

## **LETTER**

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### **FROM THE EDITOR**

The year 2016 has so far been a tumultuous one in international affairs, with terrorism remaining a global concern, fueling the outbreak of an ongoing refugee crisis. Violence in Syria, for example, has driven refugee populations to migrate en masse to safer pastures in the EU. The US presidential race has seen the rise of candidates pushing the limits and making controversial suggestions that capitalize on fears related to immigration and national security. Across the world, problems continue to emerge that highlight the primacy of migration and security. In these events, we see the theme of movement—out of and across borders—and its inevitable result: border-related tensions and conflicts and political decision-making related to the two. These recent and ongoing international developments are mirrored in the conceptual arguments and concerns presented in this semester's collection of submissions. The YJIS 2016 Spring/Summer issue: Migration & Security is thus reflective of both worldly politics and submission topics, drawing attention to the philosophical, geopolitical, sociopolitical, and security matters tied to the free (and sometimes restricted) flow of products and people across both land and sea.

The “Papers” section is led by “International Migration as Absolute Natural Law: An Inquiry into International Migration from the Perspective of Legal Philosophy,” a timely piece by Maximilian Ernst that sets the tone for this issue with an inquisitive look into the philosophical conceptualization of migration and its historical status as an absolute natural right. Dr. Niu Song’s “‘Cross Border Attacks’ of Somali Pirates and the Transformation of China’s Diplomacy” maintains the theme of border-related problems. The author argues that piracy has prompted cross-border attacks that are reflective

of China's changing diplomatic strategies, showing increasing flexibility and responsibility in the face of international threats to overseas assets. The final piece, "Trafficking of Nigerian Women and Children: Implications for Attaining Sustainable Development in Nigeria" by Ifeyinwa Mbakogu refocuses upon the movement of people, in this case illegally for the human trafficking trade. Advocating for the involvement of women and children, who are the primary victims of trafficking, in decision-making processes, the author highlights the importance of empowerment and lays the groundwork for how Nigeria can make steps toward lasting sustainable development.

Next, the "Essays" section of the Journal begins with "Reforming Japan's Security Policy: Historical Challenges, Modern Necessities" by Giacomo Bagarella, which makes suggestions for how Japan can move forward in its relationships with its East Asian neighbors without setting off alarms, as it already has with Southeast Asian countries that were also once subject to Japanese colonial rule. Also, "Making Waves: Recent Developments of the South China Sea Disputes" by Chunjuan Nancy Wei and John Falzerano overviews the complicated and overlapping claims that exist over the South China Sea. A detailed description of the present situation and the clashing territorial claims between China and a long list of other countries reorganizes the arguments and tensions that have transpired so far, with a focus on what stance and strategies these countries are advancing.<sup>1</sup>

The issue ends with one book review and interview. Jordan DeWeger's analysis of *Fateful Ties: A History of America's Preoccupation with China* by Gordon H. Chang takes another look at the rise of China from a historical perspective, in which the US conception of China and Chinese culture has been refined and redefined over a long period of US-China relations, contributing to the US' present day interest in the regional superpower. Finally, rounding off this issue of the Journal is an interview with Michael Fuchs, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and a senior policy advisor at J Street who gives his own insight into many current and relevant topics of international interest, such as US-Asian relations, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the Philippines' newly elected president.

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1 Since the receipt of this submission, there have been new developments regarding the South China Sea, namely the decision by the international court at The Hague that favored the Philippines over China, not supporting the assertion of absolute Chinese sovereignty in the region. While such recent events are not reflected, this essay thoroughly breaks down the overall status of the South China Sea disputes.

Both Angela and I are deeply grateful to the wonderful team of editors with whom we've spent countless hours creating this issue. Without their commitment and dedication, this edition of YJIS would not be what it is. This was my first semester as Co-Editor in Chief, and while it has at times been demanding, it has mostly been an educational, rewarding, and fulfilling experience. This will also be my last semester with YJIS as I will be entering the field of professional publishing. I have thoroughly enjoyed fulfilling the duties of an editor for the past three issues of our journal and am grateful to have had the opportunity to handle such a wide range of academic research. I am confident that Angela will continue to succeed as sole editor in chief and wish nothing but the best for her and the rest of the YJIS team.



Briana McClanahan  
Co-Editor in Chief

This semester at YJIS, the Editor in Chief position was jointly filled. The experience was new and exciting, but nerve-wracking, nonetheless. Briana and I have managed to successfully publish this issue only by coordinating with and relying on each other, as well as the rest of the editing team. I would thus like to extend my gratitude to everyone who makes YJIS what it is. Unfortunately, Briana will be graduating and moving on from her role. We bid her farewell with sadness. In addition, Cesare, who has been with us for the past five semesters, will likewise be finishing his graduate career. We here at the Journal deeply appreciate the efforts of these individuals so far, and wish them both the best in their future endeavors. I look forward to continuing to work with YJIS and have high expectations for this upcoming semester. It is our hope that readers enjoy this issue and continue to support YJIS into the future.



Angela Lee Sherman  
Co-Editor in Chief