IMPOSTURE AS A PROBLEM OF REFERENCE: SEMIOTICS OF THE NAME IN *BORIS GODUNOV*

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> What is my name to you?
> *Alexander Pushkin*

In this article, we continue to address the mechanisms of presenting oneself as another and another as oneself. In this regard, non-trivial features of the semantics of a proper name are described. Based on the analysis of contexts of inappropriate use of a name in a situation of imposture, described in Pushkin's tragedy Boris Godunov, the author considers semiotic mechanisms of transformation and assignment of identity. The article shows that Pushkin's intuition allowed him to see the problems that arose in the analytical philosophy of name of the second half of the 20th century. Pushkin consistently creates contexts in which the conditions of acceptability or unacceptability of deviating uses are tested. On the one hand, these features allow the author to offer an additional, logical and semantic dimension for the interpretation of the tragedy Boris Godunov. On the other hand, they significantly clarify the existing theories of proper name, showing their possible non-trivial, and in some cases, problematic consequences. Simultaneously, the logical-semantic analysis makes it possible to identify the mechanisms of imposture and the communicative conditions for its success.

Keywords: Pushkin, Boris Godunov, proper name, imposture, semantics of possible worlds

1. The self as the other, the other as the self: the semiotics of transformation

How are speech acts used to transform the self into the other? Earlier, in examining the interpretations of the self of poetic texts through the prism of Émile Benveniste's (1966, 258—266) and Paul Ricœur's (1976) ideas on the appropriation of language and the text by means of the pronoun 'I', I demonstrate how a person pronouncing another's utterance as if it were her or his own becomes a metaphor of the first speaker (Zolyan

1988a; b). Likewise, as the speaker appropriates language through the pronoun 'I' (according to Benveniste), one can appropriate a text narrating about 'me' and if that 'I' were in the poetic world of the text. By appropriating an utterance, a speaker appropriates someone's fate. Of course, this destiny is not biographical but linguo-poetic, constructed by linguistic means and lived in the poetic world of the text. In repeating first-person an utterance said before by someone else, the 'I'-reader takes a transworld travel, moving from 'my' actual world to the world where she or he takes the place of the speaker — it may be a real author, a persona or a character. According to Paul Ricoeur, it is the meaning of a text that is to be appropriated in the first place. The meaning of the text is the force through which the world created by the reference of the text is revealed. Appropriation in this sense is, according to Ricoeur, not a kind of possession, but merely another projection of the self into the world, an extension of the horizons of being and a new way of existing in the world. Perhaps, this semantic operation is what Pushkin had in mind when he described Tatyana's '*appropriation*' of another's mental state:

> She wanders with her borrowed lovers
> Through silent woods and so discovers
> Within a book her heart's extremes,
> Her secret passions, and her dreams.
> She sighs … and in her soul possessing
> Another's joy, another's pain
> She whispers in a soft refrain
> The letter she would send caressing
> Her hero...
>
> (*Eugene Onegin*, 3, X)

Pushkin describes the course of this transformation: in another's text Tatyana *discovers her secret passions and her dreams,* appropriating *another's joy, another's pain*. And, in doing so, she creates or reproduces (*whispers in a soft refrain*) her own text. The incongruence and ontological difference between these worlds erect the impenetrable barrier between the world where the speech act takes place (the reader's actual world) and the appropriated world (that of the first speaker). What happens when this boundary is crossed or disappears? Pushkin provides copious examples of such transworld transitions. On the one hand, there is some kind of 'word magic' at work, as Borges termed this technique when discussing *Don Quixote*: the mutual permeability of the worlds is made possible because some texts created in the fictional world of *Eugene Onegin* (Tatyana's letter, Lensky's poems) continue to exist in the actual world, whilst individuals existing in the latter (the real author, Pushkin, and his friends Vyazemsky, Yakushkin and others) are transferred to the poetic world of the poem. (cf. 'once Vyazemsky sat down beside her <Tatyana>' and similar instances). Pushkin has applied this technique to himself as well: in an excerpt from a draft, which is essentially an abridged short story ('If I were Tsar'), Pushkin the poet becomes a character, and Pushkin the au-

thor turns into Emperor Alexander, who exiles Pushkin the poet to Siberia, where the latter will write his 'Siberian' poems. The above quotation also reveals an intersection of ontological domains: having appropriated another's passions Tatyana writes a letter in her world — that of the novel *Eugene Onegin*. And, afterwards, the real Pushkin comes across what she has written ('Tatyana's letter lies beside me'). These operations are, however, semiotic, and they do not entail any transformation of physical reality. Tatyana Larina does not stop being Tatyana Larina, albeit she has 'appropriated' another's *feelings and words*: *And then her warm imagination / Perceives herself as heroine / Some favourite author's fond creation: Clarissa, Julia, or Delphine. She wanders with her borrowed lovers / Through silent woods* (*Eugene Onegin*, 3, X). At the same time, the magical function of language, unlike the poetic function, is focused not on creating semiotic imaginary worlds, but on transforming of the actual one.

Let us consider a slightly different aspect of what might be called Pushkin's modal poetics: the issue of appropriating a name and the right to speak on behalf of the one whose name is being appropriated. What happens when this *appropriation* of another's identity through appropriating his/her name takes place not in the imaginary, but the actual world? Appropriating a name entails appropriating another's destiny and abandoning one's own. (This will distinguish the cases discussed in this work from 'bogus' name appropriations, such as taking on a pseudonym, espionage, con tricks and other ways to impersonate someone without becoming them, albeit in-between cases are also possible). Thus, hidden behind another's name, there has to be the destiny *of the speaker*, which is a unity of narrative and performative characteristics and functions. Amongst these cases of appropriation of fate are insanity and imposture. A remarkable example of the former is found in Hoffmann's short story about the hermit Serapion: 'In all that did not touch the idea that he was the hermit Serapion who fled into the Theban desert in the days of the Emperor Decius, and suffered martyrdom in Alexandria, his mind was completely unaffected' (Hoffman 1908, p. 12). Since he is in effect alive, the Count answers the question '*You* believe that you are that Serapion who suffered such a hideous martyrdom so many hundred years ago?' (Hoffmann, 1908, p. 14) as follows:

> That,... may appear incredible to you; and I admit that it must sound very wonderful to many who cannot see further than the points of their own noses. However, it is as I tell you. God's omnipotence permitted me to survive my martyrdom, and to recover from its effects, because it was ordained, in His mysterious providence, that I had still to pass a certain period of my existence, to His praise and glory, here in the Theban desert. There is nothing now to remind me of the tortures which I suffered except sometimes a severe headache, and occasional violent cramps and twitchings in my limbs (ibid).

As can be seen, the Count, having assumed the name and biography of the long-deceased hermit, 'revives' him to live a new life, preserving

the *cramps and twitchings* from the previous life. Yet, people around him do not believe the man who has taken Serapion's name to be the resurrected martyr and consider him insane. The 'new world' built around the name Serapion exists only in the Count's imagination: a southern German forest is transformed into the Theban wilds, but only for him. Some semblance of a similar metamorphosis is Pavel's madness in *The Remote House on Vasilyevsky Island.*[2]

Another form of overcoming the barrier between the actual and the imaginary is imposture. Pushkin's reference to Pugachev and False Dmitry before evinces the poet's interest in the phenomenon. Of course, imposture requires a combination of ideological and political conditions, and Pushkin gives a comprehensive account of them.[3] We, however, will focus exclusively on the semantic and pragmatic characteristics relating to this special use of a proper name. In a poetic form, Pushkin sets problems that were central to the analytical philosophy of the 20th century (see the concepts of the proper name framed in the works of Bertrand Russell, Saul Kripke, Jaakko Hintikka, David Lewis and others). But first let us turn to Wittgenstein's rarely mentioned comment — his rather obscure distinction between the *bearer* of a name and its *meaning*:

> Let us first discuss this point of the argument: that a word has no meaning if nothing corresponds to it. — It is important to note that the word "meaning" is being used illicitly if it is used to signify the thing that 'corresponds to the word. That is to confound the meaning of a name with the bearer of the name. When Mr. N. N. dies, one says that the bearer of the

[2] 'He let his beard and hair grow out and wouldn't leave his study for three months in a row; most of his instructions were given in writing. Every so often when a paper was left on his desk for signing, he would give it back with someone else's strange signature instead of his name' [Pushkin, 1979, p. 372]).

[3] Cf.: 'A political impostor is an individual who as appropriated the name and status of a person with a claim to supreme power. This practice has prominent role in absolute monarchy regime and, partly, other despotic regime where it facilitates the consolidation, mobilisation and direction of concrete political and social forces, groups and resources. Political imposture presupposes two things that create a potential for mobilisation: legitimation crisis (distrust of the government; the loss of personal authority by the ruler; the violation of traditional rules and norms; lower efficiency; the inability to rise to the challenges) and the personal traits and motivation of the impostor. Imposture is usually the product of a 'trouble' in society caused by legitimation crisis, protests against the current order (perceived as unjust by its opponents), struggle for the preservation of traditions fuelled by the rise of ambitious leaders seeking self-actualisation. A representative example of such a situation is the end of a ruling monarchial dynasty' ([Tulcinksiy, 2020a, p. 628]). Analysis of the ideological and political aspects of imposture in Russia, particularly during the Time of Troubles, has been carried out in many works (Chistsov, 1966: Skrynnikov, 1990; Uspenskiy, 1994; Tulchinskiy, 1996; Arkannikova, 2009). See also the contributions to the themed collection of articles (*Samozantsy…* 2010). Yet, the aspect addressed here is examined in only one work (Smirnov, 2004).

name dies, not that the meaning dies. And it would be nonsensical to say that, for if the name ceased to have meaning it would make no sense to say "Mr. N. N. is dead" (Wittgenstein, 2016, p. 1151).

The case of imposture provides an unexpected angle on Wittgenstein's thought and the semantic nature of imposture. The bearer of the name, Tsarevich Dmitry, was murdered, but the meaning of the name cannot be eliminated: internally inconsistent and meaningless, such an operation is inexecutable. To actualise, however, a meaning needs a bearer, which may be not only the signifier but also a referent. The name 'Dmitry' functions as a sign vehicle, one of the four components of semiosis according to Charles Morris. A sign vehicle, i. e. a signifier, may be not only a sequence of sounds of letters but also an individual who has become a signifier for the meaning of a name.[4]

Pushkin intuitively identified the problems that would be formulated in the analytical philosophy of the name much later, in the second half of the 20th century. What supports this supposition is that he consistently creates contexts testing the admissibility of the undue (heretical) use of a proper name. This holds only for the name 'Dmitry' and the situation around it: in all other cases, names are used properly. Investigation into these conditions complements the existing theories of the name. Yet, it is important to remember that imposture is a deviation and, as such,[5] it should be taken into account by the general theory.

2. The proper name: a rigid or nonrigid designator?

The proper name labels individuals and allows one to observe them across the worlds. According to this concept, the character's name *Grigory Otrepev* is a rigid designator (Kripke, 1980) and it makes it possible to identify its bearer in any situation, real or fictional. Regardless of what he calls himself and what others call him, whether his qualities and situation change, whether he is alive or dead, he **is** Grigory Otrepev and no

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[4] Wittgenstein uses the term *der Träger des Namens* ('a bearer of the name', not 'vehicle'), which is natural since it is the human rather than the sign that is at the core of this context: „Dies heißt, die Bedeutung eines Namens verwechseln mit dem Träger des Namens. Wenn Herr N. N. stirbt, so sagt man, es sterbe der Träger des Namens, nicht, es sterbe die Bedeutung des Namens" (Wittgenstein, 2009, p. 24).

