

# Exploring the Relationship between Global Studies and Ekistics

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## Abstract

The special issue of *Ekistics and the New Habitat* (2021, vol. 81 Issue No.3) was initially thought to be straightforward and timely. However, since the call for papers in 2019, the terms of the title 'The Global Pacific: Coastal and Human Habitats' have elicited a call for clarification. This article aims to respond by explaining what is understood by the term 'Global Pacific' as it is used in this special issue's title, and thus articulate the position with which the contributors to this issue are associated. To do so, the author discusses the features of transformative global studies, identifying a resistance among global studies scholars to providing any essential definition of their 'boundaryless' discipline. While this openness sits uncomfortably with the efforts of other global studies scholars to define global studies within institutional contexts, it is an ethical stance that enables global studies to constantly redefine themselves and their discipline in terms of their research practice. It is argued that this stance echoes what Michel Foucault described as an ethic of the care of the self, and what others have called subjectivation. Finally, the theory and practice of ekistics is introduced and compared with global studies in such a way as to situate the special issue in relation to these two disciplines. In this way, readers can appreciate how the special issue focuses on a certain 'Global Pacific', which is located in relation to both global studies approaches and ekistic methods.

## Pepeha

*Ko Taranaki te maunga te rū nei taku ngākau*  
*Ko River Torrens te awa e mahea nei aku māharahara*  
*Ko Black Eagle tōku waka*  
*Ko Cracroft Fookes tōku whānau*  
*Nō Royal Oak ahau*  
*E mihi ana ki ngā tohu o nehe,*  
*o Tāmaki Makaurau noho nei au*  
*Nō Ian Thomas tōku ingoa*  
*Kia ora tātau*

It is appropriate to begin the present special issue with a *Pepeha*, a Māori introduction that situates me in relation to the places and people who define my identity within *Te Ao Māori* – the Māori world of Aotearoa New Zealand. I begin by associating myself with the mountain of the region where my ancestors settled. They are defined by the vessel in which they came to this land in 1881, the Black Eagle. I then mention a river that soothes my worries, the River Torrens in South Australia where I spent my childhood, and from where my mother's side of the family hails. I am associated most clearly, however, with my father's side of the family through Albert Cracroft Fookes who arrived in Aotearoa from England as part of the British army. He helped to establish the colony through treaty, war, trade, and by negotiation. By mentioning this ancestry, I acknowledge the colonial background of which I am the direct descendant and beneficiary. Though belonging to the Taranaki region, I am also associated with my local area, Royal Oak, a part of Onehunga which is an area of



**Fig 1:** Mt. Taranaki, Aotearoa, New Zealand  
Source: Rach Stewart Photography

Auckland where I have lived on and off since 1993. Finally, I acknowledge the landmarks of Tāmaki Makaurau, the Ngāti Whātua land on which the city of Auckland and its university are situated.

## Introduction

When preparing the call for papers for this special issue of *Ekistics and the New Habitat*, the title and approach seemed obvious: 'The Global Pacific: Coastal and Human Habitats'. The terms in this title appeared straightforward and timely; in early 2019 adopting a 'global perspective' was almost conventional, the inclusion of the word 'coastal' alluded to the archipelagic nature of the Pacific, and mention of 'human' spoke to *anthropos* – one of five fundamental elements of ekistics. However, no sooner had the submit button been clicked than questions began to arise concerning these terms. In particular, the approach suggested by the term 'global': What does it mean to describe a geographical area as 'global'? How does such a description serve to define this place? And finally, which approaches, epistemological or otherwise, does the term invoke?

This article addresses these questions by situating the present special issue in relation to the emerging discipline of global studies on one hand, and Ekistics, the scientific approach to the study of human settlements on the other.

In doing so, it aims to clarify what is understood by the 'global' perspectives implied by the title, as well as articulating the discursive position with which the contributors of this issue will be associated. Such an articulation is necessary given the contested nature of the ways in which the Pacific has been (and continues to be) framed according to political interests within colonial, neo-colonial, and geo-political contexts (Medcalf 2020; Teaiwa 2020; Douglas 2021). As will become clear, the 'Global Pacific' offers an alternative to contested descriptions of the Pacific by various stakeholders.

