

Introductory Note

As *Interlitteraria* enters the eighteenth year of its publication, it is my pleasure to inform our readers and potential contributors of some new developments, concerning both our journal and the field of comparative literature in general.

First, the publishing process of *Interlitteraria* has undergone some changes. Last year, the University of Tartu decided to start to provide some financial support to serial publications and books appearing under its trademark. We have reached an agreement with the newly founded Publishing Board that starting from this year we will try to intensify the publishing cycle of *Interlitteraria* by issuing annually two numbers of our journal. It would meet the practical need of offering more flexible opportunities to scholars of comparative literature to have their work published in *Interlitteraria*. Our readers and authors may have noticed that especially since 2006 the issues of our journal have indeed often comprised two volumes. The difference with the past, however, will be that from 2013 one number of *Interlitteraria* will appear by the summer and the other number by the end of the year.

Despite that change in the publishing rhythm, we ask our potential contributors to send us their articles and essays always by January 31 of the year they expect their contribution, if accepted, to appear in *Interlitteraria*.

As until now, we will continue with the practice of publishing one year a monographic volume gathering the papers of our EACL international conferences, and the other year articles on a variety of topics. The difference with the past is that we will try to be more flexible above all in the content of our miscellanea-volumes. They may contain monothematic sections prepared by guest editors. (Thus we plan to include in *Interlitteraria* No.2 / 2013 a section of writings on the topic of literature's relationship with censorship, the fruits of a smaller international conference held last year in Tartu.)

We also wish to mention that regardless of the fact that our university has started to provide important and indispensable support to *Interlitteraria*, our steadiest supporter is still and in all probability will remain in the future the Estonian Cultural Endowment, Kultuurkapital.

The second piece of news is about an important initiative that comes from China. Coinciding with the past Christmas Eve (Dec. 21–23, 2012), at an international conference in Yichang (Central China) International Association of Ethical Literary Criticism was founded. The initiative came mainly from Chair Professor Nie Zhenzhao, of Central China Normal University (in Wuhan), the

Chief Editor of Forum for World Literature Studies (a journal published three times a year conjointly by Shanghai Normal University, Central China Normal University and Purdue University).

In his key address to the conference, Prof. Nie Zhenzhao made it clear that the move to found the International Association of Ethical Literary Criticism was predicted by an obvious vacuum left by the main theoretical currents of Western literary criticism of the recent 30 years (on the one hand, formalism, structuralism, post-structuralism and, on the other hand, discourses directly related to politics and ideology, such as “craiology” – scrutiny of interactions between power and culture –, feminism, eco-criticism, neo-historicism and post-colonialism). Let me quote Prof. Nie Zhenzhao from his manuscript text “Towards an Ethical Literary Criticism”:

It is no exaggeration to argue that Chinese literary criticism, since China’s opening to the outside world, has been dominated by western critical theories. We should acknowledge the fruitful results brought by importing and applying them; [...] but we feel that something is lost in this process. [...] More frankly, we had to admit that we have contributed very little to literary criticism except interpretation and use of ready-made critical approaches. We could not help pondering over the question whether there is any possibility for Chinese scholars to develop literary critical kits of their own and thus contribute to the world literary criticism. I think we should try by questioning the validity of the concepts we accepted and agreed.

Though conceived in China, the new International Association of Ethical Literary Criticism is fully open to the contributions on these lines by western scholars, to conceptualize further the new current in literary criticism and demonstrate its applications to creativity in literature, especially from a comparative point of few. If we manage it, we may be pretty sure that the claim of Prof. Nie Zhenzhao in a subtitle of his paper, “Ethics as the Origin of Literature”, appears not at all as applicable only to eastern literature, but has a lot to do with the core of all major masterpieces of literature created in the world, east and west, in ancient times as well as in modernity.

While waiting for the IAELC to establish its website, comparative scholars interested in joining the new association and contributing to its activities can write for further information to the Secretary of the IAELC, Prof. Wang Songlin of Ningbo University: wangsonglin@nbu.edu.cn

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