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Statement of Purpose

positions offers a new forum of debate for all concerned with the social, intellectual, and political events unfolding in Asia and within the Asian diaspora. Profound political changes and intensifying global flows of labor and capital in the late twentieth century are rapidly redrawing national and regional borders. These transformations compel us to rethink our priorities in scholarship, teaching, and criticism.

Mindful of the dissolution of the discursive binary East and West, *positions* advocates placing cultural critique at the center of historical and theoretical practice. The global forces that are reconfiguring our world continue to sustain formulations of nation, gender, class, and ethnicity. We propose to call into question those still-pressing, yet unstable, categories by crossing academic boundaries and rethinking the terms of our analysis. These efforts, we hope, will contribute toward informed discussion both in and outside the academy.

positions' central premise is that criticism must always be self-critical. Critique of another social order must be as self-aware as commentary on our own. Likewise, we seek critical practices that reflect on the politics of knowing and that connect our scholarship to the struggles of those whom we study. All these endeavors require that we account for positions as places, contexts, power relations, and links between knowledge and knowers as actors in existing social institutions. In seeking to explore how theoretical practices are linked across national and ethnic divides, we hope to construct other positions from which to imagine political affinities across the many dimensions of our differences. *positions* is an independent refereed journal. Its direction is taken at the initiative of its editorial collective as well as through encouragement from its readers and writers.

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