## Transformative Global Studies

In a recent commentary on the epistemological foundations of global studies, Koos & Keulman (2019) point to the work of Manfred Steger and Amentahru Wahlrab whose 2017 study *What is Global Studies?: Theory and Practice* established the intellectual roots of the discipline, delimited its area of study and discussed its methods. According to Koos and Keulman, although the book can "easily pass all traditional academic scrutiny" it leads to one nagging question regarding the field, "to what extent does the work embody an American (or Western, or Global-Northern) outlook as opposed to a genuinely global (or culturally unbiased) outlook?" (Koos & Keulman 2019, p.1). In response to this question concerning 'methodological nationalism', the authors argue that efforts by global studies scholars to move beyond the epistemological and historical foundations of international relations, international studies, and area studies have only been partially successful. In other words, they maintain that global studies continues to rely on theories tied to Cold War politics and nation-state-based theorisations and analyses. Despite these lingering ties, progress within global studies has been made due to the influence of gender theory, sociology, and postcolonial approaches to the field. Global studies has made significant progress in both recognising its biases and limitations, and in developing ways to work with and around them. Indeed, it is in this respect that global studies overlaps with decolonisation movements that seek to expose and deconstruct various biases within western academia.

This research orientation is endorsed by the editors of the *Routledge Handbook to Transformative Global Studies*

(2020) who seek to distance themselves from IR-informed global studies by adding the epithet 'transformative' to the discipline. This term highlights the fundamental importance of scholarship that is both self-reflexive and radically transformative in its attempts to understand and intervene in the forms, dynamics, and politics that constitute the objects of its field. The conceptual structure of the handbook is based on a call for contributions that challenge "popular social myths around the systemic causes of global issues" before presenting alternatives that address the "major structural and socio-cognitive factors" determining them (Hossenini 2020, p.8). Specifically, the editors insist on the importance of addressing forms of "ideologically manufactured consent" that enable the ongoing use, or at least reorganisation of, "carbon-, capital-, and growth-dependent 'modes of livelihood and sociability' in the face of mounting global crises and their local impacts" (Hossenini, 2020, p.8).

If (transformative) global studies has shown itself capable of recognising its biases, then it has also promoted itself as enabling the analysis of new objects of study which are defined as being uniquely 'global' in nature. These topics transcend local, national, and regional boundaries because they occur within global networks that extend beyond and within traditional national and regional boundaries. Global studies therefore facilitates the study of problems relating to new modes of technology, migration, identity, and governance which require, by definition, transversal and multidisciplinary approaches to be apprehended.

The issues studied by global studies can be linked to discussions around 'transdisciplinarity' in higher education and attempts to encourage teachers and learners to go beyond interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary approaches. According to Budwig and Alexander (2020), the challenges of developing transdisciplinary approaches can be traced to discussions in education and psychology led by Jean Piaget in the 1970s when the limitations caused by disciplinary 'silos' led to the misrecognition or even an inability to identify real world problems. Such issues are recognisable however, and as Budwig and Alexander argue, they have been shown to be accessible by adopting a transdisciplinary approach. Global studies distinguishes itself by focusing on real world problems, irrespective of any particular disciplinary area within which they may arise. Significantly, such problems typically occur at the intersection of or across multiple fields (King & McEntee, 2022), and it is this ability to apprehend interstitial problems that sets global studies apart.

One result of this research orientation is that global studies scholars must be capable of drawing on multiple disciplines in order to study this new class of object. This means mastering one or more disciplines either individually and / or collectively. For precisely this reason, when asked to define their disciplinary approach, global studies scholars often adopt a stance conceived of as being at the limits of any singular or inter-disciplinary approach. As Jamie Gillen, Director of Global Studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau / University of Auckland notes when interviewed about the definition of Global Studies, its connection with his area of expertise (discipline) and its value (2021, 8-9):

One of the things that is interesting about Global Studies is that it is a boundaryless field of study. I also think that people need to construct meaning out of their lives by categorising and prioritising things, people, and place that matter. That tension between seeing

the world as a very exciting and dynamic place but also having smaller chunks is what I think is interesting about Geography and Global Studies.

He continues, taking specifically about the value of global studies:

My personal opinion of its value is that it's much more reflective of the way in which society and people interact with one another. I would take this from Hilary Chung who used to always say, the value of Global Studies is what people make of it – not just students, but people who are interested in the field as observers or whoever. For all that it is, it's a little bit amorphous because it's really how you define it.

