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## Philosophical understanding of screen reality: Meaningful measurements and interpretations

**Abstract.** The aim of the study was to determine the structural and semantic parameters of screen reality and their influence on the formation of the cinematic image. The methodology was based on a combination of structural-semiotic analysis, compositional analysis of the frame, comparative study of spatial, temporal and visual-stylistic solutions, as well as contextual analysis of the artistic and technical components of films. Eleven films were selected for the study, reflecting different stages in the development of cinema and demonstrating different approaches to the organisation of screen reality: “The Seventh Seal”, “Citizen Kane”, “Run Lola Run”, “Blade Runner 2049”, “In the Mood for Love”, “Earth”, “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors”, “A Spring for the Thirsty”, “Babylon XX”, “Dune”, and “The Power of the Dog”. It was established that screen reality functioned as a conditionally autonomous reality, created with the help of a system of artistic and technical solutions that transformed the reproduction of the objective world into a conceptually structured model. The spatial dimension was revealed through the coordinated decisions of the director and cinematographer, where the organisation of the frame, the arrangement of objects and characters, as well as the proportional relationship between shots served as semantic markers. The temporal dimension was formed by editing techniques, the rhythm and duration of the frame, as well as dramaturgical models, including non-linear narratives that influenced the perception of events and the construction of plot dynamics. The visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological dimensions were determined by the interaction of colour, light and texture with spatial and temporal parameters, creating an atmosphere as a carrier of conceptual content. It was found that the combination of these dimensions ensured the integrity of the artistic environment, in which visual and sound elements were in orderly interrelationships. Such integrated use of spatial, temporal, and stylistic resources made it possible to create a cinematic image capable not only of reproducing, but also interpreting reality. The practical significance of the study lay in the possibility of using its conclusions to develop methods for analysing film works in film studies, as well as in training programmes for specialists in the field of directing, cinematography and film art design

**Keywords:** autonomous reality; editing techniques; perception of events; plot dynamics; spatial parameters

### Introduction

The relevance of the study was determined by the growing role of screen culture in shaping contemporary worldview models and artistic practices. Screen reality had become not only a carrier of information, but also an autonomous space for meaning-making, combining artistic, philosophical and communicative dimensions. Its comprehension required an interdisciplinary approach, since the content structure of visual space encompassed

the categories of space, time, stylistics and emotional atmosphere, which interacted to create a unique cinematic experience. The need for analysis arose due to the insufficient integration of philosophical concepts into film studies discourse, which limited the understanding of how professional roles in cinema – director, cinematographer, editor, screenwriter, and production designer – formed a coherent picture of screen reality. The problem

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of the study was the lack of a systematic description of the meaningful dimensions of screen reality from the perspective of various participants in the filmmaking process, which would simultaneously take into account both theoretical developments and examples from film practice. Studies offered separate aspects of philosophical, cultural or semiotic analysis, but did not generalise them into a single conceptual model capable of explaining the synthesis of spatial, temporal, visual-stylistic and psychological components.

Within the framework of studying the philosophical potential of screen reality, R. Sinnerbrink (2022) considered cinema as a self-sufficient way of thinking. It had been proven that through visual images, cinema was capable of forming complex ontological models and building epistemological connections that would otherwise remain abstract. This approach provided the basis for interpreting film as an instrument of philosophical argumentation. P. Prokopic (2024) addressed the problem of narrative multilayeredness in fictional cinematic spaces. The author's results showed that the combination of different levels of spatial and plot organisation created an immersive effect, in which the viewer interacted with the on-screen reality as a multidimensional system. This broadened the understanding of the boundaries of artistic reality and the mechanisms of its perception.

Using material from Ukrainian cinema, I. Bakhov *et al.* (2022) traced the influence of sociocultural circumstances on the visual language of films. It was found that the transformation of artistic space was accompanied by a shift from collective ideological plots to individualised ones, where the cultural marking of images became particularly important in the formation of national identity. In the study by M. Barnych *et al.* (2021), the semantic status of staged reality in cinema became central. The authors established that such reality was not a reproduction of the actual world, but a structured system of meanings, in which the director and the production team set the framework for interpretation by the viewer. This opened up new opportunities for understanding the connection between concept and cultural context. L. Naumova (2023) analysed the work of Ukrainian avant-garde directors of the 1920s, noting the combination of innovative techniques with ideological explorations. It was shown that experiments with form and frame structure served as a way to convey deep philosophical reflections that reflected the social changes and cultural transformations of the era. V. Bakirov & D. Petrenko (2023) explored trends in the development of contemporary Ukrainian visual culture in a global context. It was found that the combination of local identity with universal visual codes created a new quality of screen reality that combined national meanings and international communicative clarity.

In the work of O. Bezruchko *et al.* (2024), attention was focused on scenography as a content-creating element. It was determined that the compositional design

of space was capable not only of setting the visual style, but also of acting as a carrier of philosophical subtext, influencing the emotional perception and interpretation of images. N. Kravchenko & L. Shanaieva-Tsymbal (2023) emphasised semiotic and archetypal mechanisms in contemporary Ukrainian cinema. Researchers showed that the use of an archetypal narrative structure shaped the recognition of cultural meanings and provided a multi-level reading of the screen text, strengthening the connection between the work and the viewer. Visuality in M. Lister (2023) was considered a culturally conditioned construct that required interpretation in a social and ideological context. The analysis focused on how cultural codes influenced the perception of images. The author concluded that understanding visual representations was only possible by taking these codes into account. The evolution of cinematic language in E. Horyslavets (2021) was traced in connection with cultural transformations in society. The study focused on changes in the visual and narrative strategies of cinema. The conclusion was that cinema not only reflected cultural processes, but also became a factor in their development. An analysis of the studies showed that the existing works were mostly limited to considering individual components of screen reality: visual culture, semiotics or scenography, without integrating spatial, temporal and psychological dimensions into a single concept. There was also no systematic analysis of the interaction of different professional roles in the formation of the philosophical space of the screen, and comparisons of international and Ukrainian film practices in this context remained fragmentary.

