

Editorial

This issue of *Comparativ* may seem to some readers like an exception to the journal's format. There is no common theme to which the essays relate and, consequently, no introduction that situates the phenomenon discussed in the issue within global history. But these two features, a comparative approach to a common theme and its positioning within global history as a subject and a historiographical field, have defined the profile of the journal over the past 30 years and will continue to do so in the future. In our experience, *Comparativ* makes with the consequent application of these two features a specific and valuable contribution to the further development of the field of global history. In this context, global history is first and foremost a perspective that can be taken factually vis-à-vis all historical and contemporary subjects. And this, of course, is done from different locations – be they disciplinary or geographical, be they linked to a particular gender experience or to that of a minority in the respective historiographical and social environment. Neither the number of objects nor the number of perspectives has diminished at all since the journal was founded in 1991; on the contrary, it has steadily increased, and this attests to an unbroken enthusiasm for experimentation in the field. It is probably this enthusiasm for trying out new interpretations and searching for the sources necessary to do so that has led to the field of global history receiving and retaining such central attention in the profession and especially in the broader public.

This attractiveness has, in turn, attracted younger historians taking the first steps in their careers to join the field and, in the process, to contribute to its further attractiveness through their own experiments. Since the founding of the Karl Lamprecht Society in 1991, which became the institutional sponsor of the journal and mutated into the European Network in Universal and Global History in 2002, the idea of promoting early career scholars has therefore been particularly important. For many thematic issues, editorship was entrusted to those who had taken their first steps in the field and conducted an initial workshop, the results of which found their way into the journal after rigorous peer review. The field of global history would certainly not have developed so dynamically if it had not been accompanied by the transformation of world history writing into grounded empirical work. And this transformation was and is first the work of many graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who are committed to a topic and develop a

pleasure in relating different historiographies, different archival holdings, and different field observations to make visible those transborder connections that many excellent papers on global history focus on.

In order to recognize and promote such work, the Karl Lamprecht Society, with the support of the Markov family, established the Walter Markov Prize in 1994, which is awarded every two years to honour the work of doctoral and graduate students along the lines that have also defined the work of the Leipzig historian who lived troubled times from his imprisonment by the Nazi regime to his exclusion from the Communist Party in East Germany. The main pillars of his work were a comparative exploration of revolutions around the world; social movements and decolonization processes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America; the many national traditions of writing world and transnational histories; and academic internationalization in the course of the twentieth century.

The present issue contains the contributions that were awarded the Walter Markov Prize 2021 by the European Network in a ceremony during its congress in Turku 2022, which unfortunately could only take place online. It is therefore perhaps not a thematic issue in the classical sense, but the contributions have a clear coherence, namely they show the different directions in which the interest of a new generation of global historians is currently running. The focus is on social as well as cultural history; circulations of knowledge and people are examined, but also their obstacles and the current impossibility of enforcing cosmopolitan homogenization of the world. The narratives of centrism, from whatever centre it may emanate, are critically considered, but at the same time it is clear that the actors to whom global historical studies turn are precisely carriers of these discourses: Globalization is not so much a structural context as an activity that focuses on a particular section of the world and is meant to globalize this “world” according to the worldview that these actors consider relevant.

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