Finally, Gillen shares his own personal *ethos*:

For me, it's a way to make connections between the local and the global, between who I am as a person and who I want to be in my identity, but also how that connects to other ways of thinking and doing. I think I live Global studies, so many of us in Global Studies, as students and educators live this sense of "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" The thing I find really exciting about all of our community is that we're trying to find these answers together.

Engaging in global studies not only means to address 'global issues' or address 'wicked problems' by using an approach that embraces transdisciplinarity, it equally describes an attitude for engaging with the world that produces meaning for those involved in it. For this reason, the definition of global studies is deeply personal; situated, as it is, in one's location within local and global contexts, and according to one's interests and values.

Whilst adopting the specific approaches developed within traditional disciplines, global studies, like transdisciplinarity in education involves a process of learning through inquiry which enables self-knowledge and identity construction; a process that Michel Foucault described as the "critical ontology of ourselves" (Foucault 1984, p.50). Foucault's concept, elsewhere described as "ethics", "the care of the self" or "subjectivation" (Flynn 1985, p.534) is conceived as the ongoing construction of one's identity through the exploration of the limits of power and knowledge that both enable and constrain us within historically constituted discourses and practices. The importance of the care of the self is that it maintains Foucault's anti-platonic stance. This stance challenges the platonic idea that knowing the self involves discovering one's essence. The care of the self proposes an alternative ethics which involves aesthetics: the conscious stylisation of one's life according to values. Instead of discovering one's essence, Foucault suggests the deliberate construction of one's identity, the cultivation of the self as a care of the self, understood to take place within systems of power-knowledge.

In this respect, the transdisciplinary approach within global studies can be recognised as a process through which the scholar cultivates a sense of self via their research practice. By extension, global studies is constantly defining itself through the studies that its researchers complete. It is therefore not bound by a fixed disciplinary identity, but is involved in an ongoing process of negotiating its identity within discursive fields of knowledge-power relations. Accordingly, global studies cannot *a priori* provide us with a fixed definition of itself, as its practitioners are engaged in a process as varied as those who practice it.

This refusal to define global studies in terms of its disciplinary methods or through a delimited set of objects within its domain sits awkwardly with the research conducted by Hossenini et al. (2020) which aimed to provide a history and definition of the emerging discipline. However, this uncomfortable mismatch between efforts to reinforce our understanding of global studies through the creation of a more robust definition of its objects and practices, on one hand, and the philosophical position that quietly refuses to be defined on the other, is one of the hallmarks of a field which encompasses a range of sometimes contradictory approaches to itself and its role as an academic discipline. For those who engage in global studies as a form of 'subjectivation', the project of establishing a fixed definition of global studies will overdetermine the outcomes of the heretofore open approach which gains traction by virtue of its non-definition. In other words, while some scholars seek to garner recognition and institutional position through academic definition and the articulation of the history of global studies in its various forms, other scholars seem to be engaging in a craft that forms them as much as it produces a certain type of knowledge and practice. For the latter, global studies is an academic programme and field of research that embraces this strategy of non-definition. They are well aware that the polite refusal to define themselves enables them to create the space required for the ongoing construction of their identities through their research which repeatedly attempts to make sense of the world.

The coexistence of these two approaches under the singular umbrella of global studies can be confusing for non-global studies practitioners. However, this misalignment of approaches is unproblematic for those engaged in the field. Attempts to establish the discipline are viewed as context dependent; within the academic institution it is necessary to develop a robust definition of the discipline and an institutional identity. However, within the field itself, it pays to remain open to all possible forms of global studies that may arise. Like the situations being studied, they consist of loose ends and untidy boundaries that do not conform to any positivistic categorisation.

Interestingly, in its attempt to accommodate the scope and diversity of its contributors, the *Routledge Handbook to Transformative Global Studies* is over 500 pages long. It would seem that those looking to define global studies as a discipline with a history and methodological coherence have no shortage of material. Equally, those wishing to embrace a quiet resistance to efforts at 'establishing the discipline' can point to the same material as evidence of the effectiveness of its diversity and openness. Much research has been completed and continues to be done - quite possibly due to the fact that global studies is not restricted to any one singular definition of itself.

By naming the present special issue *The Global Pacific: Coastal and Human Habitats*, the contributors are associated with this transdisciplinary approach that seeks to identify 'real world' or 'wicked problems', the study of which also serves to develop their own sense of place and identity.

