PreDictionary

PreDictionary is a dictionary of would-be words that are designed to fill gaps in language and generate new concepts and meanings. Focused on the creative potential of a neologism and a dictionary entry, this book is dedicated to both poetry and poetics. The concept of *lexicopoeia* comes from Ralph Emerson: "Every word [lexis] was once a poem." To keep language alive, we must constantly reinvent, rejuvenate, and reanimate it – to imbue it with poetry. This means, in particular: to give birth to new words. One freshly coined word, a "lexicopoem" is the most concise genre of literature, more terse than even an aphorism. The main part of the book includes 150 entries in 14 thematic sections. All new words are supplied with definitions and examples of usage. The theoretical parts, Introduction and Afterword, discuss the word- and dictionary-building process in relation to the needs of language development. The author sees the transition from the analysis to the synthesis of language as a most promising path of innovation in contemporary "post-analytic" philosophy and linguistics.

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His area includes Western and Russian
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Emory University (2002 – 2003), The Institute of Advanced Study at Durham University (England, 2011), working on projects related to the study of ideology, language, philosophy, and the future of the humanities. He has authored 20 books and approximately 600 essays and articles that have been translated into 15 languages.

Professor Epstein's work represents a compendium of ideas that diverge from the existing paradigms in the humanities. His writings are full of proposals for new disciplines, for new genres and concepts, and for new words to describe them. Semiurgy, for example, would be the science of how to produce new signs, and silentology, the inverse of linguistics. This is what actually the humanities' enterprise may be: finding blank spaces in the languages of existing disciplines and trying to fill them. The contemporary humanities, according to Epstein, are in transition from the philosophy of analysis to the philosophy of synthesis. Each act of the analysis contains a possibility for a new synthesis. The strategy of the language synthesis, or what can be called constructive nominalism, now presents itself as an alternative to the analytical tradition. Inasmuch as the subject of philosophy—universals, ideas, general concepts—are presented in language, the task of a philosopher is to enhance the existing language, to synthesize new terms and concepts, lexical units and grammar rules, to increase the volume of the speakable and therefore of the thinkable. If in the 20th century philosophers concentrated on the analysis of language, in the 21st century, they will focus on the synthesis of the variety of new languages (discourses, disciplines). Epstein calls his method potentiation and contrasts it with the traditional predominance of the actual (or real) over the potential in the ontology of Aristotle and Hegel. Analysis is focused on the actual, whereas synthesis looks into the multiple potentials hidden in any given actuality.

MIKHAIL EPSTEIN

PreDictionary

Experiments in Verbal Creativity

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By Mikhail Epstein

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PreDictionary

Every word was once
a poem...

Ralph Emerson

...as is every emerging word.

Preface

Dictionaries, even those that accommodate neologisms, tend to be reactive, i.e., reflect what has already happened with the language. A **predictionary**, on the other hand, is proactive as it contributes new words that may make their way into the language and dictionaries of the future.

The term "predictionary" can be read two ways:
(1) pre-dictionary: a draft, a beginning, a prototype of a dictionary;
(2) prediction-ary: a collection of predictions, of would-be words or words to-be, of vocabulary hopefuls.

Both readings are correct, even necessary to understand what predictionary is all about: predicting and introducing new words (rather than recording those already in use) to be potentially included over time into regular dictionaries.

This Predictionary is a collection of words that I have coined since the early 1980s. The project has three objectives: analytic, aesthetic, and pragmatic.

1. Analytically, the Predictionary looks for gaps and semantic voids in the lexical and conceptual system of the language in order to fill them with new words describing potential things and emerging ideas.
2. Aesthetically, the Predictionary aims to create miniature works of verbal art, micropoems, lexipoems. Filled with drama and intrigue, these novel pieces of language open new avenues for thought and imagination by provocatively juxtaposing available word-forming elements.
3. Pragmatically, the Predictionary seeks to introduce new words into the language by providing examples of their usage. Each word is defined and illustrated to show its communicative value and the range of possible applications in typical situations and contexts.

It is my hope that most of these suggested words will achieve the first goal, and at least some will approach the second; the third may prove unattainable, yet hope again prevails over experience. As Fyodor Tyutchev, 19th century Russian poet, put it:

> It is beyond our power to fathom
> Which way the word we utter resonates,
> A gift of empathetic understanding emanates.
> Thus, like a sudden grace that comes upon us.

Introduction. Lexicopoeia
as a Literary Genre

What is the minimal genre, the elementary unit of literary creativity? Not an aphorism or a maxim, as many would immediately suggest. The unit of verbal creativity is a neologism — a single word as a "quantum" of creative energy. A new word reveals in the most concentrated form the same qualities of invention as longer literary texts, such as a poem or a novel.

This unit of creative verbal output can be called **verbit**, blending *verbal* and *bit*; the shared *b* joining them into a single word. An example of a **verbit** is the word *verbit* itself.

Various types of neologisms perform various linguistic and social functions: technical terms, trademarks and brand names, political slogans, expressive coinages in literature and journalism… Authors like Lewis Carrol or James Joyce wove neologisms into the fabric of their writing. How-

ever, a neologism should be recognized as a self-sufficient text. I call this genre of producing single words **lexicopoeia**, from the Greek *lexis*, 'word' (from *legein*, 'say') and *poiein*, 'to make or create'. Lexicopoeia means word-composition, word-formation. It is a literary genre of its own, the poetry of a single word.

Ralph Emerson's phrase chosen as the epigraph is a good definition of lexicopoeia:

Every word [lexis] was once a poem [poiema]

To which I would add "...as **is** every emerging word." As we get too accustomed to words, use them routinely, our speech tends to become dull and flavorless. To keep language alive, we must constantly reinvent, rejuvenate, and reanimate it, to imbue it with poetry. This means, in particular: to give birth to new words.

Lexicopoeia is the most concise genre of literature. Even aphorisms seem cumbersome and verbose compared with a **lex-**

icopoem. The genre of aphorism deals with sentences, while the lexicopoem focuses on the word as the smallest meaningful unit of language fit for independent use.

Roots, prefixes, suffixes and other word-building blocks (morphemes) provide the material for lexicopoeia. Not any combination of morphemes would make a new word, just as not any combination of words would make an aphorism, a poem or a story. A lexicopoem is the atomary text with its own idea, imagery, composition, plot, and relations/references to other words. That's what makes lexicopoeia an art rather than random morpheme-blending. The meaning of a lexicopoem cannot be mechanically derived from the separate meanings of its morphological components.

The word "lexicopoeia" is an example of the very genre it designates; it is also a fresh coinage never used before in English or any other language; you won't find it in any dictionary or web source.
The preceding sentence was written in 2003 when I first put my collection online

on my web page at Emory University. By June 2011, searching for "lexicopoeia" would yield 673 web pages. Among other words I first posted on various websites in 2003, searching for "predictionary" now yields 10,500 pages; for "protologism," 10,300; "lovedom," 13,100; "cerebrity," 45,600; "syntellect," 140,000; and "dunch," 414,000 pages.[1] The words "sovok" (Homo Sovieticus) and "metarealism" (an artistic and literary movement) that I introduced into Russian in the 1980s, have migrated into English and now yield 1,430,000 and 30,000 web pages, respectively. Words, like books, have their own fate. The Web is a perfect tool to track down word origins and spread.

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[1] From 2003 I contributed my coinages to several websites open to such free submissions: Urban Dictionary; Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary; Wictionary; Pseudodictionary; Unwords Dictionary; Peripatetic forums (Neologisms); Dictionary.com Forum; English Discussion Forums — UsingEnglish.com; Google news groups, such as alt.english.usage, alt.usage.english, sci.lang, and others. I attempted to sow the seeds of new words as widely as possible, in hope that they may give rise to new ways of expression and conceptualization.

In the process of putting together this lexicopoetic collection I initially checked all my coinages on Google to make sure none has been used before, at least in the meaning proposed in this book.[2] Of course, I make no claim to be the first and only person to have introduced these words. It's not unusual for several minds to come up with the same new word independently. As Alan Metcalf puts it, "[n]ot only are words easily born, they are also easily reborn. The majority of new words that endure are coined not just once, but many times before they become established…. Just as the calculus was independently invented by both Newton and Leibniz when mathematics was ready for it, so new words appear again and again when the language is ready."[3]

It is hard to describe what it takes to coin a new word and at which point we can consider it born. When it dawns upon one's mind? Has been uttered? written down?

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[2] To look for my first online publications of any given word, you can search it on Google in conjunction with my name and surname.

[3] Allan Metcalf. *Predicting New Words: The Secrets of Their Success.* Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002. p. 97.

defined? used in a phrase? used consistently in private conversations and public discussions? When it catches public attention? becomes so convincing and emotionally charged that people are increasingly tempted to use it?

So a newborn word goes through a number of lifecycle stages. Though the word itself may have occurred spontaneously and simultaneously to many minds, it does matter who takes care of it, tries to "civilize" it, to provide definitions, contexts, interpretations and convincing examples of usage. Parenting does not stop at birth, it takes persistent efforts nurturing, culturing, and educating the newborn, providing it with means of subsistence and introducing it to society. Fortunately, the Web, for the first time in human history, offers a tremendous opportunity for researching the origins and destinies of new words, at least those that have emerged during the age of electronics.

Protologisms vs. Neologisms

The genre of PreDictionary, however eccentric or even egocentric it may seem, has a long tradition in English. In 1531, Sir Thomas Elyot in *The Boke called the Gouernor*, the earliest treatise on moral philosophy in English, set the task of purposely extending the national vocabulary by introducing new words. "I intended to augment our Englyshe tongue wherby men shulde as well expresse more abundantly the thynge that they Conceyued in their hartis (wherfore language was ordeyned)…" His neologisms include many masterpieces that were to become staples of the English language, such as *activity*, *audacity*, *education*, *exactly*, *involve*, *mediocrity*, *sincerity*, and *society*.

It is hard to imagine that nowadays one can emulate the linguistic feat of Sir Thomas Elyot and his abundant gifts to the English language. As a language matures, it tends to become less malleable. But even a single word successfully introduced into common

usage can bring its inventor recognition like a famous poem to its author. Such is the case of the humorist-writer and illustrator Gelett Burgess whose best known legacy is the word *blurb* published in *Burgess Unabridged: A New Dictionary of Words You Have Always Needed* (1914). Out of a hundred words offered in this edition only one took hold and persisted. Then, what would we call the rest of Burgess's words that evidently had their own conceptual and poetic value, such as *edicle* ("one who is educated beyond his intellect") or *gubble* ("society talk, the hum of foolish conversation")? They had never achieved the status of neologisms, i.e. words more or less adopted by the language though still perceived as newcomers (*blog* and *truthiness* are recent examples).

