

Editor's Preface

The 2021 summer issue of *Interlitteraria*, guest edited by Marko Pajević, is doubly dedicated to multilingualism in literature and culture. First, through its thematic focus established by the section “Literature and the Political: Multilingualism and Exophony in Contemporary Baltic and German-Language Culture”, which explores sociocultural and literary phenomena that are not easily defined by a single language, region or community, but have contributed to the shaping of a rather singular multilingual space of fluctuating borders and diverse, yet closely interrelated histories and identities.

Second, the whole summer issue represents multilingualism as strongly as the journal always aims to in principle, although it can obviously not achieve this in every volume. It is important to *Interlitteraria* to provide a multilingual forum where at least four working languages are equally welcome and comparative literary scholars' traditional capacity for multilingual discussion can be developed and put to use. This issue benefits from the presence of three working languages, and hopefully encourages future contributions in each of them.

The main thematic section deals with the essentially political issues surrounding and shaping literature. While individual papers vary in their approach to multilingualism, focusing on its manifestations in society and art in a broader sense or in particular works of art, in a diachronic or synchronic perspective, this synergetic variety emphasises the importance of considering culture in its complexity. Any one language, tradition or practice cannot be wholly understood if considered as an isolated phenomenon and object of study. Any practice, including literature, can only really be understood in relation to the reality in which it lives.

The “Miscellanea” section, with its focus mainly on poetic issues, draws attention to literature's own constant demand for changes of perspective and discursive diversity. Whether it manifests in the search for renewed figurative language or narrative structure in a work of art, or in a newly conceptualised and contextualised metalanguage in criticism and research, literature refuses to settle for an established form of expression. In its various manifestations in individual works, literature may take very different stands as to how or if it relates to the material, social or political reality it inhabits, although it always alerts us to our permanently multilingual reality and warns us against the complacency of thinking that any language we already speak will ever be enough.

Katre Talviste