

# Editor's Preface

Walter Pohl and Ingrid Hartl

Engaging in comparative history is a process which involves challenging one's own research traditions, well established in decades of scholarly discussion, and at the same time facing those of other disciplines, equally deep-rooted. Our journal aims to promote forming interdisciplinary connections and we are very happy to present such contributions to a global perspective in this issue. *Medieval Worlds 8* follows a strong interest in recent submissions in dealing with transcultural and diplomatic contacts and with intellectual and literary exchanges.

In *World Literature is Trans-Imperial*, a new axis of comparison for ›trans-imperial‹ texts is explored. Literary concepts are viewed from a different comparative angle in *The Global Eminent Life*, where sixth-century biographical collections and their organisational contexts from different world regions are analysed. The contents and purpose of a list of Greek books at Pippin III's court are critically re-examined in *The Aristotle of Pippin III*. Biblical and transcultural elements in an almost forgotten text from the twelfth-century Iberian Peninsula are presented in *Biblical Elements and the ›Other‹ in the Chronicon regum Legionensium*. In the later sixth century, a number of exceptional diplomatic exchanges between Turkic and Byzantine rulers took place. Embassies between the Muslim and Byzantine courts are also quite well documented in the tenth century. Both cases provide unusual insights into long-range imperial power politics and cultural encounters in early medieval Eurasia (*The Geopolitics on the Silk Road, Diplomacy between Emperors and Caliphs in the Tenth Century*).

*Medieval Worlds 8* thus focuses on connectivity, often between very distant macro-regions. A substantial number of project reports give a good overview of the variety of approaches to issues of cultural translation and knowledge transfer in current ERC grant projects. The coming issues will deal with the topics of the social impact of religious institutions and uses of the past in times of transition, and submissions are welcome.

Readers of this journal may already be aware that from 2019, there will be another journal with a name very similar to ours, the ›Journal of Medieval Worlds‹ edited by the University of California Press. The similarity of the name is, perhaps, unfortunate, but we hope that readers will not confuse the two journals. We gather from the Californian initiative that our concept has worked well, and wish the new journal success. At a time in which ›The Global Turn‹ (the title of the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America) is intensifying interest in a wide-open research field on global comparison and connectivity in the medieval period, there will be enough potential for two journals focusing on this fascinating topic. In any case, we will maintain our open-access and no-fee policy. The support of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, its Press and its Institute for Medieval Research make this possible. Download figures well into the four-digit numbers show that the journal meets an increasing demand by authors and readers, even though we do not have the means for publicity that major presses have.

Ingrid Hartl has now taken over as an executive editor of *Medieval Worlds* from Celine Wawruschka, to whom we owe thanks for having accompanied the journal through its initial phase.