I suggest calling such brand new words "**protologisms**" (Gr *protos*, first, original + Gr *logos*, word; cf. *prototype*, *protoplasm*). Protologism is a freshly minted and not yet widely accepted word. It is a prototype, a pilot lexical unit which may eventually be adopted for a public service or

remain a whim of linguo-poetic imagination. Protologisms and neologisms are different age groups of verbal population. Along with the decrepit, obsolescent archaisms facing death, and strong, thriving middle-aged words that make up the bulk of the vocabulary, we should recognize neologisms (youngsters vigorously making their way into public spaces) and protologisms (newborns still in their cradles and nurtured by their parents). Once a protologism has found its way into media, it becomes a neologism. Every newly coined word, even if deliberately promoted for general or commercial use, has initially been a protologism; none can skip that infancy phase. As it achieves public recognition, it gets upgraded to neologism; once firmly established in public domain, it becomes "just a word."

Over the last few years some words I proposed, e.g., "dunch" or "lovedom," have been gradually turning from protologisms into neologisms, with tens of thousands of web hits. But the majority of words found in this book are still babies, protologisms,

and the word "protologism" is one of them... Or is it? With 10,000 webpages showing it on Google, can we count it as a neologism? Neologisms are hard to tell from protologisms based on numbers alone. How many leaves it takes to get a "heap"? Ten, twenty, a hundred, a thousand? It is a matter of convention. I would suggest considering any word used independently by at least ten authors and found on at least a thousand webpages a neologism.

A protologism, however, doesn't have to strive ambitiously to become a neologism; childhood has its own charm and value. Kids are blessed with imagination and creativity that often fade as people mature. Sometimes a poetic word – a "one-word poem" – may be deemed unfit for practical purposes precisely because of its poetic nature. It may be a good poem or a bad poem, but it has to be judged in aesthetic rather than functional terms. Lexicopoeia as an art judges the words based on such essential criteria as wit, power of imagination, expressive and inventive energy, con-

ceptual courage rather than potential for general circulation and routine usage. It is the imaginative quality of protologisms rather than the practical usefulness of neologisms that this collection attempts to celebrate. Fortunately, one does not necessarily exclude the other.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

PreDictionary includes one hundred fifty entries divided into fourteen thematic sections. Within each section, the order of entries is alphabetic, with several exceptions for cognate words that cluster together. In the last two sections, "Language" and "Grammar Words," the entries get longer and more elaborate. As my project was approaching completion, the dictionary grew a bit self-conscious and slipped into a rather encyclopedic attitude.

The Afterword discusses the word- and dictionary-generating process (the *semiurgy*, or sign-producing) in relation to the needs of language development and the web potential. Finally, I focus on the dic-

tionary entry as a synthetic genre which even better reflects the purposes of this project than the genre of a single word, emphasized in the Introduction.

Acknowledgments

More often than not, a dictionary is a team effort; a pre-dictionary is both less and more so. On one hand, a predictionary is a creation rather than compilation, more like a work of fiction. On the other hand, words, even individually coined, are designed to be used by many. Having a "pre-word" tested and vetted by "pre-readers" prepares it to fend for itself. I was fortunate to have many gifted and insightful readers for this collection who advised me on various aspects of this dangerous enterprise. Unlike a traditional lexicographer, collector of words, the "harmless drudge" (to use Dr. Samuel Johnson's definition), the inventor of words often looks like an *insolent dissenter* who defies Tradition and usurps the Public's prerogative of shaping the Language.

The late Eve Adler, a wonderful friend and magnificent translator of one of my books, was the invaluable reader and advisor on the initial, short 2002 version of *Predictionary*. She suggested the name *lexicopoeia*

for the genre I initially called *lexipoeia*. Dmitry Shalin, another good friend and sociology professor (University of Nevada), read my early drafts with a constructive skepticism and provided generous advice, which I have followed to the end. I discussed intermediate drafts with Mary Cappello, a talented essayist (University of Rhode Island), and some entries with my long-standing friend Gene Barabtarlo, a literary scholar (University of Missouri), and benefited a lot from their refined advice. The brilliant translator of another book of mine, Dr. Anesa Miller has carefully edited the *Predictionary* when it was still significantly shorter than now, and added stylistic elegance to numerous examples. Igor Klyukanov from East Washington University has accurately yet inventively translated from Russian the Afterword and edited the Introduction and some of the later entries. Every of the several versions of the book invited new editing; the last one was edited by Vassili Belov of Maplewood, NJ, with whom I was also lucky to discuss some coinages and their possible implications. Without these friends and colleagues,

their professional expertise, linguistic taste and generous moral support, this book would very different or non-existent at all.

PreDictionary

Everyday Life

dunch *n* (a portmanteau of *lunch* and *dinner*; cf. *brunch*) — a snack between lunch and dinner in the late afternoon or early evening.

Dunch better describes the midway meal than the once suggested "linner." Dunch is a lighter meal, more similar to lunch than to dinner. Accordingly, the word is shorter and follows the pattern of the recently coined "brunch." Our urban life, with its proliferating social occasions and meetings over meals, may make this term handy.

> **Dunch** usually includes tea or coffee with cookies, sometimes fruits or a salad.
>
> I already have plans for lunch and dinner tomorrow; let's have a **dunch**.

etceteric *adj* (from *etcetera*) — mentioned under "etc." among many other items, not worthy to be named individually; generic, anonymous, unimportant.

> Alan has worked in this field for almost forty years, and he's still an **etceteric** researcher. Isn't that a shame?

> Kaluga is not an **etceteric** Russian town, it is famous for the best preserved 19th century cityscape.

> I'm afraid you've never heard of Andrew Lynch. No, he is not an esoteric writer. He is simply an **etceteric** writer.

eventify *v trans* — to make more eventful, to spice up.

> Do you want to **eventify** your life? To make it fuller, more exciting? Come travel with us.

> Let's think how we could **eventify** our next vacation.

> Our relationship is becoming a routine. I'm looking for ways to **eventify** it.

> **Eventifying** your life may seem like a good idea, but might actually prove destructive.

orgy of order — a meaningless order imposed by an outside force.

> My wife organized the papers on my desk. They were a mess alright, but I knew perfectly well which was where. I came back and found an **orgy of order**: neat but meaningless stacks of papers.

traf *v* (back-formation from *traffic*) — to drive in heavy, slow traffic, to be stuck in traffic.

(Back-formation is the creation of a simpler, shorter form of a longer word, like "edit" from "editor," "intuit" from "intuition.")

> I **traffed** for an hour before I got home.

> **Traffing** is a school of patience.

veery *adj* (blend of *very* and *veer*) — an emphatic, emotional form of "very"; to the highest degree, in the fullest sense possible. Also associated with "to veer" (from Lat *vibrare*, vibrate) and, accordingly, implies "making a huge difference," "extreme," "crucial," "ultimate."

Thank you **veery** much!

This is a **veery** important paper.

Veery truly yours.

People and Characters

chairy *adj* — someone who likes to chair meetings, to preside, to be a master of ceremonies.

> Jimmy is every bit as **chairy** as Andrew, which spells trouble for a small institution like ours.

> She is a wonderful person, but perhaps a touch too **chairy** to make a pleasant housemate.

doctator *n* (*doctor* + *dictator*) — doctor as dictator, an agent of medical tyranny.

doctatorship *n* — the dictatorship of doctors; the system of medical coercion with mandatory treatments enforced by hospitals and insurance companies. Pressure from health officials leaves the patient no choice.

> They insist on this course of treatment because it's profitable for the clinic. **Doctatorship** is a grave danger to society.

domestican *n* — someone who preaches the values of domestic life, hearth and home.

> A typical **domestican** hates going outside and prefers kitchen and living room to all attractions of the world.

> He is as reclusive as a monk, though his monastery is his own house. In a word, he is a **domestican**.

fatenik *n* (*fate* + suffix *-nik*) — someone who flirts with the idea of fate, constantly watches for omens, checks horoscopes, etc.

-nik is a Russian suffix that made its way into English in 1957 with *sputnik* (cf. similarly derived *beatnik*, *peacenik*, *refusenik*, etc.) and usually refers to persons with a certain inclination or bias.

A fatalist believes that everything is predetermined and inevitable. A **fatenik** is a playful and superficial fatalist who enjoys

signs of the supernatural without giving them much importance.

> Never mind Lisa's premonitions. She is a **fatenik** and easily picks up stupid rumors.

ifnik *n* (*if* + suffix *nik*) — someone whose life, habits and thinking are shaped by countless "ifs" rather than hu's own will or convictions.[4]

> Don't ask him what he's going to do. A typical **ifnik**, he will give you a dozen of "ifs."

meetnik *n* (*meet* + suffix *nik*) — a person who eagerly attends and enjoys any business meetings.

> Being social is one thing, meeting for the sake of meeting is another. I try to stay

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[4] **Hu** *pron* (a clipping of "human") — a 3rd person gender-neutral pronoun referring both to a man and a woman — pronounced (hju:), like "hu" in "human." **Hu** suggests the meaning of undivided humanness. "**Hu's**" stands for "his or her." More information on this pronoun is given in the last section "Grammatical Words."

> away from **meetniks** for whom getting together is an end in itself.

safenik *n* (*safe* + suffix *nik*) — a person who wants everything warranted, feels an overwhelming need for safety and security and is scared by the vicissitudes of life.

> How about a family trip to Tibet? — No way. My husband is a **safenik**, he never takes any risks.

whynik *n* (*why* + suffix *nik*) — a person too eager to know why things are the way they are and pestering everybody with questions.

The association with *whiner* and *whimper* makes this word even more expressive describing children who often are both whyniks and whiners.

> This little **whynik** drives me mad. Make him stop asking.

Emotions and Psychology

astralgia *n* (Gr *astro-*, star + Gr *algos* —
pain, grief, distress; cf. *nostalgia*) — a long-
ing for stars and space travel to remote
corners of the universe; being homesick for
the cosmos.

> *Gattaca* (the film) is about **astralgia**.
> The main character, deemed genetically
> flawed and thus given an unskilled job,
> pursues his dream of space travel.

avidominosis *n* (Lat *videre*, to see; *avi-
taminosis*, vitamins deficiency) — the
shortage of visual impressions, craving to
see new landscapes, films, spectacles,
works of art, etc.

> I feel an urge to go to the cinema. Because
> of my homebound lifestyle and months of
> non-stop reading and writing I've devel-
> oped an acute **avidominosis**.

conaster *n* (Lat *cum*, with + Gr *astron*, star) — literally *with star*, the antonym to *disaster* (literally "away from stars"); the fortunate outcome of an imminent disaster; the sensation of a dodged catastrophe remembered from the vantage point of safety.

