

## EDITORIAL

### Projects in Documenting World History and Next Steps for JWHI

The Journal of World-Historical Information came into existence in 2013, as “part of a broader mission to promote the collection, publication, review, and analysis of world-historical data.” Its goal has been to advance scholarly publication and debate combining the work of historians and information scientists, with the intention of building large-scale datasets on the human past.

This issue pursues the trajectory of the journal with articles on plans for two big campaigns for documenting the human past. In the first, Siddharth Chandra and Julia Christensen summarize past quantitative work on the 1918 influenza pandemic, and show the feasibility and the benefits of extending this work to a global study of the regional and temporal dynamics of the pandemic, whose effects continued to 1922. This research could be especially valuable for planning policy responses to future pandemic influenza. In the second article, Dennis Flynn, Patrick Manning, and Qiyao Wang provide preliminary estimates of silver flows and stocks worldwide from 1400 to 1900. Their results show that silver stocks rose at roughly twice the rate of human population from 1400 to 1900, confirming the long-term growth in the monetary economy. They propose a methodology for a comprehensive analysis of silver flows, relying as well on primary data and on theory of inventory demand.

Shorter pieces review three major research projects. On the World-Historical Gazetteer project, project director Ruth Mostern explains how this specialized index of place names at a world-historical scale is being developed at the University of Pittsburgh under a three-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Ahmet Izmirliglu reviews “Correlates of War,” the long-established but recently upgraded online dataset in international relations. Patrick Manning reviews “The Maddison Project,” the online dataset sustaining the work of the late Angus Maddison, providing data on population and GDP for national units for times extending as far back as two millennia—and building collaboration among economic historians for future upgrades in the data.

Interdisciplinary research in social science at a world-historical level is thus advancing, both within the journal and in scholarship more broadly. A July 2016 meeting in Pittsburgh of five leading research groups on two continents brought a broader basis of collaboration, but did not result in any rapid increase in funding. Realistically, however, the pace has been slower than we had hoped. JWHI has not been able to maintain its schedule of two issues per year. Research funding in world-historical social science is growing, but slowly.

Beginning in 2018, the Journal of World-Historical Information will merge with the Journal of World-Systems Research, a leading journal in historical sociology. For many years JWSR, edited by Jackie Smith and previously by Christopher Chase-Dunn, has produced interdisciplinary and wide-ranging studies on the global past and present. Merger of the two journals provides an opportunity to build on the collaborations of scholars in historical sociology, world-systems analysis, world history, and information science. The JWSR is governed by the Political Economy of World Systems (PEWS) section of the American Sociological Association—PEWS has approved the merger, as has the editorial board of JWHI. The joint publication will begin as Volume 24 of JWSR in 2018, with the addition of a distinctive section on world-historical information, to be edited by Patrick Manning, that will include articles, research reports, and reviews of datasets. Members of the JWHI editorial board will join the board of JWSR. The merged journal, retaining the title of Journal of World-Systems Research, will continue as an open-access, peer reviewed journal. Issues of JWHI will remain online at [jwhi.pitt.edu](http://jwhi.pitt.edu), and they will also be available through the archives of JWSR. We believe this is an excellent solution to the need of JWHI for a broader base, and we look forward to years of expanded collaboration of scholars in historical sociology, world history, and information science.

The Board of Editors: Ahmet Izmirliglu, Patrick Manning, Ruth Mostern, and Vladimir Zadorozhny



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