[5] Ancient and medieval society had the tradition of many-namedness, which continued under Godunov, who had two names — secular Boris and Bogolep, which he took as a monk. Although this custom had become rather a marginal phenomenon in the time of Karamzin and, hence, Pushkin, in Russian daily life, it remained familiar, habitual and natural, 'somewhat of a well-known trait of a passing era' [Litvina, Uspenskiy, 2020b, p. 201]; see also [Litvina, Uspenskiy, 2020a]). Many-namedness was regulated by transitions between worlds, such as entering a monastic community. Each name corresponded to a concrete status of its bearer (see: Uspenskiy, 1996). Pushkin, however, does not address this phenomenon, and there is no need to consider it here in any greater detail.

one else. All other nominations would be not names but designations of the qualities of that individual or characteristics ascribed to him: unfrocked monk, impostor, False Dmitry, Dmitry, Tsarevich and even 'nameless vagrant', 'unknown vagabond'. However, the name 'Dmitry' can refer to the murdered Tsarevich Dmitry only and cannot identify anyone else. In any other case, calling oneself Dmitry or being called that by others would be an instance of an incorrect, false use of the name, and individuals called this way must be designated as False Dmitrys.

In the counterfactual word, the name 'Dmitry' identifies an individual with a different set of qualities. If Tsarevich Dmitry had not been murdered, Dmitry would be Tsar:

> He'd be your age, Grigory…
> And he'd be Tsar. But God willed otherwise (p. 24)[6].

Are these names coreferential when used in the actual and counterfactual worlds? The answer can hardly be positive. And this prompted Lewis to argue that, when moving between worlds, we deal not with the same individuals but their counterparts (Lewis, 1968; 1973). Even if a Dmitry had ascended to the throne in the counterfactual world, he would not be the Dmitry who was killed in the actual town of Uglich: he would be a *double,* a possibility that never came true, who had escaped death and thereby is different from the real Dmitry. The tragedy demonstrates how this theoretical assumption can be actualised, i.e. through transforming the counterfactual world into the real one and vice versa. A counterpart of the murdered Dmitry appears in the actual world, imparting to it some characteristics of the counterfactual one; the actual world assimilates to the imaginary one where Tsarevich was saved. On the contrary, the actual world, where Tsarevich was murdered, is transformed into a counterfactual one envisaged by Godunov striving to seize power. Within the twin semantics, a situation arises where Tsarevich is murdered in one world, and someone who strongly resembles him — but is not he — continues to act in his name. One of them is actual, the other counterfactual, and their statuses constantly change. However, the characters of the tragedy, both in Muscovy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, operate semantic postulates different from those proposed by Lewis. And this poses a dilemma: only Dmitry and no one else can bear the name 'Dmitry', and this forces one to act within binary semantics where an individual is either Dmitry or non-Dmitry. All counterfactual counterparts, twins and any other *imaginable* individuals must be excluded.

Pushkin understood this contradiction, and the tragedy evinces his reflection. Throughout the play, from the Prologue, which was not included in the final version, to the concluding scene depicting popular silence, Pushkin makes his characters think about this problem and prof-

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[6] Here and below, unless indicated otherwise, the quotations from *Boris Godunov* are according to (Pushkin, 2007), the page number given in parentheses.

fers a variety of solutions: what is the name 'Dmitry', and what is the referent of the name 'Dmitry'. He also puts forward variations on this question: is Dmitry the referent of the name 'Dmitry'? Can a non-Dmitry be the referent of the name 'Dmitry'? The lack of an unambiguous answer constructs the latent plot of this discussion. The political stances of characters coincide with one or another semantic position, i. e. whether to consider one who calls himself 'Dmitry' Dmitry (Otrepev's viewpoint); whether the name 'Dmitry' has no reference in the actual world (Godunov); whether the name 'Dmitry' is a rigid designator identifying the same individual across all the worlds (the people); whether a strictly pragmatic criterion is at play — no semantic relationship between a name and its referent is motivated (Muscovite and Polish nobility). Let us consider the perspectives of the antagonists and the arguments they advance.

3. The name as a shadow and the name of a shadow

> This devil's spawn, this cursèd unfrocked monk,
> Has made the people think that he's Dimítry (p. 66).

The Patriarch verbalises False Dmitry's political success as follows: he was able to *make the people think that he's Dimitry*. He did not so much appropriate the name 'Dmitry' as became a 'double' replacing him or even tuned into a sign, a signifier. Remarkably, Godunov sees his enemy not in an individual, the referent of the name (*the cursed unfrocked monk*), but in *an empty name*, i. e. a signifier bereft of reference, a *sound*.

> Who is he, though, my frightful adversary?
> Who comes at me? An empty name, a shadow?
> And will a shadow wrest from me the purple?
> A name — deprive my children of their birthright? (p. 47).

The arbitrariness of the sign, as manifested in this case, is captured by the Patriarch:

> He's cloaked himself with our dear prince's name,
> Most shamelessly, as with a stolen vestment… (p. 66).

False Dmitry can be defeated through a semantic operation: since he is the product of a semantic operation of appropriating a signifier, the reverse operation must destroy, expose him.

> But strip away this garment—and the fraud
> Will shrink with shame in all his nakedness (p. 66).

Yet, the existence of a name presupposes that the referent can exist as well (just like the fictive existence of a bald king of France in Bertrand Russel's classical puzzle). Aware of what has actually happened, Shuisky finds precise wording: Dmity will not come back to life, but his name can:

> So if this unknown vagabond decides
> To cross the Polish border into Russia,
> The foolish mob will flock to him in droves,
> Attracted by Dimítry's risen name (p. 45).

Therefore, the name 'Dmitry' is applicable to not only the pretender, Grigory Otrepev, but also Dmitry's counterpart or, as the tragedy puts it, his *shadow* (cf. the archaic identification of the shadow, the double, the reflection and alter ego). Grigory Otrepev ceases to exist so that the counterfactual double, Dmitry's shadow, can appear in the actual world. Having 'cloaked' himself with Tsarevich's name, the Impostor merely accompanies Dmitry's shadow on its way to the throne:

> Woe unto you, you cunning Boris!
> Tsarevish as a bloody shadow
> Will walk with me into the well-lit home of yours.

It is as if Otrepev enters Boris's dreams: the bloody shadow of the tsarevich, which will walk with Grigory (*with* him, not *in his place*), comes to Boris in his dreams. And he sees these dreams as a harbinger of the actual manifestation of Dmitry.

> So this is why, for all these thirteen years,
> I've kept on dreaming of the murdered child!
> Yes... yes, that's it! I understand it now (p. 47).