> There were several **conasters** in my life that I can only attribute to God's undeserved mercy.

> You were born under a lucky star. This **conaster** was an amazing mix of chance and miracle.

conastrous *adj* — of the nature of a **conaster**, causing great relief.

> I had a **conastrous** experience after being caught in a storm while windsurfing.

egonautics *n* (Lat *ego*, I + Gr *nautikos*, of ships and sailing, cf. *aeronautics, astronautics*) — adventurous exploration of one's self.

egonaut *n* — a person dedicated to navigating one's self.

Egonauts are adventurous intraverts who travel to the frontiers of their mind and body to discover new lands.

John is constantly experimenting on himself. **Egonautics** is his passion.

experimence *n* (*experience* + *experiment*) — experience based on experiments, or an experiment based on experience.

Both *experience* and *experiment* come from the Latin *experiri*, to try or test; the two meanings have split in English in the 14th century but still have much in common. **Experimence** comes handy where one want both meanings combined.

My **experimences** with love have been more desperate than daring.

Ivan Karamazov's **experimence** in rejecting God results in madness.

happicle *n* (*happy* + suffix *-icle*, as in *particle*, *icicle*) — a single happy occurrence or a momentary feeling of happiness, a particle of happiness.

Happicles make life worth living, even a not too happy one.

There is no happiness in this world, but there are **happicles**. Sometimes we can catch them, fleeting and unpredictable as they are.

Happicles, like photons, have zero mass at rest — they lack the stable nature that defines happiness. **Happicles** flash and go, ephemeral as a fragrance, a falling leaf, or a passerby's glance.

multividual *n* (Lat *multus*, many + Lat *individuus*, indivisible) — a multiple-personality individual with many selves.

Psychologists have noticed the emergence of a protean type of personality combining properties of different individuals: not a schizophrenically split personality, but a healthy **multividual** who cannot be confined to a single self.

In the past, **multividuals** often revealed their multiple selves in acts of artistic inspiration and creative reincarnation. With the progress of technology, these multiple selves may acquire independent bodies and reach across continents under

> various physical guises performing various social and professional roles.

narrow(ly) awake — mostly asleep, dozing; the opposite of "wide awake."

> I haven't slept all night, so don't expect me to be coherent; I am **narrowly awake**.

oneirogenic *adj* (from Gr *oneiros*, dream + *genic*; cf. *photogenic, telegenic*) — having a propensity to appear in somebody's dreams.

Some people are photogenic, others, **oneirogenic**; these abilities rarely coincide. Someone hardly noticeable in real life may haunt our dreams and imagination.

> Have you noticed that cats are more **oneirogenic** than dogs?

> Ask your friends, "Do you find me "**oneirogenic**"? If the answer is "yes," ask them to recall what were your actions in their dreams.

transvert *n* (Lat *trans*, across, over + *vertere*, to turn; cf. *introvert, extrovert*) — a psychological type switching between introversion and extroversion and combining features of both types.

> I'm neither an extravert or an introvert; a **transvert**, I would say. My ways defy classification.

> His life switches between extremes of self-absorbed seclusion and wild partying at random places with random people. He is a typical **transvert**.

Relationships and Communication

ambipathy *n* (Gr *amphi-* or Lat *ambi-*, both, on both sides + Gr *pathos*, feeling) — a mixture of sympathy and antipathy, attraction and repulsion; a condition of being torn apart by conflicting feelings and aspirations.

> Catullus's phrase "I hate and love" is an early expression of **ambipathy**.

> Dostoevsky's characters often prove **ambipathic** as they alienate and torture those whom they love.

defriend *v trans* (*de* + *friend*; cf. *befriend*) — to break off friendly relations.

> He **defriended** me a year after we met, for no reason. He just stopped calling, period.

> I want to **defriend** you. —What's wrong? —I need more than friendship from you. I need love.

goodevil *n* (good + evil) - the intended good that, if implemented consistently and with violence, turns into evil, with the devil as a mediator.

> Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky exemplifies **goodevil:** the good that is enforced on people destroys them.

goodevilish *adj*

> "With an iron hand we'll drive the humanity to happiness," – this was a a **goodevilish** slogan of Rusian revolution.

hi-byer *n* (*hi* + *bye* + suffix *-er*) — a marginal acquaintance, with verbal exchange limited mostly to "hi" and "bye".

> Do you know her? — Not really, we are **hi-byers**.

> I was surprised to see this **hi-byer** stopping for a substantial conversation.

> They were married for ten years, but now they are simply **hi-byers**.

mehemize *v* (from *mhm* — a sound whereby a listener confirms hearing, without agreeing or disagreeing) — to confirm listening and understanding with no definitive response to what is being said.

> Empathetic **mehemizing** is a token of diplomatic conversation.

mehemic *adj* — related to the *mhm* sound (see above).

> What was his reaction to your proposal? — **Mehemic**. Neither yes nor no.

mutually mute — verbally incompatible persons.

Some people feel awkward of silence and try to say something though they have nothing to say to each other.

> I respect Dr. Stone but we are **mutually mute**. When we meet, we squeeze out some nonsense about weather and sports in which neither of us has the slightest interest.

Life, Health and Death

biogram *n* (Gr *bio*, life + Gr *gram*, letter) — a section of life experience, a building block of biography.

Biograms include "love," "friendship," "marriage," "travel," "illness," "war," etc., i.e. any event(s) perceived as a structural unit of life narrative.

> A traditional biography presents **biograms** chronologically, whereas a biographic dictionary of an outstanding personality would present the **biograms** in systematic order: areas of work, achievements, ideas, publications, awards, friends, co-workers, places, major personal and historical events, etc.

bioplagiarism *n* — unsolicited or illegitimate cloning.

> **Bioplagiarism** is a violation of each human's copyright to the unique text of hu's body.

Any organism is a book of unmarked quotations from its ancestors. **Bioplagiarism** is in the order of things.

sanitas insania (Lat *sanitas*, health + Lat *insania*, mania) — obsession with health and wellness.

Sanitas insania is an oxymoron. To be obsessed with health is unhealthy.

Steve washes his hands every five minutes in fear of infection – a typical symptom of **sanitas insania**.

smort *n* (*sport* + *mort*, mortal) — self-ruinous obsession with sport; health-damaging stress and exhaustion from physical exercise.

smortive *adj* — obsessed with physical exercise and fitness to the detriment of health.

smortsman, **smortswoman** *n* — a smortive person.

This **smortive** guy is jogging for four hours now, running to meet his early death.

> Please don't let your love of fitness turn you into a **smortsman**.

thanatagogy *n* (Gr *thanatos*, death + Gr *agein*, to lead; cf. *pedagogy, demagogy*) — initiation into death, preparation for dying.

> Thanatology is theoretical study of death; **thanatogogy** is a practical discipline, a pedagogy of dying.

> The Egyptian "Book of the Dead" is the earliest handbook of **thanatagogy**.

> Plato sees philosophy as the basis of **thanatagogy**: to study philosophy means preparing oneself to die.

thanatagog or **thanatagogue** *n* — a person who leads into death, prepares old or terminally ill people for dying.

> He is a **thanatagog** by vocation. He works at a hospice.

Love and Sex

amoresque *n* (cf. *humoresque, arabesque*) — a short literary or musical piece on love, often with whimsical or fantastic motifs.

> He wants to write a new *Decameron*, a collection of **amoresques** about men and women of any imaginable orientation.

amorist *n* (from Lat. *amor*, love; cf. *humorist*) — an author who specializes in romance novels; an expert in love and marriage; someone preoccupied with or experienced in love and eroticism.

> Danielle Steele is a famous **amorist**, author of dozens of sentimental novels for women.

> He switched from landscape painting to love scenes and now he is mostly an **amorist**.

> If you want good advice on your affair, ask John. He is an experienced **amorist**.

amoristic *adj* — dealing with love or eros as a matter of verbal or visual discourse (cf. *amorous*, related to love itself)

> *Sex and the City*? Sorry, I don't share your **amoristic** interests. I'd rather see a historic movie.

amorism *n* (cf. *aphorism*) — a concise statement, popular saying or general wisdom on love.

> Steve certainly has a great deal of experience with women, but his **amorisms** are trite and superficial.

amort *n* (Lat *amor*, love + Lat *mors*, death) — the mixed love/death instinct; the union of Eros and Thanatos, or transformation of one into another; a cruel passion destroying the loved and/or the lover.

> **Amort** is the most common theme of European literature, from *Tristan and Isolde* to Oscar Wilde's *The Ballad of*

Reading Gaol ("And all men kill the thing they love…")

amortify *v trans.* (Lat *amor*, love + *mortify*) — to act with both affection and ruthlessness, to inflict suffering and ruin by love.

> Dostoevsky's novel *The Idiot* is about people who keep trying to **amortify** each other — and eventually succeed.

armand *n* (from *Armand,* proper name) — an adolescent boy with a sexual charisma, a male counterpart to Nabokov's nymphet. In Thomas Mann's novel *The Confessions of Felix Krull, Confidence Man,*[5] a mature woman (a counterpart of Nabokov's Humbert Humbert) calls Felix, her teenage lover, **Armand** (possibly associated with Fr *amant*, lover), and says "I detest the grown man full-bearded and wooly-

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[5] Thomas Mann. *The Confessions of Felix Krull, Confidence Man.* New York, Alfred Knopf, 1955, p. 176.

chested… It's only you boys I have loved from the beginning… ."

> In *Lolita*, Nabokov uses the phrase "a little Faun" to describe a nymphet's male counterpart. Essentially, *nymphet*, *Lolita*, *little Faun*, and **armand** all describe a heterosexual attraction of adults to young teenagers.

> The school teacher looked for **armands** among her students – and found one. By the time he turned 14 she was pregnant by him.

bangover *n* (*bang* + *over*; cf. *hangover*) — exhaustion and other after-effects of sexual indulgence or arousal.

> You are looking kinda haggard, my friend. A hangover? — Well, and **bangover**, too.

> The Japanese have a word derived from "sex-over," "sekusu oba." Vials of special pick-me-up are sold to morning commuters at rail stations. In English, we could call it **bangover**, or **sexhaustion**.

dislove *v trans* (prefix *dis-* + *love*) — to have a deep negative feeling, attraction-through-aversion to somebody.

"**Dislove**" is a deeper feeling than "dislike," a matter of personal relationship rather than taste. **Disloving** implies a strong negative emotional connection to its human object.

> I **dislove** my ex-husband, I don't dislike him. I would never marry someone I simply dislike.

equiphilia *n* (Gr *aequi*, equal + *philia*, love) — indiscriminate love of many persons or things.

