About the cover art  In Bend Down (1998), a drawing from his “Migrate or Medal/Meddle” series, Christopher Cozier calls to mind how struggles over territory and sovereignty are enacted on and through individual bodies—often brutally so. He thus sheds light on one of the central themes of this special issue of Social Text: the violence generated by the exhaustion of spatial categories (nation, border, empire) that have long defined political communities, as well as by attempts to transcend them. Flags, as one of the best recognized symbols of national and imperial projects, for Cozier, they inflict pain as they try to “pin down” individuals who can rarely be confined within any single territorial unit, especially during a historical moment characterized by ubiquitous transnational circulation. Bend Down indexes a subjective mode centered on, in Cozier’s words, “an assortment of dislocated people and the politics of devaluation, [one that] may even be a theoretical/critical vantage point or a way of being/surviving—one derived from a response to historical circumstances.”

A native and resident of Trinidad, Cozier (b. 1959) has exhibited his wide-ranging art at the Havana Biennial, the Bag Factory in Johannesburg, TENT in Rotterdam, CCA7 in Port of Spain, the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, DC, the Brooklyn Museum, the Art Foundry in Barbados, AfricAmerica 2002, and other venues. He is a senior research fellow at the Academy of the University of Trinidad and Tobago and a member of the editorial collective of Small Axe. Cozier is also an administrator and curator of the Alice Yard art space in Port of Spain and, most recently, co-curated Paramaribo SPAN in Suriname. He is the subject of the Richard Fung documentary Uncomfortable: The Art of Christopher Cozier (2006).

References:

