



ESPRit Newsletter No. 2, December 2010

1. Welcome

This is the second newsletter of ESPRit. After sending round the first newsletter, over 50 researchers signed up for our organisation. We are happy to have already reached so many scholars from various disciplines and countries. Do feel free to forward this newsletter to colleagues who might be interested in periodical research! If you have news about research projects, articles, Calls for Papers, journals and other things of interest to ESPRit members, send us an e-mail (esprit@let.ru.nl) and we'll include it in the newsletter and on our website (<http://www.ru.nl/esprit>). We have recently also created a page on Facebook, so do join us there to share and read more on periodical research (search for ESPRit).

2. ESPRit event

As announced in the first newsletter, ESPRit will host an international conference on periodical research in 2011. The exact date and location of the conference and Call for Papers will be posted on our website in the coming months: <http://www.ru.nl/esprit>

3. Introducing...

In every newsletter an ESPRit-member will introduce him- or herself. For our second newsletter this is Dr. Usha Wilbers, who co-founded ESPRit with Prof. Odin Dekkers. She is Assistant Professor at the English department of Radboud University Nijmegen, where she has been teaching on twentieth century and contemporary Anglophone literature since 2002.

Like many scholars, I hesitate to label myself as a periodical researcher, mainly because I am not quite sure what that means. In my research I use periodicals both as sources and as objects of study and I am especially interested in the way they function in the literary field as cultural mediators. My first experience with periodical research was through the monograph I wrote on The Paris Review (1953-). I spent six months in the Paris Review archives, situated in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, and became intrigued by the clash between what the periodical aimed to project to its audience and the editorial processes which preceded the publications. I quickly learned that the study of periodicals leads to insights into various aspects of cultural production, as it raises questions about marketing, community-building, cultural transfer, literary infrastructure, etcetera. My recent research focuses on literary criticism, mainly of the late nineteenth century. Although at the moment I chiefly use periodicals as sources of criticism, I never study one without thinking about these questions. I am sure that in the future they will continue to be a central part of my research.

Part of the aim to found an organisation for European periodical researchers was based on the desire to find some form of coherence in this growing, but diffuse field. In my research on The Paris Review I grappled with questions about theoretical and methodological approaches of periodical studies and discovered that scholars take various and sometimes opposing approaches. What do these scholars have in common and what can they learn from each other? And would it be possible to come up with a shared methodology amongst international scholars? By getting scholars who work with periodicals together via ESPRit, we hope to get some answers to these questions.

By the way, do check out the revamped website of The Paris Review at www.parisreview.com, which contains samples of almost 58 years of fiction, poetry and the famous Paris Review interviews.

4. Relevant publications

The Summer 2010 number of *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*—which is an open access, refereed, online journal—is a special issue on the topic “Nineteenth Century Feminisms: Press and Platform” and contains a number of articles on periodicals. It was guest edited by Susan Hamilton and Janice Schroeder. The back issues of *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* are also worth taking a look at, such as the Special Issue on “Gender, the Professions, and the Press” (Summer 2009).

The Dutch journal for periodical research, *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies*, has become an e-journal. For the first time since its inception in 1997, the periodical will feature publications in Dutch, English, German and French. The articles in Dutch will include an abstract in English. The current issue, as well as back issues, can be retrieved at: www.tijdschriftstudies.nl. The first online issue contains the English-language article “Multimedia in the Pre-Digital Age. *Aspen Magazine* (1965-1971) and the Digital

Magazine Revolution” by Maarten van Gageldonk. The editorial board of *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies*—a B-status journal—is looking forward to receiving publications from international periodical researchers. Submissions can be sent to: redactie@tijdschriftstudies.nl.

5. Upcoming events of interest to ESPRit members

Call for Papers *Annual conference Research Society for Victorian Periodicals*

RSVP will hold its annual conference at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK, 22-23 July 2011. The theme of the conference is Work and Leisure: “Much of the Victorian Press was built on an interdependency of work and leisure. Work was necessary to produce matter for reading; and reading itself could be work or leisure. In addition, the products of the Victorian press themselves did 'cultural work'. This conference explores the place of the press with regards to the complex relationship between work and leisure in the nineteenth century.”

To download the Call for Papers, go to the [RSVP website](#). The deadline for submissions is February 1st 2011.

Call for Papers *Conference “Editing Europe. The Periodical as European Space”*

On May 13, 2011 the Dutch *TS. Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies* (Periodical for Periodical Research) and European Studies of the University of Amsterdam (UvA) will organize a symposium on the role of the periodical as ‘European space’. We define a European space as an ideal ‘community’ or ‘place’ that claims to share a European identity. ‘Europe’ has often been a fruitful model for editors of periodicals, who appropriated it to elaborate a certain programme, to justify ideological positions, to reach a wide audience or to mobilize congenial groups. ‘Europe’ has been given different functions and meanings depending on the context. Therefore, European identity does not precede the European space, but stems from it and changes continuously. Some periodicals functioned as physical European meeting places and were meeting points for authors and editors from different countries, such as international avant-garde magazines, exile and literary magazines and scientific journals (examples: *Bauhaus*, *Kontinent* or *Europe*). Other periodicals participate in international discussions, for instance by publishing contributions from foreign cultural mediators or correspondents, by reproducing articles from foreign newspapers or by establishing relations with periodicals from other countries. The periodical is both a distributor and producer of culture, as well as an institution that creates communities or ‘circles’ of editors, contributors and readers, and especially for this reason the concept of ‘European space’ opens up interesting perspectives. Furthermore, the spatial and transnational scope could be connected with existing approaches to the periodical as ‘circle’, as network, as discursive community or as *histoire croisée*.

The editors of *TS. Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies* and European Studies of the UvA kindly invite you to make a proposal for a paper (in English or Dutch) at the annual *TS*

symposium on Friday the 13th of May in Amsterdam. Possible research questions include:

- How do editors and contributors of the periodical define its circle in relation to Europe and the own nation? Which definitions of Europe and European identity do the periodicals generate? How do the national and the supranational or European identity relate to each other in periodicals?
- Why does the periodical manifest itself as European? Why and when do periodicals seek out a European space?
- Which role does the periodical play in the European debate? How did the periodical contribute to creating a European cultural space?
- To what extent could the spatial approach to the periodical as a European 'place' help to understand the periodical as 'circle, as network, as discursive community or as *histoire croisée*?

Both concrete case studies of European or internationally oriented periodicals and more theoretically oriented papers on the periodical as European space are appreciated. Your proposal (approx. 250 words) can be sent to Lies Wijnterp (L.Wijnterp@let.ru.nl) and Marjet Brolsma (M.Brolsma@uva.nl) before February 15, 2011.

6. Next newsletter

The next bi-monthly ESPRit newsletter will appear in late February. If you have news of interest to ESPRit members, send an e-mail to esprit@let.ru.nl and we'll include it in our next newsletter and on our website.