



Letter from the Editors

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INTRODUCTION



ABSTRACT

SPECTRA 8.1 builds on the journal's history of publishing pieces that test the boundaries of theoretical and scholarly rigidity. This issue is a series of interventions that update and respond to François Debrix's *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping: The United Nations and the Mobilization of Ideology*, an introduction to the essays, and a critical response from Debrix. The issue also contains two book reviews that offer important contributions to disciplinary neoliberalism and international relations.

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SPECTRA Special Issue 8.1 emerges during an ongoing pandemic and time of global unrest that have only stimulated existing precarity and inequity apparent within today's "world order." At the time this issue was prepared, only the wealthiest Western countries have access to the vaccine while in India crematoriums are overwhelmed by the virus "swallowing (Bhopal's) people like a monster."¹ The need for international collaboration and humanitarian aid has only grown more urgent; yet, these demands have mostly been met with disciplinary policies that aim to protect and expand private economic interests. Even when the international community took action to address global inequity in vaccine access through the COVAX vaccine distribution initiative, supplies were nonetheless negatively impacted by the insistence of developed countries to inoculate their domestic populations first, thus further exacerbating the divide between rich and poor.² It is only fitting then that this special issue attends to the theoretical exploration of critical issues in international relations such as disciplinary neoliberalism, subjectivation, global security and violence, and racial hierarchization. These pieces accelerate and respond to François Debrix's innovative text *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping: The United Nations and the Mobilization of Ideology* approximately 20 years after its publication, critically reimagining the application of these concepts in unique and profound ways.

This issue builds on SPECTRA's rich history of contributions that test the boundaries of theoretical and scholarly rigidity. The journal maintains a proud commitment to interdisciplinary explorations that examine conflicts at crucial intersections both locally and around the world. Especially during this time of global crisis, SPECTRA strives to publish work that recognizes the urgency of the pandemic and the way international relations and disciplinary individualism have exacerbated existing inequities. For that reason, SPECTRA co-editors Sarah Plummer and Shaun Respass are grateful for the work and contributions of Special Issue 8.1's guest editors Mauro J. Caraccioli, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech; Linea Cutter, PhD Candidate, Alliance for Social Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought (ASPECT); and Şengül Yıldız-Alanbay, PhD Candidate, ASPECT, without whom this special issue would not have come to fruition. We also thank all our authors, reviewers, advisory board members, ASPECT faculty, the Virginia Tech Library, and VT Publishing for their contributions to this issue.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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2 Lynsey Chutel, "COVAX Obstacles Threaten Africa's Vaccine Rollout." *Foreign Policy*. April 21, 2021. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/21/covax-africa-vaccine-rollout-coronavirus-pandemic/>

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