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Message from the Director

As we reach the midway point of the academic year, I’m delighted to have the opportunity to connect with the broad Weatherhead Center community. I have been part of the WCFIA for a long time, first as a Harvard Academy postdoctoral fellow, as a Faculty Associate, as chair of the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, and now as acting director of the Center. The comparative and international research mission of the Weatherhead Center matches my interests well, and I’m thrilled to be part of such a dynamic interdisciplinary research group.

The ongoing Weatherhead Research Clusters focus on topics that warrant sustained attention, including security, inequality, religion and politics, populism and challenges to democracy, and multipolarity. In addition to presenting their ongoing work in the Weatherhead Forum, the clusters sustain a vibrant array of activities for students, faculty, and visitors. One of the most interesting is the new Freedom School: A Graduate Seminar on Theory and Praxis for Studies of the African Diaspora. This interdisciplinary group meets regularly to discuss books from a syllabus cocreated by students. It includes students working on dissertations and general research topics and is funded by the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Religion in Public Life in Africa and the African Diaspora.

In addition to supporting research activities, the Center also helps faculty and affiliates share their research with a broader public audience. One such platform we use is our monthly Epicenter newsletter, which is full of new publications and media mentions. Our communications team also puts the publishing spotlight on such timely topics as Brexit, Syria, and the Trump administration’s impact on the world through their ongoing blog series. Please contact them at media@wcfia.harvard.edu if you would like to contribute to these public conversations.

While my time as acting director is limited, I was thrilled to be here for the launch of the new WCFIA Project on Shi’ism and Global Affairs. From the war in Yemen, the civil strife in Syria, and the devastation in Iraq and beyond, a diverse array of conflicts in countries with Shi’a minority or majority populations has emerged as a significant dynamic on the Middle Eastern geopolitical landscape. In this context, Iran’s foreign policy in the region and its relations with its network of allies is a significant topic of study, particularly in light of its role and influence in regional geopolitics. This is all the more salient given the ongoing nuclear standoff between Iran and the United States and the ongoing contest for regional hegemony between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Beyond concrete regional effects, these emerging developments impact global politics—including international security, foreign policy concerns, and global energy markets. In addition to its focus on the politics of sectarianization, the project also calls our attention to the dynamics of desectarianization. This is a key focus of my own research agenda and a topic that I think is ripe for more attention, as I detail in my report for the Century Foundation, Lebanon, the Sectarian Identity Test Lab.

Finally, few research topics rise to the level of global concern quite like climate change. To that end, the Center recently hosted a Manshel Lecture in American Foreign Policy by Kathryn Sikkink, the Ryan Family Professor of Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. In this talk, Professor Sikkink called for all actors socially connected to the climate change problem to step up and take responsibility for change. The talk drew on theories of forward-looking responsibility for justice, and provided practical and evidence-based ideas for the most effective actions for individuals and institutions to address climate change. We devoted one of this issue’s fall features to this timely topic—please read “Toward a Politics of Responsibility: The Case of Climate Change” on page 12 for an excerpt of Professor Sikkink’s talk.

Enjoy the winter break!

Melani Cammett
Weatherhead Center Acting Director
Matteo Maggiori Wins Carlo Alberto Medal
Faculty Associate Matteo Maggiori, associate professor of economics at Harvard University, is the 2019 recipient of the distinguished Carlo Alberto Medal. The award, established in 2007 and given by the Centre for Economic Policy Research, recognizes an Italian scholar under the age of forty who has contributed significantly to the field of economics. Matteo’s research focuses on international economics, finance, and macroeconomics.

Pippa Norris is the 2019 Charles Merriam Award Recipient
Faculty Associate Pippa Norris, Paul F. McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics at Harvard Kennedy School, received the Charles Merriam Award, which “recognizes a person whose published work and career represent a significant contribution to the art of government through the application of social science research.” The American Political Science Association (APSA) gives the award biennially.

David Howell Honored with Named Professorship
Faculty Associate David Howell, previously a professor of Japanese history at Harvard University, was awarded a named professorship: Robert K. and Dale J. Weary Professor of Japanese History. He shares the honor with his colleague Wai-yee Li.

Paul J. Kosmin Wins Runciman Book Prize
Faculty Associate Paul Kosmin, assistant professor of the classics at Harvard University, is the corecipient of the 2019 Runciman Book Prize for Time and Its Adversaries in the Seleucid Empire (Harvard University Press, 2018). The award is administered by the Anglo-Hellenic League and is given to a book about Greece. According to the chair of the judging panel, (Kosmin’s book) touches upon fundamental concepts of how we understand ourselves and our place in the world.

Ieva Jusionyte Wins Third Place Victor Turner Prize in Ethnographic Writing
Faculty Associate Ieva Jusionyte, assistant professor of anthropology and of social studies at Harvard University, received third place for the Victor Turner Prize in Ethnographic Writing for her book Threshold: Emergency Responders on the US-Mexico Border (University of California Press, 2018). The annual award is given by the Society for Humanistic Anthropology (SHA) and recognizes innovative ethnographic works—from monographs to biographies to poems—written in the spirit of Victor Turner, who “devoted his career to seeking an accessible language that would re-open anthropology to the human subject.”

Constance M. Bourguignon Named Rhodes Scholar
Undergraduate Associate Constance Bourguignon, also an Undergraduate Research Fellow in the Canada Program, was one of seven Harvard seniors named Rhodes Scholars—and one of two Canadian Rhodes Scholars. Applicants are chosen for their strong academic excellence and commitment to make a difference in the world, among other criteria. Rhodes Scholarships provide all expenses for two or three years of study at the University of Oxford; Bourguignon, a native of Montreal, plans to study education at Oxford starting in September 2020.

MICHAEL KREMER WINS NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS
Faculty Associate Michael Kremer, Gates Professor of Developing Societies, Department of Economics at Harvard University, is one of three recipients awarded the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2019. He shares the prize with Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the three won “for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty.”

The three Laureates use an experiment-based approach to fight global poverty, by breaking down larger problems into smaller and more precise questions. This approach allows them to design more specific experiments among the people most affected. From improving school results in western Kenya to introducing preventive health care subsidies in many countries, the research done by Kremer and his colleagues has measurably helped reduce poverty around the world.

Rabiat Akande Receives Harvard Law School 2019 Writing Prize
Academc Scholar Rabiat Akande received the Harvard Law School’s 2019 Writing Prize of the Program on Law and Society in the Muslim World. She is a corecipient of the award, which she won for her dissertation “Navigating Entanglements: Contestations over Religion-State Relations in British Colonial Northern Nigeria, c. 1890–1977.”

Naima Green-Riley Wins CPD Doctoral Dissertation Grant
Graduate Student Associate Naima Green-Riley is the recipient of the 2019–2020 CPD Doctoral Dissertation Grant. The grant, offered by the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy, recognizes and supports the work of emerging scholars from around the world engaged in cutting-edge research on public diplomacy. Green-Riley studies US and Chinese public diplomacy through a lens of political science, communications, and psychology. She is also a former foreign service officer at the US Department of State.

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For a full list of “Of Note” visit the Centerpiece online: wcfia.harvard.edu/publications/centerpiece
This fall heralded the start of a new—and timely—research group at the Weatherhead Center: the Project on Shi’ism and Global Affairs. This project engages in a multidisciplinary study of Shi’ism, the second largest denomination in Islam, at a crucial historical moment in which Shi’a majority states, actors, and social movements are gaining increasing prominence and relevance in world affairs. The research focuses on the intersection of Shi’ism and geopolitics and also moves beyond to incorporate traditionally disjointed subjects relating to the study of Shi’ism—from the Shi’a global diaspora to interfaith dialogue and sectarian de-escalation to Shi’a thought, history, identity, and diversity of confessional groups within Shi’ism itself.

The project’s new publication outlet, Visions, brings together these various strands of emerging research on the understanding of Shi’ism today. Visions constitutes an important step in addressing some of the shortcomings and disconnections in the field, by enriching our understanding and discussions over these complex and interwoven subjects, and serving as a springboard for more advanced academic and scholarly research and publications.

The Project on Shi’ism and Global Affairs is also deeply committed to incorporating rigorous scholarly research and findings with contemporary challenges and dynamics facing interlinked Muslim communities across the globe. As such, project affiliates have spoken recently on a variety of topics such as current geopolitical developments, including “Iraq and the Geopolitics of Protest,” as well as an interactive roundtable discussion titled “Re-Drawing the Rules of the Game? Iran, Israel, and the Geopolitics of the Levant.”

In September, Project Director Payam Mohseni and Associate Mohammad Sagha conducted a series of youth workshops titled “Shi’ism in America” at the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, Michigan. The interactive workshops focused on several themes, including pluralism within Islam and how to approach interfaith dialogue within the framework of Shi’i Islam. Also discussed was the project’s focus on sectarian de-escalation and how Muslim Americans can positively engage with greater American civil society.

The next semester will bring more engaging interdisciplinary events and research, as the project gears up for an international symposium on theology and global affairs within transnational Shi’a communities. Stay up to date by checking the Project on Shi’ism and Global Affairs website (shiism.wcfia.harvard.edu) or following us on Twitter (@WCFIAShiism) and facebook (www.facebook.com/ShiismWCFIA).

For more information about our Research Groups visit: wcfia.harvard.edu/research-groups
The Weatherhead Initiative on Gender Inequality (WIGi) was started in 2015 by Jason Beckfield, Iris Bohnet, Mary Brinton, Claudia Goldin, Alexandra Killewald, and Kathleen McGinn. The initiative recently concluded its research in the spring of 2019.

WIGi was designed to facilitate interdisciplinary, comparative, wide-ranging research and scholarly discussions of gender inequality in postindustrial societies. To that end, the initiative welcomed the perspectives of economists, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and demographers. Funded students and invited speakers from Europe, North America, East Asia, and the Middle East shared their expertise on topics from daycare to discrimination and from the workplace to the welfare state. The result was four years of lively discussion and the emergence of a community of individuals—undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral and visiting scholars, and faculty—committed to understanding the causes and consequences of gender inequality in the postindustrial world.

In its four years, WIGi hosted almost forty seminars—which typically attracted a few dozen participants, including doctoral students from schools across the Harvard community in addition to WCFIA visitors and faculty. WIGi funded an impressive thirty-eight graduate and undergraduate research projects with grants totaling over $210,000. Each fall, one seminar was devoted to presentations by WIGi undergraduates, and in the spring one seminar was devoted to presentations by the WIGi doctoral students. This provided the opportunity for WIGi-funded students to receive feedback at an early stage of their projects.

WIGi also hosted several special events, including the April 2018 conference, “Gender Equality: It’s About Time” and the April 2019 event, “Harvard Hears You: The 2019 Summit on Gender Equity.” On September 25, 2019, WIGi cochair Jason Beckfield was a panelist at the Paris-Boston Women’s Forum, an event dedicated to the discussion of issues shaping the future of gender equality across all sectors of the economy. WIGi faculty have been invited to provide commentary on specific aspects of gender inequality and social policy for a number of major news outlets, including broadcasts in the US as well as in European and East Asian countries.

