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## Landscape of Migration

According to the UNHCR's most recent, available data,<sup>1</sup> there are currently 70.8 million people around the world who have been forced from their homes. Of these, 25.9 million are refugees, over half of whom are under 18 years old. Thirty people per minute are forcibly displaced. At the same time, climate change is rapidly intensifying; rising sea levels, extreme weather, and natural catastrophes are slowly but surely becoming the norm. According to a 2018 special report by UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,<sup>2</sup> the world has 11 years left to keep global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees Celsius by curbing carbon emission by at least 45 percent (25 percent higher than current standards). The alternative increase of 2 degrees or higher would be disastrous for agricultural communities, biodiversity and societal infrastructures across the globe.

It is clear that these crises affect one another. As the world around us changes both physically and ideologically, it grows ever more urgent to consider the human relationship to landscapes and how our actions, perspectives, and interventions affect and shape them. Within the interrelated discourses on climate, politics, and migratory spaces, the term “landscape” can have a variety of implications beyond the conventional connotation of fixed outdoor environment. Rather than affirm ‘natural,’ immutable characteristics, “landscape” can reflect the changing assemblage of geographical, physical, and imaginary entities. For instance, Georg Simmel intuits that to perceive a particular landscape is a creative and constitutive act that actualizes a viewer’s subjective expression. Alternatively, “landscape” can take on a metaphorical dimension to describe the composition of a group or set of practices such as cultural landscapes, media landscapes, and, for our purposes, migration landscapes.

In this issue of *TRANSIT*, we hope to address the following questions: How do different understandings of landscape interact and in turn shape each other? How might a landscape of migration affect and/or overlap with an ecological landscape? How does one represent changes in the environment, especially in light of the unprecedented magnitude, speed and intricacy of transnational movement and global-environmental transformation? How can we strive to make patterns of migration more intelligible and what are the limits of that intelligibility? What sort of ethical considerations are necessary in framing mobility and the environment with both images and words?

*TRANSIT* invites reflections on German Studies as an academic field in light of these questions. What are the implications for German Studies in analyzing global phenomena that call into question the very idea of national borders? How do concepts of nation persist or dissolve in the

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<sup>1</sup> “Figures at a Glance.” (2019, June). Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>. Accessed June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> IPCC, 2018: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Global warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* [V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, H. O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P. R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J. B. R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M. I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, T. Waterfield (eds.)]. World Meteorological Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, 32 pp.

wake of so-called “refugee crises” or climate change? How do linguistic and cultural evolutions challenge or nuance conventional understandings of national arts and literatures?

This CFP encourages contributions from a wide range of related disciplines including but not limited to literary studies, language pedagogy, history, linguistics, film and media studies, performance studies, geography, philosophy, translation, critical theory, and anthropology.

English- or German-language papers or projects are due for editorial review by September 1st, 2019. [transitjournal@berkeley.edu](mailto:transitjournal@berkeley.edu), [CC misandberg@berkeley.edu](mailto:CC misandberg@berkeley.edu) (Michael Sandberg, Managing Editor)