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Editorial Note

Dear Reader,

The topic of migration has dominated public debate in recent years. Patterns of migration may pose challenges to national self-perception, indeed, to concepts of nationalism itself. Debates surrounding the current so-called ‘crisis’ of refugees in Europe also tend to overlook the trajectories of migrants from their countries of origin to a wide variety of destinations. A global history perspective allows us to critically re-examine these claims, and provides an alternative framework for contextualising migration flows as well as analysing the causes and impact of such phenomena from a historical, trans-regional perspective. In this edition, we have a diverse array of papers demonstrating the scope of migration as a field for historians. Global history has especially emphasised the importance of ensuring migration is not simply a story of ‘happy connections’, and that immigrants themselves are not reduced into an amorphous, agentless, mass following greater trends without input. Both of these points find themselves addressed throughout the papers of this edition, across a wide spectrum of both spatial and chronological locations.

We begin with Robin Möser’s article, which brings the field of migration history up to the contemporary period. He examines the connections between xenophobic sentiment and migration patterns in post-apartheid South Africa, focussing on attitudes to immigrants from the neighbouring countries of Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Showing that migration is not only a modern phenomenon, Shweta Raghu considers the colonial implications of works by two Dutch painters in the sixteenth century, contextualising Eckhout’s and Post’s paintings within contemporary discourses on representation, exoticism, and consumerism, and placing their artistic representations of West Indian natives into the context of Dutch imperial ambition and practice.

Chiara Ricci studies the development of anti-immigration discourse in British newspapers from 1958 to 1985, examining how the expression of opposition to Commonwealth migration to Britain evolved from fears over the racial integrity of the nation to include fears of difference in regards to culture and religion.

Baptiste Sibiude considers twentieth century relations between the French and Gabonese in Gabon using oral histories of French expat family members to create a microhistory and then examines how the wider implications of French/Gabonese relationships through these memories, and explores the strengths and limitations of such an approach.

Jan Philipp Wilhelm, who demonstrates the strengths of a micro-historical approach to global history, tracing larger transnational migration patterns through consideration of one family in the Banat Swabian village of Sackelhausen/Săcălaz in Central Eastern Europe, and reflecting on the possible contributions that the

study of this particular group's migration history can offer for a better understanding of European migrations in the twentieth century.

Adrian Franco reviews the field of environmental migration history, and strongly argues for the importance of keeping people in the frame when using overarching narratives of migration related to climate change. He emphasises the value of using a framework which includes human rights and a micro-historical focus on individuals and their personal narratives of forced migration in order to prevent overarching macro-narratives about environmental factors reducing immigrants to a homogenous mass.

Finally, we would like to bring our latest projects to your attention. Two new student projects are in the pipeline with a multimedia focus and we encourage you to check out our article 'Future projects' for more information.

We hope you enjoy our second edition,

Your Editorial Team