

Introduction

In this issue of the Basel Papers, we are proud to present to you three outstanding examples of research conducted by recent graduates of the Institute as part of their MA theses. Their work showcases the thematic and methodological interdisciplinarity at play in the teaching and research of the Institute, and engages with subjects as diverse as transitional justice, global health policy, and democratic peace theory.

Sarah Farhatiar studies the impact of the World Health Organization’s COVID-19 pandemic response on the securitization of global health policy. Her argument applies the literature on securitization to the rhetoric employed by the organization’s Director General and examines the policy output in a prospective pandemic treaty.

Michael Honegger explores fundamental questions of peace and stability in his extensive quantitative analysis of interstate conflicts. Working to disentangle democratic and territorial peace theories, his findings highlight the importance of civil society in strengthening the peaceful relationships between adjacent democracies. The paper also suggests that the pacific effects of democracy apply only to relations between two democratic states but not to relationships with non-democratic polities.

Finally, *Angela Zollinger* analyses the confluence of Brexit and powerful sentiments like Empire nostalgia and English nationalism in the making of the 2023 Northern Ireland Legacy Act by drawing on parliamentary records and stakeholder interviews. Her study explores the law’s expected adverse effects on the Northern Irish transitional justice process and points to persistent and potentially damaging policy impacts of Brexit.

What ties these works together is their engagement with some of the fundamental challenges of the early 21st century. War, border disputes, and epidemics have once again become frightening realities in Europe and cannot be ignored. Any attempt to understand and address them must rely on careful scholarly investigation, bringing together expertise from across disciplinary boundaries. The papers in this issue hope to make a contribution to this endeavor.

Prof. Corey Ross

Director of the Institute for European Global Studies

Paul Blickle

Editor