Our 2018 conference in Talloires, France, brought together scholars from Europe and the US to consider the causes of—and threats posed by—the rise of radical politics on both sides of the Atlantic. Rather than engaging in definitional struggles or protracted debates about the primacy of one causal factor over another, the goal of the conference was to mobilize cutting-edge research toward a clear and accessible discussion concerning the future of democratic politics and equitable social relations in Europe and the United States. These topics were explored from multidisciplinary directions: political scientists reflected on institutional dynamics (and solutions) and the structure of party politics; sociologists brought to the discussion research on collective identities, group boundaries, and migration; and historically oriented scholars drew lessons from past periods of radicalism. A new six-part Monkey Cage series at the Washington Post, edited by Faculty Associates Bart Bonikowski and Daniel Ziblatt, features related commentary from conference participants. For an in-depth account of the panels and topics of discussion at Talloires, read the full report by Bo Yun Park, an affiliate of the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Comparative Inequality and Inclusion and PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology. For links to the full report and Monkey Cage series, visit the Centerpiece online: wcfia.harvard.edu/publications/centerpiece/fall2019/talloires
Last spring, eighteen Harvard College students received travel grants from the Weatherhead Center to support their thesis field research on topics related to international affairs. Since their return in September, the Weatherhead Center has encouraged these Undergraduate Associates to take advantage of the Center’s research community by connecting with graduate students, faculty, postdocs, and visiting scholars. Early in the spring semester on February 6–7, 2020, the students will present their research in a conference that is open to the Harvard community. Four Undergraduate Associates write of their experiences in the field last summer:

Julie Ngauv
Julian Sobin Undergraduate Research Fellow. Department of History, Harvard College. Research interests: Genocide studies; oral history and memory; social history; Southeast Asian history; and Asian diaspora studies.

The Khmer Rouge took control of Cambodia in April 1975, remaining in power until they were deposed by a coalition of Vietnamese and Khmer Rouge deserters in January 1979. Over the course of four years, the Khmer Rouge subjected the entire population of Cambodia to forced labor in the rural countryside, establishing policies that destabilized the entire society. They targeted and killed elites, anyone who was educated, members of the former regime, and ethnic minorities.

As far back as I can remember, my father has told me stories of genocide: how he fought to survive, the things the Khmer Rouge did to him and his family, and the ways that this period scarred his own childhood. When I got to Harvard, wanting to study this, I realized that there wasn’t much foundation for me to stand on. Scholarship on the Cambodian genocide is rather scarce. The literature that did exist was missing something essential: a Cambodian voice, and the level of understanding that it brings.

In my sophomore year I read From the Land of Shadows, an overview of the genocide and the diaspora that followed, by a Cambodian American professor named Khatharya Um. She opened my eyes to my own ability to illuminate history: there are things that become clear only with an understanding of Khmer culture and language. I also found that many of the existing survivor narratives and memoirs described the experiences of people from urban, well-connected backgrounds. These dominant narratives were very different from the stories I had heard from my family, who had grown up in the rural provinces of Cambodia. This past summer, I set out to find these stories.

The time I spent in Cambodia was incredibly eye-opening for me, both personally and as a researcher. Over the course of a month, I travelled to many provinces, interviewing fifteen individuals about their experiences during the Khmer Rouge regime. I sought to understand how the Khmer Rouge defined and enforced their ideas of what it meant to be truly Cambodian. How did survivors resist, carving out, preserving, and maintaining for themselves what it means to be Cambodian?

I spent the month staying with family members that I have seen only three other times in my life, and I completely immersed myself in the daily bustle of Phnom Penh. Every morning in the cool dawn hours, people woke up—my aunts among them—to set up their wares. They hurried to organize their small house-front restaurant for the morning rush of students that would come at 7:00 a.m., right before schools start for the day.

When I was there, I talked, laughed, and asked many questions—seeing for myself what it was like to live in Cambodia in the present day, forty years after the Khmer Rouge eliminated large swaths of the population. At first glance, you could barely see the remnants of the regime: life rushed forward with such urgency that it seemed impossible to keep up, impossible to stop and think about the past. If you paused to dig deeper, however, you would find that this appearance was only superficial, and deep scars still remained. People still paused to think; to remember.

I travelled to rural temples, where the elderly and needy tend to gather and live, and I interviewed genocide survivors in their homes. I was amazed how nonchalant people were about sharing their experiences with me. When I was preparing for this research, I spent a lot of time thinking about how to make individuals comfortable. How could I possibly ask them to share such sensitive and traumatic memories with me? To my surprise, people opened up and were willing to speak about anything and everything. It reminded me of what I knew but had forgotten in the whirlwind of preparation: that survivors of the genocide want to share, and want their stories to be remembered despite living in a society that desperately tries to forget. This experience of genocide, struggle, and survival is something that has deep roots in Cambodia: living under the Khmer Rouge was a shared, collective experience for every adult over the age of forty. Today, to be Cambodian means to have survived against all odds. I hope to do justice to those who shared their stories with me.

