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Editorial

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Editorial

In the opening number of our new journal twelve months ago, Laurel Brake invited us to consider the terms we use in our scholarship and the constitutive function they have in different fields of research.¹ The move from the ‘article’ to the ‘essay’ as the common designation for a prose contribution to a periodical, she argued, was an assertion of the literary over the journalistic, with all the attendant connotations of authority and value. There is much more to say here, of course, and we are still some way from an agreed terminology for the diversity of items we find in the periodical press. But there is a further complicating factor that remained unspoken in that discussion point in our first issue, namely that of linguistic difference outside the Anglophone context. We might think of ‘Artikel’, for instance, as a reasonable German equivalent for ‘article’, but the notion of an ‘essay’ raises more subtle questions when considered in the German context. While a more academic essay might be captured by the designation ‘Aufsatz’, many intellectual journals preferred to invoke the ‘Essay’ or ‘Essayistik’ as a genre. Less dry and formal than an ‘Aufsatz’, intellectually more wide-ranging, and in good hands executed with an engaging degree of flair, the ‘essay’ in this particular sense became a defining genre in the twentieth century for review journals like the *Neue Rundschau*. Here, English is inadequate to capture not only this genre difference but also the self-conscious intellectual identity that comes with it.

And what if we consider the ‘editor’ of a periodical, the subject of a number of current research projects in periodical studies? When we discuss this in a multilingual research setting, are we even sure that we are trying to talk about the same thing? In French, the nearest cognate, ‘éditeur’, usually refers not to the editor of a periodical but to the publisher or to the editor of a text. At the same time, the French context offers the advantage of two separate terms to designate different roles that tend to fall under the single English term ‘editor’: the ‘directeur’, as the editor-in-chief with overall responsibility for the publication; and the ‘rédacteur’ whose responsibilities are more hands-on and everyday. In German, the same distinction has to rely on the differentiation between the ‘Chefredakteur’ and the subordinate ‘Redakteur’, but many publications also designate a further high-level editorial role, that of the ‘Herausgeber’ who is often the founding editor, the proprietor or publisher who may have limited day-to-day involvement. Given these complexities it is perhaps better not to even consider here the ‘editor’ in a publishing house who would usually carry the job-title of ‘Lektor’ and many of whom were also a ‘Redakteur’ in a related periodical.

Little wonder, then, that research across national and linguistic boundaries is such a challenge when we are so often not speaking the same language. It was in an attempt to provide a space in which we could overcome such challenges, or at least be

1 Laurel Brake, ‘Debating Point: “Articles” or “Essays”? A View from the Bridge’, *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 1.1 (Summer 2016), 91–92.

explicit about them, that we founded *JEPS* twelve months ago, in the hope of ‘joining forces’ as we put it in our opening editorial. In this respect, it felt significant to be able to publish in our second issue of 2016 Evanhelia Stead’s exploration of the overlapping histories of the ‘little magazine’ and the ‘petite revue’, both traced back to their respective foundational texts: Remy de Gourmont’s *Petite Revues* of 1900 and Ezra Pound’s ‘Small Magazines’ of 1930.² As Stead shows by briefly considering German, Russian, and Portuguese, terminological categories are very different in different national and linguistic contexts. Equally importantly, essays (or should that be ‘articles?’) in that number problematized the distinction between ‘little’ and ‘big’ periodicals, one of the most important trends in the current scholarship and one which benefits directly from interdisciplinary dialogues between literary studies and journalism and media studies. A major [international conference](#) in the autumn of 2018 on ‘big magazines’ promises to extend those dialogues further.

Appropriately, the problem of multilingualism emerges as a central concern in one of the new essays in this, our third, number and the first of our second year. Heleen Van Gerwen’s analysis of the Flemish legal journal *Rechtskundig Tijdschrift voor Vlaamsch-België* (1897–1963) explores how the periodical functioned as a site of intervention in the language politics of Belgium. The journal not only published its own Flemish translations of French-language legal judgements but also commented on, and contributed to, the creation and standardization of a nascent Flemish legal language. That active periodical agency emerges just as strongly in our two remaining essays, albeit in very different contexts. In one of those, Marysa Demoor, Birgit Van Puymbroeck, and Marianne Van Remoortel examine one of the few partially extant runs of a handwritten First World War godmothers’ journal, *La Revue des marraines* from 1916 and 1917. Revealing itself to be a composite of the trench journal and the much older tradition of the home-made family journal, *La Revue des marraines* not only provided a meeting-point between war-time ‘godmothers’ and ‘godsons’, but also intervened in contemporary debates about gender. In the other, M. Sage Milo demonstrates how the modernist women’s journal the *Freewoman* can be seen as an alternative public sphere, establishing itself as a counter-space founded self-consciously on emotion. In the process, Milo suggests that the notion of ‘emotional community’ may be a useful paradigm through which to understand instances of the periodical press.

In this respect, Milo’s essay fulfils another of our aims in founding our journal a year ago, namely to provide a much-needed space in which to develop theoretical approaches to periodical studies. As Milo herself acknowledges, the periodical as ‘emotional community’ builds in interesting ways on Fionnuala Dillane’s essay on ‘periodical affect’ in our opening number.³ In subsequent numbers it is our intention to publish further essays of that type, as well as to publish themed numbers that reflect the increasingly dynamic field of periodical studies. With more than sixty speakers from around twenty different countries converging on Milan to explore ‘[Conflict in the Periodical Press](#)’, the sixth annual conference of our parent institution, the [European Society for Periodical Research \(ESPRit\)](#), is proof of that dynamism and bodes well for our continuing efforts to bring together scholarship on periodicals that crosses boundaries, be they chronological, linguistic, or disciplinary in nature.

2 Evanhelia Stead, ‘Introduction: Reconsidering “Little” versus “Big” Periodicals’, *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 1.2 (Winter 2016), 1–17.

3 Fionnuala Dillane, ‘Forms of Affect, Relationality, and Periodical Encounters, or “Pine-Apple for the Million”’, *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 1.1 (Summer 2016), 5–24.