

# Foreword

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The 2024 special volume of *Semiotika* aims to expand inquiry into Greimassian spatial semiotics which started in *Baltos lankos* (No 34, 2012) and continued in two earlier volumes of *Semiotika* (2013, 2014). The special volume also attempts to broaden the field of spatial research by covering the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce, cultural semiotics of Juri Lotman and contributions to the *spatial turn* in the humanities: literature studies, literary geography, geocriticism, and literary urbanism.

I would like to express my gratitude to the authors for submitting their articles, the translators for their excellent work, the reviewers for their valuable insights, and everyone involved in the publishing process for their valuable contribution. I also appreciate the financial support of the Faculty of Philology, which agreed to cover the copyright fees of the translated works included in this volume.

The concepts of space and spatial experience are universal; spatial issues have become increasingly relevant in contemporary social contexts. This has been an impetus for collaborative research across various disciplines. *Semiotika* 19 does not include extreme examples of interdisciplinarity; nevertheless, it showcases a notable diversity of theoretical perspectives from both the humanities and

social sciences. Space is examined in several ways: as immanent textual space (in literature and film), as material urban space, as a social network, and as a condition for sensory experience. Therefore, research into space as it appears in this volume can be treated as a unique field for methodological polylogue. Below, I will briefly introduce each article, highlighting theoretical and methodological foundations employed by the authors.

The article by Jimmie Svensson connects the previous volume of *Semiotika* (18), which focused on the semiotics of the senses, with the current one, which addresses the issue of space. It explores the transformation process from a written poem by Louise Glück to the poet's oral reading from a semiotic and intermedial perspective. Glück employed a reading style known as Poet's Voice, characterized by a highly stylized prosodic uniformity and a predictable use of pitch. Such employment, which contrasts with conventional prosody, allows essential features of modern poetry to be transmediated during the oral reading, highlighting characteristics of the written text such as undecidedness, neutrality, and openness to interpretation. Although Svensson does not specifically address the concept of space in his analysis, the subject of sound in poetry inherently implies space as its medium; indeed, it creates space through performance.

In the article by Greta Statkauskaitė, the relationship between space and sound is further explored. The author seeks to describe authentic experience of encountering a harsh noise wall, revealing how factors such as listening mode, location, listener interaction, and cultural context influence the listener's experience. By employing Philip Tagg's semiotic method of music analysis, the article argues that not only can the performance space affect the sound and the listener's experience, but the sound can also transform space, challenging its traditional notions.

The article by Jovita Dikmonienė, Līva Bodniece, and Maria-Kristiina Lotman explores the symbolic meanings of dramatic space. Using Yuri Lotman's framework for analysing space in literature, the authors examine three translations of Euripides's

*Medea* produced in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. They discuss how the translators either reproduce or adapt the original setting of ancient theatre and drama within the metadiscourse and discourse of the tragedy. The analysis integrates aspects of spatial structure created by the text and of the physical layout of ancient theatres. By comparing the translations, the authors conclude that the varying representations of dramatic space are linked to different translation ideologies.

In her article, Izabela Skikaitė offers a semiotic analysis of space in Laura Sintija Černiauskaitė's short story "Room in a Jasmine Bush". This analysis inspires Skikaitė to revise the theoretical approach to space developed in Greimassian semiotics. She revisits the concepts of space, body and desire, which are central to contemporary semiotics and narratology, while also integrating psychoanalytic and cultural anthropology perspectives pertinent to the narrative. The analysis uncovers the dynamic reciprocal relationship between space and the protagonist, highlighting the contrast between mythical and modern interpretations of the connections between the cosmos and the human body. In contrast to mythical thinking, Černiauskaitė's short story emphasizes the power of the individual body to shape the inner and outer (dis)order of space.

The reflection of space in literature is also explored in Tetyana Kasima's article, which delves into the subjective experience of multilayered and changing urban life as portrayed in Clarice Lispector's novel *The Besieged City* (*A Cidade Sitiada*, 1949). It focuses on the fictional city of São Geraldo, created by Lispector, using the concept of "heterotopic moments of being" that combines the Foucauldian idea of heterotopia with Virginia Woolf's notion of "moments of being". In her analysis, Kasima emphasizes how Lispector explores the boundaries between permanence and transience, fluidity and solidity in urban spaces.

The article by Tiit Remm continues the volume's research on urban space, shifting emphasis from literature to the material textuality of the city. It proposes and explores a framework of chro-

notopical analysis, expanding its application from literary studies, as discussed in the works of Mikhail Bakhtin and Juri Lotman, to the realm of urban space. This framework is exemplified through the analysis of recently redesigned town squares in Estonia, which are part of a nationwide initiative aimed at revitalizing small towns and enhancing the appreciation of public spaces within Estonian culture. The study illustrates the effectiveness of chronotopical analysis for the integrative semiotic analysis of the multi-layered and dynamic character of urban space.

