New Additions to the Department

Christina Maags joined the Politics Department this term as Lecturer in Chinese Politics. Having studied Comparative Social Policy, Political Science and Asian studies at Oxford, Frankfurt and Bonn University, her research focuses on how the People’s Republic of China’s multilevel governance structure impacts cultural and health policy implementation. Christina has, for instance, examined how the PRC at different government levels safeguards and promotes traditional cultural practices, and with what socio-economic and cultural effects and has just commenced studying the role of Chinese local governments in promoting long-term care for older persons. Most recently, she co-edited (with Marina Svensson) a volume on *Chinese Cultural Heritage in the Making: Experiences, Negotiations and Contestations*, forthcoming at Amsterdam University Press (Spring 2018). In her free time, Christina loves to travel, go hiking, karaoke and support a local German NGO called “Adesuwa e.V.” which supports access to education in rural Nigeria.

Alexis Artaud de La Ferrière has joined the department as Lecturer in international relations and migration. His current research focuses on the transnational dynamics of Christianity, migration, and identity politics. Before joining SOAS, he was a Postdoctoral research associate at the CNRS in Paris (Groupe Sociétés Religions Laïcités) where he conducted research on the politics of hospitality and migration within the French Catholic Church. Prior to that, he was an Associate researcher at the University of Cambridge (at the Centre for the Study of the International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa) where he worked on the Al-Jazeera Media project, researching the topic of internet governance in Tunisia as after the fall of the Ben Ali regime. Earlier still, he wrote his PhD in Cambridge on the politics of schooling during the Algerian War of Independence, and even before that he studied philosophy and literature at the University of Sheffield. He is in good spirits.

Elian Weizman writes, “I (re-)joined SOAS after more than two years in Jerusalem, working as the Deputy Director of the CBRL Kenyon Institute. Before that, I was a Teaching Fellow at the Department and also at Brunel University. I am particularly interested in the politics of settler colonial states, with Israel as my case study - where I am studying internal dynamics within Israeli society, forms of resistance from within, intersections of power and law, and the politics of knowledge production inside and outside academia. I am currently co-ordinating a project about ‘knowledge production in settler colonial contexts’, that takes place in various locations, involving scholars from different fields and with different regional focuses. Also, I am co-editing a special issues of the Journal of Settler Colonial Studies about the Israeli society, a follow up from a conference held at SOAS in 2015, that is going to be published early next year!”
**Rafeef Ziadah** writes, “I am very happy to join SOAS as Lecturer in Comparative Politics of the Middle East. Prior to this I was Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the ‘Military Mobilities and Mobilising Movements in the Middle East’ project, working alongside Laleh Khalili. The project explores the politics of infrastructures, ports and transport in the Arabian Peninsula. I hold a PhD in Politics from York University, Canada. My research interests include political economy, contentious politics, labour movements and the politics of humanitarianism, with a particular focus on the Middle East. I am currently examining the impact of Gulf Cooperation Council humanitarian aid post 2011/2012 Arab uprisings, tracing the intersections of commercial, military and humanitarian logistics.” **Rafeef** is also a well-recognised spoken-word poets who is invited to perform her engagé poetry all around the world.

**Kerem Nisancioglu** is now a Lecturer in International Studies at SOAS. Before coming to SOAS, Kerem was a Visiting Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Westminster and Adjunct Lecturer at Richmond University. He received his PhD in International Relations from the University of Sussex in 2014. **Kerem’s** research focuses on Eurocentrism in international relations, and how this Eurocentrism can be subverted in both theory and history. His current research seeks to uncover the international origins of whiteness as a form of social control. His co-authored book *How the West Came to Rule: The Geopolitical Origins of Capitalism* (with Alexander Anievas) was published in 2015 by Pluto Press. **Kerem** also blogs at *The Disorder of Things*.

**Kate Black** writes, “Hi all, I am Kate Black and I recently joined the Politics department as the UG Student Department Officer. When I started at SOAS, I had just returned from a six-month honeymoon travelling around SE Asia, so am delighted to be here surrounded by so much wonderful culture. Prior to this, I managed the internal Unitemps team in the Careers department at City University of London for five years. Outside of work I like socialising, reading fantasy books, painting, and generally just enjoying life.”

**Rafid Mahdi** who previously acted as the undergraduate support officer for the Department of Politics is now the department manager. **Rafid** writes, “I studied Politics at the University of Warwick before moving to SOAS for postgraduate study, graduating in 2010. I have always had a keen interest in International Politics, relating in particular to the Middle East. Outside of work I am a keen traveller (when I get the chance), am passionate about a wide variety of music and an avid reader of all kinds of literature, fiction and non-fiction. I’ve also been told I play a mean game of ping pong and am always open to challengers.”
Appointments, Awards, Honours

Warm congratulations to Fiona Adamson who has been promoted to reader and to Matthew Eagleton-Pierce who has been promoted to senior lecturer.

Many congratulations to our newly minted PhDs: Arash Sedighi (“Rhizomatic Responses: The Organisation of Women’s Football in the Islamic Republic of Iran”); Richard Akum (on borderlands on the fringes of Liberia); Ini Dele-Adedeji (“The Mobilisation of the Boko Haram Sect”); Lili Liu (“Environmental Activism and Political Intermediation - Local Flexibility in Managing Protests in China”).

PhD candidate Lewis Turner was awarded a travel grant by the International Studies Association to attend their annual conference in San Francisco next April, for which he has organised a panel titled ‘Sex, Gender and Beyond: Broadening Debates on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.’

Rahul Rao has been invited to join the editorial board of International Political Sociology.

Fiona Adamson is a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for European Global Studies at the University of Basel in Switzerland 1 October – 31 December. While at the Institute she is working on a project on “Diasporic Europe.”

Hania Sobhy who received her doctorate from the Department has been appointed to a Research Fellow post at the Department of Socio-Cultural Diversity at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Gottingen, Germany. Hania is currently working on a project comparatively examines how different constellations of social policy and representational politics in North and West Africa affect schools and shape youth cultures and prospects. A manuscript based on her doctoral thesis is under consideration by a university press in the US.