Used with permission from Julie Ngauv

Dispatches

Undergraduate Researchers in the Field

Julie Ngauv

Julie Ngauv at Angkor Wat in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Used with permission from Julie Ngauv
The European Union, by virtue of the policies and sociocultural environments of its member states, is widely acknowledged to be one of the most LGBT-friendly regions in the world. In the past two decades, a majority of EU member states have implemented numerous wide-ranging domestic protections to expand the rights of their LGBT citizens. While EU national governments, as well as many academics, have sought to highlight and address ongoing disparities within the European Union for LGBT citizens to access certain rights and institutions, there has been a severe paucity of both research and public policy discussion addressing the intersection of the LGBT community and forced migration. This lack of popular and scholarly discourse on the intersectionality of LGBT rights with refugee rights occurs despite the fact that thousands of LGBT individuals migrate to Europe every year in order to flee persecution on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity, joining thousands more LGBT individuals who seek international protection on the basis of conflicts occurring in their home countries.

This summer, I conducted seven weeks of original field research in twelve different EU member states to evaluate how member states process LGBT claims for asylum. Through my field research, I interviewed EU officials, national asylum agencies, refugee NGOs, and LGBT rights activists in order to track disparities in implementation of the EU’s Asylum Qualification and Procedure Directives as they relate to the intake and care of LGBT asylum seekers.

I specifically focused my field interviews on LGBT asylum NGOs in order to gather and document anecdotal evidence of both legal barriers and the necessary “legal infrastructure” missing for LGBT asylum seekers throughout the EU. I eventually shifted my questioning away from a simple needs assessment of LGBT asylum seekers in the European Union to understanding how overlooked components of Europe’s asylum process are not adapted for LGBT asylum cases.

In addition to the obvious problem of homo/transphobic judges and immigration officials, I’ve found that smaller parts of the process—everything from the translators, to the country of origin information reports (utilized by refugee status determination officers and the appeals judges to assess the safety of countries for LGBT persons), all the way to the fact that many of the initial asylum hearings are done publicly (and thus inhibit disclosure of LGBT status)—play an outsized role in leading to negative adjudications beyond just the “decision makers being homophobic.”

The vast number of anecdotes that I have gathered in twelve different countries provides convincing evidence these are issues not limited to any specific country but rather are recurring across the European Union. Translators, for example, have often purposefully mistranslated terms like gay, lesbian, and trans, as well as boyfriend/girlfriend, to heterosexual wording—like “I came out as different when I was thirteen,” or “he was my very close friend”—that completely changes the heavily scrutinized narrative of LGBT asylum interviews.

I also found in numerous countries that translators—often from the same country of origin as the asylum seeker—sometimes offer legal advice to LGBT asylum seekers, or tell them not to “shame their family” by talking about LGBT persecution in their interviews. There’s also a lack of standardized terminology employed for a number of language translation, including Arabic, Dari, Pashto, and Farsi translation of LGBT terms.

Many asylum agencies use grossly inadequate country of origin reports that do not include sections on the human rights conditions of LGBT individuals in claimants’ home countries, thus severely impeding judges’ and immigration officials’ abilities to determine a “well-founded fear of persecution.” There are so many additional interesting barriers ranging from Western conceptualizations of “a linear coming out process” to racial disparities in how LGBT asylum seekers from Chechnya are adjudicated versus Ugandans. I have learned that refugee status determination officers—often under pressure to deny as many asylum claims as possible due to hostile domestic antimigrant politics—will seek to either disprove an LGBT asylum seeker’s identity as being legitimately LGBT (i.e., accuse them of lying) or seek to disprove that the LGBT community in their country of origin faces violence or discrimination.

I administered a standardized survey during all my interviews with LGBT asylum NGOs that covered a number of these common gaps—translators, country of origin reports, trainings for refugee status determination officers, trainings for appeal judges, homo/transphobic refugee reception center conditions, differences for transgender asylum seekers versus gay men/lesbian women, and so forth. In addition to NGOs, I interviewed a number of pan-European experts, including representatives from the European Union Asylum Support Office, ILGA—Europe, and several academics.

Through combining the research puzzle of pan-European asylum infrastructure gaps with NGO data, this thesis will hopefully contribute to meaningful new knowledge on the complex interactions between European law, LGBT asylum seekers, national governments, and NGOs. As the European Union Commission and Parliament are in the process of “recasting” (or updating) their asylum—and migration—related directives beginning in 2020 with the start of a new European Commission, my hope is this field research may be of use in spotlighting gaps in implementation of existing European-level protections and standards and one day might play a role in the formulation of new European-wide migration policy.

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Photos: Fall 2019 Events

WARREN AND ANITA MANSHEL LECTURE IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

On November 21, 2019 the Weatherhead Center hosted the Manshel Lecture featuring Kathryn Sikkink on “Toward a Politics of Responsibility: The Case of Climate Change.” See our feature on page 12 including an excerpted transcript and photos from the event. Photo credit: Martha Stewart

INEQUALITY AS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PROCESS

On November 1–2, 2019 the Center hosted a conference and public event to celebrate the release of the summer 2019 Daedalus issue “Inequality as a Multidimensional Process,” a collective volume by CIFAR’s Successful Societies program. Top (left to right): Moderator Jennifer Hochschild (Harvard University) and speakers Paul Pierson (University of California at Berkeley), Michèle Lamont (Harvard University), Katherine S. Newman (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), and Chuck Collins (Institute for Policy Studies). Bottom: Attendees of the conference. Photo credit: Martha Stewart

WCFIA ORIENTATION

On August 26–27, 2019 the Center welcomed new and returning affiliates during orientation. The two-day event includes formal introductions, faculty-led panel discussions on current international topics, and wraps up with a casual BBQ for affiliates and their families. Pictured below: Faculty Associates Erica Chenoweth (HKS & Radcliffe), Yuhua Wang (Government), and Acting Center Director Melani Cammett (Government & HSPH) speak at the “Authoritarianism and Resistance” panel. Photo credit: Lauren McLaughlin

WORLDWIDE WEEK AT HARVARD

Worldwide Week at Harvard was held October 6–12, 2019 and showcased the remarkable breadth and depth of Harvard’s global engagement. During Worldwide Week, the Center hosted several seminars and special events with global or international themes, including our third International Comedy Night featuring Cristela Alonzo. Photo credit: Spencer Shames

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THE WEATHERHEAD FORUM

The Weatherhead Forum showcases the research of the various research groups that are associated with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. In fall 2019, the forum continued to bring together the diverse constituencies of the Center so all affiliates may learn about and discuss emerging academic research from our community.