> **Equiphilia** may be close to indifference. Equal love to many means no love at all.

> Mary has hard time making up her mind. Not that she is indifferent to her admirers but she is now at the point of **equiphilia**.

eroticon *n* — a lexicon of love: thoughts, stories, speech figures related to love, eros, and romance.

> Roland Barthes' *A Lover's Discourse* is an outstanding example of **eroticon**.

lovedom *n* (*love* + suffix -*dom*) — the world of love, the totality of loving emotions and relationships.

> Edward VIII was that rare romantic who challenged society by trading his kingdom for **lovedom.**

> Your heart is large enough to love many, but can you find a small corner for me in your **lovedom**?

philocracy (Gr *philos*, loving + *kratos*, power, rule) — the rule of love; love as a governing principle of social and communal life.

philocrat — a believer in the power of love, in love-based governance.

> **Philocracy** assumes that God, who is Love, is the source of all authority. Hence, love should be the ultimate authority.

> **Philocracy** is different from theocracy that implies the power of organized religion and would be better termed *hiero-*

cracy — government by the clergy, ecclesiastical rule.

philophilia *n* (Gr *philia*, love) — love for love's sake.

> Todd is a **philophil**. He does not love anybody in particular, he just enjoys being in love.

philophobia *n* (Gr *philia*, love + *phobia*, fear) — a fear of love and intimacy.

> Stalin had **philophobia**: he never had a deep personal relationship with anybody, like friendship or love.

retrosexual *n* (Lat *retro*, backward + *sexual*; cf. *metrosexual*) — a person of mainstream sexuality, sexual conservative.

> Mathew has never even tried oral sex, he is a **retrosexual**.

sexhaustion *n* (*sex* + *exhaustion*) — same as **bangover**.

siamorous *adj* (*Siamese* + *amorous*) — closely connected by a psychic symbiosis based on love.

> Do you see this **siamorous** couple? They live next door for 20 years, and I've never seen them walking separately.

> – Your boyfriend was flirting with that redhead. – It's OK, we're not **siamorous**, I've been flirting with Bob, too.

spectrosexual *n* (*specter* + *sexual*) — someone looking for an ideal, illusive and elusive sexual partner.

> Some see Don Juan not as erotomaniac but as a **spectrosexual** who loved the idea of the female more than real women.

womaneuver *n* or *v* (woman + maneuver) - to act in a female manner, to use feminine tactics for achieving one's goals.

> Womaneuvering is a strategy to convert your weaknesses into advantages.
> He tried to outmaneuver her but was helpless against womaneuvering.

Mind and Knowledge

cerebrity *n* (Lat *cerebrum*, brain; cf. *celebrity*) — a famous intellectual; a cerebral but emotionally dry or egocentric person.

> I avoid meetings with **cerebrities**. Everything they have to say is already in their books.

> I used to think of Hegel as a **cerebrity** with little human passions, and was surprised to learn that he fathered an illegitimate son.

gnawledge *n* (portmanteau of *gnaw* and *knowledge*) — mechanical knowledge obtained by "gnawing" facts rather than by conceptualizing and creatively interpreting them.

Gnawledge and *knowledge* are homophones (differ only in spelling).

> When Bacon said "knowledge is power," he didn't mean **gnawledge**.

inventure *n* (*invention* + *adventure*) — a creative and engaging intellectual undertaking.

> This book about the invention of radio reads like a thriller, with one **inventure** upon another.

> By cutting reason down to size and establishing its "proper" limits, Kant encouraged subsequent **inventures**, a never-ending quest to reach beyond the limits of rational thought.

inventurer *n* — an adventurer in the world of ideas and inventions.

> **Inventurers** know how much there is that they don't know and start their journey confessing their ignorance, like Socrates or Kant.

noocracy *n* (Gr *noos*, mind + Gr -*kratia*, power or rule) — the rule of mind, a system of world government based on the civilization's consolidated intelligence.

> The future of humanity can be envisioned as **noocracy** — the power of the collec-

tive brain representing certain social groups or society as whole, rather than individuals.

Paleonoic *adj* (Gr *palaios*, ancient + Gr *noos*, mind; cf. *Paleozoic* era, from Gr *zoe*, life) — the current epoch of primitive mind and first intelligent machines; in the future history of consciousness this era will occupy a place similar to that of the Paleozoic in the history of life.

> From the perspective of a distant future, we are people of the **Paleonoic** era, when the first non-biological forms of reason were just emerging, when thinking left at last the prison of the brain with the emergence of computers and other forms of artificial intelligence.

syntellect *n* (Gr *syn*, with, together + *intellect*) — the consolidated mind of civilization that integrates all individual minds, both natural and artificial, through information networks.

> InteLnet, the intellectual network, will connect all thinking beings into one net-

work that will evolve over time into a new form of consciousness — **syntellect**. The **syntellect** will consolidate all the thinking potential of civilization and operate on both biological and quantum levels.

Philosophy

beable *n, adj* (*to be* + suffix *able*) — having a potential for being.

> What is thinkable and imaginable in our world is also **beable** in one of the possible worlds.

> A fetus is not a being yet, it is just a **beable**.

bject *n* (common part of *subject* and *object*) — one that is both a subject and object, i.e. in an undetermined position, or superposition, of being the actor and the acted upon. It is a more fundamental category than "subject" or "object."

> When we say that "the sea is seething," the sea is a "**bject**," i.e. both the subject and object of seething.

fantology *n* (*fantasy* + *-ology*) — a study of possible worlds and fantastic beings

bridging philosophical thought and artistic imagination.

> The task of **fantology** is to explore potentialities of being, including those of alternative worlds.

nove *n* (from Lat *novus*, new) — a unit of newness or novelty, something new, unexpected, unusual.

A bit is a unit of *information* obtained by learning which of the two equally likely events occurred. A **nove** is a unit of *creativity* obtained by finding which of many equally improbable ideas is most provable, viable and feasible.

> How many **noves** have you identified in this artistic project?

reity *n* (Lat *re*, matter or thing) — all that is real in opposition to the virtual.

Reity is narrower than "reality." Virtual worlds are parts of a larger reality that embraces abstract concepts, emotional states, numbers, fantasies, etc. **Reity** is what we find around ourselves when we turn off our

computers and leave the virtual worlds: the aroma of coffee, the sound of a living voice, a view from the window...

> Switching to **reity** from a video or a computer is a gratifying experience. You sense afresh the charm of things as they smell and taste and touch you.

sophiophilia *n* (Gr *sophia*, wisdom + *philia*, love; cf. *philosophy*) — love for wisdom that cannot be reduced to any academic discipline or discourse, including philosophy.

> Over the last two millennia philosophy has variously defined itself as a rational theology, a universal science, an ideology, a method of analyzing language, but seldom as **sophiophilia**, i.e. the love for wisdom proper.

sophiophil *n* — someone who loves wisdom in a non-philosophical way.

> Philosophy has strayed so far from wisdom that love for wisdom needs a different name. One can be a **sophiophil**

> without taking any interest in today's
> academic philosophy.

scientify *v trans* (*science* + suffix *-ify*,
from Lat *-ficare* or *-facere*, to make or do)
— to make something more scientific, sub-
ject to scientific analysis, rules and con-
cepts.

> He tried hard to **scientify** his paper, but
> it is still a provocative essay rather than a
> consistent argument.

> She **scientified** her diet and as a result
> lost her appetite.

white holes *n* — cultural gaps among
signs and symbols that point out a need for
new words and concepts (cf. *black holes* in
the outer space).

> **White holes**, as defined in physics,
> throw out matter and energy, in contrast
> to black holes that swallow things irre-
> trievably. Physics argues that white holes
> cannot exist, since that would violate the
> second law of thermodynamics. The laws
> of physics, however, do not apply to cul-
> ture, noosphere and semiosphere, where

white holes do exist. One of the goals of the humanities is to extract energy from such semantic voids, **white holes**, and fill them with new signs and ideas.

Religion and Beliefs

esoterra *n* (*esoteric*, occult + Lat *terra*, land) — an enchanted country, a mysterious or miraculous land.

> India, with her myriads of deities, is a quintessential **esoterra**.

ghostalgia *n* (*ghost* + Gr *algos* — pain, grief, distress; cf. *nostalgia*) — a mystical longing or wistful affection for ghosts, angels, aliens, and other paranormal and mysterious phenomena.

> **Ghostalgia** is a form of nostalgia for the other world as our true lost home.

> I am agnostic, but sometimes feel **ghostalgic**.

> In times of crisis, **ghostalgia** can grip the souls of entire nations.

relicious *adj* (*relic* + *religious*) — religiously devoted to relics, to the preservation of the past.

> Nothing in modern life is meaningful to him. He is a deeply **relicious** person, not simply nostalgic.

> To some people Eastern Orthodox spirituality seems more **relicious** than truly religious.

Slavior *n* (to (en)*slave* + suffix *ior*, like in *savior*) — the prince of this world, the Antichrist, who claims to be the savior but enslaves people pretending to save them.

> For those eschatologically-minded, the distinction between Savior and **Slavior** may be as subtle as one letter difference in their names.

> Some Christians believe that the **Slavior** is already here, in our very midst, and refuse to serve this impostor.

theomonism *n* (from Gr *theos*, God + Gr *monos*, one) — unity in God; the integration of various religious traditions and de-

nominations achieved through common faith in one God, in the oneness of God. **Theomonism** is the reversal and eventual historical outcome of *monotheism*.

> There are three major stages in the religious history of mankind. Many gods — many faiths: polytheism, such as the Greek paganism. One God — many faiths: monotheism, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. One God — one faith: **theomonism** as a synthesis of world religions.

> Monotheistic religions share a faith in one God that will ultimately lead them to unity, i.e. to **theomonism**. The more various faiths approach the truth of Oneness, the closer they are to each other.

Society and Politics

ambi-utopia *n* (Lat *ambi-*, both, on both sides + *utopia*) – a genre that combines utopia and anti-utopia, i.e. ambivalent about certain social ideals and their potential realization.

Ambi-utopianism is a controversial vision of the future. Thomas More was a utopianist, George Orwell, an anti-utopianist; on the other hand, the work of Andrei Platonov (1899–1951) is hard to define in these opposite terms as it combines dreams of the bright communist future with horrifying images of human degradation and atrocity. His novels *Chevengur* and *The Foundation Pit* are good examples of **ambi-utopia**.

> I love technology for the cheap comfort it provides, and I hate it for the very same reason. My next novel about technomania will be definitely an **ambi-utopia**.

ambi-utopian adj — related to **ambi-utopia** or **ambi-utopianism**.

    ambi-utopian attitude, manifesto, platform, novel, treatise...

crazy cracy, or **crazy-cracy** *n* (*crazy + cracy*, from Gr *kratos*, power) — a scornful name for a political regime.

