



Editorial

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The *Journal of Literary Theory* has a new team of editors: Sibylle Baumbach (Stuttgart) and Olav Krämer (Osnabrück) have joined *JLT*, replacing Fotis Jannidis, Tom Kindt, and Tilmann Köppe, who have left the team to focus on other areas in their work. With this change, we have expanded the range of disciplines covered by the members of the editorial team to include English and Comparative Literature while maintaining the key objectives of *JLT*. The journal will continue to serve as a forum for a wide range of different positions in literary theory and remains dedicated to exploring a broad array of topics related to the history and development of literary theories. Nevertheless, based on the disciplines and research interests represented by the new editorial team, we will put greater emphasis on topics that emerge from current approaches in English and American Studies and Comparative Literature. Furthermore, we aim to (re-)kindle the spirit of controversy in discussions about literary theory to foster new approaches and developments in the field.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our deep thanks to the previous co-editors for their continuous engagement, and expertise that helped establish *JLT* as one of the leading journals in literary theory. When the journal was founded in 2007, it was the only journal in the German- and English-speaking world devoted specifically to topics in literary theory. From the beginning, it was the key objective of *JLT* to bring together discussions on topics relating to literary theory from systematic and historically-informed perspectives. *JLT* is not limited to a specific direction in literary theory. Instead, it offers a forum for a wide range of different (and also conflicting) positions to discuss new approaches in the field. To support the thematic diversity of *JLT*, one of the issues per year is published by guest editors. In addition, two specific features have characterised *JLT* and remain important to us: the double-blind peer review process, which enhances the quality of the contributions, and its bilingual nature. By welcoming contributions in both German and English, *JLT* offers a forum to latest discussions and approaches from both of these scientific cultures.

When the first issue appeared in 2007, it offered an overview of new developments in literary theory and its neighbour disciplines. Since then, we have covered a wide range of topics: a larger group of issues was devoted to single research fields in literary theory such as emotion theories, comic theories, and trauma theories; another group to basic theoretical concepts such as ›interpretation‹, ›context‹, and ›function‹; and a third to genre-specific concepts of nar-

atology and lyric theory. In addition, recent approaches to cultural theory such as Animal Studies were covered, as were theoretical aspects of popular culture and media change. Finally, we have published issues on the history of theories or disciplines, e. g., on Russian Formalism, and on standards and norms in literary studies. In accordance with the interests of the editorial team, the focus has been on cognitive-theoretical and empirical approaches, on narratological topics, and on ›fictionality«. This broad spectrum of topics is also reflected in the free contributions published in each issue.

JLT has indeed filled a crucial thematic gap in the spectrum of journals in literary studies. This is confirmed, for example, by the frequent requests for guest issues we have received and continue to receive, and the access numbers to articles available in digital format. In 2020, we had 18.766 page hits, including 11.381 unique downloads of PDF files, which is considerable for a journal with a relatively specialised thematic focus. The distinct focus on literary theory continues to be important to us. Of the unrequested manuscripts the journal receives, many have to be rejected because they do not fit the profile of *JLT*: These submissions often analyse and interpret literary texts from a specific theoretical perspective, but do not themselves make a systematic contribution to the field of literary theory. For articles of this kind, there are numerous journals that are better suited.

We aim to further strengthen the key objectives of *JLT*, i. e. to advance new approaches in theories and methods in literary studies by offering a forum for critical discussions and debates about key trends and developments. It is one of our objectives to put greater emphasis on controversies in the field by inviting scholars to engage in current debates (and kindle new ones) by commenting on particularly contentious and challenging theoretical issues. Further innovations are envisaged with regard to the dissemination of the journal. For example, we are very interested in making *JLT* available open access to increase its dissemination and make contributions accessible for an even wider readership. For 2022, De Gruyter has included us in an open access pilot (model: Subscribe to Open). We hope that the model will prove successful and will be continued in the future.

The Editors, March 2022