In July and August Mark Laffey was an honorary Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, where he conducted research for his paper, ‘What about China? Remapping Postcolonialism in International Relations.’

Ini Dele-Adedeji was elected as a member of the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom (ASAUK) council in October.

James Eastwood was announced the joint runner-up for the Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize (2017) of the British Society of Middle East Studies, for his doctoral thesis, “The ethics of Israeli militarism: soldiers’ testimony and the formation of the Israeli soldier-subject”. His thesis was also awarded the Malcolm Kerr prize for best doctoral thesis by Middle East Studies Association (2016), and was the joint winner of the best doctoral thesis prize, British International Studies Association (2016).

Spotlight on Research

Ini Dele-Adedeji’s doctoral thesis titled “The Mobilisation of the Boko Haram Sect” was undertaken in the Politics department. Ini studied the appeal Boko Haram holds with a section of the Muslim public in northern Nigeria. Seeking to dispel the snobbish conclusion that southern Nigerian scholars conduct poor research on northern Nigeria/Boko Haram and fuelled, also, by the general dearth of first-hand data on the sect, Ini conducted ethnographic fieldwork in northern Nigeria.

Ini’s fieldwork was situated in Kano and Borno (living in Kano and Maiduguri, the capital of Borno, and epicentre of Boko Haram’s insurgency, between 2013 and 2015).

Ini’s research focused on getting the perspective of both Boko Haram members (including their supporters and families) and their victims (relatives of those killed or abducted by the sect’s fighters, and residents of northern Nigeria who have lived in close proximity to the sect’s members or its violence).

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Human Rights Futures (Cambridge University Press, 2017) was published in August. Stephen Hopgood, Jack Snyder, and Leslie Vinjamuri are joint editors and contributors (with a jointly authored introduction and conclusion, and individual chapter contributions) to this volume. Human Rights Futures sees the world at a crucial juncture. The project for globalizing rights will either continue to be embedded or will fall backward into a maelstrom of nationalist backlash, religious resurgence and faltering Western power. In one collected volume, mainstream and critical human rights scholars together examine the empirical and normative debates around the future of human rights. They ask what makes human rights effective, what strategies will enhance the chances of compliance, what blocks progress, and whether the hope for human rights is entirely misplaced in a rapidly transforming world. Each chapter talks directly to the others in an interactive dialogue, providing a theoretical and methodological framework for a clear research agenda for the next decade. In this innovative book, Scholars, graduate students and practitioners will find much, both to challenge and provoke them.

Adélie Chevée reviewed Ayman El-Desouky’s The intellectual and the people in Egyptian literature and culture: Amâra and the 2011 revolution.


Teaching Fellow Farooq Sulehria published ‘Between Judges and Generals’ in Jacobin. The article examines the civil-military relations in the context of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s ouster in July 2017.

Yuka Kobayashi has co-authored a policy brief with Amaia Sanchez (former PhD student and current adjunct professor at Instituto Empresa, Madrid) on ‘Minilateralism a la chine – Strategic Responsibility in Climate Change and Global Finance’. This paper forms the basis of a joint-research project on China’s Belt and Road in Spain.


Kristin Surak’s on-going work the sale of citizenship was translated into Romanian in the piece “Cosmopolini,” published in Lettre Internationale. She also published a short report on Japan’s snap elections in International Politics and Society.


Professor Stephen Chan’s new book, Meditations on Diplomacy was published in October under a creative commons licence. The electronic edition is free to download on the E-INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS site. ‘We all gesture towards a fee-free open access principle,’ said Chan, ‘and we normally publish a spare paper or two in open access journals, but I thought that if we were to make gestures at all - why not an entire book?’ The book is based on his lectures in Budapest last year as the George Soros Chair of Public Policy at the Central European University.

Leslie Vinjamuri, Jack Snyder and Thomas Risse holding copies of Human Rights Futures

Meditations on Diplomacy
Professor **Stephen Chan** has published four academic books this year - and one novel. The ensemble, minus the new *Meditations on Diplomacy*, is shown in this photo. His Cambridge University Press monograph (with Julia Gallagher), *Why Mugabe Won*, has so far been the subject of 26 Zimbabwean newspaper op-eds. His *Plural International Relations in a Divided World* (Polity) was bulk-ordered by the US State Department.

**Dr Rochana Bajpai** published a chapter ‘Secularism and Multiculturalism in India: Some Reflections’ in Anna Triandafyllidou and Tariq Modood eds. *The Problem of Religious Diversity: European Challenges, Asian Approaches* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017). While secularism and multiculturalism are often seen as opposed to each other in Western debates on religious minorities (eg French headscarves), the chapter argues that these have had close affinities in India. Some form of moderate secularism will continue to remain necessary as a state framework to act as a check on religious majoritarianism in India and beyond. Her other recent publication is ‘Comparative Political Thought’ co-authored with Brooke Ackerly, in the volume *Research Methods in Analytical Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), edited by Dr Adrian Blau. This distinguishes analytic, historical, interpretive, and critical approaches to CPT with examples of variants within each category. It argues for a methodology-based definition of CPT, and for a non-hierarchical pluralism in the emerging sub-field, in which multiple vocations of political theory prevail.

**Dafydd Fell** has published the following four essays in the new online journal *Taiwan Sentinel*: “Thirty Years After the Lifting of Martial Law in Taiwan, Political Divisions Remain” (July 2017); “When Did Martial Law Start and End?” (July 2017); “Rail Infrastructure and Neglected Public Transport in Taiwan,” (August 2017); “The Golden Age of Global Taiwan Studies?” (October 2017).

**Spotlight on Research**

Adélie Chevée investigates the social transformations of the Syrian intellectual field after the 2011 revolution, and how an ‘intellectual dispute’ is conceptualized and understood among Syrian critical voices in exile, with a particular focus on Turkey and Lebanon. Acknowledging the epistemological violence done on Syrians, whose knowledge as analysts is rarely considered in Western media and academia, she looks at the substance and conditions of knowledge production of major political debates in Syrian circles since the uprising. Between September 2016 and August 2017, she conducted fieldwork in Beirut, Berlin, Istanbul and Gaziantep, and adopted an ethnographic approach to political thought.