The aim of the study was to create a holistic conceptual model of the philosophical understanding of screen reality that would integrate spatial, temporal, visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological dimensions, taking into account the experience of Ukrainian and world cinema. In accordance with the stated aim, the objectives of the study included: to reveal the philosophical foundations of screen reality and their influence on the formation of the cinematic image; to characterise the spatial dimension in cinema from the perspective of the director and cinematographer; to analyse the temporal dimension in the work of the editor and screenwriter; to identify the characteristics of the visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological dimensions as a synthesis of the components of cinematic language.

## Materials and Methods

The study was conducted using a combination of philosophical-aesthetic, structural-semiotic and comparative methods of analysis, which made it possible to comprehensively examine screen reality in its spatial, temporal, visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological dimensions. At the first stage, a corpus of cinematographic works was identified, which differed in genre, cultural and historical diversity. The selection included films that demonstrated

different conceptual approaches to the formation of screen reality. The film “The Seventh Seal” (1957) by director I. Bergman was chosen for its philosophical richness, symbolic composition, and deep interaction of spatial and temporal categories, which allowed for the revelation of methods of transforming existential themes into visual images. “Citizen Kane” (1941) by director O. Welles was included because of its innovative use of spatial depth of field, specific compositional solutions, and complex editing structure, which demonstrated the multifaceted nature of the construction of cinematic space. The film “Run Lola Run” (1998) by director T. Tykwer was selected for the analysis of temporal models, in particular non-linear and cyclical structures, as well as specific rhythmic editing that forms the dramatic tempo. “Blade Runner 2049” (2017) by director D. Villeneuve was included in the selection due to its complex visual and stylistic organisation, where colour, light and texture function as carriers of subtext and means of creating an emotional and psychological environment. “Dune” (2021) by director D. Villeneuve was included as an example of spatial organisation through large-scale panoramas and a minimalist colour palette, which built an image of “desert metaphysics” and emphasised the philosophical symbolism of the environment. “In the Mood for Love” (2000) by director W. Kar-wai was included in the corpus as an example of visual and stylistic organisation, in which colour solutions, light and shadow effects, and the rhythmic structure of the frame function as means of forming an intimate emotional space. The Ukrainian film “Earth” (1930) by director O. Dovzhenko was selected for study as an example of the combination of epic visual composition with philosophical reflection on social processes, realised through the organisation of spatial and symbolic structures of the frame. The film “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors” (1964) by director S. Paradzhanov was included in the corpus due to its synthesis of ethnocultural motifs with innovative cinematographic solutions that form a unique visual dynamic and multi-layered space. “A Spring for the Thirsty” (1965) by director Y. Illienko was included due to its special rhythmic organisation and dramatic timing, which structures the plot through a combination of realistic and poetic elements. “The Power of the Dog” (2021) by director J. Campion was chosen as an example of contemporary work with space, where the landscape functions as a carrier of psychological subtext, and natural light and long shots created an atmosphere of inner tension. “Babylon XX” (1979) by director I. Mykolaichuk was chosen for its complex stylistic organisation, which combined colour symbolism, light and shadow solutions, and textural imagery to create a multidimensional emotional space.

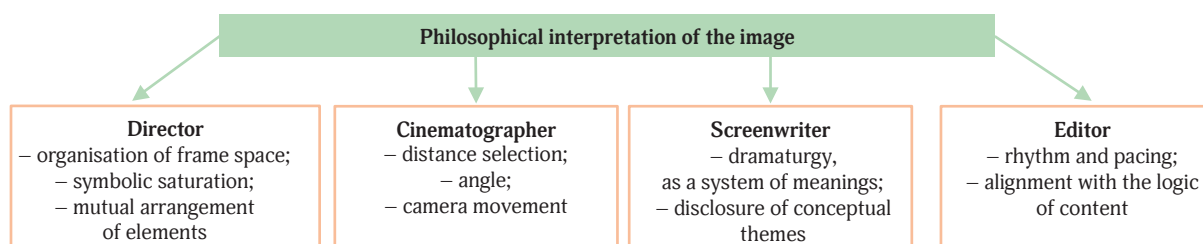
The analysis was carried out in several stages. First, a detailed structural breakdown of each work was carried out, highlighting spatial, temporal and visual-stylistic elements. Next, a comparative method was used to

compare the ways, in which screen reality was formed in different cultural and historical contexts. Philosophical and aesthetic analysis was used to determine the categorical coordinates of screen reality and identify the author’s strategies in working with space and time. The structural-semiotic approach made it possible to consider compositional and stylistic decisions as a system of signs integrated into the overall concept of the film. The research methodology also involved examining the interaction between different levels of cinematic language, from the spatial organisation of the frame to the integration of emotional and psychological effects into the overall artistic structure. This ensured a comprehensive study of the object and made it possible to trace, how technical and aesthetic solutions interact in creating the conceptual integrity of screen reality.

