

## Preface

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# Preface

## Ina Rüber

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The familiar reader of *Amsterdam Social Science* would know that in each issue we seek to encourage interdisciplinarity and provide a stage for young and devoted researchers. In this issue, we invite our old and new curious readers to join in and follow us on a journey through four articles investigating questions all connected to a concept which has become indispensable in today's society: globalization. Notwithstanding the heated discussions about the term, its contested novelty, and the disputed extent to which it is a self-enforcing process, in this issue, globalization will be emphasized because of its popularity and the myriad approaches of studying it.

Regardless of the type of social context – be it a social gathering or an academic exchange – it is likely to find oneself conversing about matters such as cultural convergence, migration, or the ease of communication over remarkable distances. Somewhere in-between viewing these phenomena as threats or opportunities, agreement would probably rest on the overarching feature of a globalizing process: an apparent interconnectedness between countries, institutions, and individuals. In this context, the

World Wide Web is rapidly improving and vibrantly changing and extending in terms of content. The article *Participative Web, social utility and ICT adoption: An issue of alignment* picks up the opportunities hidden behind the Web as a global means of communication to examine how it can facilitate a local project. The author is less interested in technical facts but seeks to identify the processes through which people can become more amiable towards using web-based tools, particularly for the goal of promoting self-sustainable projects. The action-research conducted on one particular project –through its elaborate description of the struggles of the participants in this project– reiterates the importance of interaction.

Migration, with its corporeal and political constituents, is also part and parcel of globalization. Moving from one country to another has become easier in light of advanced transportation systems, a process simultaneously impeded by formal policy restrictions and political public backlashes. In *Unpacking the experiences and perspectives of Mexican immigrant women and their Dutch partners*, the writer explores the incentives behind transnational marriages, in the particular case between Mexican women and Dutch men. Through an in-depth study of the history and initial course of a few marriages, individuals opened up in front of the researcher and talked about how love has shaped their lives.

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Another critical article dealing with migration also found its way in this issue. *How do Racialized Migrants Cope with Challenges of Labor Market Integrations and Resettlement?* presents the position of migrants on the Canadian labor market. The interviews reveal migrants' struggles with labor market discrimination, leading to under- and unemployment, de-skilling and re-training as well as their strategies to cope with these.

Finally, our fourth article, *Holocaust Memory and the Horizon of National Identity*, implicitly points the reader's

attention to processes of *glocalization*. Critically examining the Holocaust as a global “symbolic signifier”, the author argues that the Holocaust has been adapted to take local, particularly national identity-formation meanings in Canada, through the construction of Canada’s National Holocaust Monument.

As you read through these articles, we encourage you to think about how global processes have shaped academia itself. During the past year, student protesters in the Netherlands have attempted to emphasize the salience of, among others, the issue of decolonizing academia, both in its institutional and knowledge-producing character. Perhaps this is a challenging topic for you to engage with by studying it, joining our masterclasses, or writing a blog for our website.

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