

## Editorial 2023

### A Celebration of Diversity – 25 Years of NORDEUROPAforum

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jubilæum [...] OPRINDELSE via tysk *Jubiläum* fra senlatin *jubilæus* ‚jubelfest‘,  
til *jubilare* ‚juble, larme støje‘ (Den Danske Ordbog)

1998 was the year in which NORDEUROPAforum was first published as a scholarly journal – so 2023 marks a ›jubelfest‹ of a special kind: for 25 years now, NORDEUROPAforum has endured in a form which fulfils the highest academic standards with its anonymous peer review process and its declared policy of openness to all themes and theories that contribute to the understanding of an – equally broadly defined – North.<sup>1</sup> NORDEUROPAforum has appeared digitally since 2006 and numbers among the pioneers of open access publications, with an OA »diamond« profile right from the beginning. By publishing at no cost to the authors, it affords scholars the opportunity to publish high-quality research papers, irrespective of their career stage or institutional affiliation.

As a step towards future-proofing this opportunity, last year we took the decision to augment the central editorial office in Berlin with additional locations in Greifswald and Frankfurt am Main. Certain sections have been edited from there ever since: Blog and Social Media by Luise Markwort and Reviews by Rebecca Jakobi – welcome aboard! We also warmly welcome our new Editorial Board members Sabine Meyer (Greifswald), Lukas Rösli (Berlin) as well as Patrick Ledderose and Katie Ritson (both from Munich), and thank Angelika Gröger, Olga Bazilevika, and Ann-Sofie Nielsen Gremaud – they are leaving us due to job-related reasons – sincerely for their dedicated work. The pluralisation of locations and the enlargement of the editorial board aptly reflect the diversity which, in our view, sets NORDEUROPAforum apart and which we would like to celebrate this year.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Henningsen, Bernd (1998): Editorial, *NORDEUROPAforum* 8:1, pp. 1–2. On the history of NORDEUROPAforum, cf. also <https://www.nordeuropaforum.de/en/about/>.

An anniversary is also always an occasion to thank those who have made it possible. Of the many such people at *NORDEUROPAforum*, we would like to pay tribute to three in particular: Inken Dose, our honorary editor-in-chief, whose extraordinary commitment and inexhaustible knowledge not only keep *NORDEUROPAforum* going but also make it a great pleasure to work on its team, and Bernd Henningsen and Stephan Michael Schröder, who have contributed substantially to the journal's enduring success ever since it was launched.

25 years ago, it contained articles on minorities in the German-Danish border region and on the Danish church and mission in Estonia, alongside reviews of anthologies on *Nordic National Cinemas* or university education in Scandinavia, and of the Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings. While it originally focused mainly on articles with a social, political and historical studies emphasis, the spectrum soon widened to encompass literary, linguistic and media studies perspectives, which found a fitting mantle under a broadly defined heading of cultural studies, and always positioned their thinking in a context extending beyond their own discipline.<sup>2</sup> This diversity is emblematic of the openness that distinguishes *NORDEUROPAforum* in every sense of the word.

It is evident even from the themes of the first issue that *NORDEUROPAforum* has always looked to the (Baltic Sea) region rather than pursuing a ›classically‹ Scandinavian-studies orientation towards Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The economic, political and cultural transformations of this region over the last 25 years are myriad: if nothing else, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has highlighted the significance of the Baltic Sea region in many respects; the imminent accessions of Finland and Sweden to NATO are attendant on geopolitical shifts which, up until recently, virtually no one would have anticipated. To what extent appreciable cooperations can be established or intensified outside the military domain remains to be seen. Also awaiting consideration are the ways in which cooperations need to be rethought: for this purpose, the best example is the Council of the Baltic Sea States, of which Germany is this year's chair.

It is also important to keep in mind the cultural and political diversity of the region. The year 2023 presents tremendous opportunities to do so, given that the Sámi parliaments in Sweden and Finland are also celebrating anniversaries: the Swedish *Sámediggi*, as it is called in North Sámi, met for the first time in 1993, while its Finnish counterpart commenced its work back in 1973. They represent an important and hard-won success for the indigenous peoples of the North on their way to proper political participation. *NORDEUROPAforum* extends sincere congratulations!

