



The New Scholar: Volume 2!

Dear reader,

The term of a *TNS* editor is not a very long one, but the challenges and opportunities it entails are very considerable indeed. The first volume of our student journal having achieved such success, it is with great enthusiasm and heartfelt gratitude that we, the present team, compiled the issue that you now see before you.

The debut of our project, in line with *The New Scholar's* mission for inclusion and diversity, had been characterised by broadness of scope and thematic variegation. To complement and contrast the preceding selection, and to infuse the second volume with a note of individuality, we chose to concentrate on a particular thread of inquiry: *Language, Literature, Culture*. With this overarching theme, we not only wanted to unite the different fields and specialties within the Leiden University Faculty of Humanities, but also to touch upon some of the universally shared human experiences – viz. those shaped by our textual and cultural surroundings. We also wanted to highlight one of the defining aspects of *The New Scholar's* mission, which is to publish works that showcase analytic clarity, technical precision, and persuasive argumentation; thus, language lay at the heart of this volume.

The Team

The interest in literary tradition, socio-historical environments, and modes of thought expression is one that inheres in every member of our team. Angela M. Soriano Frisancho, who has a degree in Management and Tourism at Universidad Nacional San Antonio de Cusco (Peru), is currently reading Latin American Studies (BA) at Leiden University and specialises in Cultural Analysis – a strand which she plans to pursue with a Research Master programme in 2024. Valentina de Beer is a student of English Language and Culture (BA) and has recently finished her thesis on multilingual code-switching. Polina Filatova is also presently completing English Language and Culture (BA) and is due to write her thesis in the second semester of this academic year.

The Selected Articles: Language, Literature, Culture

We are pleased to say that, despite the seemingly predictable formulation, the theme *Language, Literature, Culture* has attracted papers from a wide range of perspectives.

The volume opens with the discipline of museology and visual arts, as presented by Róisín Lambert in “The Stedelijk Museum’s *When Things Are Beings* as a ‘Third Space.’” The author explores the problem of artistic exclusivity across the history of art and museums, how the struggle for recognition affects artists of the minority, and how the gap between individuals and

cultures can be bridged in a so-called ‘third space’, where cultural interaction and exchange begin to thrive.

The dialogue between culture and artist is continued by Francesca Zambelli in “Negotiating the Literati Landscape,” where the interlocking between Chinese traditional landscape painting and contemporary art is discussed with reference to the artist and cultural activist Bingyi Huang. Providing an overview of the historical development of the landscape genre in Chinese art, the article recognises an undercurrent of Daoist thought in Bingyi’s *The Shape of the Wind in the Fuchun Mountains*.

Zambelli’s analysis of Bingyi’s work is succeeded by Giorgia Caffagni’s paper on the quest for cultural identity among the Chinese diaspora in late 20th century Hong Kong. Her paper “Diaspora, Migrations, and Cultural Identity in *Comrades: Almost a Love Story*” employs a post-structuralist approach to study the audiovisual and formal aspects of Peter Chan’s film and thereby observe how the characters perceive their own cultural experience.

The issue of diasporic legacy moves from identity to globalisation discourse in Yongwon Woo’s analysis of Nahum Slouschz’s *Travels in North Africa*. Taking a postcolonial approach, the paper refers to the notions of backwardness, heritage, and colonial teleology to assess and offer an insight into the dynamics between European Jewish and North African Jewish realities of the 20th century.

Equally concerned with the Orientalist perspectives, Lily Gerloff-Blood considers Yumna Al-Arashi’s short film *Shedding Skin* in her article “Challenging Orientalist Cultural Narratives of Arab Women”. Gerloff-Blood’s analysis shows how the director manages to challenge the dominant cultural paradigms that had split Arab female identity into sexualised object and oppressed victim of sociocultural context.

Freedom, equality, and gender are also central to Niencke van Burg’s study “Gender Reforms in Saudi Vision 2030”. The article concentrates on the ideas of freedom and equality to understand how and to what extent these two notions are integrated and harmonised within the Saudi Vision 2030 plan. Drawing an overview of previous political agendas and closely inspecting the state’s response to recent civil unrest, van Burg brings to the surface the underlying social imbalances in Saudi Arabia.

The critical discussions in postcolonialism and gender are followed by the lens of historical materialism in Walter Verhoeff’s “Opportunist? Rightly Opportunist!”. Taking Ezra Pound’s *Eleven New Cantos* as a case study, the essay reconciles the widespread dualistic distinction between modernist intellectual and rising mass culture. It argues that Pound revives and adapts contemporary economic ideologies and weaves an idealistic leader-figure to redefine the populace’s relation to the system of social government.

The role of material culture, as well as its reflection of the struggle for power, persists in Maud van Es’s essay “Nero as Neoptolemus”. The paper studies the first epigram of Diodorus of Sardis and, narrowing its focus on the poet’s analogy between Tiberius’s return to Rome and Neoptolemus’s voyage to Troy, unravels the encoded cultural tension between ancient Greece and Rome.

Finally, from written language, we proceed to the language of signs. In a compressed version of her thesis “Mouth Actions in Colombian Sign Language”, Xiomara Getrouw investigates the auxiliary function of facial expressions in Colombian Sign Language (CSL) as used by deaf participants within a chosen set of sport domains. Identifying as many as ten distinct non-manual markers, the paper argues that facial expressions play significant syntactic and semantic roles in CSL.

With this collection, we not only celebrate the second outing of *The New Scholar*, but also the constantly expanding creativity, growing perseverance, and increasing autonomy of student-produced scholarship at large. In acknowledgment of all the hard work that has been invested in the making of this journal, we want to thank: our general editors Dr. Paz Gonzalez and Dr. Jill V. Jeffrey for their ever-present support and mentorship; our copyeditor Carmen Kleinherenbrink for sculpting the manuscripts into the digital format and for making the volume accessible to our readers; and finally, our authors and reviewers for their contribution and collaboration.

From the editors,

Polina Filatova
Valentina de Beer
Angela Soriano Frisancho

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