

29.06.2022

## **GWZO Annual Conference sheds light on global networking in Eastern Europe from the Early Middle Ages to the present day**

Since time immemorial, substances, goods and commodities have connected the world. Numerous academic studies have shed light on transnational and transregional interconnections based on exchange and circulation of individual materials and goods. Eastern Europe has so far been rather marginalised in these studies. The Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) wants to change this with its Annual Conference in 2022. From 6 to 8 July, experts from the Institute will discuss the history of economic integration in Eastern Europe with international scholars in Leipzig.

Materials shape societies. Their extraction, production, circulation, and use determine the distribution of resources; they are traded worldwide as goods and commodities. This influences the settlement and networking of villages, towns, and cities to this day. Processing and use created infrastructures and institutions. Raw materials such as cotton, silver or zinc, fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, and foodstuffs such as grain, coffee and sugar therefore open important perspectives on the transformation of working and living environments as well as on underlying power relations.

"If one follows the whole chain of actions connected to individual substances - from cultivation/extraction, processing in various stages, trade, consumption and, finally, research and knowledge production - a comprehensive picture emerges of how seemingly far apart spaces and actors interact with each other. With the Annual Conference, we want to make this tool - already well tested in Global History - usable for the History of Eastern Europe and elaborate the global economic and infrastructural interconnections of the region," explains Dr. Jan Zofka (GWZO), co-organiser of the Annual Conference. The multi-day event will be held bilingually, in German and English - on site in Leipzig and digitally. | <https://kurzelinks.de/q81v>

"With this conference", says Director Prof. Dr. Maren Röger, "we are bringing together central research foci of the GWZO: In the various departments, scientists are researching the use of resources and the transformation of the environment, and we also have a strong focus on interconnectedness and Global History. The conference also marks the first visible start of our new research perspective on "practices of economic activity". Accordingly, we expect a very fruitful exchange."

The *Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO)* conducts comparative research on historical and cultural phenomena and processes in the area between the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea from the early Middle Ages to the present. The researchers working at the Institute represent various disciplines of the Humanities, including Archaeology, History, Art History and Literary Studies. In its research work, the GWZO relies on a dense network of cooperative relationships with academic institutions in Europe and overseas. [www.leibniz-gwzo.de/en](http://www.leibniz-gwzo.de/en)

**GWZO Annual Conference**

**Stoffe, Güter, Waren. Zur Verflechtungsgeschichte des östlichen Europa | Commodities and the History of their Entanglements in East Central and Eastern Europe**

6 - 8 July 2022

Venue: GWZO/Online | Registration: <https://kurzelinks.de/oevr>

**Public Keynote**

**Alexander Etkind (EUI, Florence): Which Resources are Evil, and Why? Towards a Global History of Parasitic States**

7 July 2022, 6:00 pm

Venue: GWZO/Online | Registration: <https://kurzelinks.de/oevr>

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Picture material

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Caption: Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia, 14th century image.

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*This measure is co-financed with tax revenues on the basis of the budget approved by the Saxon State Parliament.*