Editorial

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Just as the previous issue of *JIRD* marked the first special feature (the Forum on the study of International Relations in Central and Eastern Europe) of volume 12, this issue marks the second. Most of this issue of the journal is devoted to a Special Section on German Foreign Policy, assembled and guest-edited by Gunther Hellmann. As his Introduction explains and clarifies the purpose and themes of the three papers that follow it, I will not spend time on that kind of summary here, but I did want to spell out the difference between a Special Section like this and a Forum of the sort that was featured in the previous issue of the journal (and the sort that will be featured in the next issue of the journal, about which more in a moment).

To recap: a Forum in *JIRD* features a number of short pieces solicited by members of the journal's editorial team, and is reviewed internally by the editorial team rather than being sent out for anonymous peer review. A Special Section, by contrast, consists of full-length research papers that are brought to the journal as a group, but then individually sent out for anonymous peer review. In other words, each of the pieces published in a Special Section must be accepted individually through the normal reviewing process, and only after all of the relevant pieces have been individually accepted is the Special Section formally constituted and the guest editor — the person or people who assembled the papers in the first place — invited to write an Editorial Introduction to the Section. This is very much like the process that we use in reviewing Special Issues of the journal, several of which are making their way through the process even now. The important point is that Special Sections and Special Issues are not reviewed as a group, but as individual submissions, as we feel that this ensures a uniformly high quality for all of the manuscripts.

As the Special Section only takes up a portion — albeit the major portion — of this issue of the journal, we were fortunate to have another manuscript, submitted independently, that by coincidence touched on some of the themes of the Special Section. Jochen Walter and Matthias Albert's paper on Turkish and European identity as discursively constituted in British and German debates not only deals with the communicative underpinnings of one aspect of German foreign policy, but also sets out to theorize self–Other relations in a way that gives it at least a 'family resemblance' to much contemporary foreign policy analysis. Walter and Albert also provide something of an operational

template for future discourse-analytical accounts of events and phenomena in world politics, making their paper precisely the kind of theoretically informed social science that we are proud to feature as our lead paper.

In the next issue of the journal, we will be devoting the major portion of our pages to a multifaceted reflection on the revolutions of two decades ago that ended Communist rule throughout Central and Eastern Europe, and their contemporary implications and consequences. Through topical features like this, and this issue's Special Section, we hope to contribute to a focusing of scholarly debate on issues of both practical and theoretical importance in world politics, and we appreciate your collaboration with us in this endeavour by continuing to read, subscribe to, review for, and submit the highest-quality scholarly work to *JIRD*.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson
Editor-in-Chief