### **Ekistics: a scientific approach to the study of the problems of human settlements**

Constantinos Doxiadis (1913-1975) was an architect, engineer and planner who played a key role in the reconstruction of Greece following the destruction of World

War II. This role involved the comprehensive and systematic recording of damage caused during the Nazi occupation, and the planning for national reconstruction - compiled in a Greek text called *Αι θυσίαι της Ελλάδος*. As noted by Doxiadis' colleague and friend, John Papaioannou, what would come to be known as "Ekistics" in the mid-1950s emerged out of Doxiadis' approach to his role prior to and then as part of the Marshall plan (Cited in Fookes 1987). Papaioannou identifies the 'attitude' by which the roots of 'ekistics' can be understood.

Highlighting a "tendency towards a global approach", the scope of which included a focus on an understanding of space through the combination of various disciplines not limited to geography, economics, planning and architecture, but also extending to include the social sciences and the arts (Cited in Fookes 1987, p.219), Doxiadis focused on the study of human settlements through the detailed analysis of different densities and scales using maps, aerial photographs and matrices. This prototypical form of ekistics involved not only detailed empirical research, but also the development of models that could be tested in order to establish ekistic principles. Finally, in the reconstruction project undertaken between 1944 and 1948, Doxiadis relied on the accumulation of vast amounts of documentation and data relating to all aspects of human settlements that had been collected in secret during the occupation of 1943-44. This information focused not only on damaged structures or infrastructure, but also on destroyed natural resources and cultivated spaces. In short, thanks to its broad scope and comprehensive data collection, Doxiadis' ekistics style report enabled the efficient reconstruction of Greece within the context of the Marshall plan.

In the context of this article, the connection between global Studies and ekistics lies in this "global approach" characterised by a broad inclusiveness on one hand, and a systematic collection of empirical research on the other. In this respect, ekistics could be said to be similar in character to global studies in that they both embrace holistic approaches to real world problems. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that ekistics is firmly grounded in planning, architecture and engineering, and as such, it retains a focus on the issues related to human habitats, as opposed to global issues or 'wicked problems' emerging within global networks or at the intersections of national and regional boundaries.

Doxiadis coined the term 'Ekistics' in 1942, deriving it from the ancient Greek word *oikos* which refers to the house, home, or one's habitat, in addition to "the establishment of a colony, settlement or town" (Rushforth 2015, p.64). Ekistics would grow into a method for studying human settlements as well as a theory for constructing them. Through his consultancy, Doxiadis and Associates, as well as through the innovative Delos symposia, during which leading thinkers, engineers, planners, architects, and academics from diverse disciplines gathered aboard the ship *Νέα Ελλάς* to share ideas within an increasingly influential school of thought. The Greek planner also led planning projects throughout the world, including a long-term study of the urbanisation of Detroit, the creation of the new capital in Pakistan, Islamabad, and the redevelopment of Riyadh. Effectively, these arenas provided a means of developing ekistics as both a theory and a practice for the improvement and creation of human settlements. In 1968, Doxiadis published *Ekistics: an introduction to the science of human settlements*, a text

which presents his vision of ekistics as a science. He argues that through the global study of settlements past and present, it is possible to establish ekistic principles that could be used to predict the outcomes of urban development and renewal. These principles were subsequently developed and published in a series of "red books" and numerous papers in the Ekistics journal. Nevertheless, the ambition of developing a science of human settlements was a collective enterprise that, like any scientific discipline, remains an ongoing project. Following Doxiadis' death in 1975, the elaboration of ekistics as a science continued through the efforts of members of the World Society for Ekistics (WSE) and those influenced by his ideas.

Although debate within the World Society of Ekistics (WSE) and elsewhere continues over whether ekistics constituted a science, a sub-field of architecture and planning, or simply an approach to transdisciplinarity (Agrafiotis, 2010), Doxiadis' theory and practice remains an example of transdisciplinary thinking that aimed to grasp the complexity of settlements in their entirety, through the synthesis of multiple perspectives. Significantly, Doxiadis did not content himself with assembling various experts to learn more about cities (multidisciplinarity or interdisciplinarity). On the contrary, his ambition was to synthesise their knowledge using a formalised method that would account for human settlements' dynamism and complexity.

This was achieved in several ways. Firstly, Doxiadis identified five fundamental elements within human settlements: anthropos, nature, networks, shells, society (Fig.1). These domains and their interaction could account for the growth and development of cities and the causes of their problems. It was not sufficient to focus on one element alone, however, but to envision one element in its relationships with the others.

