

EDITORS' PREFACE

This edition of articles surveys the theme on space and literature, that is, two very substantial ideas of our everyday life. Focusing on such rather basic and factual matters, it is hard to expect to face a vexed question. The theme presented here invites a cross-disciplinary dialogue. The editors would like to thank the contributors to the volume for their contributions and their patience. Preparation of the manuscript was particularly complex due to the – English and French – languages used in the editing process of texts not being a standard practice in publishing *Primerjalna književnost*. Many of these papers were presented in earlier versions at the Lipica Workshop in "Literature and Space: Spaces of Transgressiveness" in 2003, and have since been revised and reworked, and supplemented by other material. To the Vilenica institution, an international event of Central European authors in which colleagues from all over the world meet, organised by the Slovenian Writer's Association, we owe a special debt of gratitude for inviting and making possible the Slovenian Comparative Literature Association, organizing small-group discussion sessions, and opening up a stronger theoretical debate on the chosen theme concerning mid-European cultural reality. We are particularly fortunate not only to have had Jean Bessière, Bertrand Westphal and Bart Keunen with us on the first occasion, but to have been able to exchange opinions and ideas on the topic also later in our contacts. Their high standard of scholarship was a precious support and encouragement in carrying out the debate and making the issue public. Thanks are due also to Katia Pizzi and to Dean Komel for subsequently having accepted the editors' invitation and contributing to the debate with their valuable views on the subject.

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Thanks also to the Institut Français Charles Nodier as a source of expenditure in enabling participation of the two French professors.

Dialogue on space and literature involves a variety of possible standpoints. It implies both space in literature and literature in space. Space can be discussed as *literary, cultural, social, semiotic* phenomena, approached through its *geographical*, or more specific *urban* entities, scrutinized by *other arts*, etc. Addressing spatial transgressions – and to imply the *ethics of an encounter* – calls for participation of diverse experts in the humanities. **J. Bessière** in cross reading of Conrad, G. Stein and Fuentes, specifies the notion of transgression and refers it, on the one hand, to cultural spaces and national borders, and on the other hand, to the approach to history which it implies. Understanding literature and culture – both as logic and structure of responses – **J. Škulj** examines their semiotic situation in views of dialogism and sets out the positive effects of a borderland for the formation of the Slovenian identity. **D. Komel** lays open to view that the historical tradition of philosophical thought has already developed intercultural elements, while a dialogue as a means of mutual understanding is still a task awaiting Europe. According to **J. Kernev-Štrajn**, the literary salon in Coppet was an exemplary place of modern democratic discourse and cross-cultural dialogue. For **M. Dović**, the multicultural issues of literature are a starting point to view the Slovenian literary system adopting foreign patterns. **B. Westphal** argues that space, seemingly homogeneous in a certain moment, is composed of fluid worlds; in contrast to that of the imagology, the geocriticist point of view is multiplied. **M. Juvan** explains intertextuality as a practice of transposing, juxtaposing and blending heterogeneous semiotic spaces; he also focuses on the intertextuality of geophysical space. **D. Pavlič** arrives at the conclusion that in romantic and modern lyric poetry geographical space is frequently used as a metaphor for the inner identity of the lyrical subject. **B. Keunen** discusses the literary representations of urban spaces in which the bourgeoisie developed a new type of morality. **K. Pizzi** examining the literature of Trieste, points to the city's eccentric position which has frequently resulted in being personified or emerging as an overwhelming presence (of writers' own selves) in texts. **I. Škamperle** in his discussion of Trieste as a border city advocates his belief that borders stimulate creativity. The concluding paper of **I. Zabel**, recalling the 1960s controversy between the modernist demand that art should be purely visual and its conceptualist critics, relates to the transgression of boundaries between visual and verbal entities in the art of Jenny Holzer, Lewis Baltz and Jože Barši.

The Editors