

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

### Transnationality, Citizenship, and Identity in Theory and Practice

The editors of *SPECTRA: The ASPECT Journal* are pleased to announce the publication of Issue 2.2: Transnationality, Citizenship, and Identity in Theory and Practice. The chosen theme of this issue stems from the 2013 ASPECT Graduate Conference, held March 22-23, 2013 at Virginia Tech. We are pleased that Eliana Barrera (University of Warwick, UK) and Frederike Vetter (University of Konstanz, Germany) submitted their paper from this conference for publication in this issue. In addition to their submission, we are also delighted to have this issue feature work from students and faculty associated with the ASPECT program at Virginia Tech.

This issue features original essays, book essays, and artwork by our contributors, all on the theme of transnationality, citizenship, and identity in both theory and practice. Our goal was to publish an issue that not only addressed these global issues but also put forth solutions and suggestions for work in these areas.

In the opening contribution, Eliana Barrera and Friederike Vetter's "Systemic Deficiency: Legal Standard Setting and its effect on the individual in the European Asylum System," the authors engage the question of the European border system, an intricate network of political boundaries whose formally fleeting nature is supplemented, as they argue, by the material violence it nevertheless inflicts. Barrera and Vetter analyze the European border not as a static geographical line, but as a bureaucratic, legalistic, and above all convoluted set of practices extending across European nations, frequently sacrificing human rights of refugees on the altars of state sovereignty and bureaucratic expediency. In analyzing this particular form of violence, Barrera and Vetter traverse discourses on human vulnerability as well as legal frameworks of - and against - European state sovereignty.

Katharine H. Cross's "Insecure Lives, Excluded Bodies: Haiti and Transnational Displacement" explores the position of Haiti within transnational relations, asking why Haiti and Haitians have not been part of the conversation on human rights since its founding. Haiti's infrastructure and economic problems add to their inability to attain productive international relations. These systemic problems have led to exploitation by other countries and aid programs. Her piece fits into the current conversation on refugees and security studies, calling upon writers including Schuller, Buck-Morss, and Malkki to support her arguments.

In his essay "The Subject of Governance," Francois Debrix alerts discourses on governance to an aspect they, as he argues, frequently neglect. Challenging the view of governance as political technology, Debrix squarely places the emphasis of his interrogation onto the bodies and spaces through which governance operates. In an engagement with Foucault's interpretation of governance as governmentality, Debrix argues against recent attempts to describe governance as wholly negative, or repressive power. Instead, he argues that governance works through governing subjects in governing themselves, thus opening up lines of political contestation not confined to simply rejecting governance outright.

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Jamie N. Sanchez's "Cultural Colonialization: The Displacement of Mongolians in Inner Mongolia" analyzes the process of urbanization in China as linked to the emergence of displaced populations of Chinese Mongolians in Inner Mongolia. In what she refers to as "cultural colonization," Sanchez explores how Mongolians are displaced from their places of origin into new urban centers, leading to a decreased use of their Mongolian language. Her analysis includes the works of Foucault, Schmitt, and Agamben in addition to Said and Malkii.

In addition to these essays, we present to you two book essays. Komal K. Dhillon's "Can the Global Transmit the Local for Diaspora?" reviews Arjun Appadurai's *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, exploring the ways Appadurai argument that mass migration and media combine to force us to question our understanding of the nation-state. Dhillon challenges his theories, questioning both whether Appadurai engages enough with the hegemonic structures information our media images and whether Appadurai analyzes the function of the imagination within social life effectively.

Our second book essay, "Antebellum Fantasies and Southern Legacies: Memory and Sex in Turn of the Century New Orleans" is presented by Taulby Edmondson's and reviews Emily Epstein Landau's *Spectacular Wickedness: Sex, Race, and Memory in Storyville, New Orleans*. His analysis notes the importance of Landau's study of memory within Storyville, lacking in many other histories of this period. Additionally, Edmondson questions Landau's lack of examination of women's motivations for engaging in prostitution in New Orleans.

Finally, we present a painting done by Melissa R. Schwartz specifically for this issue, entitled "Fringes and Interiors: Transverse and Ascending." In her own words, she describes how she uses shapes, colors (and white space), and textures to portray the obscure, yet specific nature of borders.

We urge you to give feedback on the articles present on our website, entering into the conversation on transnationality, citizenship, and identity with us. Furthermore, as you read the range of essays addressing contemporary intellectual discourse in terms of crisis, context, modernity, and myth please consider contributing to future issues of *SPECTRA*. We encourage a broad range of conventional and creative contribution in a variety of formats, including articles, book reviews, essays, interviews and other works in addition to original multimedia pieces, including podcasts, digital videos, internet-hosted texts, artwork, comics, and photography. Finally, we welcome inquiries about the journal at any time.