The political work of the Sámi has also involved having to contend with ecological challenges, again and again. In particular, they have had to resist resource exploitation projects and they are harder hit than most by climate change and environmental pollution. How we shape and change the Baltic Sea region, not least ecologically, is a more burning question than ever.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Heitmann, Annegret (2014): Editorial. A forum for dialogue on methods and disciplines, *NORDEUROPAforum* 24, pp. 7–8.

Only an interdisciplinary approach can productively track these shifts and challenges. This is clear from our most recent special focuses on »Environmental Change in Nordic Fiction« (2022) and on »Changing Concepts of Nature in Contemporary Scandinavian Literature and Photography« (2021). Moreover, the thematic selections underline the international appeal of *NORDEUROPAforum* and its contribution to current debates such as the present environmental crisis and the research discourse that surrounds it. The fact that our research takes up issues which attract great interest even beyond the scholarly debates is also illustrated by the special focus published in 2020 on »Images of the North in Popular Culture«.

Among the aims of *NORDEUROPAforum* is that of preserving the diversity of our discipline, which has been jeopardised lately by the threatened closure of institutes and by cutbacks in Scandinavian cultural institutions. In future we will continue to oppose cost-cutting measures which, especially in light of the current political situation, seem astonishingly short-sighted. For instance, the planned cuts to *Svenska institutet*'s<sup>3</sup> foreign budget give cause for concern in view of the necessity of international alliances, which cannot be forged without linguistic and cultural skills. We would like to support our colleagues to the utmost.

For 25 years, *NORDEUROPAforum* has been part of a lively academic community. The networking of researchers in and outside Northern Europe is the basis of a vibrant scholarly landscape. It is important (and still possible in our subject area) to know of each other, to be aware of colleagues' research and teaching specialisations, to be cognizant of their work in progress. Exchange of this kind happens most fruitfully at conferences, which frequently serve as a starting point for articles and special focuses in our journal. Due to the pandemic, for the last few years most of these conferences had to be cancelled. So it was all the more enjoyable to see each other again – for example, at the 25th German-speaking Scandinavian Studies Conference (ATdS) in Munich in September 2022. Some of the findings presented there will be featured in *NORDEUROPAforum*. To facilitate better exchange on works in progress and larger projects, *NORDEUROPAforum* will introduce a new section. On our website it is now possible to present research projects which are third-party financed and multilingual and interinstitutional in approach under the headline »Forschungsbord«.<sup>4</sup> The first entries are already online and we call on our colleagues to send us their research projects in German-language Scandinavian studies, North European history and political science. Dissertation and habilitation projects can still be found on the website of the *Fachverband Skandinavistik*.<sup>5</sup>

We also regard our 25th anniversary as an incentive to look to the future, to think far-sightedly and innovatively, and to offer encouragement! Scholarship needs young researchers! To honour our anniversary, we invite young academics to apply for our Young Researcher Prize<sup>6</sup>: researchers who have not yet received their doctorate have

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<sup>3</sup> On the website of the *Fachverband* you can find the letter of protest written by, among others, *Sveriges Författarförbund*, *Författarcentrum* and *Svenska Pen*: <https://skandinavistik.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/debattartikel-nedlaeggnig-svenskan-i-varlden.pdf>. It was published in *Svenska Dagbladet* on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022: <https://www.svd.se/a/4oXOo/radda-svenska-spraket-i-varlden-skriver-debattorer>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nordeuropaforum.de/en/forschungsbord/>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://skandinavistik.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> More information at [https://www2.hu-berlin.de/nordeuropaforum2/media/nordeuropaforum\\_nachwuchspreis\\_2023-01-09.pdf](https://www2.hu-berlin.de/nordeuropaforum2/media/nordeuropaforum_nachwuchspreis_2023-01-09.pdf).

## EDITORIAL 2023

until the 1<sup>st</sup> September closing date to submit an original article. The winners will receive every assistance with the process of publishing their articles, and prize money also beckons.

And of course we also want to celebrate the anniversary together in person. On 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at the Representation of the State of Schleswig-Holstein in Berlin. With illustrious guests, honest discussions, and inspiring encounters: here's to the next 25 years. Välkomna!

Frankfurt and Greifswald, April 2023



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