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Graft and Transplant: Identities in Question

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Skepsi is an online research journal based in the School of European Culture and Languages at the University of Kent, and is entirely run by research students.

Skepsi editorial board’s aim is to honour the spirit of School of European Culture and Languages working hard to take advantage of its unique position as a crossroads in academic studies in Europe. Our hope is to develop collective thinking processes in the context of academic research, and to become a forum for European postgraduate researchers and postdoctoral scholars.

Our title, Skepsi — which means ‘thought’ in Ancient Greek — symbolises our will to explore new areas and new methods in the traditional fields of academic research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Originality and creativity in the approach of thought and of texts are crucial for us: to enhance and to promote these aspects will be our contribution to the tremendous range of existing academic publications.

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Foreword

The practices of grafting and transplanting, understood both literally and metaphorically, raise a series of questions with regard to the concept of identity: the unity of the subject; becoming; the Other; the in-between. Grafts and transplants set up a relationship between a donor and a receiver, be they human beings, texts, literary genres, images, languages, concepts, cultures, genders or historical periods. It involves the transposition of a part of something into something else. How might these different entities be said – or made – to co-exist? In what sense might the existence of such aggregates involve (or indeed require) a form of grafting and transplanting? Is their coexistence the result of an act of intrusion and violence or a mark of hospitality?

Skepsi’s first issue explores the process of becoming-other or (re-)building an identity which the graft and transplant entail. It honours the interdisciplinary spirit of the journal by considering the switches, relays and connectivities at work in a wide variety of literary, artistic, philosophical, cultural and linguistic assemblages. It covers an ambitious field of knowledge – translation and intertextuality, monstrosity and abnormality, personal and cultural identities – without losing the feeling of a shared project. Indeed, all articles have been written by European researchers, and are related to Europe in a broad sense of the term: for this reason, Skepsi’s first issue is – as we hope – a good example of a successful graft, despite the differences between vernacular languages and national identities.

In this inaugural issue of Skepsi, the reader will find a selection of papers given at the first annual postgraduate conference held at the University of Kent in May 2008, whose topic was: ‘Graft and Transplant’. These papers are published here along with external contributions.

Skepsi editorial board