Top row (left to right): Israel G. Solares (featuring the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Global Transformations (WIGH)); Julian Gewirtz (featuring The Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies); Talia Shiff and Charlotte Lloyd (featuring the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Comparative Inequality and Inclusion).

Bottom row (left to right): Elke Winter (featuring the Canada Program); Nina Gheihman (featuring the Graduate Student Associates Program); Yury Kucheev and Jon E.B. Lervik (featuring the SCANCOR-Weatherhead Partnership). Photo credit: Lauren McLaughlin

SPECIAL EVENT | PROGRAM ON U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS

On September 17, 2019 a panel entitled, “Japan’s Military Power and Diplomacy in the 21st Century” featured Sheila A. Smith (pictured), Senior Fellow for Japan Studies, Asia Program, Council on Foreign Relations; Noriyuki Shikata, Associate, Program on U.S.-Japan Relations and Former Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Beijing; and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor, Emeritus, Harvard Kennedy School.

Photo credit: Michelle Nicholasen
Isabel Parkey
Rogers Family Research Fellow. Committee on Degrees in History & Literature and the Committee on Degrees in Folklore & Mythology, Harvard College. Research interests: International organizations; intellectual property law; and the commodification of culture in contemporary Ghana.

Before I spent the summer in Accra, the capital of Ghana, I had spent months reading about the country’s 2005 copyright law and its provisions on the protection of folklore. Countless interviews and news articles online had warned of the law’s potential threats to creative industries in Ghana, while others had hailed its passage as a necessary move to maintain the integrity of the nation’s unique and most significant resource. Amidst all of this governmental discourse, I wondered what the actual effects of such a law might have for everyday users and practitioners of folklore. Over the course of my seven weeks in Accra, it became clear to me that there was a vast disparity between the letter of the law and the actual possibility of its enforcement.

Passed despite the complaints of concerned academics and major music industry players, the 2005 Copyright Act had effectively nationalized folklore. The law mandated licensing agreements and the payment of royalty fees from a government entity called the National Folklore Board for any usage of folklore outside the “customary context.” Historically, the nation’s copyright law had been applied only to commercial uses of folklore outside of Ghana, including Paul Simon’s 1990 album *Rhythm of the Saints*, which included a sample of a Ghanaian folk tune called “Yaa Amponsah.” The 2005 act, however, also covered domestic commercial use, requiring payments from Ghanaians themselves for the use of their folklore.

While many people I interviewed in Accra, from traditional coffin builders to archivists, expressed outrage at the idea of such a law, it ultimately came out that none of them had even heard of the law in the first place—much less had been following it. Indeed, to drive along the highways in Accra is to be hit with an onslaught of *adinkra* brand pastries, mass-produced Kente cloth backpacks, and advertisements for a new luxury *adinkra* high-rise building, all of which seem to stand in the face of the law. *Adinkra* symbols and Kente cloth are, in fact, the only two expressions of folklore explicitly protected under the Copyright Act.

When I spoke to the acting director of the National Folklore Board later in my visit, I asked her about this proliferation of folklore in the commercial sphere. She noted that the board’s primary targets were large telecom companies and banks, not individuals—in other words, those profiting the most off of the nation’s folklore, and those able to pay the largest fees back to the National Folklore Board. They were also, she insisted, companies with the power and visibility to promote Ghanaian folklore, both at home and abroad. But there seemed to me to be a missing link between granting permission for the use of an *adinkra* symbol as the logo for a bank and the “protection” of folklore that had originally been touted as the board’s primary mandate.

I looked at archival materials in the Nketia Archive at the University of Ghana’s Institute for African Studies and in the Public Records and Archive Administration Department to better understand the development of cultural policy in Ghana, exploring the various ways that the “protection” of folklore has been enacted since independence in 1957. From Kwame Nkrumah’s large-scale national cultural projects to the UNESCO-assisted cultural policy documents produced in 1975 and 2004, to the actual legislative processes behind the passage of the 2005 Copyright Act and its 1985 predecessor, I began to uncover the various ways that folklore has been defined and deployed as both a symbol of national unification and a resource for economic development.

I also spoke with the people behind and affected by some of these policies, interviewing copyright administrators, members of the National Folklore Board, academics, and cultural practitioners to better understand the ways in which the law on folklore does—and does not—function. The tensions between the legal and cultural spheres were often palpable, as what some called safeguarding, others called dispossession. Across the board, however, the economic realities were evident. Though the government hoped to curb “inappropriate” usages of Ghanaian folklore, the funds to actually enforce the law were almost nonexistent. And for artists and everyday Ghanaians, the tourism market often presented the most potential for income, necessitating commercial adaptations of traditional culture in order to sell a kind of recognizable “Ghanaianess” to foreign visitors.

