

Laudatory speech for Eric Burton as the 2019/2020 Walter-Markov-Prize winner held by Katja Castryck-Naumann (GWZO, Leipzig), President of ENIUGH, on June 26, 2020 (ENIUGH Zoom Webinar)

Dear colleagues, dear Eric Burton,

With the Markov-Prize ENIUGH honours an outstanding MA- or PhD-thesis that makes a seminal contribution to the research of Walter Markov and to the field of global history more broadly. We invite bi-annually for the submission of works that take a global perspective on their subject, be it by addressing it from a comparative point of view, by examining dynamics of connections and transfers or by seeking to understand the entanglements of various scales of actions and conditions.

Topically, this can include studies which contribute in innovative and timely ways to the fields Walter Markov was engaged in, that are the comparative study of revolutions, the historical analysis of social movements and decolonization processes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and histories from below. But the prize is not limited to these fields; above all it seeks to support younger scholars who gained first experiences in drawing on research in different languages and in using archives in various countries and who thereby cross-cut national historiographies. After all, one of Markov's central concern was to build cooperation between scholars from different parts of the world and to renew the field of global history through a close cooperation with colleagues based in area studies.

The prize devoted to him aims to encourage younger scholars to continue their decidedly global historical interest in their further academic career and to sharpen their profile with comparative and connected histories, and thus to contribute to the historical understanding of an interconnected world.

Since 1994 ENIUGH honoured 12 excellent dissertations and most of the authors have become important voices in the field. After we had launched the Call for the Markov-Prize 2019, we received applications from institutions all across Europe and the United States, and more than one were worthy the prize. Thus, the Selection Committee had to make a difficult choice. In the end, it decided to award three honourable mentions, and these works will be presented soon in a special forum in the e-journal *Connections* which is one of the two publications that are edited on behalf of ENIUGH supports.

Today, however, we want to honor the awardee of the Walter-Markov-Prize 2019/2020. It is my pleasure to welcome Eric Burton who wrote a compelling study of transregional interrelations in the field of development aid, which he defended in 2018 at the University of Vienna. Eric Burton wrote his dissertation within a collaborative project that dealt with the interrelations between German experts in the field of development aid who were sent to the Global South and their counterparts in the partner countries. He was well-prepared for tracing the trilateral and connected history of actors from the GDR, FRG and Tanzania as he had gained a bachelor's degree in cultural and social anthropology and an MA in development studies. His study sets in with the need in post-colonial Tanzania for expertise to replace the colonial administration and to realize Nyerere's Ujamaa-project for an African way of development to socialism. The following heavy recruitment of foreign experts and education of Tanzanians abroad led to a broad circulation of people to and from Tanzania, also in the field of development work, and Eric Burton delves deep into this stream of mobilities, contacts and interactions. At the core of his thesis are trajectories of different groups of actors – Tanzanian students who studied overseas, development experts from both German countries and their counterparts in Tanzania. The analytical focus lies on the scope of actions and the strategies which all of these groups carved out themselves in changing contexts. He follows closely motifs, directives, positionings, and experiences in concrete arenas, and reconstructs in detail the emerging interactions.

Eric Burton has written a wide-ranging social history of development aid that puts practices to the fore while connecting them to structural conditions, such as national development policies, the Cold War and asymmetrical power relations.

Combining comparative perspectives, the study of connections and anthropological concepts enables him to show that development work was shaped by a multitude of voices and a heterogeneity of practices. Jarring state interests are confronted with individual spaces of manoeuvre, and the fact that he focuses throughout his study on tensions and contradictions is part of his wider argument. While other scholars argued that the inherent contractions of 'aid to self-directed development' led to a pre-set dynamic which ended in exclusion, force and violence, Burton comes to a different conclusion – the golden rule of the counterpart-relations was to find a modus vivendi in between all the contradictions.

The Selection Committee was impressed by the empirical density and analytical strength of the global history of development practices that Eric Burton has written; and it were four interventions to the existing literature in particular that led the committee to award him with the prize as they will shape future research on development and global historical debates.

Exploring the solidarities and development policies of countries in the socialist East and in the Global South contributes to the de-centring of the still dominant occident-oriented research field. Eric Burton shows meticulously how Tanzanian contexts – ideological, political, economic and socio-cultural – and the interests and action of Tanzanians shaped what German experts could realize.

Grounded in deep archival work which included a whole range of Tanzanian archives and libraries, Eric Burton also used an ever-broadening circle of ego-documents, ranging from published testimonials to private archives and over one hundred interviews. This extensive source base enables him to confront the highly asymmetric holdings in public archives, to carve out the perspective of the South and to write a history of interrelation in which all sides have equal weight, although they were in unequal positions.

In addition, he moves skilfully from local to global dimensions of the events. National development policies are situated in the global field of development and shown as responses to global constellations. Mindsets and experiences of the actors are linked to their mobilities and interactions and tied back to political and economic conditions. We read in his book about the pioneers of the Tanzanian development state, about teachers at the University of Dar es Salaam, about interactions in an engineering company and in a bi-lateral development programme. Development practices become visible as an interplay of local, national and global dynamics, and development policies emerge as highly interconnected, crossing South/East/North divides. While power relations could remain polycentric in concrete arenas, global conjunctures had their effects. Altogether the broad interconnectedness which is reconstructed demonstrates that none of the involved parties were isolated or acted from pre-given geopolitically fixed space of action. The GDR was much more than a Russian satellite, post-colonial Tanzania could make use of the Cold War in many ways. In fact, most of the actors in this story had border-crossing trajectories which shows amongst others that German history during the Cold War cannot be understood without the presence of the Global South.

Furthermore, Eric Burton makes an expansive, multi-layered argument for the significance of concrete power relations and the material basis of the analyzed trilateral relations which has also contemporary implications. After all, it seems that a new period of developmental thinking begins currently in Tanzania which draws on older concepts, practices and experiences in ambivalent ways. The study of Eric Burton helps to see in comprehensive ways what is being taken up and left out from the concepts of the past, and thus brings alternative developmental practices to light, which might have critical potential.

It is with great pleasure to award to you, Eric, in the name of the selection and steering committee of ENIUGH the Walter-Markov-Prize 2019/2020. If we would be in Turku now, for the VI ENIUGH congress I could have handed you the certificate together with flowers. Now it will reach you by mail, but as you can see, it is prepared and ready to be sent, and we found an alternative for the flowers.