

Editorial Note

Published in December 2021, the previous issue of the *Journal of Latin Cosmopolitanism and European Literatures* was dedicated to the far-reaching influence of Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) in creating a classical norm to study and value art in Western Europe. The papers collected in that issue reflected on the various ways in which Winckelmann's classicizing tendency has affected the interpretation of art over the centuries, with a special focus on those works that have been considered not to meet aesthetic categories developed by the German art critic.

The present issue (Spring 2022) turns to Winckelmann's influence in the field of literary studies, where the existence of a normative standard has led to equally selective interpretations of literary works, styles and genres that, although often appreciated within their time or context of origin, were said by later critics not to meet the standards of the new classical norm. Each of the articles critically questions the concept of literary normativity and thus indicates the prejudices and biases which authors, texts and even whole periods have faced up until the present day.

In the first article of this seventh issue, Irene Zwiép reconstructs the canonization process of Jewish literature in nineteenth-century Germany. She demonstrates that Jewish philologists conceived their undertaking to include Jewish texts in the European literary canon in relation to well-established critics, including Goethe, and their ideas about a literary norm. Zwiép provides an intriguing case study of the way in which dominant aesthetics could affect the valorisation of an entire literary tradition.

Taking his cue from the forthcoming publication of the *Cambridge History of Later Latin Literature*, Mark Vessey reconsiders in the second contribution of this issue the hermeneutical approaches used in the field of late antique Latin studies from the nineteenth century onwards. He inquires to what extent the powerful model of the *western classic*, developed in an early-twentieth-century Anglophone context, has impeded the inclusion of later Latin within literary studies. When observing that the western classic has lost most of its relevance, he makes a case for new research open to insights from global literary studies.

The third and last article of the current issue, written by Piet Gerbrandy, studies the influence of literary normativity on one specific and highly influential text, Boethius' *De consolazione Philosophiae*. By connecting Winckelmann's ideal of "edle Einfalt und stille Grösse" to the Aristotelian norm of coherent narrative structures, Gerbrandy observes that the scholarly appreciation of Boethius has over the centuries been guided, if not prejudiced, by a norm that he argues to have been irrelevant to the former's literary project. Gerbrandy seeks a better understanding of the inconclusiveness of the work's ending through a critical comparison with modernist poetics.

Danuta Shanzer closes this seventh issue with a thought-provoking response piece titled "Ins and Outs and Opened and Closed." She considers the ambiguous role global literary studies might play in the study of the classical tradition. She points out that, while literary globalism can have negative results for academia with as doomsday scenario "virtual tombstones for discontinued fields and chairs," comparative and global approaches can also lead to new insights formerly impeded by dominant critics such as Winckelmann.

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