Following the lives of revolutionary intellectuals, from notorious prison writer Yassin al-Haj Saleh to young Syrian writers who achieved positions of authority after 2011, she tracked their interventions in the Syrian revolutionary press and in a transnational intellectual field in exile, aiming at reconstructing how ideas are negotiated with lived experiences of war and exile. She looks at how Syrians argue and debate in theory and in practice on urgent questions such as the legitimation of religious violence to achieve revolution, the prospect of a foreign humanitarian intervention, and the sectarian conflict within Syrian society.

Research Centres, Clusters, & Networks

Centre for Conflict, Rights and Justice

CCRJ is delighted to welcome a new group of MSc postgraduate students to SOAS. Our first event was on the nuclear crisis in North Korea. Professor Daryl Press, an expert on nuclear deterrence, a research affiliate of the Security Studies Program at MIT, and a professor at Dartmouth College, spoke about “The Korea Missile Crisis: how we got here, why it’s dangerous, and how to keep the peace”.

CCRJ also hosted a talk by Rahul Rao, “What do we mean when we talk about statues”. Rahul has featured on BBC’s Newsnight speaking on this topic.

Centre for Taiwan Studies

Between September 23-24 Dafydd Fell and Chang Bi-yu organized the International Conference on the Global Development of Taiwan Studies Programmes at SOAS. Participants came from the world’s leading Taiwan Studies programmes in Europe and North America to discuss their experiences of running Taiwan programmes.

Since the last newsletter Dafydd Fell and Chang Bi-yu have organized the following Centre of Taiwan Studies events:

**JULY**

03/07/17 2017 SOAS Taiwan Studies Summer School
Speakers & Performers: Ado Kaliting Pacidal, Hsieh Ming-Yu, Tobie Openshaw, Valerie Soe, Chi Ta-Wei, Chang Tieh-chih, Meredith Schweig, Lin Chen-yu, Hsieh Chinlin

03/07/17 Film and Homosexuality under Martial Law Taiwan
Speaker: Assistant Professor Chi Ta-wei

03/07/17 Tracing the Journey of Hoklo (Taiyu) Songs in Taiwan
Speaker: Hsieh Ming-yu

03/07/17 Polyphonic Adventures in the History of Taiwan Rap: Xiha, Raoshe, Liām-kua
Speaker: Assistant Professor Meredith Schweig

03/07/17 Concert by Ado
Performer: Ado Kaliting Pacidal

04/07/17 Popular Music and the Sense of ‘Place’ in Taipei and Liverpool: Cases on Mayday, Jay Chou, and the Beatles
Speaker: Lin Chen-yu

04/07/17 My Hoklo (Taiyu) Song Compositions
Speaker: Hsieh Ming-yu

05/07/17 Scholars, Generals, and Other Outsiders: Masculinity Politics in the Taiwan Rap Scene
Speaker: Assistant Professor Meredith Schweig

05/07/17 The Development of Taiwanese Indigenous Media
Speaker: Ado Kaliting Pacidal

05/07/17 Talk to Taiwan: the changing media environment in Taiwan
Speaker: Chang Tieh-chih

06/07/17 Film Screening of Flowers of Taipei: Taiwan New Cinema (光阴的故事-台灣新電影) with Director's Q&A
Speaker: Ms Hsieh Chin-lin

07/07/17 The Power of Saying “Sorry” – One year after the apology to Taiwan’s indigenous peoples
Speaker: Tobie Openshaw

07/07/17 Sunflowers in the Streets– A personal journey documenting a movement
Speaker: Tobie Openshaw

07/07/17 Global Politics on an Intimate Scale: Creating the Love Boat: Taiwan documentary
Speaker: Associate Professor Valerie Soe

**SEPTEMBER**

22/09/17 Spotlight on Taiwan Studies Research
Speakers: Dafydd Fell (SOAS), André Beckershoff (University of Tübingen), Kharis Templeman (Stanford University), Sasa Istenic (University of Ljubljana), Lee Chun-yi (Nottingham), Astrid Lipinsky (Vienna), Stephane Corcuff (Lyon)

25/09/17 Book launch: Taiwan Cinema - International Reception and Social Change
Speakers: Ming-Yeh Rawnsley (SOAS), Gary Rawnsley (Aberystwyth) and Valentina Vitali (University of East London)

25/09/17 Book Launch: Taiwan’s Social Movements under Ma Ying-jeou
Speakers: André Beckershoff (Tubingen), Dafydd Fell (SOAS), Lara Momesso (Central Lancashire and SOAS)
OCTOBER

09/10/17 台語片 台語片 Vengeance of the Phoenix Sisters (1968)
Introduced by: Chris Berry (King’s College London)

10/10/17 台語片 Taiyu (Hoklo) film screening: 危險的 危險的 Dangero... in Seventeenth Century Taiwan
Speaker: Leigh Jenco (LSE)

10/10/17 台語片 Taiyu (Hoklo) film screening: 危險的 危險的 Dangerous Youth (1969)
Introduced by: Chris Berry (King’s College London)

12/10/17 The Problem of Authority: Dutch Political Theories of Aboriginal Autonomy in Seventeenth Century Taiwan
Speaker: Leigh Jenco (LSE)

18/10/17 Book launch: Transitions to Modernity in Taiwan The Spirit of 1895 and the Cession of Formosa to Japan
Speaker: Niki Alsford (Central Lancashire)

25/10/17 Taiwan's Sunflower Movement: Causes and Outcome of the Protest
Speaker: Anna Kireeva (MGIMO University, Russia)

London Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Sciences

The London Asia Pacific Centre for Social Science (Co-Directors Tat Yan Kong, SOAS and Ramon Pacheco Pardo, KCL) will continue its Contemporary Japan Speaker Series (funded by the Japan Foundation) during 2017-18:

23 November 2017 (King’s)
Kumiko Miyazaki, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Current Issues related to Innovation Management in Japan: based on empirical studies of Sector Innovation Systems

25 January 2018 (SOAS)
Sigeto Tanaka, Tohoku University, Gender inequality and family-related risks: from the perspective of law and ideology

