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Editor's Introduction

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As we begin a new journey with the *Journal of World-Systems Research* (JWSR), we would like to take a minute to thank the previous editorial team of Andrej Grubacic and Rallie Murray who led JWSR for the past four years through the Fall/Winter 2025 issue. Their efforts and continuous work have sustained JWSR for years, for which we are deeply grateful.



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Second, we would like to take a moment to introduce ourselves as the new editors of JWSR.

Devparna Roy works as an Associate Professor of Sociology at Nazareth University (Rochester, New York). She also directs the Global Sustainability Program at Nazareth University. She earned her master's degree in the sociology of international development from Utah State University and her doctoral degree in development sociology from Cornell University. Prior to pursuing higher studies in the United States, Dr. Roy earned a master's degree in biotechnology from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in Gujarat, India. She has also worked as a full-time journalist with India's leading financial daily, *The Economic Times*, where she reported on environmental issues such as the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (Save the River Narmada Movement). Dr. Roy primarily uses the lens of agri-food systems (with a focus on agroecology and the political economy of genetically modified seeds) to understand contemporary debates in the world systems school of analysis, critical agrarian studies, and development studies.

Daniel Pasciuti is Associate Professor at Georgia State University. Dr Pasciuti completed his PhD at Johns Hopkins University under the direction of Beverly Silver and Giovanni Arrighi, prior to his passing. Prior to moving to Georgia State University, he previously served as a postdoctoral fellow and Assistant Research Scientist with the [Arrighi Center for Global Studies](#), and as a research assistant for Christopher Chase-Dunn at the [Institute for Research on World-Systems \(IROWS\)](#) at the University of California Riverside. His research focuses on urban governance and housing to understand how changes in the global economy challenge the ability to rebuild urban space in the 21st century. He co-leads the Georgia Community Impact Partnership (GCIP) and the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Disabilities (iCORD) at Georgia State University.

Madelief Tilder is a Sociology Dual BA/MA student at Georgia State University, working under the direction of Dr. Daniel Pasciuti. Her research investigates the interconnected roles of criminal justice, urban housing, and public health in generating and sustaining inequality, with particular attention to how institutions of punishment, governance, and care shape life outcomes within and between communities. Born and raised in the Netherlands and relocated to the US in 2019, she utilizes world-systems frameworks in situating inequality within broader structures of capital, governance, and global power. During her undergraduate years, Madelief served as a project associate at the Georgia State Prison Education Project, and as a policy researcher at the [Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prisons](#). She later served as a graduate research assistant at [Shepherd Center](#). Currently, Madelief works as a graduate research assistant at [Project Healthy Grandparents](#) and a Managing Editor for the *Journal of World-Systems Research*.

Jun Yang is a first-year Joint MA/PhD student in Sociology at Georgia State University. Her research interests include health, the life course, gender, and social inequality, with particular attention to how family roles, social institutions, and broader structural conditions shape individual well-being across the life course. Before coming to the United States, she completed a bachelor's

degree in Political Science and a master's degree in Sociology in China, experiences that continue to inform her comparative and interdisciplinary perspective on social life. She currently serves as Managing Editor for the *Journal of World-Systems Research*.

Hadley Briglin is an undergraduate at Nazareth University (Rochester, New York) in the Honors College majoring in Sociology and minoring in Spanish. She started attending Nazareth University in 2025 after spending a year studying at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York. Her research interests include gender, technology, and social inequality. Hadley Briglin joined the Editorial Team for the *Journal of World-Systems Research* as a managing editor in 2026.

In the first issue of JWSR for 2026, we are honored to publish the second part of a two-part interview with the historian and world systems scholar Dale Tomich, conducted by his student and friend Juan Giusti-Cordero between January and July 2024. The interview offers a unique opportunity to engage directly with the development of the relational methodology that lies at the heart of world systems analysis. Dale insisted that the innovation of scholars like Immanuel Wallerstein and Fernand Braudel was more than just an emphasis on broader geographic or longer temporal perspectives. It was the formulation of theoretical and methodological foundations for a new unified social science.

We are pleased to feature a diverse array of nine research articles in this issue. Covering different aspects of reproduction and crises of capitalism, authors touch on a set of recurrent themes: from adaptation through technocracy, migration, environmental exploitation, and digital governance, to labor as a strategic site to both hegemonic rise and systemic transformation. These articles demonstrate violence as a structural feature of the world system but also demonstrate key spaces of resistance and alternatives that provide hope and guidance.

The first article in this issue, by Glen David Kuecker, **“Resisting Capitalist Reproduction in the Liminal State,”** rethinks resistance in a period of world system transition by arguing that capitalism is reproducing itself through the technocratic 2030 Agenda and advocating pluriversal, counter-power strategies to challenge that process and pursue a just transition.

The next article, by Stephen Wilkinson, **“Theorizing the Interregnum: The Semi-Core Challenge to Western Hegemony, Technical Workers and the Shaping of a *New World Order*”**, analyzes the current geopolitical and economic interregnum, arguing that a rising “semi-core” challenges Western hegemony and opens conditions for systemic transformation. Drawing on Bauman, Chinese Marxism, and recent Chinese and Russian policy texts, it emphasizes the role of technical workers positioned between rival infrastructural and epistemological systems. Wilkinson argues the transformative potential lies not only in strategic expertise but in fostering solidarity across global AI labor while bridging fundamentally different philosophical and infrastructural orders.