> There is no cause good enough to kill people. Democracy, autocracy, aristocracy... All these **crazy-cracies** are not worth a single human life.

> Matthew has decided to launch a new political movement. He believes that another **crazy-cracy** will make a difference.

deadvertise *v* (*dead + advertise*) — to advertise and promote political causes by death.

> Terrorism is the art of **deadvertising**.

dreadvertise *v* (*dread + advertise*) — to advertise by dread, to engage in propaganda by speading fears and mistrust.

> There are skilled **dreadvertisers** in our government.

globotomy *n* (*globe* + *lobotomy*) — aggressive "surgical" solutions to global problems.

> The war in Iraq may tear the world apart and lead to **globotomy**.

the dooming 2000s — a nickname for our decade.

> The booming 1990s, **the dooming 2000s**.

> Americans divide their cultural history into decades: the prosperous fifties, the rebellious sixties, the egoistic seventies, the greedy eighties, the booming nineties. We live in **the dooming 2000s**.

the oopsies, or **the OOpsies** (from *oops*) — a nickname for the 2000s.

> The *oops* of surprise and dismay is suggested by the ending zeroes of the decade of big failures and grave mistakes. We failed to detect and avert the terrorist plot

— oops. We failed to capture Osama — oops. Iraqi WMD — oops. We promised better life to Iraqis — oops. Our thriving market economy turned out to be a bubble — oops. Thus, **2000-psies**, or **OOpsies**, or **oopsies**.

obamanna *n* (*Obama* + *manna*, from the Bible) — high expectations of miracles that Barack Obama may produce as the U.S. president.

> Don't expect **obamanna** immediately falling upon us after the inauguration.

politicosis (cf. *toxicosis*, *psychosis*, etc.) – obsession with politics, propensity to talk politics or politicize everything without adequate knowledge or understanding.

> As a young man, John suffered from **politicosis**, but now he hardly even looks into newspapers.

taxicosis *n* (*taxes* + *toxicosis*) — a seasonal depression caused by tax preparation that affects the majority of US population

every March and early April. Symptoms: fatigue, nausea, melancholy, etc.

> You look depressed. What happened? — A usual spring **taxicosis**.

totalgia *n* (*total* + Gr *nostalgia*) — nostalgic aspiration for totality, national unity, the ideals of social commonality aligned with traditional values and beliefs.

> In postcommunist countries, many experience **totalgia**, longing for the lost ideal of social integrity.

> Totalitarianism in Russia is still alive in the **totalgia** for the old Soviet customs, songs and morale.

Time

chronocide *n* (Gr *khronos*, time + Lat *cidum*, from *caedere*, to slay; cf. *genocide, homicide*) — "the murder of time," the violent disruption of historical continuity.

> Any revolution is a form of **chronocide**: it sacrifices the past and present to the future.

> Communism and fascism are both **chronocidal**: one destroys traditions as it leaps to the chimerical future, another brings the society under the spell of the mythic past.

chronocracy *n* (Gr *chronos*, time + Gr *kratia*, power or rule) — social and political order based on timing; rule by the laws and force of temporality; a form of government imposing time constraints on all authorities and the necessity for periodic transfer of powers on all levels.

Under **chronocracy**, life is determined by the regular periodic change of political, economic, and cultural trends, methods, fashions, and personnel. Presidents, computers, car models, artistic styles, dress cuts, textbooks have to change periodically to maintain their status as "new."

> Who rules in America, *demos* or *chronos*? America is a **chronocracy** no less than a democracy, with strictly enforced changes on all levels, from political leaders to dress fashions and technology.

chronomania *n* (Gr *chronos*, time + Gr *mania*, obsession, madness) — obsession with time and speed; inclination to utilize every moment and to submit one's life to a total time control.

> America suffers from **chronomania**. Faster, faster, faster! Let's pause to see where we stand and consider where exactly we have been rushing headlong.

> **Chronomania** may jeopardize your mental health. Try to refocus your life beyond schedules and deadlines.

chronomaniac *n* — a person obsessed with time and speed who tries to live faster and micro-manage time. Synonym: **time-nik** *n* (*time* + suffix *–nik*)

> He checks his watch every minute, a real **chronomaniac**.

> My colleagues are crazy **timeniks**. No one has a minute for a human conversation.

chronopathy *n* (Gr *khronos*, time + Gr *patheia*, suffering) — a temporality disorder, a lack of time sense; inability to manage time, to meet schedules and deadlines.

> **Chronopathy** is the undiagnosed cause of many social disorders and career failures.

> **Chronopathy** can be compared to blindness or dyslexia. An impairment of the time orientation ability, it should be treated as a psychological condition rather than a moral deficiency.

chronopath *n* — a person affected by chronopathy.

> You are always late. Are you a **chronopath**?

chronopathic *adj* — related to **chronopathy**.

> He misses one appointment after another not because of ill intentions or disrespect. He has been **chronopathic** since childhood.

chronosome *n* (Gr *chronos*, time + Gr *soma*, body; cf. *chromosome*) — a unit of historical heredity.

Chromosomes pass the genetic code to subsequent generations; **chronosomes** pass a mental code of a historical period through styles, traditions, and "cultural color."

> The **chronosomes** of the early 20th century avant-garde reached the generation of the 1960s and shaped its political views and artistic styles.

> Young people in the 2000s have different **chronosomes** than we had in the 1990s.

The **chronosomic** analysis of *Finnegans Wake* lays bare multiple mythological sources and images of ancient chronicles in Joyce's enigmatic prose.

ex *v trans* (from the Greek derived prefix *ex*, out, from, out of, as in *ex-president*, *ex-husband*) — to make outdated, obsolete, to relegate to the past.

He **exed** his girlfriend and now feels lonely.

Those prone to **exing** others should be ready to be **exed** themselves.

liveline *n* (cf. *deadline*) — the start date of a process. **Liveline** and deadline are the scheduled beginning and the end of an action or procedure.

The deadline for filing applications is March 31. The **liveline** for application processing is April 1.

What is the **liveline** for ordering this still unpublishhed book on Amazon?

to ride the edge — to be ahead in something, to be on a cutting edge and take the risks of being first and leading others.

> A recent graduate in quantum physics, Amalia now **rides the edge** of nanotechnology.

timenik *n* (*time* + suffix *–nik*) — see **chronomaniac**.

uchronia *n* (Gr *ou*, not + Gr *chronos*, time; literally "no time"; cf. *utopia*, no place) — a condition of "no time," an uneventful state of permanence.

> As soon as utopia finds its way into reality, it turns into **uchronia**, a disruption of history itself.

> The worlds of great visionaries are often **uchronian**. Perfection precludes change.

Technology and Internet

corputer (Lat *corpus*, body + *computer*) — a digital device implanted into the human body; a futuristic term referring to an organ of the cyborg.

> **Corputers** will soon exceed traditional computers in computational power.

EGG *n* (abbreviation) — *Electronically Generated Group*, such as a *smart mob* (*flashmob*) or *bookcrossing* enthusiasts. These communities emerge in cyberspace and use the web to establish social bonds, to connect and act together in real time and space.

> Rapidly emerging **EGGs** take advantage of the speed and flexibility of the web to extend virtual communities into the real world. These **EGG**s are indeed the eggs of new web-initiated communities.

egger *n* — a member of EGG.

> Do you participate in any **EGG**? — Yes, I
> am a seasoned **egger**.

egonetics *n* (*ego* + *net* + suffix *-ics*) —
searching one's own name and creating a
network of self-references to increase one's
presence on the Web.

Egonetics is a purposeful dissemination
of one's name, making links to one's home-
page, joining interactive sites, blogs, and
forums to boost self-representation. Unless
intended for intellectual participation or
professional advancement, this is a narcis-
sistic pursuit.

> It is hard to tell where the professional
> ambitions turn **egonetic**. He just loves
> seeing himself on the Web and spends
> hours every day on **egonetics**.

egonetic *n* — a person who engages in
egonetics.

> Jim is a caring guy and not an egoist in
> the traditional sense, he is simply an
> **egonetic**. He loves his name more than

himself and is more attached to his virtual persona than to physical existence.

Egonetic doesn't necessarily mean egocentric. In the illusory world of the Web one is desperate for a grip of reality which is one's own name. For an **egonetic**, hu's proper name is the umbilical cord connecting the vast infosphere with the small human being who peeks though the screen.

headmade *adj* (cf. *handmade*) — produced by human mind, or "natural" intelligence rather than by intelligent machines, robotic minds, software programs, etc.

In the future age of artificial intelligence, **headmade** things will be valued as high as handmade objects in the industrial age of mass production.

humy, or **humie** *n* (diminutive from *human*) — a patronizing name for humans; a human being as an inferior partner of robots or other creatures of superior intelli-

gence. The term also alliterates with "humiliated," the role humans might assume in a technosociety dominated by artificial intelligence.

> For somebody as smart as this **humy,** you have to wonder why he cannot conquer illness and death.

> An average artificial physicist of the 22nd century may look condescendingly even at the brightest **humies** of the past, like Newton and Einstein.

infopause *n* (*information + pause*) — a break in using Internet and other sources of information in order to recover from its influx.

> An **infopause** may take from several minutes to months, depending on the gravity of the affliction.

> Every business should introduce at least two five-minute **infopauses** during the workday, with all computers and lights turned off to refresh employees' ability to process new information.

InteLnet (*intellect* + *internet*) — intellectual network; the electronic network at the service of intellectual communication.

InteLnet is an intellectual replica of the Internet, an attempt to connect electronically connectable cyberspaces on intellectual and spiritual levels, and to bring the humanistic message of the Internet in line with electronic media and interconnectedness of cyberspace. **InteLnet** is a response of the creative mind to the challenge of the expanding electronic universe.

> **InteLnet** was launched in 1995 as an experimental site and virtual community to discuss and promote interdisciplinary ideas in the humanities.

netify *v trans* (*net* + suffix -*ify*) — to make something net-like, to give the quality of a net.

Netify differs from "digitize"; it means introducing the features of electronic networks into social communication, into the off-line world at large.

> We are trying to **netify** the cumbersome structure of our team.

netification *n* — the impact of electronic networks on society, culture, etc.

> The future lies in the **netification** of society, i. e. making it as transparent to mind and open for communication as an electronic network.

netscapism *n* (net + escapism) - an inclination to retreat from unpleasant realities into the electronic network, or virtual world.