The murdered tsarevich exists in the world: he talks to the afflicted and cures them.

> And then one day,
> While fast asleep, I heard a young boy's voice,
> That said to me: "Rise up, old man, and go
> To Úglich-town, and pray before my grave,
> There, in the Church of the Transfiguration.
> The Lord is good—and I'll forgive your sin..."
> "Who are you, though," I asked the boyish voice.
> "I am Dimítry, royal prince. The Lord
> Hath called me to his Host of Angel-souls,
> And made of me a mighty wonder-worker! (p. 67).

In both cases, he comes in a dream: he continues to exist in the actual world as an incorporeal apparition, a *shadow*. Finally, Grigory Otrepev comes to see himself as an emanation of shadow: the bearer of the name 'Dmitry', i.e. the signifier of 'Dmitry' is destined to become a sign of shadow and the son of a shade.

> **Dimitry** (*proudly*)
> The shade of dread Iván adopted me,
> And christened me Dimítry from the tomb;
> Two nations has he brought to strife around me,
> And in my name pronounced Borís's doom
> I am his son, Crown Prince (p. 60—61).

This monologue is the only one where Pushkin calls the speaker Dmitry before introducing his lines (in other cases, he is referred to as Oterpev, Pretender or False Dmitry). The monologue also stands out for being the only inset of rhymed verse in the tragedy otherwise written in blank verse.

Imposture is another mode by which a 'shadow' exists in the actual world, along with residing in a dream. Therefore, the political conditions listed by Grigory should be supplemented by another one: the individual whose name is being appropriated must exist in the actual world and have a special status even after death (as a miraculously rescued hero-martyr, a legend, a shadow, a mythical character). To elaborate on Wittgenstein's thought, the meaning of the name (a 'shadow', a 'ghost'), which may be stored on new carriers (dreams, memories, impostures born of the 'shadow), lives on after the bearer of the name dies.

4. The resurrection of the name as an act of imposture

It takes more than existence as a shadow to resurrect the name 'Dmitry', and Shuisky foresaw this. The tragedy describes the conditions of such a resurrection, of giving real existence to the *shadow*. A performative act of self-naming is needed, alongside a situation in the world where an alternative state of affairs becomes possible. A thinkable alternative strives to establish itself as reality.

Boris Godunov begins with a discussion of the current state of affairs. A world where the tsarevich was murdered, and Boris refuses to ascend the throne is recognised as contradicting either political logic or common sense. This is when the name 'Dimitry' is mentioned for the first time, by Shuisky.

> **Shúisky**
> I say it was a waste,
> If this be so, to shed Dimítry's blood,
> For then the prince might just as well have lived.
> **Vorotýnsky**
> How terrible a crime! But is it true,
> Borís gave orders for the prince's death? (p. 10)

Within Shuisky's logic, Boris has to be tsar. And, vice versa, if Boris *does not ascend the throne, Dimitry could live.* Here, as he does in many other episodes, Shuisky is voicing a special, political, logic. The world where Dimitry could live is given as a counterfactual one. In a world where Boris is tsar, Dmitry cannot exist. If Dmitry has been murdered, Boris is to be tsar. This is how the situation is described in the conversation between boyars. Yet, a world where the tsarevich could live is possible, but this is a world where Boris is not tsar. The 'resurrection' of Dmitry, accepted by the Muscovite nobility, happens after Boris dies.

A reverse transformation of the same scheme is characteristic of the picture put together by people of the 'low estate'. The scene at the

Chudov Monastery (which was not included in the final version, probably, because it was too straightforward and declarative) provides yet another alternative: not Boris's enthronement, but his downfall made possible by the resurrection of Dmitry.

> **Grigory**
> If only the Khan attacked again, or Lithuania rose!
> What an opportunity! I'd try my sword against them.
> How would it be if our Tsarevich suddenly rose from the grave,
> And he cried to us: "Where are you, lads? Where are my faithful followers?
> Join me against Boris, help me against the criminal,
> Capture that adversary of mine, and bring him here before me!"
> **Monk**
> Enough of this empty talk; how can we resurrect the dead?
> No, the Tsarevich met with quite a different fate — listen:
> If you think of doing something, do it …
> <div align="right">(as translated in Dunning et al. 2006, p. 287)</div>

The counterfactual situation is given at first as a fabulous alternative described using colloquial vocabulary and folkloristic rhythmic patterns. At the end of the dialogue, this alternative is realised through a performative act of self-naming or imposture.

> **Grigory**
> Decided.
> I am Dimitry, the Tsarevich (as cited in Dunning et al. 2006, p. 289).

Dimitry is the one who has said 'I am Dimitry'. The act of self-naming is equivalent to resurrection. Yet this is not sufficient. Such naming should be public and legitimised by the addressee (audience). In the case of performative utterances, the powers of the speaker to make such an utterance should be confirmed by the addressee, which is done by the Monk:

> **Monk**
> My hand: you will be Tsar (as cited in Dunning et al. 2006, p. 289).

The second act of self-naming is described in the conversation with Marina. To perform it, the character transforms at first into his old self only to reject it and become Dmitry. Here, it is the addressee who plays the active role. The pretender tries to be both Dmitry (for everyone) and Otrepev (for himself and Marina), and fails. When talking to Marina, he attempts to retain his old self:

> **Pretender**
> Stop! No more!
> I have no wish to share with someone dead
> The woman that by rights is his alone (p. 58).

> Do not despise a youthful, rash impostor;
> He may have hidden virtues after all,
> That make him worthy of the Russian throne,
> And worthy of your precious hand as well… (p. 59)

But, for Marina, it is not the virtues of a man but the status linked to his name that matters:

> Dimítry you shall be, and no one else;
> I could not love another (p. 59).

Grigory Otrepev cannot be himself: he is not identical to his old self any more; he is but a body (signifier), a vessel for the shadow of Dmitry. Remarkably, when confiding in Marina, he calls himself an 'impostor' rather than Grigory. Pushkin too replaces the name Otrepev with Pretender before the character's lines. Thus an inversion occurs: the name (*an empty name*) is given existence, whilst Grigory, a man of flesh and blood, has to become a signifier, a sign vehicle (this *will* happen in the real history when new False Dmitrys appear after the death of Otrepev to embody the meaning of the name 'Dmitry'). Dmitry (or False Dmitry, the difference is not essential anymore) is the sign of the name; he is doomed to be what Marina has articulated (*Dimítry you shall be, and no one else*)[7].

