

Politics and International Studies Newsletter

New Members of the Department



Phil Clark is a new lecturer in international and comparative politics, focusing on Africa. He was born in Sudan, grew up in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, and is Australian by nationality. Before coming to SOAS, he was a research fellow in the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford, and before that a research fellow at the Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster. He holds a DPhil in Politics from Oxford, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar.



After completing a one-year ESRC postdoctoral fellowship in the department of Politics and International Studies here at SOAS in September 2010, **Corinna Mullin** has taken up a two-year lectureship in Comparative and International Politics, with reference to the Middle East. She researches the potential epistemological and ontological challenges posed by Islamist movements, as both state and non-state actors, to various concepts, theories and norms that underpin the practice and theorisation of international politics.

New Publications

Rahul Rao celebrates the publication of his book, *Third World Protest: Between Home and the World* (Oxford University Press). Journeying through the writings of James Joyce, Rabindranath Tagore, Edward Said, and Frantz Fanon, the activism of 'anti-globalization' protesters, and the dilemmas of queer activists, the book demonstrates what a critique of hegemonic cosmopolitanism and of nationalism might look like. He has also published two articles, "Disciplining Cosmopolitanism" in *Transnational Legal Theory* 1(3) and "Queer in the Time of Terror" in *Law like Love: a queer perspective of law in India* (Yoda Press).

Phil Clark's book, *The Gacaca Courts, Post-Genocide Justice and Reconciliation in Rwanda: Justice without Lawyers* is now out with Cambridge University Press. The book examines the Gacaca community courts which since 2001 have been the centrepiece of Rwanda's justice and reconciliation programme. Drawing on more than six years of fieldwork in Rwanda and nearly five hundred interviews with participants in trials, this in-depth ethnographic investigation of a complex transitional justice institution explores the ways in which Rwandans interpret Gacaca. He has also written two opinion pieces relating to the book and the recent Rwandan elections: "Kagame's power struggle" for *The Guardian's* Comment Is Free

(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/isfree/libertycentral/2010/aug/05/rwanda-kagames-power-struggle>) and "Truth and reconciliation at a price" for Radio Netherlands Worldwide (<http://www.rnw.nl/international-justice/article/truth-and-reconciliation-a-price>).

Rochana Bajpai's book *Debating Difference: Group Rights and Liberal Democracy in India* problematizes post-colonial as well as liberal narratives and constructs a framework that combines their insights for the analysis of the relationship of multiculturalism and liberal democracy in India, and post-colonial democracies more generally. Rochana has also published "Rhetoric as Argument: Social Justice and Affirmative Action in India, 1990" in *Modern Asian Studies* 44(4); and "Cultural Rights of Minorities during Constitution-making: A Re-reading" in Gurpreet Mahajan and Surinder Jodhka (eds), *Religion, Community and Development* (Routledge).

Mark Laffey's "Things Lost and Found: Richard Ashley and the Silences of Thinking Space" has been published in *Review of International Studies* 36(4). His "Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations" (*Millennium* 31(1), 2002 with Tarak Barkawi) has been reprinted in George Ritzer and Zeynep Atalay (eds.), *Readings in Globalization: Key Concepts and Major Debates* (Blackwell), and his "Beyond Belief: Ideas and Symbolic Technologies in the Study of International Relations" (*European Journal of International Relations* 3(2), 1997, with Jutta

Weldes) now also appears in Mark Bevir (ed.) *Interpretive Political Science Vol 3: Interpreting Politics* (Sage).

Laleh Khalili's co-edited volume, *Policing and Prisons in the Middle East: Formations of Coercion* (with Jillian Schwedler) is now out in the UK with Hurst & Co, and in the US with Columbia University Press. The book is the first ever book length foray in the world of the state's internal coercive mechanism in the Middle East and includes exciting new articles on such broad range of topics as policing demonstrations in Amman Jordan, death fasts in Turkish prisons, the significant role of private firms in the construction, maintenance and management of Abu Ghraib prison, and the French colonial police's control of the Syrian desert and its Bedouin inhabitants. Additionally, her "The Location of Palestine in Global Counterinsurgencies" now appears in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42(3), and "The New (and Old) Classics of Counterinsurgency" has been published in *Middle East Report* 255.

Felix Berenskoetter has published "Identity in International Relations" in Robert Denemark (ed.), *The International Studies Encyclopedia* (Wiley-Blackwell) and "From NATO to ESDP: A Social Constructivist Analysis of German Strategic Adjustment after the End of the Cold War" (with Bastian Giegerich) in *Security Studies* 19(3).

Matt Nelson also has a new book with Hurst & Co. and Columbia University Press, *In the Shadow of Shari'ah: Islam, Islamic Law, and Democracy in Pakistan*. The book traces the relationship between Islamic law, landed property relations, and local patterns of political representation in Pakistan to explain why rural Muslims have a tendency to vote for the introduction of Islamic law but against its enforcement—in many cases electing representatives with a proven ability to *avoid* the implementation of what many regard as a 'fixed' or 'immutable' *shari'ah*. He argues that a deeper understanding of the historically contextualised political logics underlying this pattern of voting help to illuminate the relationship between Islam, Islamic law, and notions of 'political accountability' throughout the Muslim world. He was also invited, again this year, to write

the year-end summary of politics in Pakistan for *Asian Survey* ("Tackling the Taliban?"). And, in October, he published an article in the *Journal of Human Rights Practice* ("Persistent Legal Pluralism and the Challenge of Universal Human Rights").