As I finished writing my thesis this semester, my analysis was constantly informed and altered by the disparity between rhetoric and reality that I experienced this summer, and by a new understanding of the potency of the category of folklore itself in official and personal settings alike.
Russell Reed


Over the winter and summer breaks, I had the privilege of performing research in both Belgium and Rwanda in support of my larger undergraduate thesis project. Currently, my research seeks to connect two seemingly disparate histories: that of the Royal Museum for Central Africa and its role in educating and (mis)informing the Belgian public about the African colonies, and of mountain gorilla conservation in Virunga and Volcanoes National Parks, housed in Congo-Kinshasa and Rwanda, respectively.

I spent the beginning of my summer in Belgium. I was primarily at the Royal Museum for Central Africa, where I spoke with a number of researchers—from primatologists to anthropologists to curators—about the history and politics of the museum. This research complemented the archival work I began in January, which had jumpstarted my larger thesis project by focusing on the role of zoos humains (human zoos) in promoting Belgian colonial expansion in Africa.

My thesis begins with the phenomenon of the zoos humains, which involved the displacement and exhibition of 267 Congolese people at the 1897 World’s Fair in Brussels. The exhibit was extremely popular, with nearly one-third of the Belgian population visiting it firsthand. This success led to the foundation of the Royal Museum for Central Africa, where I worked. I consider the role this event—and over the next century, the museum itself—played in dehumanizing Congolese people in the Belgian colonial imagination, likening them to animals and emphasizing their perceived incivility and primitiveness. I argue that the museum and its propaganda were central to rationalizing the colonial project, too, creating a racist logic to pursuing civil colonialism—even while brutal and primarily capitalistic colonialism took place under Leopold and later the Belgian colonial government.

I spent the remainder of the summer in Rwanda. I met many individuals involved in the conservation community, participated in a number of site visits at museums and parks, and visited the mountain gorillas in Volcanoes National Park. I wrapped up my work as an affiliate of the University of Rwanda’s Center of Excellence in Biodiversity by holding a seminar on my findings for Rwandan and Congolese students and faculty members.

Virunga National Park was founded in what is now the southeastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1925, making it the first national park in Africa. The park was founded following the discovery of mountain gorillas there, which have long been considered of great importance to conservation and, perhaps connectedly, to human and evolutionary science. They have also been used as a reference point to the “less-evolved” human, something that was theorized in the days leading up to European colonialism in Africa through (pseudo)scientific racism.

Herein lies the connection I intend to tease out with my paper: how can the dehumanization of African people in the colonial and postcolonial imagination, and the (at times) simultaneous humanization of these nonhuman gorillas, be placed into one narrative, and what are its implications for our understanding of modern gorilla conservation, and of the larger international conservation regime? I believe that the long history of human and animal governance in the region complicates current conservation discourse, illustrating that the fine lines we seek to draw between “human” and “animal” have long been blurred in the region.

I look to the highly varied statuses of Virunga National Park in Congo and Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda—which neighbor one another and house a fluid population of mountain gorillas—to attempt to explain the colonial influence on modern conservation efforts. In Congo, Virunga National Park continues to be one of the most endangered parks in the world, with local subsistence and international oil interests both competing against a militarized international conservation presence to destabilize the park. The park is headed by a member of the Belgian royalty and relies almost entirely on international funding. Its tourism operation is weak, comparatively inexpensive, and regularly shuttered due to political turmoil and kidnappings.

Meanwhile, the Rwandan park has become a highly lucrative tourism operation under the strong postgenocide government, led increasingly by the domestic government. The park and its gorillas have been overtaken by the Rwandan Development Board (who were not, at times, thrilled with my research inquiries), and they have undermined the power of international agencies in their own conservation efforts, holding arguably the most sovereign wildlife conservation operation on the continent. This effort has been fueled by tourism revenue, but it originated from the Rwandan government’s interest in altering the international perception of Rwanda from a poverty-stricken, genocidal country in Africa to its current status as a development success story—the “Singapore of Africa,” as it is often called.

My findings will come from a large variety of mediums, and I hope to use this history to provide new perspective in conversations related to environmentalism, sovereignty, aid, and sustainable conservation and development in Rwanda, Congo, and beyond.
Today I’m going to be speaking about material from my forthcoming book, *The Hidden Face of Rights: Toward a Politics of Responsibility*. And I’m very happy because literally the first copy of the book arrived in my office yesterday. So you are the first people ever to see the new book, and this book is based on what I call the Castle Lectures that I gave at Yale almost two years ago.

And the topic of the book is a broader look at how to combine rights and responsibilities. And climate change is just one of about five topics I talked about in that book, but it’s a particularly useful case to make the main point of the book, and that is that it’s not enough in these days to talk about rights. We have a big gap in implementation with rights. And in order to implement rights more fully, we have to think simultaneously about rights and responsibilities.

And that when we think of responsibilities, it’s not enough to think just about state responsibilities. Of course, and of course with climate change, we want to think about state responsibilities for mitigating climate change, we want to think about corporate responsibilities. But we also want to think about responses of other nonstate actors. And in that I include—I include not just corporations for nonstate actors, but also NGOs, also universities, also individuals.

And now some of you who may be familiar with my previous work or listening to Melani’s description of my previous work, you may say, so why is Kathryn Sikkink, who’s an IR scholar of human rights, transitional justice, and norm theory all of a sudden talking about climate change? And it is true that I’m new to this issue. But I’m talking about it for a couple of reasons. One reason is that climate activists themselves are beginning to use human rights as a frame to think about climate.

