

## *Introductory Note*

In this volume, *Interlitteraria* continues with the proceedings of the conference *Belletristic Translation: a Means of Cultural-Spiritual Dialogue or a Tool of Acculturation?* held by the Estonian Association of Comparative Literature in 2015. This thematic section first tackles some general and fundamental problems in translation studies: the very possibility of translating literary texts, and the socio-cultural status of translators. Comparing and connecting historical and modern phenomena in poetics and politics, Jüri Talvet and Anne-Marie Le Baillif discuss both the evolution and constant characteristics of translation practices in Europe, based on examples from Estonia and France.

The case studies that follow (Asta Vaškeliene, Gitana Vanagaitė, Katre Talviste, Madli Kütt) explore these issues in various cultural and historical contexts in the Lithuanian and Estonian cultural space.

The *Miscellanea* section is strongly focused on the problematics of identity, showing how literary works shape and reflect our understanding of our own and foreign cultures (Jesús López-Peláez Casellas, Terry Siu-Han Yip, Ana Toroš), of gender and sexuality (Kārlis Vērdiņš and Jānis Ozoliņš), and the application of national, socio-cultural and sexual stereotypes in the depiction of traumatic experiences (Anneli Kõvamees).

The section ends with insights into contemporary literary works that question or explore the loss of traditional bases for identity, sense of self and of existence. In her reading of Umberto Eco, Rama Kundu shows how a seemingly traditional piece of island fiction turns into a reflection upon fundamentally unattainable ideals and concepts, while Maire Jaanus begins an exploration of Ene Mihkelson's and W. G. Sebald's world of post-humanist self-perception.

*Katre Talviste*