Dmitry's second birth is presented as a process of naming, not in a cradle but a tomb, and it remains unclear whose tomb this is: Tsarevich Dmitry's or Ivan the Terrible's. The dead man (more precisely, his shadow) has adopted a living man, having given him the name of the dead one. This is the scheme of legitimation Grigory Otrepev embraces to complete his transformation into Dmitry.

Resurrection has its own logic beyond the control of either Dmitry or Marina. False Dmitry will not become Otrepev for Marina, and Marina cannot reveal Dmitry as an impostor. To this threat he responds:

> **Pretender**
> You think I tremble at your idle threat?
> What man would heed an unknown Polish girl
> Before a Tsar?...
> **Marina**
> But stay, Tsarévich. Now at last
> I hear a man, and not a mewling boy.
> This pleases me and brings us in accord (p. 61).

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[7] As Igor Smirnov aptly writes, 'the imposter, having claimed someone else's body, has destroyed the social content of the personal sign linking its various owners into a line of succession. False Dmitry I could seize power in the Moscow State because he had radically transformed the correlation between his name and the person designated by the former, thus establishing a complete identity between himself and the one whose namesake he had become by cunning. The first Russian revolution, which unfolded in the early 17th century, was a nominative, anthropoimic affair' (Smirnov, 2004).

Marina, who earlier addressed him as 'poor impostor' now calls him Tsarevich: his *speech* makes her come to terms with him since those in power have already accepted his claim to speak in the name of the tsarevich. The next section of this article will look at how it is done.

5. Co-creating the impostor

The tragedy also describes other ways to resurrect a shadow. Unlike the one we examined above (Dmitry is the one who says 'I am Dmitry), they are products of another presumption (Dmitry is the one who is called Dmitry). This right to name or, more exactly, the right to make the decision to call one by that name rests with the authorities of Poland and Muscovy, on the one hand, and the people, on the other.

Initially, the materialisation of Dmitry's shadow is discussed as a possibility *in a conversation* between Vasily Shuisky and Afanasy Pushkin. The murdered Dmitry is alive: this oxymoron formulated by Afanasy Pushkin does describe the actual situation:

> **Púshkin**
> The son of Tsar Iván... one moment, wait...
> His son and heir, the boy Borís had murdered...
> **Shúisky**
> There's nothing new in that.
> **Púshkin**
> Just wait, there's more.
> Dimítry is alive!
> **Shúisky**
> That's news indeed!
> The crown prince lives!...
> **Púshkin**
> Just listen, hear me out.
> Whoever he may be: the rescued prince,
> A spirit who assumes his shape and form,
> Or even some bold rogue and crass impostor,
> It's still the case: Dimítry's reappeared (p. 37).

Seasoned politicians, the boyars do not care much who carries the name Dmitry: a *spirit, some bold rogue* or *Tsar's murdered son and heir*. What matters is the act of the name becoming material:

> **Púshkin**
> And Púshkin's seen him, too,
> As he came riding to the royal palace
> To make his way, through ranks of Polish lords,
> Into the private chamber of the King (p. 38).

Another Pushkin, Gavrila, has seen someone called Dmitry, i. e. a carrier of the name 'Dmitry'. Regardless of who that really is, what counts is possible consequences, which the boyars ponder:

Shúisky
All that you say, my friend, bewilders me,
Compels my head to spin with dizzy thoughts.
There's not a doubt: the man's a rank impostor,
But poses no small danger, I admit.
This news is grave! And should the people hear
Or learn of this, a mighty storm will come.
Púshkin
And such a storm that Tsar Borís may fail
To keep the crown upon his clever head (p. 38).

Paradoxically, the boayrs are reproducing the same dilemma: in the world where Boris reigns, there is no place for Dmitry, but that world emerged exactly when Dmitry was murdered. If Dmitry appears in it, Boris will perish. The existence of Dmitry cancels the hard fact of murder. But, in the world where Dmitry lives, there is no place for either Godunov or his posterity.

The people
Let's take him! Drown the pup! Long live Dimítry!
And death to all the house of Godunóv! (p. 90).

A similar position is taken by another Pushkin, whom the author of the tragedy considered his ancestor: what matters is not who the bearer of the name 'Dmitry' is, but that his appearance in the world restores the state of affairs earlier regarded as counterfactual:

Basmánov
Come Púshkin, that's enough:
I know precisely who he is, so please,
Stop playing games!
Púshkin
Both Poland and our Russia
Have long accepted him as Prince Dimítry;
But I, in any case, don't press the point.
Perhaps he is Dimítry after all,
Or maybe a pretender, as you claim;
I only know that one of these fine days,
Borís's son will yield him Moscow's throne (p. 86).

The impostor understands this as well:

...neither king, nor pope, nor noble lord
Cares in the least if what I say is true.
If I'm the prince or not, it's all the same;
I serve as pretext for dissent and war;
That's all they need (p. 61).

Pushkin describes those in power — the king, the magnates, the boayrs, Marina — as carriers of the semantics of doublethink or the pragmatic concept of the truth: they know that Dmitry is dead (Shuisky himself witnessed the burial), but they are ready to embrace the opposite perspective and recognise the impostor as the tsarevich. George Orwell descries doublethink as follows: 'to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, … to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again, and above all, to apply the same process to the process itself — that was the ultimate subtlety' (Orwell, 1949, p. 32). This is how the beholders of power behave in the tragedy. One of them, a witness and active participant in the current and coming political processes, the future tsar Vasily Shuisky goes so far as to '*to apply the same process to the process itself*'. He phrases this principle as follows:

> It's not a day for recollection, prince;
> Occasions sometimes prompt us to forget (p. 18).

The imaginary reality, the counterfactual world (the one where the tsarevich was saved) becomes the actual world, and the actual world, where Boris is tsar, becomes counterfactual. The dual reference of the name 'Dmitry', which can denote a dead and living man alike, turns into somewhat of a blend reflecting the blending of the worlds. Doublethink is a legitimate way to deal with a reality emerged from the mutual permeation of the actual and imaginary worlds.

