

Foreword

From the outset we tried to make the cover of our periodical *Werkwinkel: Journal of Low Countries and South African Studies* more attractive with each new number. Many academic journals do so, although this is not always apparent (we are usually offered a rather monotonous, plain graphic layout with the underlying thought that such covers represent the desired level of academic detachment). All the covers of the previous “Werkwinkel”-issues are available on our website <http://ifa.amu.edu.pl/werkwinkel>.

The cover of the first *Werkwinkel* represents the window of an early 19th century manor house in Boschendal, one of the oldest wine estates in South Africa, built in typical Cape-Dutch style. Using this photograph, we wanted to refer to the two fields of our interests, namely the Low Countries and South Africa.

The following number contained many articles on literary reception, amongst others an item on the reception of Dutch literature in Poland. We therefore chose a picture of the old 17th century hydrotechnical system in Notecka Primeval Forest, where there are still traces of the diligent presence of Dutch settlers.

As the third number was completely devoted to colonial affairs, we placed a sculpture work of three black men on the cover. The three figures are the work of a contemporary Georgian artist currently working in Poland, and refer to the earlier bas-relief on a building in the medieval Silesian town of Wrocław.

The fourth number contained miscellaneous essays and also a substantial block of reviews. The cover presents us with a collage by contemporary Polish artists (prepared for the Climate Change Conference that took place in Poznań in 2008) and refers in an explicit and creative way to Breughel’s famous painting “The Blind leading the Blind.” The Blind are transferred to the reality of the post-industrial world and make their way through contemporary rubble, stumbling over litter, pipes and ditches. This collage – a classical quotation from the culture of the Low Countries – was displayed in the centre of Poznań on a gigantic banner for some time.

In 2010, *Werkwinkel* became a biannual journal. The cover of the first number shows a reproduction of a page from the “Hottentottische Wörtersammlung”. This is a 19th century copy from a dictionary list of words, dating from 1691, and contains elements of European languages (German and/or Dutch) and Khoikhoi. This cover not only refers to one of the articles in the journal, but also illustrates our interest in Dutch and South African matters.

The present number is dedicated to the topic of ‘Violence’. The response was enormous and it was decided to carry this theme over into the next edition in spring 2011. A suitable cover was found in “A Village Brawl” (c 1635-1650), a painting by Pieter de Bloot (1601-1658). Not only does this work belong to the art collection of the National Museum in Poznań, but, moreover, the title word “Brawl” is one of the first and most common associations the concept “Violence” evokes. We hope that this new biannual formula will suit our readers, and that the new thematic number will capture their attention in the same way *Werkwinkel* – covers always try to do.

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