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EDITORIAL

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With increased mobility enabled by evolving technology, the world experiences higher rates of migration and globalisation than ever before. This phenomenon has led, in recent years, to a high volume of literature about migration and diaspora, i.e. literature which deals with the general theme of transnationalism. The term transnational, in its simplest guise, refers to the relations between citizens of different nation states and the networks which link them. It also refers to the complex subjectivity of those who migrate. Scholars emphasise that transnationalism, because of heterogeneity and diversity, gives rise to a site for dynamic social and cultural change. At the same time, continuity is a necessary feature of this site. The co-existence of change and continuity (a focused process of adaptation and assimilation which simultaneously considers the role of memory, the past, and ties to homeland) then is also a defining element of transnationalism. The tensions and struggles which arise from this paradox have a radical impact on the construction of subjectivities as represented in this literature. Thus the term transnational comes to refer not only to the geographic multi-locationality of authors or characters, but also to their potential for subversion of national, ethnic and other cultural or political identities/affiliations, and it is this potential for subversion which is the main focus of this themed issue.

This themed issue contains articles which examine literature produced primarily in the African but also in the Latin American and South Asian diasporic contexts. Most of these articles have been developed from papers presented at a colloquium hosted by the Intersecting Diasporas Group which is based in the Department of Literary Studies in English, Rhodes University, in August 2018. In addition, the themed issue favours a comparative methodology which explores the respective literatures of these diasporas in relation to each other. This themed issue presents cutting-edge scholarship.
which compares and contrasts various transnational texts in order to describe the complex and paradoxical experiences of diaspora in a world of increasing mobility and de-territorialism, which yet, in certain locations, also faces increased regulation or prohibition of migration due to heightened nationalism. From South Africa, to Myanmar, to the USA, migrants experience severe precarity and the denial of basic human rights. The literature examined in this themed issue captures that precarity as well as the heroic and transformative potential of migration.

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