> In the past, the wild nature and remote countries provided the favorite refuge for social escape. Now it is the net. **Netscapism** has grown into a serious problem, especially among adolescents.

netscapist *n* - a person who escapes from unpleasant realities into the networld.

> **Netscapists** are ubiquitous today. If you are texting or twitting with your roommate instead of talking with him in a living room, you are in danger of becoming a netscapist.

socionetics *n* (*social* + *net* + suffix -*ics*) —
a discipline that explores socially transfor-
mative effects and potentials of electronic
networks.

> **Socionetics** studies web communities
> and the grassroot democracy they gene-
> rate, as opposed to the bureaucratic style
> of representative democracy.

technopoeia (Gr *techne*, art, craft + Gr
poiein, to make or create) — the poetic,
visionary side of technology as a form of
creativity, as a transformation of the world
by laws of harmony and beauty.

> Bridges spanning rivers like man-made
> rainbows; skyscrapers gleaming in a blue
> haze; virtual worlds bringing the freedom
> of fantasy and transformation – all this is
> **technopoeia**. Technology is every bit as
> metaphoric and symbolic as poetry, it just
> expresses its energy not verbally but in
> form of poetically transformed matter
> where each element plays with nature,
> defying gravity and physical constraints.

Using scientific instruments and communication facilities, **technopoeia** lets us see the invisible, hear the inaudible, speak in tongues, bring our word to every corner of the universe, and burst open the vast horizons of land and skies. **Technopoeia** expands the scope of poetry though engineering.

videocracy *n* (Lat *video*, I see + Gr *kratos*, power, rule; cf. *ideocracy*) — the power of visual images in shaping the society; the impact of television, cinema, Internet, and advertising on public opinion, politics, market strategies, etc.

Ideocracy is dead since the ex-communist countries are no longer communist. Was it the power of democratic ideals or American-style **videocracy** that overwhelmed the communist utopia? **Videocracy** has become indeed an integral part of American democracy in the media age.

videology *n* (Lat *video*, I see + Gr. *logos*, word, thought, doctrine; cf. *ideology*) — the impact of visual media on public mentality,

the combined effects of visual information and propaganda.

> The power of ideology that culminated in totalitarian regimes of the 20th century has been successfully contested by the Western art of **videology**: visual images appear to be more convincing than abstract ideas expressed verbally.

vir *n* (*virtual* + Russian *mir*, world) — a virtual world providing full-range sensorial experience so the subject is unable to tell reality from illusion.

> English scientists have recently built the prototype **vir**, a kitchen-size space to experience real virtuality.

> I will not let you go to that **vir** alone: who knows what temptations will you face there.

virtonautics *n* (*virtual* + *nautics*, from Gr *nautikos*, of ships, sailing) — exploration of virtual worlds.

> Our current trips thru the computer screen are just wading along the beach.

Virtonautics means leaving the shore (=the screen) behind and venturing far into the cyberworld as the emergent 3D environment available to all the five senses.

Virtonautics is still in embryo, but has a potential to become even more common an occupation than aeronautics and astronautics are today.

virtonaut *n* — a person engaged in **virtonautics**.

Our kids all become **virtonauts** at the earliest age and have hard time switching careers.

webbiage *n* (*web* + suffix *-iage*; cf. *verbiage*) — excessive use of web tools and design beyond what is reasonable to achieve a certain goal.

Why do you need all this **webbiage**? Simplify!

Language

Anglonet *n* (*anglo* + *net*) — the English language sector of the WWW.

> **Anglonet** contains about 227 billion words vs. Runet (Russian network) with just 30 billions.

elonym *n* (*electronic* + Gr *onyma*, name; cf. *pseudonym*) — electronic name; the part of electronic address that precedes @.

> In our corporate mail system, **elonyms** are assigned based on first initial plus the last name with last letter deleted. Mine is bjohnso (Bill Johnson).

> His **elonym** is as pretentious as himself: aaaaa111. Clearly he claims to be alpha, not omega.

Englobal *adj* (*English* + *global*) or **Englobish** (*Engl* + *glob* + *ish*) — the international English, as opposed to national/local variants of the English language, such as British English, American English, Spanglish, etc.

> What language does he speak? It doesn't quite sound English. — It's **Englobal**: not quite English, but still usable almost everywhere in the world.

infinition *n* (*infinity* + *definition*) — an incomplete and potentially infinite definition; the process of defining something that cannot be fully or precisely defined; an open list of possible definitions.

infine *v trans* (Lat *in*, not + *finis*, boundary; cf. *define*, *refine*) — to define in a negative way something indefinable, to stop or postpone the process of definition.

Certain emergent fluid concepts are subject to **infinition** — infinite dispersal of their meaning — rather than to definition. For example, Lao-tse never says what Tao is but only provides a number of **infinitions**: "The Tao that can be trodden is not the

enduring and unchanging Tao. The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name."[6] Jacques Derrida never defines his method of deconstruction but only **infines** it in numerous passages. To **infine** means to suggest multiple possible definitions and state that none of them can define the subject.

There are several ways to **infine** a concept:

1.   Directly stating that the concept cannot be fully defined.

2.   Providing multiple definitions that succeed and cancel each other thus amounting to a long **infinition**.

3.   Providing an inconsistent, paradoxical definition that points out the mutually exclusive properties of the concept (such as "perfection" and "evolution").

The need for **infinitions** can be inferred from Gödel's theorems. The most basic concepts of any philosophical or religious system, such as God, Being, Absolute, Spi-

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[6] *The Tao Te Ching*, ch. 1, 1-2.

rit, Beauty, Love, are not definable within these systems. Each discipline has its own primary concepts subject to **infinitions**, such as *wisdom* in philosophy, *soul* in psychology, or *word* in linguistics.

interlation *n* (*inter* + *lation*; cf. *translation*) — variation of a theme in two or more languages; unlike in translation, the roles of source and target languages are interchangeable; a verbal art based on figurative (metaphoric) relationship between languages.

Robert Frost said that poetry is what gets lost in translation. **Interlation** synergistically increases poetic value by adding more layers of imagery to metaphors of each language.

> Bilingual people don't need translation but may enjoy an **interlation**, e.g., two juxtaposed language versions of apparently identical texts – say, a Joseph Brodsky's poem in Russian and English. His own translation of his Russian line meaning "Loneliness is a man squared" into English reads: "Loneliness cubes a man at ran-

dom." It would be irrelevant to ask which of these expressions is more adequate to Brodsky's thought. This Russian-English **interlation** represents the scope of its metaphoric meaning.

Silentese *n* or *adj* (*silent* + suffix *–ese*, as in Chinese, Portuguese) — the language of silence; may use non-verbal signs, gestures, mimicry, or facial expressions.

> He didn't say anything. — Why, he spoke eloquently, but in **Silentese**, the most difficult language to study and understand.

> We are working on a **Silentese**-English dictionary. It translates into English the hidden messages of our mind and the meanings of our silence and pauses for which so far we have no vocabulary.

stereotext n (Gr *stereo*, three-dimensional + *text*; cf. *stereo music, stereo cinema*) — multilingual writing using multiple languages to convey the multidimensionality of thought and imagery by emphasizing the variety of associative connections.

The stereo effect may be either intentional or achieved by the experience of reading multiple versions of the same text. Vladimir Nabokov's autobiography can be read as a **stereo-text** in two languages and three consecutive versions: *Conclusive Evidence* (1951) — *Drugie berega* (1954) — *Speak, Memory* (1964). Nabokov pointed out that these are much more than mere translations: "This re-Englishing of a Russian revision of what had been an English retelling of Russian memories in the first place, proved to be a diabolical task, but some consolation was given me by the thought that such multiple metamorphosis, familiar to butterflies, had not been tried by any human before."[7]

> In a global society, "**stereo textuality**" can be viewed not just as an odd by-product of the growing multilingualism, but as the most adequate form of verbal creativity. Stereo music and stereo cinema (3D films) reproduce sounds and images better than the "mono" technology. **Stereotext** has the same quality: proper-

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[7] Nabokov, Vladimir. *Speak, Memory*, London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1964 pp. 12-13.

ly presenting an idea and conveying all the dimensions of thought and imagery may take at least two languages, like two eyes or two ears. The synergy of languages yields **stereo poetry** or **stereo prose**.

textoid *n* (*text* + Gr suffix -*oid* referring to likeness; cf. *asteroid*) — a virtual, digital text that can be edited by any user and exists only while being read.

The digital era shattered the traditional concept of text. Once immutable, self-identical texts are turning into fluid, dynamic, transient **textoids** roaming the web and constantly modified by users, much like an epic song in a traditional community.

> *Wikipedia* is a collection of permanently revised **textoids** that never settle as stable texts.

tonguefusion *n* (cf. *confusion*, *transfusion*) — a fusion of languages, in a literary work or otherwise.

Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* is a perfect example of **tonguefusion**.

verbject *n* (*verbal + object*) — a verbal object: (1) a smart computerized object that is managed by verbal commands; (2) a genre of art that combines a material object and a text into one whole.

Yesterday things were silent, today verbjects listen and respond. Even a freezer has its own raspy voice.

In Conceptualist **verbjects**, the physical presence of the objects, such as a chair or a spade, complements the text that describes them in documentary or imaginative ways.

Grammatical Words (conjunction, pronoun)

bespite *conj* (*because* + *despite*) — "because of or in spite of" in condensed form.

> This book will generate keen interest in both scholars and the general public, **bespite** its controversial nature.

> **Bespite** the intensity of the debate, there has been major progress in our understanding of this trend.

> **Bespite** the expectation of Truman's imminent defeat, Democrats turned out in numbers and assured his victory.

hu *pron* (from *human*) — a gender-neutral third person pronoun.

Hu is a back-clipping (a word's shortened form with the end omitted, like *lab*, *math*, *ad*, or *condo*).

Hu is pronounced (hju:), like in *human*, and is thus close to two other person-

related genderless singular pronouns, *you* and *who*. *Who* and **hu** are naturally drawn to each other by rhyming and communicational contexts, as a question and the answer. **Hu** points to that generic, genderless **hu**man to whom the *Who?* refers. The answer is prompted by the question itself. "Who buys this stuff? Who would want a car like that?" — "Anyone who believes that **hu** can afford it."

The forms of the third person pronouns are:

	Nom	**Gen/Adj**	**Acc**	**Refl**
Masculine	he	his	him	himself
Feminine	she	her	her	herself
Neutral	hu	hu's	hu	huself

> Anyone stating that **hu** has a conflict of interests should not serve as an investigator.

> An employee may choose to cover only **huself** and **hu's** child or any number of children.

It's the vice-president's job to support the president and take **hu's** place when **hu** is away.