The posters from the 2023 protests regarding judicial reform in Israel, which are the focus of Michal Ornan-Ephratt's article, can also be viewed as an urban phenomenon that transforms public spaces into sites of civic resistance. The article examines the role of silence as both a theme and a means of expression in the posters, highlighting its communicative function. Verbal silence emerges as a key option for conveying messages when the emphasis is on absence. The article concludes that the effectiveness of silence's semiotic potential varies depending on the social background of the protesters. The supporters of the reform felt secure and confident in their political parties or associations, and this confidence eventually resulted in their lack of emotional involvement in the political debate. Conversely, the opponents of the reform did not align with any specific groups and participated in the protests out of a sense of individual responsibility. Driven by feelings of fear, anxiety, and insecurity, what the author refers to as "horror vacui", they experienced a surge in creativity, which was partly reflected in the use of silence as a semiotic tool in their posters.

The article by Gintarė Bidlauskienė explores the tradition of Lithuanian poetic documentary comparing two films about Vilnius: *Time Passes Through the City* (*Laikas eina per miestą*, 1966), directed by Almantas Grikevičius, and *Once Upon a Vilnius* (*Čia buvo Vilnius*, 2022), directed and filmed by Eitvydas Doškus. Adhering to a geocritical approach proposed by Bertrand Westphal, the article integrates concepts from the urban theory, drawing on the works

of Michel de Certeau, Henri Lefebvre, and Kevin Lynch, alongside ideas from post-structuralist philosophy. The paper examines the relationship between the city and its cinematic representations, highlighting the thematic and aesthetic connections between the two films. The article contrasts Grikevičius's modernist vision of Vilnius as a meeting point of history and modernity with Doškus's depiction of a city that is continually evolving, merging local heritage with global influences.

Inga Vidugirytė's article examines the *writing of space* in Giedra Radvilavičiūtė's essay "Rational Decisions" ("Racionalūs sprendimai"). In contemporary literary geography, *the writing of space* means that in a work of literature, space is not merely a container of events and actions but is created by establishing spatial networks involving both human and non-human characters. The process creates a relational space or a space as a place-event. The paper argues that Radvilavičiūtė introduces a new mode of representation for the city within Lithuanian urban literature. The author suggests that the notion of "domestic disorder" from Radvilavičiūtė's essay could be one of those concepts whereby the new urban theory is seeking to better align research with the realities of contemporary city.

The three authors selected for translation into Lithuanian come from different fields of study. However, they are connected not only by the theme of space but also by interrelated perspectives of observing, imagining, and analysing space.

*L'Invention du quotidien* (1980) by Michel de Certeau continues to inspire urban studies and is widely used as a methodological framework in the humanities and social sciences. It has not been translated into Lithuanian, and those who cannot read it in French usually refer to the English translation, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984). The third part of the book "Spatial Practices", along with the popular chapter "Walking in the City", is especially favoured by urbanists and scholars in culture and the arts. In the chapter, de Certeau contrasts the experience of observing the city from a

distance with walking through its spaces, establishing a foundation for the distinction between spatial strategies and tactics. The strategies are employed by state authorities, municipalities, capital, or businesses to plan and reshape the city, often encouraging people to consume. In contrast, ordinary citizens develop tactics to navigate around these powers, avoiding their interference in daily life and creatively using the city for their own needs. For the Lithuanian translation, we have chosen “Spatial Stories”, a different, yet equally engaging chapter from the book. In the chapter, de Certeau further explores differences between space and place, map and tour, and draws an analogy between movement in space and storytelling.

The second translation is the chapter “A Geography of the Moving Image” from the book by Giuliana Bruno *Atlas of Emotion* (2002). In the chapter, the author embarks on what she calls a sightseeing tour through the genealogy and history of cinema. Along the way, she revisits “classical” film theory to outline watching the movie as a practice of *emotion* pictures. The playful possibilities of the word (*e*)*motion* to express the proximity of *emotion* and *motion/movement* as well as the metaphors of travel applied to filmic practices, are essential in her search for a theory that can explain the relationships between architecture, painting, film, and geography. Ultimately, the journey brings her to the idea that film as a framework for cultural mapping is modern cartography, a mobile map of differences, a production of socio-sexual fragments, and a cross-cultural travel.

The article by Eric Landowski develops the analysis of space characteristic of Greimas’s semiotics, which he proposes to extend by including the distinction between the four modes in which we interact with space. First, he identifies different types of space: the world as a fabric, a volute, an abyss, and a network, and defines distinct modes in which subjects experience space. Later, the author returns to the interaction and dialogue between the types and, finally, to their unity. The article goes beyond the strict limits of semiotic discourse. The typological analysis of space borrows

expressive tools from poetic writing. It is open to interpretation and can be used creatively, not just for pure semiotic analysis.

During the preparation of this volume, the Lithuanian semiotic and literary community suffered a painful loss: the passing of Professor Kęstutis Nastopka, one of the founders of the Centre for Semiotics at Vilnius University and the *Semiotika* journal, a pioneer in the study of Greimas's semiotics in Lithuania. The volume concludes with a farewell to Kęstutis Nastopka.