

EDITORIAL

Setting out on the voyage of a new journal about Literary and Humanistic studies always entails an uncertain sailing, yet even more undetermined in the current context of global affairs, afflicted by economic crisis, collective despondency and growing disregard for Humanities in society. This is a bad time for poetry (“schlechte Zeit für Lyrik”), as Bertolt Brecht wrote in the 20s and then sang with a wider media effect the Spanish music band *Golpes Bajos* in the 80’s. However, we are convinced that discouragement, like fire, can only expand if fanned; optimism, in turn, has a performative virtue. Anyway, the Latin proverb, passed on by Ausonius, teaches that *dimidium est facti coepisse*: the beginning is half the whole.

Our vision is that *Littera Aperta* will make of its title meaning its own identity, admitting a wide spectrum of analytical methodologies, spanning from ancient approaches, genuinely philological, to modern and postmodern strategies. Traditionally, Philology has sought to establish the Texts and recreate their meaning in its original context, whilst postmodern criticism asserts that the meaning of texts is merely a cultural construct. Nevertheless, we believe that in the critical journey it is possible to ply a route equidistant between Scylla and Charybdis: the text analysis helps to build theories and, complementarily, the methodical doubt of deconstruction impels us to test the validity of theories by means of a close textual reading. Let us admit, following Pierre Grimal, that systems grow old and become obsolete, more often than not very quickly and that only data remains unfaltering, “as a possession for all time”, to employ Thucydides’ definition of History. Yet it is not untrue either that systems, theories and models help to govern the chaos in the fluid system that is the world of data. Against the deconstruction principle of uncertainty raises the constructive aspiration to knowledge.

The openness of the journal is also applicable to the texts and topics studied: ancient and modern, oral and written, printed or transmitted through other means. With this journal we would like to harmonize the dialectical oxymoron: to go back to the origins in order to better understand modernity, to critically observe the global from the local (and vice versa), to examine the complex relationship between the Orient and the West. We support W.R. Parker in his 1964 dictum: “to live intellectually in one’s own time is as provincial and misleading as to live intellectually only in one’s own

culture”. The vicious circle can derive into a virtuous circle, a means to reach and apprehend transculturalism. The texts, authors and genres approached do not necessarily have to limit themselves to the authors canonically commended to the occidental Parnassus. More often than not, genres, authors and mass media pulled over the margins of the shores of high culture have a wider impact. Object of attention can and should also be artists in different platforms, such as cinema, comic, television, music, internet, video game console, and even smartphone devices. The journal will also welcome didactic and pedagogical studies in Humanities (both theoretical and practical aspects); interviews to figures who have a say in order to throw some light, without dazzling any of us either, on the seas that we are determined to sail from today onwards; and finally, book reviews which deal with relevant current publications, that we prefer imbibed with critique and broad-minded perspective rather than descriptive and over simplistic.

It has been stated that Life —and therefore also a journal’s Life— is the combined result of Fate and Need, in relation to parameters and factors unknown to humans. We think that the Need that *Littera Aperta* was born existed. In addition, we know that it is possible to build Fate together with work and excitement and, last but not least, with *a little help from our friends*. *Littera Aperta*’s friends are its readers, contributors and collaborators. We owe our gratitude to all our fellow travelers for sharing with us this voyage into the world of Humanities.