15 February 2018 (SOAS)
Seizo Nakajima, Waseda University, Aspects of popular culture and creative industries in Japan in comparison to China and/or South Korea

22 March 2018 (King’s)
Yasumasa Igarashi, Tsukuba University, Challenges to overcome social gaps through local co-production

Presentations and Conferences

Rahul Rao participated in a discussion titled ‘Thinking the Queer Commons: Gender, Law and Property’ with Saidiya Hartman, Jack Halberstam and Rizvana Bradley, as part of a study day organised by the Serpentine Gallery, London, on 8 July 2017 around Hartman’s landmark text Scenes of Subjection. In July, Rahul gave a lecture titled ‘Spectres of Colonialism’ on 17 July 2017 as part of the London Free School of Applied Critical and Feminist Theory. In August, Rahul was in conversation with filmmaker Jayan Cherian following a screening of his new film Ka Bodyscapes at Nottingham Contemporary. In September, Rahul was in conversation with Max Biddulph, Jos Bitelli and Nicola Guy around a series of homoerotic drawings from the Adamson Collection at Nottingham Contemporary. This is the first event of Bitelli’s new performance commission ‘For Dr. A, without whom’.

In October, Rahul Rao was in conversation with Claudia Aradu, Felix Berenskoetter and Duncan Bell at the closing roundtable titled ‘Thinking about Futurity’ of the 2017 Millennium Conference ‘The Politics of Time in International Relations’ held at the LSE.

Politics and International Studies Seminar Series 2017-2018

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
Seminar Series 2017-2018

Wednesdays, 3-5pm
Venue: 4426

Further Information:
Facebook: Politics@SOAS
Snapchat: SOASPolitics
E: Matthew Logart-Moore@lse.ac.uk
W: www.politics.sas.ac.uk
In early August, doctoral candidate Catherine Craven presented her paper on “Critical Realism, Assemblages and Practices Beyond the State: A new framework for analyzing global diaspora engagement?” at the Beyond Positivism Conference of Yale’s Critical Realism Network in Montreal. On the first weekend of November, Catherine organised and chaired a two-day workshop at the Free University of Berlin on “Diasporas and Homeland Governance: Decentering the State as an Analytical Category”. The workshop brought together international scholars from multiple disciplines, including the Department’s own Fiona Adamson, to reflect on the ways in which the emergence of diasporas as important actors in global politics is challenging commonly held assumptions about statehood, citizenship and boundary drawing, especially with regards to governance and public policy provision.

Shivan Fazil, graduate student of MSc Middle East Politics, was invited as a speaker to a regional workshop held on October 3, 2017 at the Carnegie Middle East Centre, in Beirut. The event was co-organised by the Berghof Foundation (Berlin), PODEM (Istanbul) and the Carnegie Middle East Centre. In his remarks, Fazil presented his background paper “Iraqi Kurdistan’s Independence Referendum: Secession or a Recipe for Further Fragmentation” and highlighted how the recent referendum in the Kurdistan Region could influence the internal and regional politics of the prominent actors in the region and explored the positions of the Kurdish region’s political parties in the face of a growing public discontent aggravated by the heightened economic crisis and political impasse in the semi-autonomous region.

Alastair Fraser presented new research on ethnographic approaches to the study of local politics on a panel entitled ‘Local Government in Decentralizing and Urbanizing societies’ at the European Conference on African Studies in Basel in July.

Elian Weizman co-convened (with Sharri Plonski from the SOAS LMEI) a 5-panel section at the EISA annual conference in Barcelona in September titled ‘Unsettling contemporary settler colonial relations: realities, knowledge and decolonisation’. She also co-ordinates a working group ‘Unsettling International Relations: knowing and unknowing the settler colonial present’ funded by the ISA in the forthcoming ISA annual conference in San Francisco in April 2018. Both are part of a bigger project co-ordinated with Sharri Plonski (SOAS LMEI), Magid Shihade (Birzeit) and James Eastwood (MQUL, formerly a SOAS doctoral student) looking at questions of knowledge production in comparative settler colonial contexts.
In July, PhD candidate Adélie Chevée participated in a workshop at the University of Marburg under the title “Because of the War...”: Transformations in/of the Syrian Field of Cultural Production. She presented a paper titled ‘Thinking the intellectual dispute: perspectives from the Syrian case’.

Manjeet Rangotra participated in the Durham Union debate on 13 October 2017. She spoke in favour of the motion ‘This House Believes Liberalism is in Retreat’.


In July, Matthew Eagleton-Pierce participated in a workshop titled ‘The Keywords Project’ at Jesus College, University of Cambridge. In the spirit of Raymond Williams’ scholarship, the activity was part of an interdisciplinary research team investigating common terms in popular culture. In September, Matt attended the International Initiative for Promoting Political Economy (IIPPE) Annual Conference in Berlin, where he presented on ‘Forms of Resilience in Neoliberal Ideologies’.

Reem Abou-El-Fadl was invited to be discussant at the colloquium ‘Revolutionary Circulations and Generations: Egypt, Algeria, Palestine, 1945-2015’ at the INALCO (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilisations) in Paris on 7 July 2017.

Hagar Kotef gave the keynote address at the conference Critical Theory at a Neo-Liberal Age: Contemporary Perspectives, which took place at Tel Aviv University. She also took part at a special panel, accompanying the exhibition HOME in Amsterdam. The exhibition was curated by Meta Knol, with photography by artist Marjan Teeuwen, and video blogs by photographer Ezz Al Zanoon and journalist Rawan Mahady. It included live conversations with panelists in Amsterdam and Gaza (via skype.) The live conversation in which Hagar took part alongside Mkhaimar Saud Abusada and Omar Shaban from Gaza and Fares Al Qadi from Amsterdam, sought to ask what the meaning of the word ‘home’ is in the context of war, diaspora, exclusion, and displacement.

Doctoral candidate Lewis Turner attended the European International Studies Association meeting in Barcelona in September and presented two papers. The first focused on sexual violence prevention programs with Syrian refugees, and the second explored how to understand the position of adult males within humanitarisman. Lewis also presented his research on refugee livelihoods in refugee camps to the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies annual conference in Edinburgh in July. He also presented a paper, co-authored with Katharina Lenner, on attempts to facilitate work permits for Syrian refugees in Jordan under the auspices of the Jordan Compact.