Secondly, Doxiadis identified five forces that would influence the five elements: economic, social, political, technical and cultural (Fig. 2). The interaction of the forces on the elements, and one upon the other, formed the basis of an analysis of how settlements developed. However, whereas Doxiadis' antecedent, biologist and planner Patrick Geddes (1854-1932), had conceived of cities as living organisms and developed matrices to account for their complexity, Doxiadis elaborated on this model considering the full spectrum of settlements at fifteen different scales, ranging from the individual in a single room to a global urban network, the ecumenopolis. In contradistinction to Geddes, Doxiadis defined settlements in terms of their specifically human dimension. They were not considered as natural phenomena created by animals or insects, but as the deliberate product of human activity in all its richness and diversity. In this sense, they were treated as being of a higher order of evolutionary development (Jagadisan & Fookes, 2006). Although interacting with nature, human settlements were defined by the needs of *anthropos*, humanity, therefore,

they were not considered to be an inherent part of the natural world.

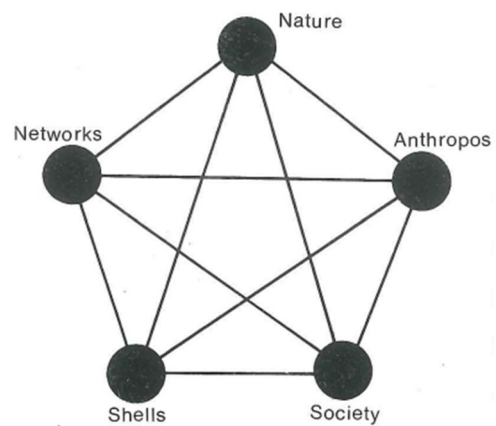
Thirdly, Doxiadis conceived of a settlement as belonging to a region rather than to its immediate surroundings. As such, the study of a human settlement encompassed a much greater field of study than had previously been undertaken; the most famous example being the study of Urban Detroit Area that encompassed four levels on the ekistics scale: (1) USA and Canada, (2) the Great Lakes and the Eastern Megalopolis, (3) the Great lakes Area, and (4) the Urban Detroit Area itself. The conceptualisation of settlements as part of various regions and considered in terms of ekistic elements and forces transformed the way that settlements were conceived.

In addition to the analysis of cities at various scales and in terms of their complex components, Doxiadis insisted on the importance of 'human scale', which refers to the appropriate dimensions of settlements so as to facilitate human happiness. At a time when cities focused on developing height and efficiency, Doxiadis insisted upon the importance of buildings that did not dwarf their inhabitants, and transport networks that while fast, would not endanger their users. In particular, he was concerned about preserving neighbourhoods in which the separation of motor vehicles and pedestrians could ensure the safety and serenity of the latter.

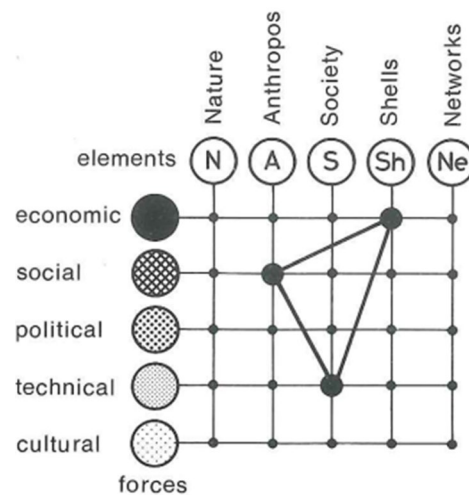
This principle was put into practice through the design of a settlement of Apollonion in Porto Rafiti, Greece. This settlement includes "hu-streets" devoid of mechanised transport, and separate "mec-streets" for mechanised vehicular access. (Doxiadis, 1975).

Fourthly, Doxiadis introduced the scale of time. Akin to the models used in developmental psychology, ekistics differentiates between old and new areas of settlements with different needs and problems. Urban renewal and the prevention of urban sprawl assume a greater prominence in ekistic thinking as a result. To account for the dynamism of cities developing over time, Doxiadis also posited the design of the 'dynopolis' – which he considered to be a model for the 'city of the future'. The dynopolis is a city that was designed to incorporate change from the gradually expanding centre in one direction, rather than through rapid uncontrolled growth on the outskirts of a city in all directions.