6. Men's minds...

Yet another agent that has the right to name is the people. Alexander Pushkin puts a thought pointing to the source of legitimation into the mouth of his ancestor:

> **Púshkin**
> You want to know, Basmánov, where we're strong?
> Not in our troops, not in our Polish allies,
> But in men's minds, in what the people prize (p. 87).

Shuisky voices the same thought couched in a different style:

> Your power, majesty, is great indeed:
> Your graciousness, your bounty and your zeal
> Have won the hearts of all your loyal subjects.
> But you yourself must know: the mindless rabble
> Is fickle, mutinous and superstitious,
> An easy prey to vain and idle hopes,
> A slave to every momentary impulse;
> Indifferent and deaf-eared to actual truth,
> It feeds on fables and on fabrications (p. 44—45).

The opinion of the people uses other mechanisms of semantisation: the name is deemed inseparable from the person. Thus, Boris's ploy to anathematise Otrepev and sing a requiem for Dmitry has precisely the reverse effect. Acting on the advice of the patriarch, Boris meant to expose the impostor by performing these actions, to *strip* him of the appropriated name.[8] But, from the people's perspective, they are two different individuals, and singing requiem for the living tsarevich is sacrilege, another cardinal sin imputed to Boris:

> **First man**
> Well, did they put a curse on what's his name?
> **Second man**
> I was standing on the porch and heard the deacon cry out: Gríshka Otrépev — anathema!
> **First man**
> Well, they can curse him if they like, but the Tsarévich has nothing to do with Otrépev.
> **Second man**
> Now they're singing a requiem for the dead Tsarévich.
> **First man**
> A requiem for someone who's still alive! They'll pay for this one day, these godless blasphemers (p. 72).

As we can see, *men's minds* may not differ much from the pragmatic decisions of the elite, albeit they both rely on different mechanisms. The people seems to take as a premise the concept of rigid designation, which rules out the possibility of Otrepev becoming Dmitry. For the elite, on the contrary, the decisive thing is the decision to give a name regardless of its causal history. The nameless members of the people are the only ones who believe in the miraculous rescue of the tsarevich, and they give reality to imaginary constructs created by the authorities:

> **A voice from the crowd**
> What can we say? The boyar spoke the truth.
> Long live Dimítry, Moscow's rightful Tsar.
> **A peasant** (on the platform)
> Let's go! The Kremlin palace, brothers, quick!
> Come on! We'll put Borís's whelp in chains!
> **The people**
> Let's take him! Drown the pup! Long live Dimítry!
> And death to all the house of Godunóv (p. 90).

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[8] Cf.: 'Defeating the onomatocrat, Grigory Otrepev, comprehensively would require a ritualistic mystical destruction of his true name, accomplished through pronouncing an anathema on him. The fact that onomatology and struggle against name usurpers was the remit of religious philosophy in Russia is explained by the course of the long national history of imposture, which was religious as well' (Smirnov, 2004).

But 'men's minds' cannot be always controlled by the authorities but act according to their internal logic (which Boris speaks of hatefully in his monologue: 'The rabble hate the power of the living, // The dead alone can garner their affection' (p. 28). They can change in a flash. One can also envisage subsequent developments and a change in *men's minds.* The famous finale '[t]he people are silent' can be interpreted as a change in *men's minds*: the murder of Boris's wife and son may deprive the new tsar of the name he has been given:

> **Mosálsky** People! Maria Godunóva and her son Feódor have taken poison. We have seen their dead corpses. (The people fall mute in horror.) Why don't you speak? Let's hear your cry: Long live the Tsar, Dimítry Ivánovich!
> *The* People *are silent* (p. 92).

Yet, what is on people's mind changes from version to version. For instance, the very first one had in the stead of the now classical phrase '[t]he people are silent' the following:

> **The people**
> Long live Tsar Dmitry Ivanovich![9]

7. Historical memory and the changeability of history

Semantics of the name is a problem that can be directly related to history. The causal theory of names (Keith Donnellan, Gareth Evans, Saul Kripke) holds that the link between a name and an individual is legitimised by assuming a chain of observers from the moment when the individual was named. The continuous history of the use of the name ensures the identity of an individual. Hence, the situational alternation of remembrance and forgetfulness, the breaking of the chain will render the identification procedure impossible since it will preclude tracking an individual across all instants of time. At some points, he or she may disappear; at some other, another individual may turn up. Doublethink causes the past to change; the past and history are erected on the basis of the current 'opinion'. As applied to the semantics of the name, the situation of baptizing is substituted with that of naming at the given moment: 'the Dmitry who is called Dmitry here and now'. Yet, this relativistic perspective on the past has an alternative: regardless of the fickle 'opinion', there is the true account of affairs written by an impartial chronicler who has nothing to do with the action described and is the author of a suprapersonal text aimed at a suprapersonal recipient. The fickle popular

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[9] People Long live Tsar Dmitry Ivanovich! (as cited in Dunning et al. 2006, p. 451).

opinion and the doublethink of the authorities are opposed in the play by the chronicler Pimen. There are two characters in the tragedy who witnessed the murder of the tsarevich. One of them is Vasily Shuisky, capable of remembering and forgetting at the same time, which he does in a conversation with Godunov (the interrogation scene) and when talking to Vorotynsky. A courtier of cunning (as Vorotynsky calls him), Shiusky, is a witness and falsifier of history. He is the one who documents the imaginary situation created by Boris, which is to replace the actual one. A counterfactual model is taking the place of a historical description:

> **Vorotýnsky**
> How terrible a crime! But is it true,
> Borís gave orders for the prince's death?
> **Shúisky**
> ...I was charged
> To look into the matter at the scene
> And there I found fresh traces of the crime;
> All Úglich had been witness to the deed,
> Its citizens all testified the same.
> When I returned, I could have — with a word —
> Exposed the hidden villain to the world.
> **Vorotýnsky**
> Why didn't you destroy him then and there?
> **Shúisky**
> I must confess that he bewildered me
> With unexpected shamelessness and calm;
> He looked me in the eye and showed no guilt,
> Then questioned me on every small detail —
> And, face to face with him, I gave him back
> The nonsense that he whispered me himself (p. 10).