Based on her research on the sale of citizenship, Kristin Surak presented the paper “The Marketization of Citizenship: How to Commodify a Quasi-Sacred Status” at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association held in San Francisco, and the paper “Elite Mobility in an Unequal World: The Commodification of Citizenship” at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting held in Montreal. She also gave talks on the state of international migration today at Investment Migration Summits in London, Hong Kong, and Bangkok.

In August, Yuka gave a paper at the EUROSEAS Annual Convention on China-Philippine relations and the South China Sea, which is one of the key issues in the Maritime Road. In August she also gave a talk at the Global Public Policy Institute (Berlin) on China’s Belt and Road in Europe discussing some preliminary findings from fieldwork conducted in China and some key European cities.

In September Yuka Kobayashi gave a paper on China’s Belt and Road Initiative in the Mediterranean at the British Association of Chinese Studies on a panel with Igor Rogelja (former SOAS PhD student and current Teaching Fellow at Kings’ College) and Kostas Tsimonis (former SOAS student and current Lecturer at Kings’ College) and Ozge Soylemez (current PhD student jointly supervised with Kings’ College). The following week, Yuka addressed the One Belt One Road Summit at Oxford University Law Faculty and spoke about the legal and regulatory issues in China’s Belt and Road. A week later, she gave a talk at the SOAS-China Beijing Normal University joint conference on the ‘Governance of China’s Belt and Road’. In October, she was interviewed by BBC and ABC on China’s Belt and Road Initiative and the South China Sea Dispute. Some sections of the interview can be found here in Vietnamese.

Fiona Adamson, along with SOAS PhD student Mathilde Zederman and former SOAS PhD student and teaching fellow Gerasimos Tsourapas (now a lecturer at University of Birmingham), organized the workshop “Authoritarianism from Afar: Diaspora Engagement and the Transnationalization of State Repression” at CERI-Sciences Po on 7 July 2017.
The workshop was held under the auspices of the Politics Migration, Mobility and Membership (MMM) cluster and was co-sponsored by the SOAS Department of Politics. The workshop included papers by the three organizers as well as from Enze Han. The keynote address, “Dictators Without Borders” was delivered by John Heathershaw of University of Exeter.

In July, Fiona Adamson presented two papers and chaired a panel at the 24th Annual Council of Europeanists in Glasgow, Scotland. In August/September, Fiona presented the paper “The Migration State in the Middle East: Nationalizing, Developmental and Neoliberal Models of Migration Management” (co-authored with Gerasimos Tsourapas) at the American Political Science Association (APSA) meeting in San Francisco. She also participated in a roundtable on The Political Economy of Emigration, as well as an APSA-sponsored roundtable on diversity in hiring. At APSA, Fiona organized a working group on Cities and Migration at the APSA meeting in San Francisco. She also organized a reception for the APSA Migration and Citizenship section. At the end of September, Fiona presented the paper “Non-State Authoritarianism and Diaspora Politics” at the workshop ”Beyond the Territorial State: Diaspora Mobilizations and Contested Sovereignty in the European Neighborhood,” at the University of Warwick.

In October, Fiona Adamson presented a paper on “Migration Governance in Turkey” at the workshop “Understanding Global Migration” in Taos, New Mexico.
Faultline: One Hundred Years of Sino/Russian/Soviet Competitive Cooperation at the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center, Sapporo, Hokkaido University.

In October, Bhavna Dave presented a paper on “Migrants’ legalization campaign in Russia and the role of intermediaries” at the International Conference New Trends and Directions of Migration at the Higher School of Economics, Moscow. She also gave a lecture on “Migration and Global Cities” (in Russian) to postgraduate students at the Moscow Institute of International Relations (MGIMO).

In September, doctoral candidate Mathilde Zederman organised the workshop “Islam en Europe: terrains et pratiques de recherche” at the EHESS in Paris.

Leslie Vinjamuri gave a talk about the recently published book Human Rights Futures at the Free University Berlin together with Thomas Risse and Jack Snyder.

Leslie Vinjamuri spoke at the annual meeting of the APSA in San Francisco on an “author meets critics” panel discussion of the new book by Kathryn Sikkink (Harvard University), Evidence for Hope: Making Human Rights work in the 21st century. Leslie spoke on a panel at the BISA US Working Group conference at Edinburgh University on US Foreign Policy under Trump.

Tat Yan Kong gave a presentation titled ”North Korean economic performance: sources and political implications” at the International Forum on North Korea held at the British Academy (30 October 2017). Other participants included: Rosemary Foot (Oxford), Steve Tsang (SOAS), Micheal Cox (LSE), John Nilsson-Wright (Cambridge), Todd Hall (Oxford) and Isobel Hilton (China Dialogue).

Meera Sabaratnam spoke on the opening semi-plenary panel of the European International Studies Association Conference in Barcelona in September, on the subject of Race and Racism in International Relations. During her time as a Visiting Scholar in the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland in July and August, Meera Sabaratnam presented her research paper ‘Is IR Theory White?’ and participated in a double book launch alongside UQ’s own Shahar Hameiri. The podcast of the event can be accessed here. She also presented her paper to the University of Sydney in August.

In September Mark Laffey presented a paper, ‘The Imperial Wound of Memory’ at the European International Studies Association Conference in Barcelona. On Halloween, Laleh Khalili gave the annual lecture of the Sussex Centre for Conflict and Security Research.

On 12 September 2017 Dafydd Fell gave the Inaugural Taiwan Studies Lecture at Zurich University titled, ‘Taiwan’s Political History in Eleven Election Advertisements.’ He then joined the Conference on Civil Society versus the State? Emergent Trajectories of Civic Agency in East Asia in Comparative and Transnational Perspective, University of Zurich September 13-15 2017. He gave a paper co-authored by SOAS Politics Department PhD student Tommy Kwan titled “The Relationship between Mainstream and Movement Parties in Taiwan: The Case Studies of the New Power Party (NPP) and Green Party Taiwan-Social Democratic Party
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Alliance (GPT/SDP).” On September 22 Dafydd Fell gave a talk titled ‘Film portrayals of democratic politics in Taiwan,’ at the SOAS Spotlight on Taiwan Research Sessions.