A university professor must exhibit **hu-self** in **hu's** own true character — that is, as an ignorant human being, actively utilizing **hu's** small share of knowledge.

An introvert can easily become an extro-vert when it is advantageous for **hu** to do so.

To avoid gender bias, some prefer switch-ing to plural. However, such a solution is problematic and may compromise the lan-guage's ability to deal with individuals. Compare:

A hero is one who places **huself** at risk for another.

vs.

Heroes are those who place themselves at risk for others.

To convey this idea I would like to imagine **a** hero, one human being rather than a group, a mass of heroes. Resorting to *they* eliminates not only gender, but individuali-

ty as well. Should we speak and think about people as multitudes only? It is important to talk about a student, an employee, an author, a doctor, a physicist, or a person, rather than to refer to faceless students, authors, doctors, persons, etc. Better to adjust the grammar to ethical and conceptual concerns, not the other way around. Gaining gender-neutral grammar at the expense of an individual reference is a dubious achievement.

Hu has several advantages over other applicants for the job:

1. **Hu** is fully motivated and semantically/etymologically justified as a short form of *__hu__man*. Whenever **hu** is used, *human* resonates behind it making it memorable, meaningful and suggestive (unlike artificial pronouns suggested earlier, such as *e, et, mon, na, ne, po, se, tey*).

2. **Hu** is a two-letter one-syllable word. Using **hu** instead of "he or she" (2 keystrokes *vs.* 9), **huself** instead of "himself

or herself," etc. saves time, space, and effort, especially in e-mail.

3. **Hu** follows the pattern of the pronouns *he* and *she* (same 'h,' a single vowel, open syllable) and is thus their good partner in gender specialization within a lexical family.

4. **Hu** is spelled consistently with pronunciation, unlike the unpronounceable *s/he*.

5. **Hu**, unlike *they* used to refer to an individual, is not grammatically disruptive and can be used routinely and mechanically, without twisting the sentence to put everything in plural.

6. **Hu** easily lends itself to derivatives following the common patterns, e.g., **hu's** and **huself**.

7. To borrow a gender-neutral pronoun from another language, we may consider the Old English *ou*, Persian *u*, and Arabic *hu* already used in this role. Any of them could be easily incorporated into contemporary English, adding (or

keeping) the *h*, as a short form of the genderless *human*.

So far, I see no strong arguments against **hu**-language, the language of undivided **hu**manness. In the near future, this **hu**manness will require to be even better articulated to distinguish our species from any artificial forms of intelligence emerging to assume ever more active roles in civilization and language. Soon we'll have to answer questions like "Who is doing this or that (reading, speaking, thinking, etc.)?" The answer may be either **hu** (human) or *it* (machine). We need the word **hu** not only to harmonize the verbal treatment of men and women, but also to tell apart human vs. non-human beings that will increasingly share qualities, environments, and jobs. We need that word to refer to a human agent in the context of human/machine interaction.

In a famous episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, the Enterprise's crew liberate an individual from the evil Borg Collective and give **hu**, of course, the name Hu(gh). **Hu**(gh) is indeed so human.

Afterword.
A New Linguistic Turn:
From Analysis to Synthesis

The live vibrant speech we hear ignites our imagination with the fire of new creations, i.e., new word formations... The only duty our vitality imposes on us is creating words... The first experience elicited by the word is conjuring up... phenomena that have never existed; the word gives birth to action... Creating language is the purpose of poetry; the language is what creates the relations of life.

– Andrei Belyi, *The Magic of Words* (1910)

At present the formation of new words is a slow process..., and no new words are deliberately coined except as names for material objects. ... [I]t would be quite feasible to invent a vocabulary, perhaps amounting to several thousands of words, which would deal with parts of our experience now practically unamenable to language. ... What is wanted is several thousands of gifted but normal people who would give themselves to word-invention... Given these, I believe we could work wonders with language.

– George Orwell, *New Words* (1940)

1. Sign Generation and the Internet

There are three types of language activity: *combinative, descriptive* and *formative*. Most texts fall under the first type. Everybody combines words some way or another, although the vocabulary and patterns of word combination differ greatly in literary, political, scientific or colloquial language.

The second type includes scholarly works that describe language and define words and the rules of their combination (grammar books, dictionaries, etc.).

The third, and the rarest, type introduces new signs into the language (rather than combining or describing those that already exist). We will call it **semiurgy** (Gr *semeion*, sign + *−ourgia*, work; cf. *liturgy*, *metallurgy*), i.e. sign creation. The word *semiurgy* is itself an example of semiurgy in action. Semiurgy can be defined as efforts to expand and modify the semiosphere.[8]

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[8] Jean Buadrillard (cf. *Systems of objects*, 1968) and the postmodern theory of communication apply the

Word creation may seem an anonymous process taking place at the nation level, yet individual contributions to the vocabulary may be important. Shakespeare alone added about 800 words to English, including *critic*, *generous*, *gloomy*, *hint*, *luggage*, *manager*, and *outbreak*.[9] Ben Johnson is credited with *analytic* and *antagonist*. We use many other words with recognized authorships:

> *gas* (a substance), by the Flemish chemist Jan Baptist van Helmont (17th c.)

term *semiurgy* to any sign-related activity. I use it narrowly, as the art and practice of creating new signs.

[9] "In all there are 2,035 'first usage' words... assigned to Shakespeare. My estimate is that about 1,700 of these are imaginative coinages on his part. An amazing total, by any standard. And even more amazing is the impact of these words on the subsequent development of the language. About half of them fell out of use... . But that leaves some 800 clear-cut cases, such as *abstemious*, *accessible*, and *assassination*, which achieved a permanent place in English..." David Crystal. *Words. Words. Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 140–141. Also see Jeffrey McQuain and Stanley Malles. *Coined by Shakespeare: Words & Meanings First Penned by the Bard*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1998.

serendipity (an accidental discovery), by the English writer Horace Walpole (18th c.)

psychedelic (mind-altering drugs), by Humphry Osmond, a British psychiatrist (late 1950s)

workaholic (addicted to work), by Wayne Oates, an American Christian pastor and writer (late 1960s)

factoid (a published alleged fact), by Norman Mailer (1973)

Newspeak (a totalitarian language), by George Orwell (1948)

Inventing new words doesn't mean creating Newspeak. Orwell's Newspeak was a way to reduce the vocabulary to a limited number of words laden with ideological attitude. Apart from such political abuse of neologisms, Orwell strongly believed in coining new words to express "parts of our experience now practically unamenable to language."

Contrary to the common belief that language is produced by the entire nation, word coinage is a private enterprise: some-

one's mouth utters a new word or a hand writes it down. However, individual contributions went unrecorded for millennia, so we can only see the results of centuries of "natural selection" of the vocabulary. Early literary creativity was not individualized, either, as songs and legends were passed down via word of mouth. Literary authorship came into being with writing.

Nowadays, the information technology spells the end of the folk age of language: the Internet does to language what writing at one point did to literature, i.e., undermines its folklore nature turning it into an area of individual creativity. Web search capability means that new words will be easier to trace back to their authors, to find out their original meanings and the author's intention: a click on the Search button is all it takes. The Internet also allows circulating a new word to any number of people in a matter of seconds. Neologisms catch on instantly, with their success measured by the number of web pages where they are adopted.

One can anticipate that over time creating new signs will become a booming area of creative work. New, faster data processing technology means accelerated vocabulary replacement to humanize communication. The current explosion of slang and unorthodox spelling on the web points to semiurgy as ever more versatile tool of vocabulary innovation.

A century ago, at the dawn of the literary avant-garde, Velimir Khlebnikov, a Russian futurist poet, prolific wordsmith and language designer, was prophetic about the role of practical "linguistry":

> Making up words is not against the rules of language... Just like the man now populates river shallows with fish, so linguistry makes it possible to repopulate the depleted stream of language with extinct or made-up words. We believe they will sparkle with life again, as in the first days of creation.[10]

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[10] Velimir Khlebnikov. *Tvoreniya*. Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1986, p. 627.

Linguistry, a verbal branch of semiurgy, is to theoretical linguistics what gardening or horticulture is to botany.[11]

Why semiurgy is socially and culturally important? Ludwig Wittgenstein famously said: "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." Coining new words overcomes these limits and expands our world. It creates not only new signs, but new concepts and ideas, too. Every new word brings about a new meaning, and along with it, a potential for new understanding. Meaning guides human feelings and actions. We ask ourselves, Is it love? Or I'd rather describe the feeling as compassion? friendship? lust? respect? pity? gratitude? Then we act based on which word we've found to describe our feelings best, e.g., get married or divorced, keep dating or break up, etc. The Greek had a number of words for various types and shades of love, such as *eros, mania, philia, agape* – yet in

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[11] The term *linguistry* was occasionally used as a synonym of *linguistics*. I propose using *linguistry* more specifically, as a transformative linguistics, a practical art of cultivating and expanding the language.

English (and many other European languages, for that matter) there is just one word, *love*, indiscriminately applied to motherland, ice cream, or spouse. New formations derived from the same word through suffixes (cf. *lovedom, lovehood, underloved, dislove, eqiphilia*, etc.) not only add a new layer of meanings to the language, but also new shades to the range of feelings, actions and intentions. According to Khlebnikov, the word governs the brain, the brain governs the hands, and the hands govern the kingdoms. A mere word can engender new theories and practices, just like a seed, millions of future plants.

My plea to all those who make a living by writing and/or speaking: We all use the bounty of the language as means of our very existence thus profiting from it. We all are language's dependents for life; yet we can repay our debt, at least partially, by enriching language with new words. No law mandates us to contribute a new word per every thousand words used. Let such a payback become a matter of our professional honor.

2. Language Synthesis

Every new discipline or way of thinking, be it quantum physics or Hegel's philosophy, develops its own vocabulary. Quantum mechanics is impossible without neologisms like *photon, quark, spin, uncertainty principle, wave–particle duality*, and so on. From the linguistics standpoint, the development of every discipline equals the continuous growth of its vocabulary as the system of signs that not only describe the laws of the universe, but also pave the way for new ways of thinking.

Sign creation is especially important in philosophy as it looks for terms/concepts/categories that could free our thinking from the prison of everyday language and common sense prejudices. Philosophers often fail to find what they need among the existing words and coin new words or assign new meanings to old ones, e.g. *idea* (Plato), *thing-in-itself* (Kant), *Aufhebung* (Hegel), *Ubermensch* (Nietzsche), and *Zeitigung* (Heidegger).

Their language is rich in neologisms referring to their most fundamental concepts that did not fit into the existing vocabulary. Philosophy creates new terms and meanings just like economy creates new goods and values.

