

INTRODUCTION

The 2019 *Contemporary European History* Prize

The editors of *Contemporary European History* are delighted to announce the results of the 2019 CEH Prize, which was set up to encourage, recognise and promote high-quality research among postgraduate and early career scholars. We were thrilled to receive a very strong field of entries, many of which are now forthcoming in the journal. The submissions all demonstrate the thought-provoking, eye-opening and exciting new work that is being carried out in the field of contemporary European history.

The 2019 CEH Prize has been awarded to Márcia Gonçalves for her article ‘The Scramble for Africa Reloaded? Portugal, European Colonial Claims and the Distribution of Colonies in the 1930s’.

This is an important, clever and well-researched piece on an understudied and very significant topic: the response of Portugal and its empire to the movement for colonial appeasement and redistribution of African colonies in the 1930s. The article demonstrates that the great powers’ perception of Portugal and Belgium as inadequate colonial powers was central to their strategy of colonial redistribution and shows how ‘marginal’ powers such as Portugal entered that debate to promote a rhetoric of victimisation and shore up support for the dictatorship. By bridging the conventional separation between ‘imperial and international history’ and ‘European history’, Gonçalves demonstrates the extent to which the 1930s crisis of democracy and revisionism was entangled with the imperial order.

The Prize committee also decided to award an Honourable Mention to Mira Markham for her article ‘Světlna: Partisans and Power in Post-War Czechoslovakia’.

This deeply-researched essay presents a compelling narrative about anti-communist violence in Czechoslovak Wallachia in 1949 and the subsequent show trial of its perpetrators, thus complicating the traditionally rosy portrayal of the ‘third resistance’ in Czechoslovakia. As well as highlighting the importance of studying the regional dynamics of popular politics in post-war Czechoslovakia and beyond, the article makes an important intervention into debates about the nature of resistance in the first years after the communist coup in February 1948. Going beyond the simple dichotomies of good and evil that have often dominated discussions of resistance, Markham thus makes a critical and nuanced contribution to a topic that has not only been central to scholarly research but also the subject of intense public debate about state socialism in the Czech Republic over the past twenty years.