## Results

### Philosophical foundations of the formation of screen reality in cinematography

Screen reality was defined as a space created by cinematic means that possessed its own structural and semantic organisation and was perceived as a conditionally autonomous reality, distinct from the direct reproduction of the physical world. Its specific nature lay in the transformation of objective phenomena and events through a system of artistic solutions, which integrated figurative language, compositional principles, rhythmic-editing structure, and the author’s overall concept. This reality does not merely model space and time; it established a specific logic of interaction between elements, which ensured the work’s internal integrity and recognisable aesthetic. The philosophical status of screen reality lies in its capacity to set the categorical coordinates of perception – spatial, temporal, and cause-and-effect – while simultaneously offering the viewer interpretative models related to existential, ontological, and axiological questions. On a conceptual level, it emerged as a constructed model of the world, where visual and sound components existed within an ordered system of interrelationships that mutually reinforced and elaborated upon one another. Screen reality was not limited to the mere fixation of the depicted; rather, it formed its own semantic structure, capable of influencing the interpretation of meanings, emotional engagement, and the viewer’s worldview, thus making it an autonomous object of philosophical analysis. The distribution of professional functions among the main participants in the filmmaking process, within the context of the philosophical conceptualisation of the screen image, determined how the creative decisions of each specialist influenced the construction of the film’s spatial, temporal, and semantic structure. The coherence and harmony of these decisions ensured the formation of a cohesive model of screen reality, in which the artistic form was subservient to the conceptual objectives of the work (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Functions of key participants in shaping the philosophical content of screen reality

Source: based on M. Norfolk (2020), R. Spottiswoode (2022)

The interaction of the functions shown in the figure ensured the unity of the artistic concept and its philosophical content. The synthesis of the actions of the director, cinematographer, screenwriter and editor formed the screen space, which was perceived by the viewer as a logically and conceptually complete reality. Such integration of creative roles allowed for a high level of consistency between the visual form, dramatic structure, and semantic accents of a cinematic work. An example of the realisation of screen reality as a philosophical model was the film “The Seventh Seal” (1957) by director I. Bergman. The space in it was organised as a closed structure, where compositional decisions such as the use of symmetry, contrasting shots and a static camera created a sense of metaphysical concentration (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** A moment from the chess game between Knight and Death

Source: The Seventh Seal (1957)

Visual images, in particular the scene of a chess game with Death, form an autonomous space of meanings, in which the plot served only as one of the levels of perception. Time in the film was perceived not as linear, but as condensed, devoid of everyday details, allowing the viewer to focus on the existential aspects of the characters’ dialogue. In this case, the reality on screen took on the characteristics of a symbolic system, where each frame was a logical element of the whole, subordinate to a single philosophical concept. Another example, O. Dovzhenko’s “Earth” (1930), demonstrated a different approach to the formation of screen reality, focused on the organic connection between man and the natural

environment. The space of the frame was constructed through panoramic shots that captured the cyclical nature of natural processes and place human activity in a broader context of existence (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3.** Frame from the film “Earth” (1930), directed by O. Dovzhenko

Source: Earth (1930)

The philosophical basis of the image in the film “Earth” was based on the idea of harmony and interdependence, and the montage structure emphasised the repetitiveness and rhythm of phenomena. The absence of excessive dialogue reinforced the significance of the visual series as the carrier of the main meaning, where each frame was both documentary evidence and artistic abstraction. Both examples showed that screen reality in the philosophical dimension was not a mechanical fixation of reality. It was constructed as a model, in which spatial and temporal parameters were integrated into a semantic structure. In “The Seventh Seal”, this structure focused on expressing metaphysical uncertainty and the search for meaning, while in “Earth” it reflected the patterns of the natural and social cycle. In both cases, cinematic means were used to organise the viewer’s experience in accordance with certain philosophical coordinates, where each visual and audio element functioned as a semantic marker.

The concept of screen reality in this interpretation allowed to cover both the technical and content aspects of film production. From a technical point of view, it determined the way images were constructed and edited to create the illusion of an independent world. In terms of content, it was a mechanism for constructing meanings, in which artistic decisions reflected the author’s vision

and at the same time enter into dialogue with cultural codes that were understandable to the viewer. The philosophical foundations of screen reality lay in the fact that each element of this space was part of a conceptually coherent system, where the relationship between spatial, temporal and visual factors determined the overall perception of the work. This understanding was key to the further analysis of other dimensions of cinema, as it defined the boundaries, within which the director, cinematographer, screenwriter and editor work, and determined the interdependence of their decisions. Screen reality does not exist outside these professional interactions: the director formed the conceptual framework, the cinematographer gave it visual form, the screenwriter determined the logic of the unfolding events, the editor organised the temporal structure, and the art design integrated everything into a single space. The result was an artistic product, in which the philosophical foundations of the image were manifested not only in the choice of theme, but also in the structure, composition, and rhythm of the work (Shtets & Melnyk, 2024).

Applying this approach to the analysis of “The Seventh Seal” and “Earth” revealed that, despite significant differences in historical context, artistic styles, and technical capabilities, both films demonstrated consistent work with screen reality as a philosophical object. In the first case, the frame space and editing are organised to create metaphysical tension, in the second – to capture and emphasise the natural rhythm of life. As a result, both films functioned as holistic systems, where each element had a conceptually justified place. This vision of screen reality opened up the possibility of a systematic consideration of cinema in the coordinates of philosophical analysis, where space and time cease to be merely physical categories and became carriers of meaning. This allowed to reveal the underlying patterns of cinematic image construction and determine, how artistic decisions at different levels affected the integrity and perception of a cinematographic work. Screen reality was the result of the coordinated work of all participants in the creative process, where the director’s conceptual decisions, the cinematographer’s visual means, the screenwriter’s dramaturgical structure, the editing organisation of time and the artistic design were integrated into a single

system. In such a structure, space and time go beyond purely physical categories and take on the role of carriers of meaning, and each element of the composition performs a specific function in the formation of the holistic semantic field of the work. The harmony of these components ensured the completeness and conceptual consistency of the cinematic product, in which the philosophical foundations of the image were manifested at all levels of its organisation.

