



**THE LITHUANIAN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION,
THE INSTITUTE OF LITHUANIAN LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE**

International scientific conference

**LITERATURE IN ERAS OF CONFLICT: IDEOLOGY AND
ETHICS**

17–18 October 2024

The Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, Vilnius, Lithuania

Deadline for submission of applications: 1 May 2024

Contact email: info@lila.lt

Conference fee: EUR 50 (until 30 June) / EUR 70 (until 31 August), for members of the Lithuanian Comparative Literature Association: EUR 30.

Conference languages: Lithuanian, English.

The conference will take place at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore (Antakalnio St. 6, LT–10308 Vilnius, Lithuania). Participation will be also possible remotely.

In 1940, after the shocking experience of war, Czesław Miłosz published an essay entitled "Reflections on the Season of Fires", in which he reflected on Europe's defeat and the world's apocalypse. In the face of today's upheavals, it is relevant to revisit these questions by bringing to life the experience of historical and contemporary conflicts in literature.

When thinking about conflict literature, ethical and ideological dichotomies are at the forefront, as well as the complex relations between truth and lies, autocracy and democracy, survival and death, humanism and evil, the human body and political power, collective and individual tragedy, aggression and heroism, totalitarian control, and

creative impulse, and so on. We propose to look at fiction as a medium for conveying these morally and psychologically complex experiences. It is also evident that the mechanisms and functions of literature in recording experience in texts are shifting, with literature gravitating towards moral philosophy or historical education, or spawning new genres, such as dystopia, war reportage, and topical war poetry.

A huge discursive rift is opening up between the experience of conflict and its verbal expression, in which ideological and ethical aspects play a key role. How do political discourse and totalitarian control shape the literary narrative? What is the relationship between the aesthetic value of literature and its ideological function? How is literary language influenced by the representation of conflict themes and what rhetorical and stylistic strategies do writers choose? Is literary expression capable of adequately conveying trauma when the author has not directly experienced it?

We invite you to consider the issues of conflict literature beyond the literary themes and expressions provoked by military conflicts and the clash of different political powers. The idea of the organizers is to involve literary struggles in the field of dialogue, bringing to the fore the intersections of literary currents and paradigms that are changing the literary landscape. In the post-modern era, when value relativism, irony, and play seem to prevail, and conflicts seem to be impossible in principle, they do happen. How does social media change the appreciation of literature or its reception in general?

We particularly welcome comparative papers that juxtapose several epochs of historical cataclysms and upheavals, different literary battlegrounds, or the reflection of conflicts in different art forms.

The following **thematic guidelines are proposed:**

- Catastrophes and catastrophism: a new language for new times;
- The role, value, and status of literature in a period of socio-political turning-points;
- The memory of wars and memory wars in literature;
- Shifting styles, radicalization of value choices, revision of the literary canon;
- Literary conjuncture and texts that distort the politics of memory;
- Various forms of control and overcoming of Soviet literature: propaganda, censorship, internal censor, Aesop's language;

- Literature as a form of cultural resistance under ideological indoctrination
- Variations of inscribing authentic/non-authentic existence in art;
- Possibilities and impossibilities of communication, polylogue of ideas (miscommunication);
- Recurrences of colonial thinking in postcolonial discourses;
- Cancel culture in the literary field;
- Literature in eras of conflict: a medium for ethical evaluation
- Conflicts and social media in the literary field (tensions between fiction and social media, between professional criticism and bookstagrammers, etc.);
- Conflicts of the future: the challenges of artificial intelligence for authentic literature and literary creators.
- The rise of the dystopian genre; apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic imagery; themes of disaster survival and management in literature.

We welcome abstracts of 150–200 words for twenty-minute presentations and short biographies to info@lila.lt by 1 May 2024. **When registering, please indicate whether you will be attending the conference in person or remotely.**

English-language papers based on the conference presentations and selected by the Scientific Organizing Committee will be published in the peer-reviewed continuing journal *Acta litteraria comparativa*.

Scientific Committee

Dr. Karolina Bagdonė

Dr. Gintarė Bernotienė

Associate Professor, Dr. Dalia Jakaitė

Associate Professor, Dr. Eglė Keturakienė

Professor, Dr. Mindaugas Kvietkauskas

Dr. Laura Laurušaitė

Dr. Manfredas Žvirgždas