Editorial

The issue before us is the new issue of the journal titled *Polemos – Međunarodne studije – Po–MeSt (Polemos – International Studies),* a journal created by merging two previously acclaimed journals in the academic and professional community interested in their wide range of topics.

Polemos was first published in the far 1998, and *Međunarodne studije* in 2000. *Polemos* was based at the Sociology Department of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, while *Međunarodne studije* at the International Relations Department of the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. However, both journals tended, and succeeded to outgrow the in-house journal level and achieve to impact a wider academic and professional audience. Both journals can boast to have been initiated by the bards of Croatian science. *Polemos* was founded by the retired professor Ozren Žunec, and *Međunarodne studije* by the late professor Radovan Vukadinović (1938-2019). The publication of both journals lasted over two decades and counted a large number of papers, some of which left a significant mark. They went through various phases, from the physical distribution of hard-copy issues to online publications, different indexation and levels, issues with financing and vast changes in the academic community from the onset of their publication.

Polemos was published as an interdisciplinary journal for research into war and peace. Ozren Žunec was the editor-in-chief from 2009, replaced by Mirko Bilandžić. Since 2023, the editor-in-chief has been Danijela Lucić. Until 2025, the publisher was the Croatian Sociological Association and Jesenski i Turk publishing house. In the first 10 years, the publishing of *Međunarodne studije* varied in dynamics, afterwards reaching two annual issues. Radovan Vukadinović was the editor-in-chief until his passing in 2019, and the journal changed publishers several times: Center for International Studies, Business School for International Relations and Diplomacy, Croatian Association for International Relations. Since 2019, the publisher has been Libertas International University, with Vladimir Filipović as the editor-in-chief. *Polemos – Međunarodne studije (Po–MeSt)* sees its first issue as a continuation in the co-publication of the previous publisher – Libertas International University and the new co-publisher, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. more specifically the Centre for Innovative Studies.

Where does the idea to merge two long lasting and well-established journals come from? The previously mentioned great changes in the academic community in the last several years have had significant impact on the scientific publishing and production. Orientation toward competitive projects, meeting various criteria, the all-present metrics, a hyper-production of a kind, the wide availability of foreign journals, challenges and issues with indexation and impact factors all created circumstances in which both journals, their publishers, editors-in-chief, authors and readers had to think about further steps. Publishing in journals that are not part of „data bases“ has become unprofitable for a lot of authors. Publishing in the Croatian language means

decreasing citation levels. Thus, the traditional functioning of journals has been called into a significant question.

The merging of *Polemos* and *Međunarodne studije* journals aims to strengthen the efforts for quality academic publishing, retain the authors in domestic journals and attract foreign authors, preserve scientific production in the Croatian language and encourage quality scientific discussion at domestic higher education institutions. Moreover, it intends to achieve a successful synergy of the two journals, their editorial boards and their publishers, i.e., institutions.

As regards the programme, the journal simultaneously retains the identity of its predecessors and aims to build a new one. The journal was conceptualised as an interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary scientific journal oriented toward research studies based on the issues of war, peace, the military and international relations. The journal joins theoretical and empirical research in the areas of humanities and social sciences, including sociology, political science, philosophy, law, economics, anthropology, history, demography and relevant disciplinary fields. The journal especially encourages publishing papers of interdisciplinary character considering issues of war and peace and specific aspects of international policy.

The journal *Polemos – Međunarodne studije* claims the right to previous issues and archive of its predecessors. The new editorial board significantly values the work of previous editorial boards and is deeply grateful for their effort in building and preserving the journals – to Ozren Žunec, Mirko Bilandžić, Luka Brkić and Josip Lučev. It retains the enumeration of the previous journal – in this case Polemos. The new journal adapts to the new circumstances and will be published online first, achieving completion by the end of each calendar year. The papers are accepted in the Croatian and English language and the editorial board will tend to keep the publication balance in both languages.

The new issue is before us and we hope that it will create plentiful new ideas for the next period and continue to be one of the academic strongholds, a gathering point for various authors, ideas, interpretations, research and polemics. With these wishes and intentions, we are publishing the first issue in 2025.

Zagreb, 30 November 2025.

Vladimir Filipović and Danijela Lucić