Front Matter

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Editorial Statement

In 2018 a group of academics in Indiana began discussing the possibilities of launching a new humanities journal that would serve as a place for the many voices, outlooks, and works of the state’s and the Midwest’s thinkers, artists, and activists. It is with great pleasure now in 2020 that I formally introduce the result of those efforts. Taking its name from both the geographic concept of the meridian line, as well as the street that runs through Indianapolis connecting north and south to Monument Circle, The North Meridian Review strives to be a humanities journal for a disturbingly inhumane age. In the midst of a global pandemic, alarming climate change, needed social protests, and volatile political actors, it is now more important than ever to call upon the power the humanities have to positively affect the world. Ours is a world of endless technological innovations, and ever-increasing efficiencies. Yet innovation and efficiency are not automatic positives for society. If the George Floyd protests, or the burning of Australia, or COVID-19 have taught us anything, it is that we must consciously examine the foundations of our social and cultural existences if we are to direct our society toward needed change.

In this issue, Ricardo Quintana Vallejo examines the concepts of belonging and nationality in his study of Turkish poets in Germany. Benjamin Balthaser reflects on the meaning and significance of the collapse of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and the history and future of third-party left-wing movements. Deonte Osayande explores the meaning of disability in a period of pandemic. Valentina Concu provides the first of a two-part translation project, providing English readers with the first translations of Italian Holocaust survivors’ testimonials. The journal also sits down with Indianapolis business owner, poet, and activist Elysia Smith to discuss the state of the city. Michael Baumann provides a fantastic edited poetry section featuring multiple voices and pieces. And last but not least, the journal is pleased to publish its first book review section.

Moving forward, the journal hopes to publish two issues annually, one a general issue made up of scholarship, prose, poetry, and reviews; and a second issue centered on a special topic. For our first special issue, Mark Latta will be editing multiple pieces on the concept of powers to create and destroy. Given the state of the world, from changes to city boulevards to alterations in the planet’s climate, one could hardly ask for a more timely and needed focus.

Let this be the first of many issues. A humanities journal for the humans. Thinking grounded in the practical application of the humanities, not knowledge rarified in marble museum exhibits.
Instead, let this be concrete slabs for peoples’ feet to walk and stand on, the base of a meridian line connecting voices from one point to another.

Wesley R. Bishop
Managing and Founding Editor
The North Meridian Review
Indianapolis, Indiana
September 2020