The first book launch for Dafydd Fell’s new edited volume Social Movements in Taiwan under Ma Ying-jeou was held at SOAS on September 25. Dafydd’s talk was titled ‘The Revival of Taiwan’s Green Party after 2008.’ He was joined by two other chapter authors: Lara Momesso (University of Central Lancashire) and André Beckershoff (Tubingen).

Current Research

This August Hagar Kotef began a one year Leverhulme fellowship to research Home: The Violence of Political Belonging (or: Mobility and Stability in Israel/Palestine). This project explores how people develop attachments to spaces of violence by looking at “home” as a political category tying belonging to violence. Examining contexts of settler colonialism, particularly Israel/Palestine, where homes themselves are tools of dispossession, it asks how violence becomes formative of collective identities. Beyond its regional focus, however, this research contributes to a broader literature concerning state-violence, projects of expropriation and forced mobility. Via the notion of “home,” she further foregrounds a politics of affect that goes beyond formal frameworks of citizenship, addressing thereby the plea for justice voiced by those excluded from it.

Bhavna Dave spent 2 weeks in July 2017 conducting research in Vladivostok, Russia on the state-directed policy of promoting the development of its Far-Eastern region through creation of free economic zones and aid and attract investments from the East Asian economies. She spent a further 4 weeks in Moscow and St Petersburg in August 2017 conducting research on how the complex migration laws and regulatory regime in the Russia leads to corruption in the sphere of migrants’ legalization and employment.

Spotlight on Research

The rise of majoritarian nationalism poses a threat to minorities worldwide. In India, the election of a Hindu nationalist government has been accompanied by a rise in violence against minorities and the erosion of their civil and political liberties. Dr Rochana Bajpai’s current research examines the work of representation, focussing on Muslim and Dalit MPs in India.

Two sets of concerns animate this inquiry. First, the work of representation that politicians do remains mostly abstract, or narrowly understood. By examining the practices of representation at multiple levels, this project highlights the complexity of democratic politics in India. It thereby critiques simplistic negative perceptions of politicians that fuel populist politics in India and elsewhere. Second, in contrast to multicultural approaches that take minority identities as given, my research shows how minority representatives mediate and navigate...
between different dimensions of identity and the demands of multiple constituencies.

Over the last few years, I have conducted over 70 interviews with Muslim, Dalit and women MPs in India, following them during election campaigns, parliamentary debates, and constituency surgeries and meetings. Bringing together debates across political theory and anthropology, my book project seeks to provide the first systematic comparative study of representation from the perspective of parliamentarians of different minority backgrounds. In analysing the work of Indian representatives, it seeks also to develop conceptual tools to theorize the co-existence of democratic and authoritarian forms in electoral democracies.

Outreach

Leslie Vinjamuri spoke about US-Europe relations at a meeting at The Ditchely Foundation on a Chatham House-Koe Roundtable on "The Future of Europe: Britain and Turkey amid a Changing EU. She also spoke on a panel at the Cheltenham Literary Festival on "Making America Great Again? Foreign Policy under Trump"; delivered a lecture at Westminster School as part of the school’s Locke Lectures. The title of her talk was “Is Trumpism here to stay and what does it mean for the rest of the world?”

Leslie interviewed Jasmine Whitbread on the topic of leadership. Jasmine was is the CEO of London First and was previously the CEO of Save the Children, spoke at The Wilderness Festival on a panel sponsored by Newsweek Magazine on US Russia relations. She also delivered an evening lecture to the Dartmouth College students currently studying abroad at LSE on the politics and implications of Brexit.

In July, Yuka Kobayashi had meetings with the EC (Cabinet, DG Trade and DG GROW) to discuss China’s Belt and Road Initiative and its impact in the EU. In the same month, Kobayashi was interviewed by news.com of Australia on China’s Belt and Road Initiative.

In July, Phil Clark’s expert testimony was cited extensively in a High Court judgment concerning the extradition of five Rwandan genocide suspects. Since 2010, Phil has been involved in this case as an expert on Rwandan politics and law. In August, Phil gave a briefing on the Great Lakes region to the new Irish ambassador to Uganda. In September, Phil Clark helped launch a series of working papers and policy briefs by Rwandan researchers as part of a DFID-funded Aegis Trust project in Kigali. These papers stemmed from a programme that Phil established in 2015 to support the Rwandan research community and increase the number of Rwandan authors published in international journals. Also in September, Phil gave a briefing on the Rwandan political situation to the DFID office in Kigali and gave a seminar presentation on post-conflict reconciliation to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at Whitehall. In October, Phil appeared as an expert witness in the case of a Rwandan suspect in Boston, giving evidence concerning the FDLR and RUD rebel groups in eastern DR Congo.

In October, Matthew Eagleton-Pierce presented at the Royal United Services Institute in London on ‘Challenges in the World Economy’ for an invited group of foreign ministers from Gulf countries.

Meera Sabaratnam and Mark Laffey ran a workshop at the University of New South Wales, Australia in August, on questions of decolonising the IR curriculum. They also ran a masterclass for the Graduate Centre in Governance and International Affairs in the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland on ‘Decolonising International Relations’.

Dr Rochana Baipai’s keynote paper at the Dr B.R. Ambedkar International Conference, Bengaluru was covered in the national newspaper, the Indian Express in an article titled ‘Indian liberals didn’t foresee threat of an authoritarian state’. Rochana published an op-ed by invitation in the Times of India. She argued that public discussion of conflicting views, the willingness of powerful leaders to concede on crucial points to achieve consensus (reservations were not the first preference of either Nehru or Ambedkar), to avoid majority decision-making in order to secure agreement of minorities, underpin the achievement of the Indian Constitution.
In November, Phil Clark coordinated a week-long training on Sub-Saharan Africa for the Ministry of Defence at the Henlow air force base in Bedfordshire. Tom Young also participated in the training.