Shiusky explains his behaviour not by fear but by the futility of questioning the narrative that has been endorsed by those in power (in this case, the source of power is Godunov's influence on Tsar Fyodor). It may need proof before it is embraced, but it cannot be challenged since the upholders of a different point of view will be eliminated (there is somewhat of *argumentum ad morti* at play, see (Tulchinskiy, 2020b):

> **Shúisky**
> But what was I to do?
> Reveal it all to Fyódor? But the Tsar
> Saw matters through the eyes of Godunóv,
> And listened with the ears of Godunóv.
> And what if I'd convinced him of the facts?
> Borís would just have turned him round again,
> And off to some dank dungeon I'd have gone,
> Where, soon enough—as happened with my uncle —
> They would have had me strangled in the dark.

> I mean no boast, but should it come to that,
> I have no fear of torture or of death;
> I'm not a coward... but I'm not a fool
> To put my neck inside a noose for nothing (p. 10—11)

Another witness, Pimen, concludes his narration with the murder of the tsarevich. In the tragedy, the chronicler is the only one to contrast opinion with the *truth*. Pimen is not a mere bearer of historical memory: by describing the events as they did transpire, he becomes the creator of *history as a description of what took place.* Not the official narrative but the account by an unprejudiced observer will live on:

> **Grigóry**
> Borís, Borís! Before you Russia trembles,
> And no one dares to mention or remind you
> Of that poor child and his wretched fate.
> But here in this dark cell, a hermit monk
> Condemns you for a hideous transgression;
> And you shall not escape the court of man,
> No more than you'll escape the court of God (p. 25).

Pimen puts into words the already impossible alternative:

> **Pímen**
> Some seven years. By now he would have been...
> (Ten years have passed since then... no, somewhat more,
> Twelve years it is)—He'd be your age, Grigóry…
> And he'd be Tsar. But God willed otherwise (p. 24).

But the conversation with Pimen prompts Otrepev to take the name of Dmitry. The name creates the individual and turns an imaginary counterfactual world into the actual one. But what is to be done if 'God willed otherwise'? If the world must be the way it is, any attempt to actualise other states of affairs is illegitimate. If 'God willed otherwise', then calling oneself Dmitry is 'heresy', which is stated explicitly in the tragedy:

> **Patriarch** These blasted literates! What a thing to say! *I'll be the Tsar of Moscow!...* Why, this is heresy, Father Abbot.
> **Abbot** Heresy, Your Holiness, the rankest heresy (p. 26).[10]

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[10] Cf.: 'Apparently, the perception of the False Dmitry as a heretic and sorcerer took shape in the lifetime of the pretender: an anonymous message of 1605 says that, after False Dmitry appeared in the political arena, Boris Godunov sent an ambassador to the Polish Sejm and they "spread the word that Dmitry was the son of a priest and a known sorcerer"; later, the same rumour was spread in the Muscovite lands… Thus, false Dmitry was buried as a sorcerer' (Uspenskii, 1994, p. 90, 92).

As is well known, the historical storyline of the tragedy follows Karamzin's *History of the Russian State*. The play begins with a dedication: 'To the memory, precious to Russians, of Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin, this work, inspired by his genius, with reverence and gratitude is dedicated' (p. 1). Moreover, Pushkin deemed it necessary to familiarise himself with Karamzin's work in order to understand the tragedy.[11] Karamzin drew on chronicles. By dedicating the play to Karamzin and naming his *History* its source of inspiration ('this work, inspired by his genius'), Pushkin creates the impression that he is reproducing the *true history* narrated by Pimen, which forms historical memory independent of the influence of participants in the events. Therefore, he can restore the 'correct' causal history of the name and expose all the false namings the actors tried to impose.

8. Conclusion

Pushkin's intuition gave him an insight into the problems that would emerge in the analytical philosophy of names in the second half of the 20th century. His intuition provided him not with vague hunches but with clearly formulated conditions under which problematic situations arise. This view is supported by Pushkin continuously creating contexts where the admissibility of the deviant ('heretical') use of a proper name is tested: he describes the conditions under which the characters abandon canonical naming for 'heretical'. Dmitry's name is the only one that undergoes this test. In all other cases, the use of names is conventional, i. e. there is one-to-one correspondence between a name and its bearer, and a name is used to identify the same individual in all possible worlds. Only the name 'Dmitry' and its paraphrase 'the tsarevich' are used differently and can point to different referents. Pushkin introduces testing situations of two types: one of them stems from the 'multi-individuality' of the name 'Dmitry', which identifies two different individuals; the other is based on the mutinamedness of the individual referred to as Grigory-Dmitry. The names of individuals who can be named differently are determined not by the function of identification across different worlds but by the world itself — the context of naming. In some worlds, the same person is called Dmitry, in others, Grigory. His only attempt to be Dmitry and Grigory at the same time nearly drove him to his death ('No wonder I was trembling. She almost did me in') (p. 62). For Dmitry to resurrect, Otrepev has to disappear. The dependence of naming on the context is manifested in that Pushkin refers to his character differently in

[11] Cf.: 'Here is my tragedy since you want it so much, but before you read it I demand that you look through Karamzin's latest volume. It is full of good jokes and subtle references to the history of that time, like our talks at Kiev and Kamenka. It is necessary to understand them — a sine qua non' (a draft of a latter to Nikolay Raevsky, 1829; the original was written in French) (as cited in Dunning et al. 2006, p. 142).

different episodes. The character's lines are introduced with four different names: in the first scenes that take place in Russia, he is called Grigory Otrepev. When the scene shifts to Poland (and then again to Russia), Pushkin calls the character according to his status function: Pretender or, less often, False Dmitry. Only once is he referred to as Dmtiry, and this does not seem to be an accidental misspelling: this is the way he is called when delivering the most momentous monologue: 'The shade of dread Iván adopted me, / And christened me Dimítry from the tomb' (p. 60).

