

Editor's Welcome to *PORTAL*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2009.

'The Space Between: Languages, Translations and Cultures' is a special issue of *PORTAL Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies* guest-edited by Vera Mackie (University of Melbourne), Ikuko Nakane (University of Melbourne), and Emi Otsuji (University of Technology, Sydney). As Vera Mackie and Stephanie Hemelryk Donald (University of Sydney) say in the introduction to the special issue:

All of the contributors to this special issue have reflected on the stakes involved in negotiating differences in language and culture. In their research and professional practice they inhabit the 'space between': the space between languages, the space between cultures, and the space between academic disciplines. While many of our contributors are located in the Australian university system, we also have contributors from outside that system, as well as contributors who are theorising disparate sites for the negotiation of difference. The most exciting aspect of the papers presented here is the ability to move between the spheres of cultural theory and the everyday. Analytical techniques originally developed for literary and cultural analysis are brought to bear on the texts and practices of everyday life.

In addition to the critical essays, three cultural works also intervene in the discussion over what it means to inhabit the 'space between' languages, cultures and countries.

The guest editors and the *PORTAL* editorial committee would like to acknowledge and thank the following institutions and individual for the support that made this special issue possible: the Australian Research Council's Cultural Research Network; the former Institute for International Studies at the University of Technology, Sydney; the School of Historical Studies at the University of Melbourne; and the ARC Cultural Literacies Node Convener, Mark Gibson.

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I am delighted to announce that the January 2010 special issue of *PORTAL Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies* will be 'Fields of Remembrance,' guest edited by Matthew Graves (University of Provence, Aix-Marseille I) and Elizabeth Rechniewski (University of Sydney). The guest editors have provided the following description of the special issue's scope.

Fields of Remembrance special issue

'En ces temps de débauche mémorielle, j'ai pensé qu'il était bon de revenir à des situations de base.'

Jean-Yves Potel, préambule,
La Fin de l'Innocence: la Pologne face à son passé juif,
Autrement édns, 2009.

Across the world over the last 20-25 years nation-states have paid renewed attention to the observance of national days, and have undertaken campaigns of education, information, and even legislation, in order to enshrine the parameters of national remembering and therefore identity; while organisations and institutions of civil society and special interest groups have sought to draw the attention of their fellow citizens to their particular experiences, and perhaps gain national recognition for what they believe to have been long overlooked. Described by Pierre Nora as the 'era of commemoration' or by Jay Winter as the 'memory boom,' or, more polemically, as in the quote above, as *débauche mémorielle* or *inflation mémorielle*, these developments have been accompanied by a realignment of the status of history and memory. Memory may challenge official history; it may be brandished as a weapon in the quest for community identity, political rights, or financial compensation; it may be deployed as a tool of international diplomacy. It lays claim to the authenticity of lived experience and yet it calls on history for legitimacy. The historian is thus confronted with new responsibilities called upon by the victim, the journalist, the judge, and the legislator to pronounce on the validity of their claims.

If there has been a world-wide turn to commemoration in recent years, there are nevertheless significant differences between countries in the relationship between memory and history and in the uses—and abuses—of memory. The articles in this issue will explore some of these particularities through the lens of a number of *situations de base*, concrete situations, that shed light not only on the policies and

practices of particular countries but on the methodological and theoretical issues involved in studying transcultural remembrance. The issue will include articles by Robert Aldrich ('Remembrances of Empires Past'), Matthew Graves (memory on the national periphery), Judith Keene (on cinema as prosthetic memory), George Parsons (on memories of the Somme), Lindi Todd (on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa), and Elizabeth Rechniewski ('Remembering the Battle for Australia').

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