### Spatial parameters as a meaningful resource in cinematography

The spatial dimension in cinematography defined the visual and compositional boundaries of screen reality, within which the plot unfolds, the dramaturgy was constructed, and the semantic structure of the work was formed. It encompassed the organisation of objects in the frame, the arrangement of characters and the nature of their interaction with the physical or conditional environment, as well as the perspective, scale, and dynamic parameters that determined the direction and rhythm of the audience’s perception. The director’s decisions set the overall concept of space, determining its degree of openness, fragmentation or integrity, while the cinematographer’s work shaped the visual perspective through the choice of angle, depth of field, camera movement and light and shadow accents. The coordinated interaction of these components transformed space into an active instrument of conceptualisation, where every element acted not only as an aesthetic component, but also as a semantic marker, integrated into a holistic artistic concept that ensures the internal unity and conceptual completeness of the film. The coordinated work of the director and cinematographer in constructing the frame space forms not only the visual composition, but also the semantic level of the film’s perception. Each professional role executed its own set of functions that influenced the organisation of the screen space and determined, how the viewer interpreted events, the interrelationships between characters, and the environment. Table 1 systematised the key tasks and functions of these specialists, as well as explaining their contribution to the creation of the semantic structure of the cinematographic work.

**Table 1.** The roles of the director and cinematographer in shaping the frame space and their impact on the semantic structure of the film

Role	Functions	Description of impact on the semantic structure of the film
Director	Organisation of the boundaries of the depicted space, arrangement of objects and characters, proportional relationship of frames, creation of symbolic load through visual markers, definition of compositional dominants, formation of the logic of event perception, choice of space type (closed/open, fragmented/integral) according to the film’s concept	Determined, how the viewer interpreted events, ensured the coherence of the spatial organisation with the film’s concept, influenced emotional perception, and provided additional layers of meaning through symbolism

Table 1, Continued

Role	Functions	Description of impact on the semantic structure of the film
Cinematographer	Choice of distance to the object (close-up, medium frames, long frame), definition of the angle of view (vertical, horizontal, overhead frame), creation of the relationship between objects (dominance, subordination, equality), camera movement as an orientation marker in space, unveiling new elements of the environment, emphasising the dynamics of action, and forming the visual perspective	Shaped the method of visual perception of space, set the rhythm and dynamics of the visual sequence, underscored the relationship between characters and the environment, and influenced the intensity of emotional perception and the conceptual interpretation of the image

Source: based on C. Benson-Allott (2022), Y. Aslanyürek & E. Aycan (2024)

An analysis of the roles of the director and cinematographer showed that their decisions had a direct impact on the conceptual unity of the reality depicted on screen. The frame space, organised according to the principles of compositional harmony and visual perspective, became a carrier of meaning, in which the technical parameters of filming interacted with artistic tasks. Such integration allowed the creation of holistic, conceptually motivated screen images, in which visual form and content were inseparably united. In the film “Citizen Kane” (1941), the frame space had a multi-layered organisation, which was realised through the use of depth composition. The placement of objects on different planes allowed for the simultaneous perception of several levels of the event, allowing the viewer to follow the interaction between the characters and the environment. Cinematographer G. Toland used wide-angle optics in combination with a large depth of field, which preserved the clarity of the image in both the foreground and background (Fig. 4).



Figure 4. Party scene from the film “Citizen Kane”  
Source: Citizen Kane (1941)

This allowed for the creation of frames, where symbolic elements of space – such as architectural details, furniture, or lighting – served as contextual accents, deepening the meaning of the scene. The vertical and diagonal lines of the composition created a sense of scale and hierarchy, which enhanced the dramatic effect. In the film “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors” (1964), the

frame space was formed as an ethnographically rich environment, where each element of the decor served as a carrier of cultural code. The director’s concept involved not only capturing everyday details, but also incorporating them into the compositional structure as semantic markers associated with local tradition. Cinematographer Y. Illienko used a wide range of camera angles and movements, including circular panoramas and long tracking shots, which revealed space as a dynamic, multi-layered system. Camera movement often served as a way of visually connecting the characters with their environment, emphasising the interdependence of humans and the natural landscape (Fig. 5).



Figure 5. Frame from the film “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors”  
Source: Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors (1964)

As a result, the screen space acquired symbolic significance, becoming not just a backdrop for the action, but an equal participant in the dramatic process. A comparison of the approaches in these two films demonstrated different strategies for using space as a construct of meaning. In “Citizen Kane”, it was organised according to the principle of perspective depth, which allowed several plot centres to be placed within a single frame and the viewer’s attention to be directed through compositional dominants. In “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors”, space was constructed as a densely saturated environment, where every detail was included in a cultural-symbolic system, and the cameraman’s movement served as

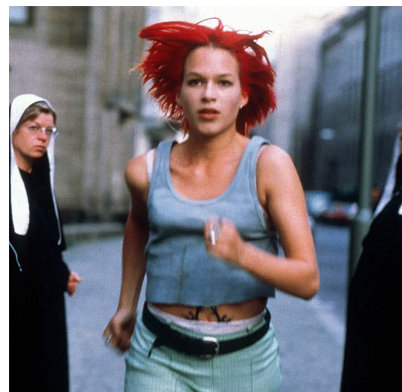
a means of its unfolding. In both cases, the director's and cinematographer's decisions regarding the organisation of space determined not only the visual form of the work, but also the level of its perception in terms of content.