And so for example, here are the young plaintiffs in a lawsuit in *Juliana v. US* which is asking the US government to recognize the rights of future generations and step up and do more on climate change. There is a similar case in Colombia that the young plaintiffs have won their case in the Colombian Constitutional Court, and the Constitutional Court is requiring the Colombian government to meet with the young plaintiffs and other communities to form an intergenerational climate pact, and especially around deforestation. Colombia, to meet its Paris Agreement goals, has promised [to stop] deforestation. And so it focuses on how Colombia can do a better job on that.

Greta Thunberg is working with fifteen other children to bring a case to the United Nations. Here she’s bringing the case to the UN committee that oversees the Convention on the Rights of the Child—the Human Rights of the Child, and she’s saying that states have violated the human rights of children and the future generations of children by failing to address climate change.

But even more kind of far-fetched arguments—rights arguments—are being made in this area. So there’s arguments of the rights of trees. This comes from Christopher Stone’s book, but also a very well-cited law review article on the rights of trees. People are making arguments about getting rights for rivers, and here, Colorado River was trying to join other rivers of the world, including the Ganges River, which are already recognized as bearers of rights.

And perhaps the biggest example is the Earth herself being seen as having rights. So Pachamama is the Earth goddess in some Andean indigenous cultures, and in both Ecuador and Bolivia, the constitutions talk about rights of Pachamama. So it’s not so much that I’m moving to climate change, it’s that the climate change people have come to my realm, the realm of human rights.

I am not at all opposed to these rights claims; I’m not opposed to the notion that rivers, trees, or Pachamama herself should have rights. And I’m, in fact, particularly enthusiastic about the idea of thinking about rights of future generations. But it illustrates my broader point in this book, and that is: rights only get us so far. And if we do not combine our concern with rights with a robust understanding of responsibilities—of states and nonstate actors—we will not be able to implement these rights.

Now the other reason I’m kind of following through on thinking about climate change is that—this is in my rights and responsibilities framework—IR scholars who’ve dedicated themselves much more to climate change, in this
case, Robert Keohane, who spoke here two years ago, are starting to write in a way that really leaves a door open for people who do my kind of work.

So here's Keohane and Oppenheimer, and they're saying climate change is not going to be solved at the level of international negotiations, right? It will depend much on domestic and transnational politics. And—I really love this part—the Paris Agreement accomplishes little, but it opens what was a locked door. That door is now a little bit ajar, pushing hard to carry us through to a better outcome. But nothing will be accomplished at the international coalition level alone.

So the question before us is: the door is open by Paris—how do we push through that door? And I'm going to argue that some of the work that I've done in my whole lifetime on transnational social movements, on norm change, on norm entrepreneurs, on how do you move from having norm entrepreneurs to having social movements that can bring about dramatic change in the world is now relevant to this climate change area.

So in some of the earlier books that Melani mentioned, *Activists beyond Borders or The Justice Cascade*, I studied historical and current norms campaigns. I went all the way back—I have a chapter that looks at the antislavery movement, looks at women's suffrage. One of my favorite cases was the issue of ending foot-binding in China, for example. And then I looked at the ways in which human rights entered into first international relations, international law, and then into American foreign policy.

Of course now we think human rights is part of foreign policy, but Henry Kissinger wrote in 1976 that human rights had no place in foreign policy. Things change, and they change because of the kinds of people that I call norm entrepreneurs. In other words, they change from the bottom-up. Usually the changes do not happen from the top-down. Governments don't offer individuals their rights on a platter. People demand their rights, they organize campaigns, and they bring about change.

And so for example, in the case of antislavery activists—originally tiny groups of Quakers—who first put forward this idea, which was a crazy idea at the time, that slavery was social sin and must be ended. Eventually they were able to elect members to the UK Parliament and into the US Congress.

And those—I don't know if anyone's seen the book or the movie *Amazing Grace*, but it tells the story of Wilbur Wilberforce who was one of the abolitionists elected to the Parliament—the UK Parliament. They called them the Saints. There weren't very many of them, but they were the swing votes in the UK Parliament. And they were the ones who insisted on abolition as part of the price of their membership in the coalition, and that's what led the British to push for abolition of slavery.

And so these social movements do not have to become—they do not become majoritarian movements, but they learn how to wield some power to bring about change. So the thing that happens with these norm entrepreneurs is they take ideas that at the time—when you go back and study the history, at the time were unimaginable, and they turn them into things that are eventually taken for granted. And sometimes that takes centuries. And sometimes it moves a lot faster than that.

So for example, in my book *The Justice Cascade*, I studied this new trend of how you move from it being unimaginable to hold state officials criminally accountable for mass atrocity. Up until—except for Nuremberg and Tokyo trials—about 1973, it was unimaginable that state officials would be held accountable for human rights violations committed during their terms. And yet now today we have an International Criminal Court (ICC) capable and in the process of prosecuting official state officials for mass atrocity. I'm actually very pleased to have in the room my friend and colleague, the founding prosecutor of the ICC, Luis Moreno Ocampo.

So my point here is we need norm entrepreneurs, and guess what? We've got them. The young people are stepping forward to be the norm entrepreneurs. This is a photo I took at the climate march—the climate strike in Boston. They're skipping their lessons to teach us one.

Well the lesson—so we've got the norm entrepreneurs, but now we have to figure out how are we going to take responsibility to begin to use to support, sustain, disagree, but generally be part of this coalition that these norm entrepreneurs are trying to form. What do we really mean by responsibility? It's one of those ordinary words we use a lot. But when I started to use it in casual conversation, I started to get a lot of pushback. People don't like the word “responsibility,” and they really don’t like the word...
"duty," which is how we used to talk about it, and obligations. And so I started to feel like there was something interesting, because when I brought up responsibility and especially nonstate responsibility, I started to get a lot of pushback. And one reason why climate change is a good case is that people are willing to stay with me longer when I start talking about responsibility.

