



Letter from the Editors

SAMUEL BECKENHAUER 

LEAH RAMNATH 

*Author affiliations can be found in the back matter of this article

In this issue of SPECTRA: The ASPECT Journal, we follow along with the tradition of critical interdisciplinary scholarly publications, showcasing a diverse array of research and creative works with a robust theoretical focus. Issue 10.1 delves into crucial intellectual debates concerning the politics of environmental degradation, critical theory, colonialism, and human-animal relationalities. Its contents include original artwork, poetry, four articles, commentaries, and an interview, all centered around these central themes. In summary, SPECTRA 10.1 presents a rich collection of scholarship, contributing to a strong display for approaching pressing issues from an interdisciplinary perspective.

The issue artwork, entitled “Washed Ashore,” by Aline R. S. de Souza and poem, Tulevazuksii (Futures),” by Sara Maaria Saastamoinen, cultivate a sense of simultaneous arrival and departure. As Saastamoinen says in the poem, “I water futures, floating across constellations,” this journal issue presents the possibility of thinking beyond the present political consensus through critical inquiry. Reflecting on the feelings generated by de Souza’s art, the articles, commentary, and interview may be pleasantly perplexing—or uncomfortably uncanny.

The articles range from the location of the sea to the forest, from thoughts cultivated inside of the mind towards the articulation of speech. Opening with “Mapping Everyday Waters: Scales of Sea Level Rise and Poetic Cartographies in the Marshall Islands” by Kaiqing Su, readers are prompted to think through the politics of cartographic representations of sea level rise and the significance of indigenous perspectives to recognize and overcome colonial dimensions around achieving global climate justice. This is followed by Reed Byg’s article: “Pawpaws, Temporal Embeddedness, and Unruly Ecologies.” Byg spatially and temporally complicates “homogenous ‘modern’ existence” by following the complicated political ecology of the pawpaw, proposing a potential model for envisioning alternative ecological projects toward an overall post-capitalist paradigm.

Eleanor Harmon’s contribution in “Uncanny Animals in Kafka’s Short Stories” analyzes Franz Kafka using the work of Sigmund Freud, as well as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Harmon’s article explores how Kafka’s use of animals creates uncanny effects and interrogates the impossibility of the unified subject. The final article written by Ben Papsun, “‘A New Language of Critical Theory’: Debord’s Style of Negation,” explores the political and aesthetic contours of Guy Debord’s concept of negative critique contextualized in the society of the spectacle in relation to Roland Barthes’ “Writing Degree Zero.”

INTRODUCTION



CORRESPONDING AUTHORS:

Samuel Beckenhauer

Virginia Tech, ASPECT, US
beckenhauer@vt.edu

Leah Ramnath

Virginia Tech, ASPECT, US
leahr@vt.edu

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Muhammed Shah Shajahan's "Encounter, Agency and Feeling: Few Remarks on (the Critique of) The Feeling of History: Islam, Romanticism and Andalusia (2020)" analyzes the reception of Charles Hirschkind's *The Feeling of History: Islam Romanticism, and Andalusia*. Shajahan discusses how reviewers have criticized Hirschkind's conceptualization of history and emotion. Shajahan focuses on the significance of attunement within Andalucismo and its role in framing the encounter of the relationality of subject formation as "feeling." In this sense, Shajahan provides a commentary on the politics of strong distinctions between "feeling" and "reason" within History.

François Debrix's "Necropolitics and American Hype-Power" theorizes the operation of hype-power as a form of necro-political power within the context of ongoing endemics and pandemics, such as Covid-19. Debrix conceptualizes the significance of hype in relation to superpower, arguing that what is specific about contemporary hype-power is how it occludes mass death, potentially through incompetence or apathy, within everyday life.

The interview section features an engaging conversation with Dr. Sushmita Chatterjee, Chair of Ethnic Studies and Women's and Gender Studies at Colorado State University. It explores her research on the politics of meat, her work process (offering some practical advice for junior scholars), and her thoughts on the democratic imagination—especially as it pertains to human-animal relations. Chatterjee was also the keynote speaker at the 2023 ASPECT Conference, where graduate students from Virginia Tech and across the United States presented their work.

After the publication of issue 10.1, co-editors Samuel Beckenhauer and Leah Ramnath will officially conclude their term as co-editors of SPECTRA, and Hannah Gignoux and Luther Lee McPherson IV will assume leadership of the journal. We want to thank all authors, peer reviewers, the SPECTRA advisory board, the newly formed editorial board, ASPECT, the Virginia Tech Library, and VT Publishing for their contributions to this issue.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Samuel Beckenhauer  orcid.org/0000-0003-0892-0867
Virginia Tech, ASPECT, US

Leah Ramnath  orcid.org/0000-0003-4638-6044
Virginia Tech, ASPECT, US

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