The coordination of the director's and cinematographer's work in shaping the frame space transformed the visual plane into an instrument of conceptualisation. The symbolic and compositional load of the elements, complemented by the choice of distance, angle and camera movement, created an integrated space, in which the image performed both a descriptive and a meaning-creating function. This approach allowed the construction of screen reality as a holistic system, where space not only contained the event, but also shaped the conditions for its interpretation. The generalisation of the spatial dimension in cinema showed that its structure was formed as a result of the interaction of directorial and cinematographic decisions, which ensured a combination of compositional orderliness and conceptual meaning. The space of the frame acted not only as the environment, in which the event unfolds, but also as an independent carrier of meaning, capable of influencing the interpretation of the work. The choice of image scale, object configuration, and camera movement trajectory determined, how the viewer perceived the relationships between characters, environment, and plot action. This approach ensured the integrity of screen reality, where spatial parameters were an active component of the overall artistic concept.

### Time parameters as a structural component of cinematography

In editing practice, the temporal organisation of a work was determined by the rhythm, duration of individual frames, and the order, in which they were connected. Rhythm was formed by the ratio of fast and slow editing transitions, changes in the pace of events, and variations in the dynamics of the visual sequence. The duration of a frame determined the degree of the viewer's focus on the image: short frames increased the pace and created a sense of dynamics, while long frames allowed the viewer to immerse themselves in the details and visual atmosphere. The order of editing transitions affected the perception of cause-and-effect relationships and determined the logic of the unfolding of events. By manipulating these parameters, the editor not only organised the chronology, but also formed an artistic temporal structure that may coincide with real time or deliberately deviate from it to create a certain effect. For the screenwriter, the temporal dimension was expressed in the construction of dramatic time – a structured sequence of events that determined, how the plot's emphasis was distributed. Dramatic time can be linear, when events unfold sequentially, or non-linear, when the plot was built on flashbacks, parallel lines or time shifts. Non-linear models allowed to combine different time planes, created the effect of repetition or variability of events, and changed

the perception of the duration and sequence of action. Such techniques were often used to enhance emotional impact, intensify conflict, or convey a character's subjective experience. The film "Run Lola Run" (1998) was an example, where the editing organisation of time and the script concept work in close connection (Fig. 6).



**Figure 6.** Frame from the film "Run Lola Run"  
Source: Run Lola Run (1998)

The film was based on the repetition of one plot situation with three different versions of events. The editing was based on a fast pace, quick transitions, and a combination of short frames with dynamic camera movements. This created a sense of a continuous race against time, which was constantly under pressure from circumstances. The script structure, built on the principle of variable repetition, used non-linear dramatic time, where each version of the story began at the same starting point, but ended differently. This structure allowed to explore the impact of small changes in the course of events on the final outcome, emphasising the relativity and instability of cause-and-effect relationships. Another approach to temporal organisation was demonstrated in the film "A Spring for the Thirsty" (1965). Here, the editing structure was based on the use of long frames and a minimal number of editing transitions, which slowed down the pace of the narrative and created a sense of time stretching (Fig. 7).



**Figure 7.** Frame from the film "A Spring for the Thirsty"  
Source: A Spring for the Thirsty (1965)

This approach allowed to focus on states and detailed that would go unnoticed in a fast-paced montage. The order of the frames was organised in such a way that the real passage of time seems to stop, and the visual images became independent carriers of meaning. The script combined linear narration with episodic inserts of a symbolic and metaphorical nature, blurring the line between the present and the past. In such a structure, dramatic time loses its strict chronological certainty and acquires conventional features, which reinforced the philosophical subtext of the film. A comparison of these two examples showed, how editing and screenplay decisions regarding time can produce diametrically opposite effects. In “Run Lola Run”, the temporal dimension was subordinated to high dynamics and constant movement, which created tension and keeps the viewer’s attention active. In “A Spring for the Thirsty”, the temporal rhythm was slowed down, and the editing aimed at creating an atmosphere of concentrated contemplation, where time is perceived as an extended, almost static quantity. Both approaches demonstrated that the organisation of time was a key means of managing the emotional and semantic perception of a film. “The Power of the Dog” (2021) stood out for its use of space as a key tool for psychological expression (Fig. 8).



**Figure 8.** Frame from the film “The Power of the Dog”  
Source: The Power of the Dog (2021)

The landscapes in film “The Power of the Dog” were not a neutral backdrop, but convey hidden meanings that heighten the dramatic tension. The mountain ranges of Montana were presented in the form of large-scale panoramas that contrasted with the intimate interiors, creating a sense of isolation for the characters in a hostile yet majestic environment. Long frames and the absence of a fast-editing rhythm allowed the viewer to immerse themselves in the inner state of the characters, feeling their vulnerability and psychological tension. Natural lighting emphasised the texture of the environment – from dry grass to wooden surfaces of the ranch – and at the same time creates a special “natural rhythm” of the image. Every ray of sunlight or glare in the evening twilight became a significant element of the composition, acquiring symbolic subtext. As a result, the visual

solution transformed nature into an active participant in the drama: the landscape became a mirror of the characters’ psychological states, and the atmosphere of the film was an example of how the aesthetics of slow cinema can create a multi-layered system of images. In general, it was important in editing and screenwriting that the time dimension was not a passive fixation of duration, but an active tool for constructing meaning. The tempo, the order of the frames, the construction of the plot lines and their mutual arrangement created conditions for the interpretation of events, shape the viewer’s expectations and determine the depth of their involvement in the story. When the editor and screenwriter work in harmony, the dimension of time became an integral part of the artistic concept, rather than just a technical element. This ensured the integrity of the work, in which time – both real and dramatic – became a carrier of meaning and one of the leading factors of artistic expression.

