

*The conference takes place in person only, in the Bowie-Vernon Room, K262, CGIS Knafel Building, 1737 Cambridge Street. Refreshments will be provided to participants. Please note that most of the presenters' theses are due in early March and are works in progress.*

---

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

8:45–9:10 a.m. Coffee and light breakfast

9:10 a.m. Opening remarks

- **Christoph Mikulaschek**, Director, Undergraduate Student Programs; Faculty Associate. Assistant Professor, Department of Government, Harvard University.

9:15–10:45 a.m. Session 1: Global Health Policies, Health Inequities

- **Chair: Eram Alam**, Faculty Associate. Associate Professor, Department of the History of Science, Harvard University.
- **Alin Asim (Molecular & Cellular Biology and Anthropology)** // Tuberculosis through an anthropological lens to decipher TB not merely as a biomedical challenge but as a social phenomenon shaped by history, power relations, and health policies shaped by structured inequalities and injustice in Turkey.
- **Aisha Fathima Kokan (History of Science and Government)** // British colonial famine policies and medical interventions shaping of health narratives in South Asian immigrant communities in the US and UK by exploring how famine governance and public health campaigns influenced perceptions of diet and disease, linking colonial-era policies to present-day health disparities.
- **Kayla Renae Reifel (History of Science and Chemistry)** // How mandatory abortion counseling in Germany was shaped by Nazi eugenics, the East-West divide, and post-reunification policy by employing archival research in Berlin to examine whether counseling protects ethical principles or reinforces state control over reproductive choices, exploring the intersection of medical ethics, historical memory, and public policy.

10:45–11:00 a.m. Break

11:00–12:30 p.m. Session 2: Global and Local Economies

- **Chair: Shinju Fujihira**, Executive Director of the Program on US-Japan Relations.
- **Maria Su Cheng (Applied Mathematics and Social Studies)** // Denmark's resistance to the euro. While regionally and economically integrated, Denmark has repeatedly opposed the European single currency since the 1990s. Its monetary sovereignty is, however, limited under the krone's long-term peg to the euro.
- **Brennis Ivanna Carrillo (Theater, Dance & Media and Government)** // How municipal government funding impacts the arts comparatively across Washington, DC, Mexico City, and London. How different government structures and levels of funding impact access and participation in the arts

and how artistic organizations dedicated to community service operate with and without institutional support.

- **Kevin Wang (Economics and Applied Mathematics)** // Even prior to COVID-19, Thai households were burdened with some of the highest debt levels in the region. The pandemic compounded this vulnerability by generating income shocks through job losses, business closures, and uneven economic recovery. How do these shocks influence repayment behavior, delinquency, borrowing, and access to credit across different types of households?

12:30–1:15 p.m.

### Lunch break

*Lunch will be provided for conference participants.*

1:15–2:45 p.m.

### Session 3: Foreign Policy Failure, Political Mediation, and Diplomacy

- **Chair: John NL Koo**, Graduate Student Associate. PhD Candidate, Department of Government, Harvard University.
- **Han (Hailee) Byur Youn (Government and Economics)** // How third-party actors influence the institutionalization of negotiated political settlements by comparing the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland and the 2000 and 2007 Inter-Korean Summits.
- **Samy Almshref (Philosophy)** // How politicism, the condition of being political across cultural contexts, challenges the assumption that political agency manifests uniformly. American foreign policy failures stem from epistemic misunderstandings of non-Western political life.
- **Thomas Anthony Tait (Government)** // Archival research of the Kennedy, Nixon, Carter, and Reagan administrations to examine how bureaucratic politics and individual psychology explains policy and goal reform in response to foreign policy failure.

2:45–3:00 p.m.

### Break

3:00–4:30 p.m.

### Session 4: Legacies of Colonial Violence and International Humanitarian Law

- **Chair: Joseph Lasky**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Weatherhead Scholars Program. PhD, Department of Government, Cornell University.
- **Eva Chandler Frazier (Social Studies and Ethnicity, Migration, Rights)** // Archival research in US archives in Washington, DC; New York City; and Geneva, Switzerland to reconstruct the transfusion and spread of French practices of counterinsurgency that were developed during the Algerian war for Independence and used in the War on Terror. This project wrestles with the notions of the bodily sovereign, transnational threats, and the impact of institutionalized regimes of colonial violence.
- **Camila Cruz (Social Studies and Philosophy)** // Discourse among state ambassadors in the 1949 Geneva Conventions and 1948 UNGA to uncover ideological influences, hypothesizing Kantian and Hegelian principles as dominant. Through archival research in Geneva, theoretical analysis, and ethical evaluation, this project assesses whether ideological dominance reflects political coercion.
- **Kaitlyn Pham Tran (Government)** // Examining the history of Vietnam, from French colonial violence to post-reunification repression, this project uncovers recurring legacies of violence perpetrated by and against the Vietnamese people. The continued application of historical colonial sites and methods of violence, especially post-reunification, inspires the puzzle of an important research question: Why have former French colonies like Vietnam continued to experience sustained state violence and repression after the end of conflict?