Doxiadis' emphasis on human scale, time, and the creation of dynamic cities were important factors in distinguishing his work from that of the members of CIAM, the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne*. Leading modernist architects, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mart Stam, and Sven Markelius founded CIAM in 1928 and hosted a series of conferences focused on issues relating to cities until 1959. They espoused a universal architecture using modernist forms, and through their efforts developed a better understanding of the problems of human settlements. Further, through the application of grids and matrices, they sought to develop principled models that could be applied anywhere in the world. However, the realised designs by CIAM members came to be criticised as "universal, uniform, ugly, inhuman, elitist, [and] lack[ing] meaning" (Mahsud 2006, p.241). Notably, Le Corbusier's apartment buildings would come to be known for their detrimental psychological impacts on residents as they eventually became ghettos on the outskirts of urban centres. Doxiadis attempted to improve upon the CIAM principles by remaining sensitive to the internal complexity of cities and local historical



**Fig. 1:** The five elements of human settlements  
Source: Doxiadis, C. (1975). *Building Entopia*. Athens Publishing Center. p. 44.



**Fig. 2:** The five forces of human settlements  
Source: Doxiadis, C. (1975). *Building Entopia*. Athens Publishing Center. p. 44.

factors. Though operating from universal principles, Doxiadis ekistics grid was more sensitive and detailed than that used by Le Corbusier (Jagadisan & Fookes 2006). Moreover, it accounted for change through time and could be applied at larger scales.

Eventually, though, Doxiadis' theories combined to form the anthropocosmos model, a grid that plotted the ekistic elements against the 15 different scales of his development from a room in a dwelling to the ecumenopolis, a global network of cities that would function as a singular urban settlement (Doxiadis, 1975). The anthropocosmos model incorporated more factors to take into account the gap between desirability and feasibility as well as economic and

time constraints. The completed model has been criticised however (Rushforth 2015) as being overly complex to be workable in practice. That is, the comprehensive and fine grained analysis that it makes possible is perhaps too costly and detailed for governing bodies to undertake. That point notwithstanding, the greater challenge to Ekistics has been the development of other areas of the social sciences and in particular, the rise of urban design, which is seen by some as the successor to ekistics. However, as Rushforth (2015) notes, Urban design could never be "considered as a substitute" (p.75) for Ekistics, due to its interdisciplinary approach. That is, ekistics offers a 'global' perspective that relies on the systematic synthesis of multiple perspectives. The importance of the anthropocosmos model is that it provides a framework through which complexity and change can be understood in a systematic and comprehensive way.

This synthesis takes place using the ekistics grid and method called IDEA-CID, which stands for Isolation of Dimension and Elimination of Alternatives, Continuously Increasing Dimensionality. This method seeks to identify the various dimensions of a settlement, theorise their development by eliminating potential future forms, and then plotting this development within a process of permanent growth. As Rushforth (2015) notes in his critique of this method, although Doxiadis was able to predict in 1968 the urban decay of Detroit that led to its bankruptcy in 2013, the analysis is potentially too cumbersome to be practically applied. On the other hand, as Fookes (1987) has argued, the IDEA-CID model allows the basic aim of Ekistics to be achieved: "to advance our understanding of solutions for the issues and problems of human settlements, by way of their synthesis into both theory and practice. (p.223).

Fookes (1987) insists on the importance of synthesis in terms of theory and practice by pointing to the 18 hypotheses developed by Doxiadis and his associates, and the participants of the regular Delos symposia. These hypothesis inform empirically tested models relating to cities which are understood as growing and dynamic entities that support human flourishing to different degrees. They are an attempt to practically improve the functioning of settlements for their inhabitants whilst developing scientific knowledge about how they function.

When describing his relationship to human settlements, Doxiadis was fond of using the analogy of a physician treating a patient. The planner, who otherwise enjoyed describing himself as a humble "builder", sought to develop a systematic understanding of the problems of human settlements in order to find their treatments. The medical model is important because it conceptualised cities as living organisms whose *telos* ought to be the flourishing of *anthropos* – the people who lived within and in relation to them. In this simple sense, cities are built by and for people, but in many cases, through their design and growth they fail to serve people's needs. Extending the medical analogy, cities can be young or old, in good or poor health, and as they age their ailments need to be accurately diagnosed and treated. Cities are considered as complex and ever changing as human health, and ekistics developed into a complex combination of disciplines with the aim of becoming a science of human settlements.