#### **Visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological parameters of cinematography**

In the work of a production designer, colour, light and texture were tools that directly influenced the creation of a work’s subtext. The colour palette determined the emotional tone of a scene and can indicate hidden meanings: warm shades were associated with intimacy or calm, while cool shades were associated with alienation or tension. Light, through its intensity, direction and contrast, directed the viewer’s attention and shaped the spatial depth of the frame. The texture of objects and surfaces emphasised the materiality of the environment, which influenced the perception of space as real or conditional. The combination of these elements provided visual coding of information that the viewer read on a subconscious level, deepening their interaction with the reality on screen. An important task for the director was to integrate spatial, temporal and stylistic dimensions in order to create a coherent atmosphere. Spatial solutions determined the location of objects and the interaction of characters with the environment, temporal solutions set the pace and rhythm of the unfolding of events, and stylistic solutions created the overall visual identity of the work. The synthesis of these components ensured the consistency of the emotional and psychological impact, with each visual element supporting the given mood and concept. As a result, the atmosphere of the film became an integral part of the semantic structure, rather than just a decorative addition. In “Blade Runner 2049” (2017), the colour palette was based on the contrast between saturated neon shades and dark areas of the frame. The combination of blue, green, and red accents with dense shadows created a visual code associated with urban overload and the technological dominance of the environment. Lighting solutions, in particular the use of side and back lighting, created an effect of limited visibility, which enhanced the feeling of uncertainty (Fig. 9).



**Figure 9.** Frame from the film “Blade Runner 2049”  
Source: Blade Runner 2049 (2017)

The texture of the sets and costumes, rich in detail, conveyed the material complexity of the world, emphasising its multi-layered nature. As a result, the visual and stylistic level interacted with the emotional and psychological, creating an atmosphere of alienation and inner tension. The film “Dune” (2021) demonstrated another approach to working with colour and light in space. Here, the visual concept focused on a minimalist palette of sandy shades that emphasised the monotony and scale of the desert environment (Fig. 10).



**Figure 10.** Frame from the film “Dune”  
Source: Dune (2021)

The contrast between light and shadow was used to create a metaphysical dimension to the frame, where space appears not only as a physical landscape, but also as a philosophical category. Large-scale panoramic shots are combined with ascetic costume and set designs, creating a sense of ritualistic austerity and emphasising the alienation of humans in a hostile environment. In “In the Mood for Love” (2000), colour was used as a tool to nuance the emotional state of the characters. The predominance of rich reds, warm browns and golden tones set an intimate yet tense atmosphere. Lighting techniques using soft diffused light and zoned shadows created an intimate space. The textures of the fabrics of the costumes, walls, and interior objects created a sense of tactile intimacy, reinforcing the psychological aspect of the interaction between the characters. The combination of these techniques with a slow pace and repetitive angles results in a high degree of emotional immersion for the viewer. In the film “Babylon XX” (1979), the colour scheme was based on a natural palette, where earthy tones were

combined with bright elements of traditional clothing. This ensured the reflection of an authentic environment and at the same time marked the symbolic elements of culture. Light was used to emphasise the texture of the natural landscape and the expressions on the characters’ faces, creating a balance between realistic reproduction and artistic emphasis on details. The texture of everyday objects, architecture and natural objects enhanced the authenticity of the image, while maintaining compositional harmony. This approach promoted the integration of the visual and psychological levels, where the viewer perceived the event as part of a holistic cultural environment. What these examples had in common was that visual and stylistic decisions determined the framework for the emotional perception of the plot. In “Blade Runner 2049”, it was created a sense of isolation in a technological space; in “In the Mood for Love”, it was enhanced the intimacy and tension in the characters’ relationships; and in “Babylon XX”, it was formed a connection with the cultural and natural environment. Regardless of the context, colour, light, and texture were not only aesthetic devices, but also structural elements that influenced the interpretation of content.

The synthesis of the work of the production designer and director in this dimension ensured that the spatial, temporal, and stylistic components supported each other. The atmosphere created as a result of such integration becomes the semantic core of the work, aimed at forming a holistic emotional and psychological experience for the viewer. As a result, the visual and stylistic level became not an isolated artistic layer, but an integral part of the conceptual construction of screen reality, where each element was subordinate to the overall idea and a specific artistic strategy. The visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological parameters of cinematography were formed as a complex of interrelated elements, in which colour, light and texture performed the function of meaning-creating factors capable of directly influencing the interpretation of what was depicted. The colour palette determined the emotional tone of the scene, the lighting solution forms the volume and depth of space, and the texture of objects enhanced the feeling of materiality of screen reality. The coordination of these components with spatial and temporal parameters ensured the structural integrity of the work, where the atmosphere was not only an aesthetic characteristic, but also a carrier of conceptual content. As a result, the visual-stylistic system became an instrument for regulating the emotional impact on the viewer and accurately shaping the author’s meaning.

