

TRANSIT 11.2: Foreword

Reflections on (a) Changing Europe

Dear Readers,

It is my privilege to introduce the **second issue** of the **eleventh volume** of *TRANSIT Journal*. As a second installment of our ten-year [anniversary volume](#), we continue the discussions fostered by our [CFP: Reflections on \(a\) Changing Europe](#). Representing both continuity and innovation, this issue responds to Europe's continuing polarization: proposing new interpretive frameworks for hope and communication across a changing media landscape and delving back into Germany's past to investigate the palimpsestic nature of European colonial relations.

We begin our issue with an exploration of the communicative potential of social media. **Jonas Teupert's** "[Sharing Fugitive Lives: Digital Encounters in Senthuran Varathraja's *Vor der Zunahme der Zeichen*](#)" posits the Varathraja's Facebook novel as a literary gesture towards the homelessness of contemporary communication—a media-driven evolution of the novel form in which faceless interlocutors share moments of intimate connection in an imagined space of transnational community.

Giovanna Montenegro's "[The Welser Phantom: Apparitions of the Welser Venezuela Colony in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century German Cultural Memory](#)" revisits the failed 16th-century German colonial venture into Hapsburg America, providing a historical analysis of the 'phantom' of this early colonial project as it haunted the cultural memory of an emerging German nation-state.

"[Eine wohltuende Unsicherheit: On Naming and Authenticity in the Works of Milena Michiko Flašar](#)" by **Edward Muston** examines the complex significance of names and name-giving for the transnational subject in three literary works by Austrian writer Milena Michiko Flašar, arguing that a fluid understanding of names offers a destabilizing energy against the hegemonic forces of ethno-nationalism, cultivating a space of 'beneficial uncertainty.'

Maria Stehle and Beverly Weber's "[Precarious Intimacies: Narratives of Non-Arrival in a Changing Europe](#)" explores three very different cinematic responses to migration in recent European cinema, tracing moments of shared contact and emotion to develop a theory of 'precarious intimacies' as a counterweight to the often violent forms of exclusion experienced by migrants on the increasingly militarized thresholds of the European Union.

In addition to our scholarly articles, *TRANSIT 11.2* is pleased to offer our readers two literary translations. Continuing his [exploration](#) of **Stefan Zweig's** fear of postcolonialism from our previous issue, **Ashwin Manthripragada** provides the first comprehensive English translation of Zweig's 1909 editorial "**Die indische Gefahr für England**": "[The Indian Threat to England \(On the Occasion of a Political Assassination by a Young Hindu\) 1909](#)." Following his own return from South Asia, Zweig muses in this candid essay on the limitations of the British colonial

project—revealing his own simultaneous enthusiasms and disillusionments and casting a nervous eye to the simmering tensions on the Austrian-occupied Balkan Peninsula closer to home.

“[Stranger Shaming](#)” by **Ida Sophie Winter** offers a lively translation of **Katja Huber**’s poem “**Fremdschämen**” from the anthology *Fremd*, edited by Fridolin Schley. *Fremd* is a collection of responses by contemporary German-language authors on experiences of everyday racism—in addition to outward observations and projections, contributions to this volume also explore troubling encounters with inherent racism within.

Our volume concludes with two book reviews. The first, by **Jessica Ruffin**, reviews [In Permanent Crisis](#) by **Ipek A. Celik**, a wide-ranging study of representations of ethnicity in contemporary European media centered around close-readings of four recent European films. The second, by **Molly Krueger** and **Michael Sandberg**, reviews [Black German](#) by **Theodor Michael**, as translated by **Eve Rosenhaft**. Originally published as *Deutsch sein und Schwarz dazu. Erinnerung eines Afro-Deutschen*, Michael’s memoirs offer one of the few English-language glimpses into the life of a prominent Black German activist whose life spans some of the most turbulent decades of the twentieth century.

We proceed into our second decade as a journal steadfast in our resolve to engage the changing political and media landscape of the 21st-century German-speaking world with a critical, scholarly eye. The resurgence of ethno-nationalism on both sides of the Atlantic—indeed, across the globe—demands renewed commitment to open communication for a generation of scholars for whom inter-European or Transatlantic divisions have increasingly become memory. Increased scholarly interest in migration necessitates self-awareness of our own often privileged mobility as scholars, and a critical perspective on the circulation of both peoples and knowledge. For the Erasmus generation of young Europeans, a transnational understanding of Europe has become second nature, yet the ease with which some navigate its evolving borders remains in sharp contrast to the difficulties which accompany even the most banal daily activities for others.

In our efforts to facilitate access to our material to a wide and interdisciplinary readership, this issue offers for the first time an edition of our journal in which all citations of our primary material are provided in bilingual (English/German) translation. *TRANSIT Journal*’s digital platform is free and open-access. Transnational and multilocal, our cooperative research gestures not only towards an expanded understanding of contemporary German Studies, but towards an expanded understanding of the German-speaking world today.

In my final issue as managing editor, I would like to give special thanks to *TRANSIT*’s [editorial team](#) for their hard work, our authors for their perseverance and commitment to the scholarship, and **Deniz Göktürk** and the **Department of German** at **UC Berkeley** for their many years of support. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new managing editor, [Michael Sandberg](#). I am pleased to leave the journal in his (and our editorial team’s) capable hands.

Sincerely,

Jon Cho-Polizzi
Managing Editor