To be an "ekistician" or practitioner of ekistics thus means to master at least one discipline and to engage with other experts in higher level thinking based on a synthesis of

approaches. Similar to global studies scholars, then, ekisticians pride themselves on going beyond single-disciplinary thinking. Also, like their global studies counterparts, ekisticians consider themselves to be part of a discipline that is synthetic and holistic in its approach, 'going beyond' current methodologies to examine a new class of object.

However, in a reflection of the modernist moment in which ekistics was conceived, Doxiadis defined it as a scientific discipline that aimed to systematically combine various approaches to the study of specific aspects of human settlements into a comprehensive discipline; one capable of developing universally applicable solutions for humanity. Doxiadis aimed for ekistics to become a science of human settlements through which the latter's problems could be understood in their essence and thus be solved or at least alleviated. The aim was to develop a comprehensive body of knowledge (*savoir*) of human settlements and to develop predictive models based on principle and empirical analysis. In this sense, ekistics is platonic and one could describe it as approaching human settlements "globally" – only in the sense of developing a comprehensive understanding of their various forms and evolution. From an ekistics perspective, historical knowledge of settlements is to be combined with analysis of an extensive range of settlements at different scales in order to improve them, and to develop plans for realisable ideal cities described as entopia – in contradistinction to dystopia and utopia. Doxiadis sought to construct a future based on ekistic knowledge, theory and practice. This master narrative is characteristic of modernist theory.

However, in comparison, global studies is less ambitious in its scope whilst still aiming to develop knowledge of global problems in order to understand them, and with the goal of taking action to solve them. The open approach of global studies scholars (discussed earlier) is important here, as it may be considered as a reflection of the lessons learned from the pitfalls of adopting such an all-encompassing modernist approach. This is why Foucault's notion of subjectivation may be helpful to understand how global studies scholars approach their 'boundaryless' discipline that resists any essentialising definition. Hence, the self-reflexive, 'transformative' dimension is a key feature of global studies.

Interestingly, the emphasis in ekistics on 'synthesis' of disciplinary knowledge to achieve higher-order solutions anticipates to some degree the approach developed by global studies scholars. In this regard, ekisticians could look to global studies for ways to articulate this 'synthetic' transdisciplinary level of analysis more clearly within ekistic methodology.

## Conclusion

The aim of this article was not to recount the history of ekistics or to explain ekistic theory in detail. Rather, our concern has been to develop a schematic understanding of how ekistics relates to global studies, and how the present special issue is situated in relation to these two approaches. Thus far, we have demonstrated the transdisciplinary focus of global studies and likened this to the transdisciplinary "synthesis" achieved by ekistics. We have also pointed out a key difference in approach, namely, that ekistics is surely focused on human settlements and the problems related to



them, whereas global studies is examining issues that arise within global networks and across and within national and regional boundaries. What this means is that certain global studies researchers may feel at home contributing to ekistics insofar as their research relates to human settlements. Further, ekistics and its archives may well have a lot to contribute to global studies in terms of understanding particular issues, as well as methodologically. Although there is more research needed to clarify the disjunction between an ekistics rooted in European modernism of the 1950s and the more recent and open approach developed by global studies, it can be acknowledged that the ekistics grid, the IDEA-CID, and the 'attitude' embodied by Doxiadis and emulated by his followers may well prove useful for global studies scholars.

Finally, we began this article with the task of clarifying the sense in which 'Global' was being applied to the contributions in this issue. By designating 'The Global Pacific' as the locus of the current special issue this collection of texts is positioned in relation to both global studies and ekistics. On one hand, contributors have responded to the call for papers to produce research that is revolutionary as it reframes or reimagines the Pacific; on the other hand, insofar as they form part of this journal, the contributions add to the ongoing creation of ekistics as a discipline and as a body of knowledge.

The 'Global Pacific' therefore does not pretend to offer a comprehensive view of the region or claim to be representative of its diversity. Rather, this issue brings together a range of voices that challenge the reader to rethink their understanding of the Pacific, whilst building our transdisciplinary understanding of its dynamic complexity. Further, this understanding is developed with the express purpose of engaging with the problems studied. In this precise sense then, the present special issue is an invitation to engage in the process of reframing the Pacific, to position oneself in relation to that process, and to engage in the project of solving the global issues and the problems of human settlements.

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## Keywords

Ekistics, Transformative Global Studies, Pacific, decolonisation