amid the smiles of *immutable* Love, in that house not made with hands, *eternal* in the heavens – there, my brethren, may we all meet again" (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 214). "Masonry regards death but as the gate of life, and the Master Mason learns to look forward with *firm* but humble confidence to the moment when he will receive his summons to ascend to the Grand Lodge above" (Ward, 2008: 108).

4. Through the combination of the second and third methods. The semantics of the general narrative time of the Masonic text is close or identical to the concept of *eternity*. At the same time, within specific texts, there can appear the differentiation between objects in the sphere of eternity

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(these include everything related to *light*) and temporary objects (these include everything related to *darkness*). "We use the Rule to direct all Masons to <…> punctually observe our duty, press forward in the path of virtue, and, neither inclining to the right, nor to the left, in all our actions have *eternity* in view" (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 111). "Masonry uses the Line to <…> to direct our steps to the path, which leads to *immortality*" (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 112). "For on this Book, that oath you took, // and may you break it *never*, // just stand by this*, and this**, and this***, // *forever* and *forever* (Wisconsin Masonic Handbook, 2004: 130).

The category of space proves to be broader than the abstractly understood real space, since it implies both surreal areas and a statement of facts outside of their coordination with spatial characteristics. It is important here that the inner space of a person and the outer space (the world) turn out to be pointedly isomorphic. Appearing in the descriptions, it contributes to the assertion of uncertainty.

22. Have you a Key of the Lodge? – Yes I have

23. What is its Virtue? – To open & Shut & to Shut & open

24. Where do you keep it? – In an Ivory Box betwixt my Tongue & Teeth, or wtin my heart, where all my Secrets are kept (The Masonic Trowel).

Q. Where shall I find the key of your lodge? – A. Three foot and a half from the lodge door under a perpend esler and a green divot. But under the lap of my liver where all my secret of my heart lie (Carr, 1946: 43).

At the same time, of great importance are the definitions, which belong to single thematic areas or simply identical, for various segments of spatial reality.

Q. What Form is your Lodge? – A. A long Square.

Q. How long? – A. From East to West.

Q. How broad? – A. From North to South.

Q. How high? – A. Inches, Feet and Yards innumerable, as high as the Heavens.

Q. How deep? – A. To the Centre of the Earth (Snoek, 2006: 103).

The interesting thing about this spatial framing is that the rituals express at the same time that each lodge in principle includes the whole world.

This universalism of the center of the Masonic text is directly related to one of the ideological constants of Freemasonry, in accordance with which it stores and transmits some kind of universal divine knowledge, which embraces everything and fixes the provisions that act always, everywhere and for everyone. The linguistic form of the text, clearly manifested through the specifics of the functioning of egocentric words, produces a phantom image of some hypothetically representable primary text. If, for experimental purposes, one accepts the Masonic concept and concedes the existence of this primary text which was dictated by the highest forces and contains general information about everything for all times, then in linguistic terms such text can only be non-egocentric.

Conclusions

Thus, the Masonic text is a text that exists independently or as part of another text, the content of which is focused on the author's positive presentation of the ideological concept of Freemasonry. In terms of language, this orientation is manifested in the fact that the text acquires the stable features of a non-egocentric text.

The center and periphery of the Masonic text are closely interconnected, which is manifested in the fact that the center generates the periphery where its features become less noticeable (dissolve). The periphery, as a rule, is a manifestation of reflection about the center, its adaptation to specific conditions, its arrangement in specific circumstances, or the linguistic fixation of the external organizational structures produced by it. Indicative in this regard, on the one hand, is the correspondence of masons, which includes

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thoughts on the basic categories of the picture of the world, that is, reflection, or, on the other hand, the minutes of meetings of the lodges, fixing the sequence of actions. In these cases it is natural that steady egocentric features should appear which are also present in a number of artistic texts, since, in one way or another, the author coordinates the real plane.

Non-egocentricity of the text manifests itself in the fact that the transmitted information is given the status of universal, and the text itself takes on the form of a cliché that, under certain conditions stipulated in it, applies to any person, any time and space, that is, it becomes a matrix superimposed on the variety of existing situations.

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