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6

8:45–9:15 a.m. Coffee and light breakfast

### 9:15–10:45 a.m. Session 5: Identity and Minority Politics in Modern History

- **Chair: Deepika Padmanabhan**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Weatherhead Scholars Program. PhD, Department of Political Science, Yale University.
- **Dalal Hassane (History & Literature and Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations)** // A literary and historical analysis with a focus on Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer*, Bachtyar Ali's *The Last Pomegranate Tree*, and archival material on Kurdish-Iraqi cultural production and political activity at the turn of the twenty-first century. Drawing on the concept of rememory, this project focuses on the ways in which sensorial and embodied experiences with war, death, and trauma in the homeland write against state-sanctioned historical trajectories in Kurdistan and Iraq.
- **Katy Yifan Lin (Social Studies and East Asian Studies)** // The transformation of Taiwanese national identity between 1945–1987, exploring how these changes manifested in the Taiwanese people's perceptions of contemporary Japan and the former Japanese Empire.
- **Kawsar Yasin (Social Anthropology and History)** // Using community archives, ethnography, and oral histories, this project traces how Uyghur organizing in Istanbul has shifted due to the Turkish state's closing ties with the People's Republic of China beginning in the late twentieth century. As a result, Uyghur women have become vanguards of long-distance nationalism, resistance, and historical authorship in the Istanbul Uyghur community. Their organizing has resulted in the cultivation of Uyghur worlds rooted in kinship and memory.

10:45–11:00 a.m. Break

### 11:00–12:30 p.m. Session 6: Cold War Politics, Postcolonialism, Foreign Policy

- **Chair: Will Sack**, Graduate Student Associate. PhD Candidate, Department of History, Harvard University.
- **Kendall Carll (History)** // Relying on thousands of documents from archives across the US and Taiwan and dozens of interviews with top policymakers, military leaders, and intelligence professionals, this thesis investigates how the end of the Cold War, political liberalization in Taiwan, and a fierce domestic political battle collectively reshaped the foundations of US-China-Taiwan relations through the early 1990s.
- **Kashish Bastola (History)** // Reconstructing a covert Cold War program through which the Central Intelligence Agency trained Tibetan refugees at Cornell University and Berea College in the 1960s by drawing on multiarchival research across four countries, with an emphasis on oral histories with Tibetan freedom fighters, by uncovering how American universities were instruments of statecraft in Asia and is the first sustained study of this history.
- **Tesia Susan Thomas (Economics and Government)** // Ethno-religious dynamics in Kandy, Sri Lanka, and Calicut, India—two postcolonial societies shaped by British imperialism. While both cities share a history of colonial exploitation and diverse populations, they exhibit divergent intergroup dynamics; Kandy faces ongoing violent tensions, while Calicut flourishes in relative peace.

12:30–1:30 p.m. Lunch break

*Lunch will be provided for conference participants.*

1:30–3:00 p.m.

### Session 7: Law, Leadership, and Media in Democracy

- **Chair: Chinemelu Okafor**, Graduate Student Associate. PhD Candidate, Department of Government, Harvard University.
- **Hana Rose O'Looney-Goto (Government and Economics)** // A comparative analysis of how the legal status of affirmative action (also known as positive discrimination) in the US and the UK influences the salience of race and class identities in distributive justice systems, with a particular focus on university admissions.
- **Dominykas Navickas (Government and Economics)** // A comparative framework for president-parliament relations, which will be applied to explain why Lithuania experienced substantially less democratic backsliding and maintained stronger institutions than Poland since 2004.
- **Sofia Santos de Oliveira (Government and Economics)** // How the mediatization of politics in Brazil impacts political belief formation, policy preferences, and social cohesion. Through a mixed-methods approach, this study explores how misinformation on social media spreads, why it is perceived as credible, and how it influences modern institutions and personal relationships.

3:00 p.m.

### Closing remarks

- **Christoph Mikulaschek**, Director, Undergraduate Student Programs; Faculty Associate. Assistant Professor, Department of Government, Harvard University.

---

### Valuing Accessibility

*The Weatherhead Center for International Affairs welcomes individuals with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you would like to request accommodations or have questions about the access provided, please get in touch with Clare Putnam in advance of your participation or visit. Requests for Sign Language interpreters and/or CART providers should be made at least two weeks in advance, if possible. Please note that the Weatherhead Center will make every effort to secure services, but that services are subject to availability.*