## Discussion

The analysis of the results obtained was carried out in comparison with the provisions presented in contemporary scientific research on the philosophical, spatio-temporal, visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological parameters of cinema. The comparison made it possible to

determine the extent to which the patterns identified in this study correlated with existing scientific approaches, as well as to outline the differences that deepen the understanding of the components of cinematic language and their interaction. In particular, a comparison of the results obtained with the provisions outlined in the work of S. Swarnakar (2025) made it possible to establish that the interpretation of screen reality through the prism of a semiotic approach confirmed the role of sign systems in the formation of the semantic levels of the cinematic image. Consistency with the principle of holistic structural organisation of visual and sound elements identified in this study was evident, but it was clarified that within the analysed films, semiotic mechanisms acquired not only a narrative, but also a compositional and spatial function, which was not directly emphasised in S. Swarnakar's (2025) conclusions. The correlations between the spatial dimension and production processes established in the study coincide with the results of A. Zienowicz-Wielebska *et al.* (2020), which emphasised the importance of interaction between film project participants in achieving artistic integrity. However, this study detailed the influence of director-cinematographer interaction on the organisation of screen space in terms of semantic content, which complements the authors' theoretical model with empirical examples.

T. Lankhuizen's (2025) conclusions about the relationship between visual form and the viewer's empathic engagement resonated with the synthesis of stylistic and emotional parameters identified in this study. However, while T. Lankhuizen (2025) focused primarily on the psychological mechanisms of empathy, in this case, the emphasis was on the combination of colour, light, and texture with the rhythm of editing as factors that determined the emotional and psychological effect. The study by L. Liapi *et al.* (2024) confirmed that the editing structure affected the subjective perception of time. This was consistent with the changes in dramatic rhythm identified in this study through variations in frame duration. However, in this case, it was noted that rhythmic shifts in films were used not only to modify the perception of time, but also to emphasise the semantic nodes of the narrative. The results of K. Kovarski *et al.* (2022) regarding the influence of editing on the perception of time correlate with the mechanisms of nonlinear structuring of the narrative identified here. At the same time, it was clarified that in the selected films, editing performed not only a perceptual-modulating function, but also a conceptual-interpretative function aimed at forming the author's point of view.

The patterns of spatio-temporal organisation and stylistic integrity established in this study were correlated with a number of contemporary approaches that revealed various aspects of cinematic language. An examination of the technological editing tools in the work of J.H. Liew *et al.* (2023) demonstrated the potential of the latest algorithms for maintaining spatial-temporal

consistency, which made it possible to compare them with the effects identified in this study, achieved by traditional editing methods. This comparison confirmed that even without the use of high-tech solutions, it was possible to ensure the stability of the narrative structure if the editing was organised taking into account the dramatic rhythm. P. Russo's (2023) idea of a screenplay model as a complex adaptive system turned out to be related to observations about the interaction between screenplay construction and editing: in the films studied, the flexibility of the dramaturgy ensured its correspondence to the pace and structure of the visual series. Such integration was also evident in the camera work analysed by D. Mia (2023), which emphasised its role in shaping the atmosphere. In the results of this study, this position was supplemented by an emphasis on the interdependence of cinematographic techniques and artistic and staging decisions that reinforced the conceptual subtext of the scene.

Similar consistency was demonstrated by the findings of M.B. Yilmaz *et al.* (2023), who analysed the impact of camera movement on the emotional engagement of viewers. The effect revealed in this study confirmed this relationship, but was expanded in the context of combining spatial dynamics with colour and light parameters, creating a multi-level psychological impact. The influence of the creative team's coordinated work on the final stylistic unity, described by A. Watson *et al.* (2018), also coincided with the results obtained. At the same time, it was clarified that such unity was evident not only at the filming stage, but also in the intra-frame organisation of space. This observation was consistent with the approach of R. Bénard O'Kelly *et al.* (2024), where atmosphere was defined as a structural component of a film, and within the scope of this study, as the result of the integration of spatial, temporal, and visual-stylistic decisions. E. Frantz's (2023) study, which focused on the emotional background of contemporary cinema, provided the basis for correlation with the identified mechanisms of emotional and psychological influence. The analysed films demonstrated that the emotional effect was formed through a complex combination of colour, light, rhythm and spatial organisation, which emphasised the inseparable connection between the emotional component and the technical and artistic parameters of cinematic language. The interpretation of cinematic space, as recorded in the results of this study, demonstrated the stability of classical approaches to spatial organisation even in the context of the active introduction of digital technologies. A comparison with the conclusions of K. Ilmaranta (2020) confirmed that traditional methods of creating a coherent visual concept remain effective even in an environment where virtual production practices are widespread. This coincidence emphasised the relevance of classical techniques as a basis for the formation of a semantically and conceptually coherent space.

The tendency towards ambiguity in spatial and temporal solutions revealed in the films studied directly

echoed A.S. Grønstad's (2020) approach to the poetics of opacity in visual culture. While in scientist's interpretation opacity was a way of complicating the viewer's visual experience, in the analysed materials it also served as a dramaturgical tool, creating an effect of uncertainty and supporting a multifaceted perception. This allowed for a broader understanding of the poetics of opacity, combining it with editing and compositional strategies. The combination of the philosophical categories of space and time with the screen image established in this study received an additional interpretation in light of the considerations of K. Redrobe & J. Scheible (2020) on spatial thinking in cinema and digital cultures. Their approach emphasised the theoretical understanding of the interaction between space, time and technology, while in the results obtained in this study, space-time structures acquired a clear narrative function related to the logic of plot development. This showed that the philosophical foundations of spatial thinking not only determined visual organisation, but were also integrated into the dynamics of the script.

