



# Politikon

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## Editorial Note

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The first issue of *LAPSS Politikon* was published over twenty years ago, at the time when democracy was believed to continue its spread and embedding among the political communities around the globe. The second issue, published a few months later that year, and the third issue published in 2002 entail considerable attention to challenges surrounding the war against terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11. Although, given a two-year break in publishing, *LAPSS Politikon* is yet to celebrate twenty years of publication, the above glimpses of its history illustrate not only its longevity but also its capacity to reflect on contemporary challenges within a relatively short period of time after they arise.

While the COVID-19 pandemic may be the first reference point for a ‘contemporary challenge’, climate change has anything but disappeared in 2020. While the immediate effects of the pandemic might not persist in the long term, climate change remains an undisputedly central point of focus for social science research and thinking. As a consequence, we are particularly pleased to publish a special section on Climate Justice in the present issue of the journal. Alix Gabaude introduces the context and content of this section in the following lines:

This special section brings together several papers which were presented at the first regional conference by IAPSS Europe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2019 in Stockholm, Sweden. This first conference was on the theme of “Paths to Climate Justice” and brought together 50 young scholars from all around the world for a series of academic, political, and NGO panels, as well as workshops. Three papers which were presented at the conference are shared in this special section. They all look at different issues arising with the changing climate and focusing on security risks, disaster management, and climate-induced migration.

Firstly, Melina Kotsinas in “Climate (In)justice: An Intersectional Feminist Analysis of Disaster Management in Antigua and Barbuda in the Aftermath of Hurricane Irma” studies disaster management and stakeholders working in this field in a Small Island Developing Nation, Antigua and Barbuda, following Hurricane Irma and how they understand and respond to crisis. She particularly ponders on how structures and power relations (such as gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, age, and socio-economic status) are reinforced or challenged. She does this by using an intersectional feminist theoretical framework and through semi-structure in-depth interviews and focus groups with actors

on the ground. She finds that some of her results concur with previous research and that women, along with older people and children, are portrayed as more vulnerable, although generalising about the vulnerability of female single-households overlooks context-specific dynamics. The intersectional framework brought age, family status, class/socioeconomic status, and occupation forward as being generally associated with gender with (dis)ability and sexuality being somewhat, but less so present.

Secondly, Lisa Carroll discusses in “Not Quite Migrant, Not Quite Refugee: Addressing the Protection Gap for Climate-Induced Movement; Conceptualisation, Governance, and the Case of Mr. Ioane Teitiota” the fact that the current international legal system cannot ‘effectively manage and sufficiently protect’ people moving due to climate and that the issue surrounding the definition of people undertaking this type of movement is doctrinal as well as definitional. She assesses the different terminologies used and the refugee-migrant debate. She identifies three primary issues for this gap in protection, firstly the emphasis by the main legal and policy mechanisms dealing with human movement on forced movement, secondly the emphasis on intra-state movement and the associated mechanisms on internally displaced persons, thirdly the lack of recognition of slow-onset events-induced movement over an emphasis on movement resulting of rapid-onset events. She focuses particularly on the Pacific Island States with a case study of the endeavour by Mr. Ioane Teitiota to claim refugee status in New Zealand. She finds that the terminological and related definitional issues presented in the first part of the study and the focus on forced movement due to rapid-onset events poses a major barrier to legal protection.

Last but not least, Lisa Nowag presents in her research note “From Climate Change to Conflict – Environmental Security Challenges in North-Western Kenya” a review of the past research on the links between environmental changes and violence as well arguments for and against the controversial climate-conflict nexus. She wonders ‘if and to what extent climate change can be regarded as a significant contributor to violent conflicts’. In addition to the review of the literature, she develops a case study looking at environmental security and more particularly on the climate-related effects on pastoral raiding in North-Western Kenya, several regions highly at-risk from climate change. She argues that the environmental changes due to the changing climate act as multipliers of already existing sociopolitical tensions, as exemplified by the cases of Turkana and Pokot. Something further enhanced by current lacking governmental coping mechanisms.

Alix Gabaude (University of Gothenburg, Panels Coordinator for the IAPSS Europe Regional Conference 2019)

The special section is followed by another research note by Chloé Bernadaux, providing insights into the operation of consociational systems in Northern Ireland and Lebanon from the perspective of their capacity to prevent conflicts along ethnonational lines. Why is it that in the former, this system is considered as contributing to political stability, while in the latter it is not? Unpacking this puzzle, Bernadaux argues that these two cases should be studied via a comparative Most Similar Systems Design, which then allows to zoom in on the exogenous factors that contributed to the differentiated outcome.

Finally, a glimpse on recent developments in the journal itself. We have introduced a promotional option in the journal for potential partners, and look forward to receiving expressions of interest based on the more detailed information [available at our website](#). In December 2020, we are furthermore pleased to welcome Nzube Chukwuma, Nabil Ferdaoussi and Nicasia Pizziano as new Editorial Assistants, resulting from our first open Call for Editorial Assistants with a connection to Africa, a region that has thus far been underrepresented in the editorial team, particularly in comparison to the number of submissions received with a focus on African politics. In 2021, the editorial team hopes to contribute to showcasing quality research from scholars of all backgrounds and generations, including the first contributions addressing questions in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Max Steuer  
Editor-in-Chief