In thinking about responsibility, I drew very much on political theorists, like Iris Marion Young. This is her beautiful posthumous book called Responsibility for Justice. And Young makes an argument that I think helps us understand why people don’t like responsibility. Because mainly when we say responsibility, we mean what Young calls the “liability model.” We mean, who's to blame? Who can we sue, who can we punish? And that’s what she calls backward-looking responsibility. And the main model, where we have a responsibility in the world, is actually a backward-looking blame model.

And this is partly driven by lawyers. That’s their job, blaming people—find out who to sue and who to punish. But it means that sometimes we are too backward-looking. Now, I’m in favor of punishment for some rights issues, OK? I believe that state leaders deserve to be held criminally responsible for mass atrocity. But for most human rights issues and also for climate change, punishment doesn’t get you very far. You need to have forward-looking responsibility. Instead of saying who's to blame, you need to say also, what can we do together in order to bring about change as we move forward?

And that’s how Young helped me. She has what she calls a social connection model of responsibility. So instead of being backward-looking, it’s forward-looking, and it says all the actors who are socially connected to a structural injustice and able to act must take action. And I think that's exactly correct. All the actors socially connected to the structural injustice of climate change and able to act need to step forward, take responsibility, and act together.

I first have to say, to the lawyers present, that I’m not talking about legal responsibility here. This forward-looking specifically is not legal responsibility. I'm talking about ethical and political responsibility. And so if it's ethical and political, then the question that Young asks is, how do we reason about it?

And Young gives us what she calls four parameters to reason about one’s own actions and those of others. And those four parameters are power, privilege, collective ability, and interest. And I’m going to focus today on power and privilege. And the reason I’m doing that is because we know from the data on emissions, and especially on these so-called lifestyle consumption emissions, that about 10 percent of the world’s wealthiest people produce 49, almost 50 percent of global lifestyle emissions. And that the poorest 50 percent are only responsible for 10 percent of total lifestyle emissions. So it means it’s really important to think about power and privilege.

But as soon as I say 10 percent, most of us in the room—and this would be myself included, initially—think oh yeah, those wealthy 10 percent out there, those people who travel by plane every day to London or wherever. And then I started gathering the data—who are the 10 percent wealthiest people in the world? And it turns out—I have two different sources, I’m sure there’s debate—something between $68,000 and $100,000 in assets puts you in the 10 percent wealthiest people in the world.

So I can say, with regard to my colleagues at the Kennedy School, for example, that my faculty colleagues and I are in the 10 percent wealthiest people in the world. I’m not going to make any generalizations about the audience, but my colleagues and I are there. And what that means is we can’t keep saying oh, the responsibility, it’s those wealthy 10 percent out there. We have to say, no, if we're concerned about people with power and privilege taking action, that needs to include us, me and my colleagues at the Kennedy School.

This idea of responsibility is starting to catch on. This is a survey that was done in August this year, 2019. It’s not a huge survey, it’s only a little over 1,000 people, so it’s only suggestive. But it suggests that US citizens are beginning to think about responsibility in more diverse ways.

So that while of course they are most concerned—and correctly so—about responsibility of corporations, the US federal government, and developed or industrialized countries outside of the US, they recognize that individual people, as well as your local government officials, also have a great deal or some responsibility. So 79 percent of people in this survey think that individuals have a great deal of—or some—responsibility for climate change.
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The Weatherhead Center is pleased to announce its 2019–2020 class of Juster Fellows. Now in its ninth year, this grant initiative is made possible by the generosity of the Honorable Kenneth I. Juster, former chair of the Center’s Advisory Committee, and current United States Ambassador to India. Ambassador Juster has devoted much of his education, professional activities, public service, and nonprofit endeavors to international affairs and is deeply engaged in promoting international understanding and advancing international relations. The Center’s Juster grants support undergraduates whose projects may be related to thesis research but may have broader experiential components as well. The newly named Juster Fellows—all of whom will be undertaking their international experiences this winter or early spring—are:

Frances Hisgen (History and History of Art & Architecture), will study the relationships between white British and Chinese peoples in the British Empire in China and in Hong Kong, with a focus on Eurasian life within networks of segregation regulated by colonial laws and informal custom.

Julianna Kardish (Visual & Environmental Studies and Anthropology), will conduct creative ethnographic research about the grounded realities of homeless Capetonian women navigating postapartheid Cape Town, during a four-year-long water shortage.

Reshini Premaratne (Social Studies and Middle Eastern Studies), seeks to understand why the Middle East as a region and Lebanon as a case study has a relationship between remittances and domestic conflict that differs from the global trends.

Reade Rossman (History & Literature with a secondary field in Spanish), will begin thesis research on beauty salons as sites of both racial construction and economic mobility in women of the Dominican Republic and the Dominican diaspora in New York.

Raphaëlle Soffe (Social Studies), will study the connection between the decline of recent public services in the UK and the Brexit referendum and the working-class “left behind” regions.

Ben Sorkin (Sociology with a secondary field in Educational Studies), will examine US-Russia relations and the role of education diplomacy on these relations through the experiences of American and Russian study abroad students in Russia.

Kexin “Cathy” Sun (Social Studies), will examine why women become involved in civil resistance movements, how gender norms impact the nature of their engagement, and how their involvement changes the process and outcomes of these movements in the context of East Asia.