The other characters use the name 'Dmitry' to refer to:

1) the murdered tsarevich Dmitry (in the world correlated with the time of speaking of the characters of *Boris Godunov*, he '[s]leeps in his grave' but also haunt people's dreams as a shadow and cures the afflicted who come to pray at his grave;

2) the individual earlier called Grigory Otrepev;

3) in the acts of self-naming, the referent of the pronoun 'I' in the phrases pronounced by the individual earlier referred to as Grigroy Otrepev and now calling himself Tsarevich Dmitry.

These three factors determine the felicitous conditions for imposture as a performative: 1) the act of self-naming; 2) the presence of a person who was called by that name earlier; 3) the opinion of the people and the authorities, i.e. the presence of those willing to refer to the person earlier called Grigory as 'Dmitry'. The third condition is tightly linked to status-giving. The internal chronology of the tragedy is driven by the reference of the name. The world-time line may be considered as the interval set out by the tragedy from the moment when the name Dmitry is used to refer to the late tsarevich Dmitry and not the living Grigory Otrepev (the period from the enthronement of Boris to the scene at the Chudov Monastery) to the finale (the existence of Tsar Dmitry is recognised, and the corresponding reference is proclaimed the only right one). In the mid-position within this interval is the situation where both names have one referent (for some he is Grishka Otrepev, and for others Tsarevich Dmitry). For those in power, with their propensity for doublethink, and the character himself, Otrepev and the tsarevich are the same individual, who has to be named differently depending on the context. Naming is becoming a matter not of reference but rather of belief and opinion. In some temporal worlds-contexts, the references of the names Dmitry and Grigory Otrepev co-exist; in others, they mutually exclude each other. The name is granted its own existence, and when the impostor dies, it acquires a new bearer: the second False Dmitry, the Thief of Tushino, appears on the scene, followed by the third impostor, the Thief of Pskov. This development of events was apparently taken into account in Pushkin's semantic constructions.

Let us get back to the central question: what is the semantics of a proper name? Is it a condensed description (Russell), a rigid designator (Kripke), a set of essential properties (Hintikka, 1972) or a causal chain of references (Donnellan)? Analysing the semiotics of imposture leads one

to the following answer: in varying cases and contexts, in various pragmatic conditions, different characteristics come to the fore. Generalising, the semantics of imposture can be reduced to a binary relationship: the proper name functions as a condensed description, somewhat of a hologram, but identifies not the bearer of the properties and status in question but her/his counterpart who claims to carry them. Yet, the use of this name claims the title of a rigid designator, capable of identifying the same individual across all the worlds and not his doubles. Imposture is a phenomenon deliberately disrupting the use of a name as a rigid designator and yet alluding to such use. In some sense, it is a 'rigid false designator'.

Imposture is possible where there is a rigid link between the name and its bearer. It is not only that in case of imposture the individual is called by different names: firstly, unlike a pseudonym, the new name transforms its bearer, and he or she can no longer be what was the referent of the previous name; secondly, the referent of the adopted name must be a person who exists (or existed) and has a performative status. Ascribing status qualities specific to the name, i.e. using the name as a condensed description (a synthesis of Russel's and Hintikka's name theories), grants corresponding powers or equips one to claim them. Imposture, as a semantic phenomenon, rests on misusing or manipulating the potency of a name to act as a condensed description or a hologram (when not only the traits of an individual, but also a possible world are built around a name). The semantics of the name is no longer a relationship between a sign and a referent; it demands a complete set of status qualities ascribed to its referent by 'men's minds' or based on a contract between holders of power. The reference of a name loses its objectivity, turning into a verdict — a decision made by people in power (the Polish king and magnates, the Mniszech family, the boyars) or carrying other legitimacy (*men's minds*). At the same time, the act of imposture and its recognition by the ruling class changes the past: what was an unrealised possibility (Dmitry's reign) becomes actuality. The actual world is the one where Dmitry is alive, while the world where Dmitry is dead, and Boris Godunov is tsar, has to disappear. This logical-semantic transformation takes place in history: the living one becomes dead (Godunov dies), and the dead one lives (Dmitry is resurrected and enthroned). The murdered heir to Ivan comes to life, and the living heir to dead Boris is murdered. Pushkin does not give the ultimate answer — on the contrary, he replicates multinamedness in the author's notes: depending on the context, the main character is called Oterpev, Pretender, False Dmitry and (once) Dmitry. Another theme is concerned with memory, which is the foundation of the causal theory of the name, and the possibility to abandon memory. The chain of observers is broken— with the missing links, it is impossible to establish relationship between the name and its bearer. Still, there is a possibility of a *true* description of what happened, and the restoration of the *true* history. All these peculiarities, on the one

hand, betoken another, logical-semantic, dimension for interpreting *Boris Godunov*; on the other, they provide a clearer picture of the theories of the proper name, pointing to their possible non-trivial and sometimes problematic consequences.

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САМОЗВАНСТВО КАК ПРОБЛЕМА РЕФЕРЕНЦИИ: СЕМИОТИКА ИМЕНИ В «БОРИСЕ ГОДУНОВЕ»

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Автор продолжает рассматривать механизмы представления себя как другого и другого — как себя. В данной связи описываются нетривиальные особенности семантики имени собственного. На материале анализа контекстов ненадлежащего употребления имени в ситуации самозванства, описанных в трагедии Пушкина «Борис Годунов», анализируются семиотические механизмы преобразования и присвоения идентичности. Показано, что интуиция Пушкина позволила ему увидеть те проблемы, которые возникли в аналитической философии имени второй половины XX века. Пушкин последовательно создает контексты, в которых проверяются условия приемлемости или неприемлемости отклоняющихся употреблений. Эти особенности, с одной стороны, позволяют предложить дополнительное, логико-семантическое измерение для интерпретации «Бориса Годунова», а с другой — существенно уточняют имеющиеся теории имени собственного, показывая их возможные нетривиальные, а в некоторых случаях проблематичные следствия. В то же время логико-семантический анализ позволяет выявить механизмы самозванства и коммуникативные условия для его успешности.

Ключевые слова: *А. С. Пушкин, «Борис Годунов», имя собственное, самозванство, семантика возможных миров*

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