During the 20th century, the Anglo-American philosophy was dominated by the linguistic-analytic approach with its emphasis on logical clarity and the analysis of everyday, scientific, and philosophical language (reducing it to the "atoms" of meaning) as philosophy's primary task. At the same time, the synthetic aspect of language and the task of producing new terms and concepts were all but ignored.

Philosophy of *language synthesis*, heralded by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 1987; *What is Philosophy?* 1996), may be seen as a new alternative to the tradition of language analysis. To the extent that the subject of philosophy are language-based ideas and universals, the task of philosophy is to expand our mental vocabulary and grammar, to generate new words, con-

cepts, lexical and semantic fields, and syntax. Thus philosophy helps the mankind expand the scope of the speakable, conceivable and thinkable, and, therefore, of doable and feasible.

This postanalytic approach would focus on the synthesis of new terms, concepts, and statements based on their analysis. Every analytic act provides an opportunity for a new synthesis. Breaking down a statement allows to recombine the elements and create new statements, thus opening new areas for thought and speech.

If we apply the approach of George Moore (a founder of analytic philosophy) to the statement "stupidity is a vice," this statement would be equivalent to "I have a negative attitude towards stupidity," or "Stupidity creates negative emotions in me." These statements tell nothing new, they just clarify what the original one means. The creative, synthetically oriented approach to this statement, however, uses it as a potential foundation for other, alternative and more informative, "wondrous"

statements (Aristotle said that philosophy is born out of the feeling of wonder). Analysis itself is pointless unless it leads to a new synthesis.

Let's suggest a series of questions and alternative propositions to the same analytically trivial statement. Is stupidity always a vice, or in certain cases can be considered a virtue? If wit can be applied to justify a vice, then can stupidity serve as manifestation of innocence? If stupidity is sometimes used as a means to a virtuous goal, can it then be considered a virtue itself? A Russian satirist of the 19th c., M. Saltykov-Shchedrin, coined a term that has come into common usage: *blagoglupost*, best rendered by the English neologism **virtupidity** – something stupid but well-meant, a sublime nonsense, a pompous triviality.

Now, if stupidity, in a sense, can be a virtue, then malice may be virtuous as well, or, rather, virtuousness may be mean. If so, we could call the well-intentioned malice **benemalence** (cf. *benevolence*), of which Dostoevsky's Great Inquisitor is an exam-

ple: people can do horrible things with the best of intentions. The Bolshevik Revolution had as one of its slogans "Let us drive humankind to happiness with an iron hand," which is another instance of **bene-malence**.

So analyzing a trivial statement may lead to a synthesis of non-trivial, thought-provoking statements and new words. Such an operation can be formalized by the symbol ÷ as the sign of logical bifurcation (i.e., an alternative emerging from a statement analysis). The elements of the statement which precede the sign ÷ are variables, whereas their alternatives/variations that follow are new statements condensed into new terms:

Stupidity ÷ is a vice.

Stupidity can be ÷ a vice (but may not be).

Stupidity can be ÷ a virtue (under certain circumstances).

Good intention is a premise of virtue.

Stupidity can be a vehicle of good intentions. – **Virtupidity**

Malice can be a vehicle of good intentions.
– **Benemalence**

Analysis and synthesis feed and inform each other. Every analysis that isolates elements of a word/concept can lead to synthesis, i.e., recombination of these elements into other words, concepts, new terms, statements, disciplines, methods, and worldviews. The level of synthesis depends on the level of the underlying analysis. Accordingly, analytic philosophy can be interpreted and revised in terms of synthesis.

3. Magic, Logic and Aesthetics of the Word: Dictionary Entry as a Genre

Any verbal sign, in addition to phonemes and morphemes, includes a referent, or a signified, described by its dictionary definition, as well as its actual and potential uses (the pragmatic sphere, according to the Wittgenstein's view that the meaning of a word is its use in speech). Thus, to fully introduce a new verbal sign we need a dictionary entry which would include the word with its definition and samples of usage.

Dictionary entry is an important form of semiotic discourse that comprehensively describes a verbal sign as a unity of the signifier, the signified, and the context/usage. It is also a **semiurgic** genre.
The dictionary entry has been barely subject to linguistic study.[12] There is, though, a

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[12] Sidney I. Landau provides a study of the dictionary work in *Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography* (1989); Chapter 3 (pp. 76–119) is the most relevant to our discussion. The book is a helpful survey but does not elaborate on the dictionary entry

short article titled "The Paradox of a Dictionary Entry" by Natalia Shvedova,[13] an outstanding Russian linguist. The paper has no reference section, since there is no "prior art." According to Shvedova, the "dictionary entry is a linguistic genre that tells not only about the word itself, but also about its various linguistic environments: contextual, classificational, derivational, phraseological, and functional." Shvedova sees the dictionary entry as a model of the entire language universe: "The macroworld of language appears through the micro-world of a word, as if concentrated in it. A word as a unit of language represents the entire language…"

The dictionary entry may be a complex piece indeed, with various grammatical and stylistic markers, etymological/historical references, etc., but three elements are crucial: (i) the headword itself; (ii) the defini-

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as a linguistic genre of its own. David Crystal (*op.cit.,* pp. 33–39) provides a good introduction into the work of a lexicographer.

[13] Natal'ia Yu. Shvedova. *Russkii iazyk. Izbrannye raboty* (Russian Language: Selected Works). Moscow: Iazyki Slavianskoi Kul'tury, 2005, p. 420.

tion; and (iii) phrases that show how the word is used in typical contexts. Here are two examples, one from a conventional dictionary, another from my *PreDictionary*:

> **happiness**, *n.* [from *happy*] – good luck; good fortune; prosperity; a state of well-being; a pleasurable or enjoyable experience.

> All happiness bechance to thee in Milan! – W. Shakespeare. I had the happiness of seeing you. – W.S. Gilbert

> **happicle** *n* (*happy* + suffix *-icle*, as in *particle*, *icicle*) — a single happy occurrence or a momentary feeling of happiness, a particle of happiness.

> **Happicles** make life worth living, even a not too happy one.

> There is no happiness in this world, but there are **happicles**. Sometimes we can catch them, fleeting and unpredictable as they are.

Semiotics embraces three dimensions of a sign and has three branches, accordingly: (i) the syntactics that describes the elements (phonetic, morphological, lexical) of a sign or a sign sequence and relationships between them; (ii) the semantics that describes the meaning (any concepts/objects to which the sign refers); and (iii) pragmatics dealing with the sign's uses and communicative functions.

The dictionary entry covers all these aspects: the headword represents a syntactical unit (a set of morphemes and phonemes); the definition, the semantics (describes the sign's meaning); the examples reflect the pragmatics by showing situations/contexts where the sign would be appropriate and typically used.

Thus, the dictionary entry comprehensively reproduces a semiurgic act with its syntactic, semantic and pragmatic dimensions. Creating a new sign/word takes much more than just combining phonemes and morphemes in a way never used before; it would also require explaining its meaning

and providing potential context(s) of its usage. Designing entries that introduce new words rather than deal with existing ones, goes beyond a purely academic pursuit. In fact, this applies to any dictionary. "A good dictionary thrives on the brilliance of its definitions. They have to be clear, succinct, relevant, and discriminating. They can also be elegant, humorous, quirky, and memorable. Definitions... involve imagination and creativity, just as any other literary genre."[14] A projective dictionary should be especially ingenious and creative, a "linguo-fantasy," a "lexi-fiction."

In a traditional dictionary designed to clarify words found in texts, the reference system can be described as text—dictionary—text: we encounter a word, look for its definition in the dictionary, then go back to the text. Projective dictionaries can't refer to any actual text since the words have never been used before. New words relate to the language as a system, so the reference pattern would be (pre)dictionary—language—

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14 David Crystal, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

possible text (one that could include a new word taken from that projective dictionary).

For example, the word *conaster* refers to the English lexicon (rather than any existing text), specifically, to those words derived from the Latin *aster* (star), especially to the motivating word *disaster* (literally, "away from stars"). Of course, any examples used in projective dictionaries would be made up by the author, since there is no existing text to quote.

> **conaster** *n* (Lat *cum*, with + Gr *astron*, star) — literally *with star*, the antonym to *disaster* (literally "away from stars"); the fortunate outcome of an imminent disaster; the sensation of a dodged catastrophe remembered from the vantage point of safety.
>
> There were several **conasters** in my life that I can only attribute to God's undeserved mercy.
>
> You were born under a lucky star. This **conaster** was an amazing mix of chance and miracle.

Semiurgy is a holistic act that integrates the magic, science and art of sign creation.

A semiurgic act limited to the syntactics alone (i.e. combining phonemes and morphemes into a signifier) would result in magic spells, incantation, glossolalia, speaking in tongues, often as part of mystical or religious practice. For example, reciting an unintelligible mantra would plunge the believer into an ecstatic or meditative state. What is meaningless for some may be a holy language for others.

A semiurgic act limited to the semantics alone (i.e. generating concepts/ideas) would fall into the area of intellectual, philosophical or scientific creativity.

A semiurgic act limited to the pragmatics alone would be verbal art, such as poetry or prose, i.e. the art of combining words the best possible way to produce the most expressive and beautiful speech.

But in a true semiurgic act all of these aspects come together to make up the microcosm of the dictionary entry: the newly crafted word is the magical element; the

definition is the scientific/logical compo-
nent; and the example is the artis-
tic/aesthetic component. Thus, what we
call the dictionary entry is, in fact, the mi-
niature manifestation of the entire semios-
phere.

The word magic usually needs no clarity or
defined meaning; in fact, the incoherence
may even contribute to a mantra's effect.
Similarly, verbalizing scientific concepts
may not require artistic expression. Used
separately, the three kinds of semiotic ac-
tivity may interfere with one another and
the intended goal — the magic of the word,
the scientific accuracy of the concept, and
the artistry of speech. But only a semiurgic
act combining sound, meaning, and usage
would be a comprehensive manifestation of
the semiosphere.

Three identities coexist in a semiurg: a ma-
gician conjuring up a new word from the
depths of a language; a scholar carefully
defining the word to bring it to its unique
place in the vocabulary; and a writer plot-

ting a situation that would require the new word.

The process of sign creation can start anywhere and proceed in any direction, not necessarily following the 'word–meaning–usage' path. For example, a situation or a concept may emerge and call for a new word. But as soon as one of the semiurg's three identities have initiated the process, the other two have to be involved: the magician would ask the scholar for a definition, and the writer for a plausible context. Or the scholar may order a word for a new concept from the magician, and a convincing usage sample from the writer. The three elements are inseparable in any dictionary entry, which, for this very reason, is the most comprehensive verbal genre that unites the magic, logic and aesthetics of the word.

Also by Mikhail Epstein

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