Jimmy Engren and Lars Hansson's article **"Migration as a Prelude to Hegemony: An Integrated Comparison of Migration Processes in the Early Modern Dutch State and the United States"** discussed the importance of labor migrations to a state's rising hegemonic status in the world-system using a comparison between the Dutch rise to hegemony and the U.S. rise to hegemony.

In **"Haitian Reserve Army of Labor: A Product of Geopolitical, Endemic, and Phenomenological Violence"** Dery and Molinero-Gerbeau offer an interdisciplinary analysis that bridges a Marxist political economy framework with a historical analysis of Haitian violence to theorize the country's labor force as a globally constructed Reserve Army of Labor. Drawing on centuries of colonialism, political instability, and economic exploitation, the authors trace how enduring regimes of violence have positioned Haitian workers as a source of cheap labor benefitting global powers at the expense of Haiti's own national development.

Continuing the discussion on labor, we have Lipon Mondal's article **"Theorizing Labor Control in the Global Apparel Industry: A Case of Bangladesh"**, which examines labor control in Bangladesh's apparel industry. Based on factory-level research, it argues that market and non-market actors jointly exploit workers through legal and illegal coercion, structural violence, and informal power. This reinforces global capitalist inequality across all stages of labor control in a new regime called social despotism.

Next, we have four articles focusing on questions of political ecology and technological transformation:

Piotr Walewicz's article **"Cheap Water, Catastrophic Costs: The Political Ecology of the Oder's Transformation"** analyzes the history of the exploitation of the Oder River up to the 2022 ecological disaster, exploring how water is undervalued in the capitalist world-system through the concept of "Cheap Water."

Rice's article **"Lead Battery Recycling and the Ecologically Unequal Exchange of a Crescive Contaminant Across the U.S.-Mexico Border"** examines a central contradiction within an industry that is widely celebrated as ecologically modern. The tightening of US lead emission standards in 2008 drove hundreds of millions of batteries across the border for recycling. Rice argues that this regulatory asymmetry is a form of ecologically unequal exchange that produces racialized environmental violence by exposing Mexican border communities to lead contamination at thresholds far exceeding US standards.

JiaYing Lyu's article, **"Revisiting World-Systems Theory in the Age of Dual-Core Competition: Technological Disruption, Institutional Shifts, and the Repositioning of the**

Periphery,” revisits world-systems theory under intensifying U.S. and China rivalry and shows that, despite greater fluidity and new bargaining spaces, structural inequalities in rule-setting, finance, and technological standards continue to constrain mobility in the periphery.

Finally, the Sarsenova, et. al. article **“Development of Information Technologies and Specifics of their Use to Reach Ideological Goals: International Experience and Practices”**, examines how states use information technology for ideological and political purposes. Analyzing the U.S., China, Kazakhstan, and selected EU states, it shows divergent strategies, ranging from state control and censorship to content regulation and cybersecurity, while highlighting a shared trend of using social media to shape political attitudes and historical memory.

We are also pleased to feature a symposium, produced by Professor Alexander White, on Claire Decoteau’s book *Emergency: COVID-19 and the Uneven Valuation of Life* from the University of Chicago Press. We hope that you enjoy this symposium based upon comments from a 2025 author meets critics discussion at the Eastern Sociological Society Conference between Gowri Vijayakumar, Robin Wagner-Pacifci, Joseph Harris, and the author Claire Decoteau. Between August 2020 and May 2021 Dr. Decoteau worked with four graduate students: Cal Garrett, Fructuso Basaldua, Cindy Brito and Bianca Perez to recruit interviewees from across the city of Chicago at a time when COVID-19 made any sort of qualitative analysis incredibly challenging. Interviewing Chicagoans living under increased public health focus because of COVID-19, those subjectified and hailed as Essential Workers as well as policy makers and health professionals, *Emergency* captures the struggles of communities living under the weight of legacies of racism, structural neglect and oppression and the limits of addressing systemic harms through the lens of emergency response.

Finally, as we observe the current global turmoil, we are excited to introduce a new events commentary series; [Caravanserai](#). Just like the fortified roadside inns of the previous ages, we hope to offer scholars of world systems a safe harbor to work through contemporary events and help each other make more sense of the current global, regional, and local crises. The first of our series was graciously authored by Christopher Chase-Dunn who invites us to think about the election of Mamdani in New York and the potential future of moving the global system in a more progressive direction and the future of democracy to counter the current rising autocracy. We invite you to join us on this journey with us, at Caravanserai. If you wish to contribute, please send submission to Devparna Roy or Dan Pasciuti of 2,000 to 5,000 words examining any current events topic from a *longue durée* perspective.

We are happy to conclude that world-systems scholarship is in good shape. As we enter this age of turbulence and transition, the unidisciplinary project that turns conventional social science on its head, and breaks with liberal narratives of capitalism and modernity, offers a lot of analytical clarity, promise, and hope.