

## Call for papers

### Tartu Summer School of Semiotics 17-20 August, 2019

#### **Semiotic dimensions of spaces & literacies**

Juri Lotman proposed that the primary semiotic dualism lies in the duplication of the world in language and the duplication of the human in space: „Genetically speaking, culture is built upon two primary languages. One of these is the natural language used by humans in everyday communication. [...] The nature of the second primary language is not so obvious. What is under discussion is the structural model of space“ (Lotman 1992: 142). The organizers of the next Tartu Summer School of Semiotics find continuous inspiration in this statement and call for discussing the functioning of cultural languages as mediators of human and non-human environments and as developers of cultural competence.

Understanding culture via its spatial organization has been a characteristic of Tartu semiotics. The structural models of space facilitate making sense of nature, society and culture as living environments. The creation of such models is simultaneously creation of descriptive languages for conceptualising cultural experience and on a more essential level, cultural mediation. The latter affects both individual and collective capacity to interpret reality and underpins the formation and perception of cultural identity. On the one hand, the contemporary cultural dynamics has underlined the necessity of studying the cultural environment in relation to the technological advancement: from the digitalization of (everyday) culture to cultural polyglotism, including improved foreign language skills, digital literacy and emergence of transmedial spaces of communication.

On the other hand, the ecological changes in our living environment have created the need to analyse the mutual influences of human cultural and non-human spaces: the ways that different species both encode and interpret their surroundings and contexts. These include the human modes of textualising space in artistic and non-artistic languages, other species' modes of learning about their surroundings and the ways their agency becomes manifested in their relations with our mutually shared environments. At the same time, the scientific understanding of these relations clearly needs to be balanced with the development of related literacies for mediating the knowledge to the members of culture.

Reference: Lotman, Juri 1992a. Tekst i poliglotizm kul'tury [Text and cultural polyglotism]. In: Lotman, Juri, Izbrannye stat'i. Vol. 1. Stat'i po tipologii kul'tury. Tallinn: Aleksandra, 142–147.

We invite all the semioticians studying the dynamics of nature, society and culture to Tartu in order to discuss a topic simultaneously universal and current for the era of the Anthropocene - the semiotic dimensions of spaces and literacies. We welcome both 20 minute presentations as well as more unconventional formats (à 5-10 minutes) that would provoke thoughts by introducing works and ideas in progress. 300-600 words abstracts (for 20 minute papers) or short comments on why you would like to share your work in progress at Tartu Summer School of Semiotics should be submitted by January 15th, 2019 to [semiotics@ut.ee](mailto:semiotics@ut.ee). Additional information will be available at: [tsss.ut.ee](http://tsss.ut.ee)

Topics that we welcome non-exhaustively include:

- Making sense of digital fragmentation through spatial models and metalanguage;
- Spatial applications for mediating cultural heritage;
- Developmental changes in the structuring and literacy of space;
- Animal agencies in adapting to anthropogenic and hybrid environments;

- Interactions of semiotic and spatial practices in environmental education.

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