

The Politics of Finance – Creditworthiness, Credibility and Reputation on Global Markets
An Interdisciplinary Conference at the International History Department
Graduate Institute Geneva, 18~19 June 2020

In July 1964, in the aftermath of the military coup which deposed President João Goulart, creditors at the Hague Club approved the Brazilian officials request for rescheduling its debts. The roaring inflation under the left-wing government cost the sympathy of its creditors, who considered the unpopular policy by the new general in power, Castelo Branco, to restore economic order with credit curbs, cuts in state spending and increased taxation with a kindlier eye. As *The Economist* summarized, “Creditors Prefer Generals”. (*The Economist*, July 11, 1964). About a decade later, when the Economics Minister of Argentina’s military José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz, came back from his world tour to drum up loans to service the \$1.2 billion in loans that came due over the following months, the magazine *Euromoney* reported that the minister had managed to re-establish in a few months an essential part of Argentina's image: credibility (*Euromoney*, September 1976).

As was the case with other developing countries in Latin America and elsewhere, Brazil and Argentina had been largely cut off by foreign creditors during the previous democratic regime, before becoming a hot destination once the military regime that came to power committed to orthodox monetary and fiscal policies. Democracy and international finance were at the crossroads, as these moments have indicated.

This interdisciplinary conference, to be held at the International History Department, Graduate Institute Geneva, on June 18th and 19th 2020, invites scholars in Economics, History, Sociology, Political Science and Legal Studies at different career stages to examine critically sovereign creditworthiness, credibility and reputation. In doing so, it attempts to initiate a scholarly dialogue on the political and cultural aspects of banking practices based on ‘trust’, and the relationship between politics and banking.

Contributions might address, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- What makes a country credible and creditworthy?
- How do International Organisations perceive different regimes?
- How is creditworthiness lost? How is creditworthiness reestablished?
- How do governmental and rating agencies, or financial institutions establish creditworthiness?

These are some of the questions that this international conferences wishes to address in an interdisciplinary way. We hope to bring together scholars to discuss a highly relevant research topic, in the context of increasing tensions in countries such as Argentina, Venezuela and Turkey. Confirmed keynote is Professor Jeffrey Frieden, Harvard University.

The conference is generously supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), sponsor of the research project 'Business with the Devil? Assessing the Financial Dimension of Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America, 1973-85'. Supporting institutions include the International History Department and the Centre for Finance and Development at the Graduate Institute, Geneva.

Scholars interested in participating in the conference are invited to submit paper abstracts of no more than 300 words, along with their academic CV, to the conference convenors at politicsfinance2020@gmail.com by **20th December 2019**. Abstracts should include the speaker's name, academic affiliation and contact details. Selected presenters are expected to submit a full paper by the end of April. Funding opportunities are available to defray travel and accommodation expenses. Priorities will be given to early career researchers. For questions, please contact us at politicsfinance2020@gmail.com

Conference Organisers

Dr Carlo Edoardo Altamura

Swiss National Science Foundation Ambizione Research Fellow

International History Department, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

Dr Seung Woo Kim

Research Fellow

International History Department, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies