

# FOREWORD

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RYAN ALEXANDER

Dear Readers: This issue features five excellent articles that, in the tradition of the *Journal of Global South Studies*, reflect diverse geographical and disciplinary research. Albert Hasudungan surveys how the rapid expansion of oil palm plantations in the Kapuas Hulu region of Indonesia have exacerbated economic inequalities, providing some population sectors with access to diverse market assets while causing land dispossession and poverty for others. Michael B. Bishku explains how Malaysia, though more economically integrated with (and dependent upon) the United States and Asia, has rededicated itself to fostering its long-standing relations with the Middle East and Islamic world. Pramod K. Kantha examines how relations between India and Nepal have deteriorated since the 2015 adoption of a new Nepali constitution, one to which India and the Madhesi, a large constituency of Nepal's population, both objected. Diogo L. Pinheiro shows how sovereign risk ratings, ostensibly an objective measure of market conditions, were in fact used to measure compliance with a neoliberal economic development paradigm. Fernando de la Cruz Prego demonstrates that across two distinct economic development models, the relative importance of foreign aid in Bolivia has depended on the prices of the major commodities it exports.

In addition to our guest authors and editors, I would, as always, like to extend my sincere gratitude to the anonymous peer reviewers who have worked to improve each article, as well as the volunteer associate editors (Fodei Batty for Africa, Srobana Battacharya for Asia, Vaughn Shannon for the Middle East, Luis Sierra for the Americas, Jason Strakes for Eurasia, and Michael Hall for book reviews), and offer equally big thank-yous to the *JGSS* editorial assistant, Sara Abernathy, and to Lauren Phillips, journals manager at the University of Florida Press. Be sure to read our extensive selection of book reviews in this and future issues.

Our parent organization, the Association of Global South Studies, was established in order to provide an international structure for the humane and scientific study of peoples, problems, and issues in the world's developing countries, with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of life in those places. The late Dr. Harold Isaacs, professor emeritus of history at Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, Georgia, founded the Association of Third World Studies (ATWS), Inc., in 1983. The association now has a global membership and chapters in South Asia and Africa. In the summer of 2016, following a vote of the members of the association, ATWS was renamed the Association of Global South Studies (AGSS).

As ATWS, the association began its history as an institution in 1991 when, under the newly ratified ATWS constitution, elected officials assumed responsibility for the management of the organization. Since 1992 the executive headquarters have been located at Georgia Southern University (1992–2003), Mississippi State University (2003–2006), and Louisiana State University–Shreveport (2006–). Due to the dedicated and energetic leadership of Zia H. Hashmi and Paul Rodell at Georgia Southern, Shu-hui Wu at Mississippi State, and William Pederson at LSU–Shreveport, AGSS has made great progress as a global, professional organization. In 1995 the United Nations recognized the success of AGSS by granting it UN “consultative status,” thus enabling the association to increase its direct impact on world development. AGSS has an established and newly revamped website, to be found at <http://apps.gsw.edu/atws/>.

Membership in AGSS is open to any person interested in studying the developing countries. Yearly membership dues are \$60.00, which includes an annual subscription to *JGSS*. The yearly subscription rate is \$60.00; single copies are \$30.00. Discounts are available for students and those living in the developing countries. Membership and subscription forms, as well as copies of *JTWS/JGSS*, may be obtained by writing to the Association of Global South Studies, Inc., care of Ryan Alexander, History Department, SUNY-Plattsburgh, Champlain Valley Hall 224, Plattsburgh, NY 12901. Individuals interested in submitting articles to be considered, or refereed, for publication by the *JGSS* Board of Editors, should submit manuscripts, as Microsoft Word files, to the editor via email: [ralex006@plattsburgh.edu](mailto:ralex006@plattsburgh.edu).

Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in various online databases, including: the *International Bibliography of the Social Sciences*,

*International Political Science Abstracts, Political Science Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, Historical Abstracts, Periodica Islamica, PAIS Indexes, Scopus, and CAB International (CABI). Full text is available at JSTOR and Project Muse.*

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