In September, Ini Dele-Adeleji was a selected participant in the International Early Career Development Workshop (Ile-Ife, Nigeria) organised by the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife & the Department of International Development, University of Oxford. The Workshop was titled ‘New Research in Nigeria’. Ini was also an invited participant in the annual ‘Festival di Internazionale a Ferrara 2017’, organised by the Italian weekly, Internazionale (Ferrara, Italy), which held from September 28 to 1 October, 2017. Ini was part of a roundtable panel discussion titled ‘Milioni di Nigeriani Ostaggio della Guerra a Boko Haram’. Ini was also grateful for the opportunity to interact with one of his heroes, Angela Davis, during this event.

Spotlight on Research

Felix Berenskoetter writes, “My current research explores the ontology of friendship between political communities, a phenomenon long neglected by IR scholars. Building on my earlier work, my aim is to develop a theory of international friendship as an intimate, political and dynamic relationship. I want us to think about the possibilities and faces of friendship more carefully and explain how friendships emerge, how they are maintained, how they deal with crisis and how they fall apart. One of the challenges of this project is to grasp the notion of the ‘intersubjective’, namely to make sense of friendship as something that exists ‘in between’ states and to evaluate its strength. I do so by trying to identify ideational and emotional markers of a bond expressed in language and in practices at the level of political leaders and state institutions. Conceptually I am drawing on insights from sociology, philosophy and psychology, complemented by empirical analyses of a few ‘special relationships’ emerging out of the second World War: German-US, UK-US, and German-French relations. In addition, together with a colleague based in Israel, I also look at German-Israeli relations. These cases raise a number of fascinating questions, such as how friendship can (or cannot) develop in a hierarchical relationship and between former perpetrators and victims, and whether multiple friendships complement of compete with each other. In exploring these issues, I am also reflecting on how my conceptual work and my empirical studies inform and shape each other or, put more generally, how theory building and making sense of history hang together.”

Media and Blogs

Rahul Rao produced a 2 minute Viewsnight capsule on the politics of statues in the wake of the controversies swirling around the statue of Confederate general Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville, Virginia. The capsule was broadcast on BBC2’s Newsnight programme on 21 August, and was followed by a studio discussion. Rahul also participated in discussions on Monocle Radio and BBC Radio 4 on the same topics. He has written a blog that tries to explain what is at stake in these discussions, which has become part of a series of posts on statues on The Disorder of Things.


Leslie Vinjamuri continued to make weekly TV appearances on networks including CNN, BBC News, BBC World, the Victoria Derbyshire Show, and Bloomberg TV to discuss topics including the US and the Iran Deal, US and North Korea, Trump’s White House, the Transatlantic Partnership, politics surrounding Charlottesville, the investigations of collusion between the Trump administration and the government of Russia, and other related topics.

Leslie Vinjamuri was interviewed live and for a podcast alongside Jamie Angus, Deputy Director of the BBC World Service Group, and Tania Brangan, The Guardian’s lead foreign writer, on the BBC’s decision to launch a radio service aimed at North Korea. Leslie also contributed to discussions on Radio 4, LBC, and on BBC World Service on politics surrounding Charlottesville, the investigations of collusion between the Trump
administration and the government of Russia, and other related topics. Leslie was interviewed by BBC World Service by Dan Damon for the World Update program on topics including the role of the media during Trump’s Presidency, and politics in the White House, and was quoted in an article by France 24 on the US decision to withdraw from UNESCO.

Ryan Brading was interviewed by FM4 Austrian Radio on ‘Venezuela: symbolic anti-maduro referendum’; the BBC Radio 5 with Dotun Abedayo on ‘Venezuela and its rapid slide to dictatorship’; and Radio France International on ‘US Sanctions: Venezuela’. Ryan Brading also published ‘Venezuela: what Chávez’s mentor told me about the country’s Castro-inspired road to ruin’ in The Conversation and The Independent in August.

Kristin Surak was quoted in The Economist and the Ukranian magazine Navoyi Vrynya concerning her research on the sale of citizenship, and gave interviews to the Italian newspaper La Repubblica, Sky TV News, and BBC Radio concerning Japanese politics and the recent national elections.

Ini Dele-Adedeji was interviewed on the BBC News ‘Focus on Africa’ programme in July, where he discussed the claims made by the Nigerian government to have defeated Boko Haram; and was quoted in an article in the Financial Times’ September publication on women’s education in northern Nigeria titled ‘Kano’s Emir Fights Local Prejudice over Educating Girls’. Ini was also quoted in an article in African Business magazine’s October publication on the entry of the discourse on “restructuring” into the Nigerian zeitgeist.

In July, Radio France Internationale (02:58) interviewed Phil Clark about the International Criminal Court’s decision not to give interim release to former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo; International Business Times interviewed him about Uganda’s handling of 950,000 refugees from South Sudan; and Phil was a guest panellist on Monocle24’s “Midori House” programme, discussing Trump and Putin, the presidential assassination trial in Montenegro and the Rwandan elections. Also in July, Le Temps newspaper in Switzerland quoted Phil Clark on debates over Uganda’s amnesty law for rebel combatants.

In August, the East African interviewed Phil Clark about political freedom in Rwanda ahead of the country’s presidential election; Phil did the Monocle24 review of the Australian newspapers (47:20), featuring the resignation of two senators because of dual citizenship and the start of the trial of Cardinal George Pell on historical sexual allegations; IRIN News interviewed him about Uganda’s hosting of 950,000 South Sudanese refugees; Radio France Internationale interviewed him about the UN accusing the Congolese government over 80 mass crimes found in the Kasai provinces; the Washington Post interviewed Phil Clark about the Rwandan presidential election; and Phil’s comments were highlighted in the Washington Post’s “Today’s Worldview” summary. Also in August, Phil Clark was interviewed on the Rwandan election by Newsweek, Time magazine, International Business Times, the East African, Le Courrier (Switzerland), the Al Jazeera “Newshour” programme, Turkish Radio Television and Radio France Internationale.