The data obtained in the study on the cultural-ontological dimension of cinematic reality corresponded to K.L. Killebrew's (2020) approach to the representation of cultural identity in visual practices. In his concept, identity was formed through visual codes, symbols, and spatial configurations, while in the analysed films, it emerged as a result of combining these visual factors with the temporal rhythm and emotional tone of the scene. Thus, the cultural dimension was not limited to elements of visual decor, but manifested itself in the entire system of cinematic construction – from *mise-en-scène* to editing rhythm. The systematisation of the compared results showed that the concepts developed in contemporary research were closely related to the characteristics of screen reality, spatial-temporal organisation and visual-stylistic structure of the film identified in this study. The identified similarities confirmed the stability of the key patterns of cinematic image formation, while the differences revealed the potential for further refinement of theoretical propositions regarding the role of philosophical foundations, editing decisions, and stylistic parameters in creating the atmosphere and semantic integrity of a work. The set of conclusions outlined the prospects for expanding the scientific discourse in the direction of interdisciplinary understanding of cinematic language, combining aesthetic, cognitive, and communicative approaches.

## Conclusions

The study found that screen reality in cinema functions as an artificially constructed space, organised according to its own structural and semantic laws. It differed from the direct reproduction of objective reality due to the transformation of events and phenomena through a system of artistic decisions that combined figurative language, compositional principles, and the author's concept. The spatial dimension of cinema was clearly ev-

ident in "The Seventh Seal" and "Citizen Kane", where the frame was constructed as a multi-layered structure with philosophical undertones. In the film, space was used to visualise the existential problems of man and the inevitability of death, and to demonstrate the social multidimensionality and internal conflicts of the characters. In the Ukrainian films "Earth" and "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors", spatial solutions reflected a close connection with the natural and cultural environment: in "Earth", the earth appeared as a symbol of life and collective memory, while in "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors", space acquired ethnographic richness, becoming a carrier of local cultural tradition. In "Babylon XX", space was interpreted symbolically and allegorically, allowing realistic scenes to be combined with metaphorical images. The temporal organisation demonstrated different models. In "Run Lola Run", it was based on high dynamics and repetition of plot variations, which created a tense rhythm and emphasised the role of chance in the course of events. In contrast, in "A Spring for the Thirsty" and "The Power of the Dog", time slowed down due to long frames and a contemplative atmosphere, creating an effect of philosophical concentration and psychological depth. The visual and stylistic level was most evident in "Blade Runner 2049" and "Dune", where the combination of colour, light and texture formed an urban-philosophical and metaphysical visual code. "In the Mood for Love" was dominated by intimate colours, intimacy and rhythm, which created a psychologically deep space that conveyed the subtle nuances of the characters' emotional states.

The results confirmed that screen reality functioned as a multidimensional system. Space, time, colour, light and texture acted as meaning-making factors in it, and their synthesis ensured the integrity of the artistic image and forms the philosophical dimension of the cinematographic work. The generalisation of the results allowed to conclude that the interaction of spatial, temporal, visual-stylistic and emotional-psychological parameters ensured the multi-level organisation of screen reality, in which artistic decisions functioned as a single meaning-creating system. The study had limitations related to the focus of the analysis on individual representative examples, which resulted in partial coverage of the potential spectrum of visual and narrative strategies in world cinema. Promising areas for further research include expanding the comparative analysis to a broader array of cinematographic works from different cultural traditions, using interdisciplinary methods.

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None.

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## **Філософське осмислення екранної дійсності: змістовні виміри та інтерпретації**

■ **Анотація.** Метою дослідження було визначити структурно-сміслові параметри екранної дійсності та їхній вплив на формування кінематографічного образу. Методологія ґрунтувалася на поєднанні структурно-семіотичного аналізу, композиційного аналізу кадру, порівняльного вивчення просторових, часових і візуально-стилістичних рішень, а також контекстуального аналізу художніх і технічних компонентів фільмів. Для дослідження було відібрано одинадцять фільмів, що відображали різні етапи розвитку кіномистецтва та демонстрували відмінні підходи до організації екранної дійсності: «The Seventh Seal», «Citizen Kane», «Run Lola Run», «Blade Runner 2049», «In the Mood for Love», «Земля», «Тіні забутих предків», «Криниця для спраглих», «Вавилон XX», «Dune», «The Power of the Dog». Було встановлено, що екранна дійсність функціонувала як умовно автономна реальність, створена за допомогою системи художніх і технічних рішень, що трансформували відтворення об'єктивного світу у концептуально структуровану модель. Просторовий вимір виявлявся через узгоджені рішення режисера та оператора, де організація кадру, розташування об'єктів і персонажів, а також пропорційне співвідношення планів виконували функцію смислових маркерів. Часовий вимір формувався монтажними прийомами, ритмом і тривалістю кадру, а також драматургічними моделями, включаючи нелінійні наративи, що впливали на сприйняття подій і побудову сюжетної динаміки. Візуально-стилістичний та емоційно-психологічний виміри визначалися взаємодією кольору, світла і фактури з просторовими та часовими параметрами, створюючи атмосферу як носій концептуального змісту. Було виявлено, що поєднання зазначених вимірів забезпечувало цілісність художнього середовища, у якому візуальні та звукові елементи перебували у впорядкованих взаємозв'язках. Таке інтегроване використання просторових, часових і стилістичних ресурсів дозволяло створювати кінематографічний образ, здатний не лише відтворювати, але й інтерпретувати реальність. Практичне значення дослідження полягало у використанні його висновків для розробки методик аналізу кінотворів у кінознавстві, а також у навчальних програмах підготовки фахівців у галузі режисури, операторської майстерності та художнього оформлення фільму

■ **Ключові слова:** автономна реальність; монтажні прийоми; сприйняття подій; сюжетна динаміка; просторові параметри