

Call for Contributions

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DERRIDA AND LITERATURE

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9 October 2024 marks the 20th anniversary of Jacques Derrida's death. In commemorating the French philosopher and writer, this issue of WORLD LITERATURE STUDIES aims to offer broader discussion of Derrida's reflections on literature.

Derrida's deconstruction has considerably influenced the conditions for thinking about literature and philosophy. To this day, Derrida is still credited with the concept of levelling the genre distinction between philosophy, literature, and literary criticism,¹ which should lead to the paradigmatic obliteration of all genre distinctions.² A widespread claim about Derrida's deconstruction is that Derrida is said to constantly proclaim and manifest the unity of philosophical and literary discourse.³

Jacques Derrida refuted such interpretations of his work. Referring to the concluding passages of the essay "White Mythology" or his "*Qual Quelle*", he insisted that his interest in the metaphor and fictionality of literature, on the one hand, and in the formal structure, rhetorical organization or textual types of philosophical discourse, on the other, does not "in the slightest signify reducing, leveling, assimilating. On the contrary, it is to endeavor to refine the differences" (Derrida, J., 1988. *Limited Inc a b c...*. Northwestern University Press, p. 156). The following statement is both illustrative and representative in this context: "I have never assimilated a so-called philosophical text to a so-called literary text. The two types seem to me irreducibly different" (Derrida, J., 1995. "Is There a Philosophical Language?" In: *Points... Interview 1974 – 1994*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 217).

In the context outlined, this volume proposes to address the fundamental question of how Derrida's deconstruction specifies the concepts of "literature" and "literariness" and how they are integrated into considerations of the general structure of textuality. Attention should also focus on an analysis in what sense an understanding of the conditions of literary writing is important to achieve the objectives formulated by Derrida in relation to the possibilities of deconstructive reading of works from the logocentric tradition. It is well known that Derrida's deconstruction is carried out at the "margins of the texts" as a certain way of reading them; it is therefore possible to approach solutions to the question raised from multiple perspectives and contexts. The editors would gladly accept well-considered interdisciplinary contributions that develop the following contexts:

¹ See HABERMAS, J., 1985. *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne*. // HABERMAS, J., 1987. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Frankfurt-am-Main, Suhrkamp Verlag.

² See NORRIS, Ch., 1990. "Deconstruction, Postmodernism and Philosophy: Habermas on Derrida." In: *What's Wrong with Postmodernism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

³ See GRYGAR, M., 2006. "Slovo, písmo, text. O strukturalismu a dekonstrukci." In: O. SLÁDEK, ed. *Český strukturalismus po poststrukturalismu*. Brno: Host, s. 217.

- Derrida's thinking on the relationship between literature and philosophy, such as his emphasis on the importance of literary writing/literature in a discursive context in which the primacy of logic over rhetoric has been postulated since Aristotle.
- Derrida's polemic with Jürgen Habermas (and the controversy that this polemic provoked).
- Derrida's relation to formalism and French structuralism. This context also invites a rethinking of the typological contexts of deconstruction and Czech structural aesthetics (as provisionally outlined in the collection of research papers by Sládek, ed., 2006. *Český strukturalismus po poststrukturalismu*. Brno: Host).
- Derrida's reading of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* in the essay *Parergon*.
- Derrida's interpretations of literary works (J.-J. Rousseau, G. Flaubert, S. Mallarmé, M. Blanchot, J. Joyce, P. Valéry and others).
- Derrida's definition of the role of metaphor outside literary discourse, in science and philosophy.
- The role of aporia in literature (the ineffable as a fundamental element of literary discourse).
- The relationship between the machine, the writing tools (the typewriter, the keyboard, the hand, the pen) and the text, the independence of the work from the author, the role of the unconscious in the writing process, the automation of writing in Derrida's work in relation to Roland Barthes' concept of "Death of the Author".
- The presence of Derrida's deconstruction in the difference of *women's writing* (Hélène Cixous, Sarah Koffman).

Contributions that focus on the analysis of the network of deconstructive concepts used by Derrida as interpretative and methodological tools, such as the notion of "improper" (meaning, borders, etc.), "grammatology" (of literature), "metaphor" (e.g. in the context of Aristotle's *Poetics*), "otobiography", "spacing", etc., may also be accepted.

Languages of contributions: Slovak, Czech, English, French.

Please email your abstracts (maximum 3,600 characters) to the volume editors at marcel.forgac@unipo.sk and a copy to usvlwlit@savba.sk by 16 June 2023. Authors will be notified about further cooperation by 23 June 2023. The deadline for submissions (maximum 36,000 characters) is 30 October 2023.