



Multiple bushfires burn in drought-stricken western New South Wales, Australia in December 2019, as captured by the Copernicus Sentinel-3 satellite. (Source: ESA)

UC Press Launches 'Global Perspectives'

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In early 2020, the University of California Press will launch *Global Perspectives* (*GP*), an online-only, peer-reviewed, transdisciplinary journal seeking to advance social science research and debates in a globalizing world, specifically in terms of concepts, theories, methodologies, and evidence bases. *GP* will take full advantage of the multi-media publishing opportunities presented for academic journals today, enriching works published in the journal by invited commentaries, annotations and visual content.

GP starts from a basic premise: the world that gave rise to the social sciences in their present form is no more. The national and disciplinary approaches that developed over the last century are increasingly insufficient to capture the complexities of the global realities of a world that has changed significantly. New concepts, approaches, and forms of academic discourse may be required. The emergence of Global Studies over the last decade or so is perhaps the best example of a field that transcends established, and sometimes entrenched, disciplinary boundaries.

To this end, *GP* sets out to help overcome the national and disciplinary fragmentation of the social sciences, and the relative isolation of thematic foci that have grown into inter-disciplinary and transnational fields such as Global Studies. The journal is organized by subject sections that address major conceptual themes or empirical issues. Initially, *GP* has eight subject sections, each curated by a dedicated section editor, and overseen by Helmut K. Anheier of the Hertie School and UCLA as editor-in-chief. Specifically:

Payal Arora of Erasmus University in Rotterdam heads the section on communication

and media. The intellectual basis for this section is that the ‘global turn’ in media and communication demands new ways of conceptualizing relations and boundaries between the local, the national and the transnational. In recent years, ubiquitous computing, mobile technologies and social media have amplified the urgency to unpack the globalizing of media platforms, communication patterns and processes as well as their underlying politics and policies. *GP* is a home for theoretical and empirical studies that are at the fulcrum of deliberations on the “global” in media and communication.

Leading the section on security and cooperation, international institutions and relations is Thomas J. Biersteker of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. Due to the fact that global security and cooperation take many forms and appear differently from different vantage points on the globe, global perspectives on security, cooperation, and institutions are needed. *GP* is interested in the boundaries and challenging the variety of different parochialisms that emerge in different national, disciplinary, and institutional settings, and challenging those who engage in efforts to “discipline” the field. *GP* takes a global view to security, cooperation, international institutions, and international relations.

Miguel Centeno of Princeton University will serve as editor of the section on global epistemologies, concepts, methodologies, and data systems. While the scale and scope of global interactions have increased exponentially, the unit of analysis for much of social science remains at the national level at the highest. To develop a global perspective, we have to re-orient ourselves to a new level of aggregation. For example, to unify the study of systems across academic disciplines and operational domains, we might use and develop concepts such as offered by network analysis as both tool and metaphor, and also invite the introduction of new concepts that help the social sciences solve the conundrum of methodological nationalism. *GP* encourages theoretical and empirical examinations of global systems, propose epistemologies for studying them, introduces and assesses concepts as well as methodologies, and reports on data sources and possibilities.

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The social institutions, organizations, and relations section, edited by Sara Curran of the University of Washington, seeks responses to questions such as: what knits

people together; what ensures the continuity and sustenance of communities; and what are the deeper social forces that either accelerate or slow the forces of global change and shape cascading effects within localities (and vice versa)? *GP* invites 'big ideas' essays that take up the deeply humane inquiries that characterize those of our shared social scientific, intellectual antecedents and who shifted our paradigmatic views of the meaningfulness of social institutions, organizations and relations. These essays might ask questions formulated in earlier historic moments, such as how do we explain social change, how is society possible, what is society in these times, and what are social organizations?

Dirk Messner of the United Nations University in Bonn leads the section on global change and sustainability transformations: technology-society interface. It addresses a triangle of three closely related themes: global change, sustainability, and technology. Understanding the dynamics of each as well as their inter-relationships requires perspectives from across the social sciences but also from the natural and life sciences, including fields such as computer science, robotics, and environmental studies. Digitalization, big data, artificial intelligence, autonomous technical systems, biotechnologies and nanotechnology will transform societies and economies profoundly. There is a need to understand various and varied impacts these technological drivers of change are likely to have on fundamental aspects of society: new power patterns and different inequality mechanism can emerge, and democracy and privacy might be challenged.

The section on political economy, markets, and institutions is led by JP Singh of George Mason University. The motivation for this section is that some of the most pressing global challenges today lie at the intersection of markets and institutions, are influenced by political economy, and depend on the success and failure of collective action. Some of these issues include climate change, the management of natural resources and the commons, the flow of technology and ideas, production and consumption patterns, and the relationship between growth, inequality and poverty. Understanding, and finding solutions to them, could greatly benefit from a meaningful inter-disciplinary conversation about the inter-related dimensions that are involved at different levels – micro, meso, and macro.



Hagen Schulz-Forberg of University of Aarhus leads the politics, governance, and the law section. The trinity of politics, governance and law has shaped the ‘long twentieth century’: from the unravelling of European empires to the emergence of international law based on a liberal teleology and international organizations and institutions as its resting place, to the affirmation of the nation-state as the main locus of the social and the tensions that emerge between the local social organization and the larger transnational settings, regimes and trade flows. The relations between politics, governance, and the law will play a decisive role in shaping a peaceful unfolding of the twenty-first century as the need for a new global sustainability becomes increasingly urgent, particularly in the face of increasing tendencies to autocratic rule and lasting ‘states of emergency’. *GP* features broad, innovative, and deep thinking about the past, present and future of the trinity of politics, governance and law.

Finally, Helmut K. Anheier edits the culture, values, and identities section. This section challenges the presuppositions within the social sciences toward culture: too often, culture is either as a residual once the “hard” economic and political factors are taken into account, or becomes the all-encompassing construction supposedly explaining everything. Culture in a broad sense is a system of meaning, its social construction, articulation and reception, including religion, ideologies, values systems and collective identity. *GP* examines specific manifestations of the

importance of culture, such as culture and globalization, the influence of the cultural sector in urbanization, the relationship between economics and culture, and the role of culture in nationalism.

In order to involve the next generation of academic talent from across the social sciences and around the world, GP has established the Emerging Scholars Forum (ESF). The ESF consists primarily of post-doctoral fellows and assistant professors at an early stage in their career. They are recruited based on the recommendation of *Global Perspectives* board members. This group, diverse in terms of disciplinary and regional background, is part of the journal's editorial work: ESF members will join the Editorial Board in reviewing articles and submitting their own content, as well as helping to foster a new generation committed to a global discourse in advancing the social sciences.

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All submitted and invited contributions are peer-reviewed, double-blind. They may include elements such as tables, graphs, images, illustrations as well as multimedia elements (audio and video files, maps, datasets, etc.). *GP* offers the following formats:

Research Articles present original findings, and typically range between 5,000-10,000 words in length, although shorter and longer contributions can be considered.

Review Article offer conceptual advances, syntheses, and integrations of a field or topic.

Research Briefs & Insights focus on a distinct finding or argument in a succinct way.

Commentary/opinion pieces, policy reviews are considered or invited on a case-by-case basis only.

Global Perspectives is now accepting submissions in all sections. Papers can be submitted at the following address:

https://app.scholasticahq.com/journals/globalperspectives/manuscripts/new.

For questions and comments contact Helmut K. Anheier at Global Perspectives Journal gpjournal@luskin.ucla.edu.

Tags

global dynamics

global studies

interdisciplinarity



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