In October, Phil Clark did the Africa news review on Monocle24 (33:00), focusing on the role of African first ladies in Nigeria and Zimbabwe; was quoted in a debate in Le Monde about France’s role in the Rwandan genocide; Deutsche Welle and Radio France Internationale interviewed Phil Clark about Joseph Kabila pushing the DR Congo elections back to 2019; Phil was also quoted on the same issue by World Politics Review and the Daily Maverick; Phil did the Monocle24 news review on Catalonia, Trump vs. Tillerson and the Austrian election; Deutsche Welle and Radio France Internationale interviewed Phil Clark about US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley’s visit to Africa; In October, Phil Clark was interviewed by RFI on the threat of US sanctions against the Congolese government if it continues to delay the presidential election; and reviewed reviewed the international news on Monocle24 (25:00), focusing on the Mueller investigation, Westminster sexual harassment, the Kenyan election and Australian government turmoil over dual citizenship controversy.

In August, Michael Buehler’s research on vigilante groups in Indonesia was mentioned in the Jakarta post.

**Announcements**

In October 2017, Toby Emerson, Merve Kania, and Neema Nodoust were elected as postgraduate student representatives for the Department of Politics and International Studies. They are always available to chat over a coffee or beer for creating dialogue on important issues between the postgraduate students, academics, and administration. They have great things planned and are looking forward to meeting and representing the PG students throughout the year. Please join the facebook group “SOAS PG Politics 2017-18” they created: https://www.facebook.com/groups/162874770970461/.

Toby Emerson is reading MSc State, Society, and Development. He is focusing on Greater China and small states at SOAS, having previously studied International Relations at the Universities of St Andrews and Hong Kong (Email: 656942@soas.ac.uk).
Merve Kania is a German with a Turkish first name and a Polish last name, studying the MSc Middle East Politics. After her master’s studies, she would like to pursue an academic or public policy counselling career. She enjoys drawing, traveling, trying new food as well as sports (Email: 656045@soas.ac.uk).

Neema Nodoust is an Iranian-American pursuing his MSc in Middle East Politics. Focusing his studies on Iran and economic development, Neema hopes to use his education at SOAS to transform the nature of American political and economic engagement with Iran and the greater region (Email: 655873@soas.ac.uk).

Personal Notes

After great send offs from the Department and from the London Middle East Institute in July, Charles Tripp packed up his office, shipping his books to the library of the newly established AHRC-funded Nahrein Network at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr in Erbil, with the help of Prof Eleanor Robson (UCL), Dr Paul Collins (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford) and Dr Saad Eskander (Director, University of Kurdistan Hewlêr).

The Department of Politics and International Studies is one of the most cutting-edge politics departments in the United Kingdom, and uniquely positioned for the study of the politics of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

There are at present nearly 500 students studying for degrees (BA, Certificate, MSc and MPhil/PhD) in the Department. The Department also hosts visiting students who are here as part of their work towards degrees in other countries (notably the United States, EU, Korea and Japan).

Apart from providing students with a firm grounding in the discipline, the department has particular strengths in the following areas:

- Regional Politics: Middle East, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and Africa
- International Relations: IR theory, security, human rights, transnational justice, international migration, IPE
- Comparative Politics: comparative political sociology, comparative political economy, comparative political thought
- Political Theory: political Islam, non-western political thought, multiculturalism

The current officers of the department are:

**Head of Department**
Mark Laffey

**Undergraduate Admissions Tutors**
Rochana Bajpai
Matthew Eagleton-Pierce

**Undergraduate Programme Convenors**
Rafeef Ziadah (BA Politics)
Meera Sabaratnam (BA International Relations)

**Undergraduate Tutors**
Carlo Bonura (Student Welfare Tutor)
Elian Weizman (First Year Tutor)
Christina Maags (Second Year Tutor)
Rahul Rao (Third Year Tutor)

**Postgraduate Tutor**
Dafydd Fell

**Postgraduate Admissions Tutors/Programme Convenors**
Phil Clark (MSc African Politics), Terms 1 & 3
Stephen Chan (MSc African Politics), Term 2
Dafydd Fell (MSc Asian Politics)
Kerem Nisancioglu (MSc International Politics)
Laleh Khalili (MSc Middle East Politics)
Dafydd Fell (MSc Politics of China), Term 1
Yuka Kobayashi (MSc Politics of China), Terms 2 & 3
Tar Yan Kong (MSc State, Society and Development)
Leslie Vinjamuri (MSc Conflict, Rights and Justice)
Matthew Nelson (MSc Comparative Political Thought), Terms 1 & 3
Rahul Rao (MSc Comparative Political Thought), Term 2

**Research Tutor**
Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, Term 1
Alastair Fraser, Terms 2 & 3

**Research Admissions Tutor**
Tom Young

**Department REF Coordinator**
Lawrence Saez

**Department Learning and Teaching Coordinator**
Mark Laffey (acting)

This newsletter is produced three times per academic year by Laleh Khalili. Send any announcements or notices to lk4@soas.ac.uk

Department of Politics is on twitter; please follow @soaspolitics
On Facebook, you can find and befriend us at SOASPolitics
In September, Charles did nothing very much in the internet-free haven of Sifnos.

In October, as part of his ongoing research into the appropriation and reclaiming of public space in Tunisia, Charles participated in the events, seminars, interventions and installations of Dream City 2017, which took place across the old Medina of Tunis. An extraordinary experience of creativity and contention, exploring difficult and sometimes taboo topics in the spaces of the Medina, making public through powerfully affecting works concealed aspects of power, violence and prejudice. This was all the more encouraging at a time in Tunisia that is otherwise characterised by the political euphemism of ‘conservative transition’.

Many warm congratulations to Carlo Bonura and his partner Maria who are now the proud parents of little Leo, born on 17 August. We are hoping they are getting at least a little bit of sleep.

Former SOAS Politics undergraduate and SOAS Student Union co-president, the wonderful Georgie Robertson has been selected the by Labour Party to stand for council elections in King’s Cross. Georgie has a long history of campaigning for both local and national causes, having been active in the campaign to end outsourcing at SOAS, and for Jeremy Corbyn during the most recent parliamentary elections.

Georgie Robertson celebrating her selection with another SOAS Politics alumnus, Haringey Labour Councillor, Adam Jogee