Doctoral student **Toby Matthiesen** published "Hizbullah al-Hijaz: A History of The Most Radical Saudi Shi'a Opposition Group" in *The Middle East Journal* 64(2).

Dave Harris and **Simona Vittorini** have published "India Goes Over to the Other Side: Indo-West African Relations in the 21st Century" in Emma Mawdsley and Gerrard McCann (Eds), *India in Africa: Changing Geographies of Power* (Fahamu Books).

Professor **Stephen Chan's** *Citizen of Zimbabwe* (Weaver Press) is now reprinted in a new edition. The book is a series of interviews conducted with Morgan Tsvangirai who was awaiting the verdict in his treason trial. His *End of Certainty* (Zed Books) also appears in an expanded new edition. He described the book as "an unashamed, perhaps overweening, effort to inaugurate a new anglophone tradition: to speak about complex things, with imagination, in public; to let imagination carry some of the complexity; and to discharge an intellectual's public role." He has also written "Alternative Institutional Arrangements for Human Development" for *Development* 53(1) and "The Bitterness of the Islamic Hero in Three Recent Western Works of Fiction" in *Third World Quarterly* 31(5).

Leslie Vinjamuri's "Deterrence, Democracy, and the Pursuit of International Justice During Conflict" has been published in *Ethics and International Affairs* 24 (2).

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam's *A Metahistory of the Clash of Civilizations* is now out with Columbia University Press in New York and Hurst & Co in London. The book explains the conceptual genesis of the clash of civilizations and the influence of western and Islamic representations of the other. Arshin highlights the discontinuities between Islamism and the canon of Islamic philosophy, which distinguishes between Avicennian and Qutbian discourses of Islam, and he reveals how violence became inscribed in western ideas, especially during the Enlightenment. Columbia University Press has also printed Adib-Moghaddam's *Iran in World Politics: The Question of the Islamic Republic* which combines theory and lived experience to explain the foreign

relations and domestic politics of post-revolutionary Iran.

Corinna Mullin's article based on her latest research project, "Islamist Challenged to the 'Liberal Peace' Discourse: The case of Hamas and the Israel-Palestine 'Peace Process'" will be published in the next edition of *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*.

Dafydd Fell has published the following articles recently: "Critical Elections in Taiwan: Locating the Start of a New Political Era" in *Asian Survey* 50(5) and "Taiwan's Democracy: Towards a Liberal Democracy or Authoritarianism?" in *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 39(2). His opinion piece, "How to Achieve Political Consensus?" also appeared in *Taipei Times* (28 June 2010 <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2010/06/28/2003476597>)

Doctoral student **Hanan Toukan** has published "On Being the Other in Post-Civil War Lebanon: Aid and the Politics of Art in Processes of Contemporary Cultural Production" in the *Arab Studies Journal* 27(1).

Sossie Kasbarian's "The 'Others' Within – the Armenians in Cyprus" is now published in Kerem Oktem and Dimitar Bechev (eds.), *Shifting Boundaries: Nationalism and Transnationalism in Southeastern Europe* (Brill Publishers)

Research Centres, Groups, and Networks

The Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Science, newly constituted at SOAS and housed within the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences will provide a forum for inter-disciplinary, comparative social scientific research relating to the Asia-Pacific region (corresponding to the APEC region encompassing Northeast/Southeast Asia, Australasia and the NAFTA countries); host regular seminar series, workshops, conferences featuring scholars from UK and overseas; and develop externally-funded, inter-disciplinary collaborative projects within SOAS and with institutions overseas. The Centre is interested in particular in i) varieties of social systems; ii) systemic transitions; iii) regional economic integration; iv) regimes types; v) security, securitization and development in the Asia-Pacific region. For more information, contact Dr Tat Yan Kong, yt2@soas.ac.uk.

In a new initiative to help us analyze and understand the implications of

politics of rights and justice, during and post conflict, the Department has established a **Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice (CCRJ)**, co-directed by Dr Stephen Hopgood and Dr Leslie Vinjamuri. Organized under five research clusters – global human rights, transitional justice, humanitarianism, the practice of conflict, and faith and secularism – CCRJ is an interdisciplinary forum for encouraging research-driven engagement between and among scholars, practitioners, advocates, and research students. Through research workshops, speaker series, manuscript readings, and grant projects CCRJ facilitates creative engagement among policy and research communities based internationally and in London. Recent highlights are a workshop on Professor Michael Barnett's forthcoming book *For Better and for Worse: the Lives and Times of Humanitarianism* (Cornell, 2011) and the launch of the London Transitional Justice Network (LJTN) of which CCRJ co-director Dr Leslie Vinjamuri is co-chair. CCRJ welcomes as research associates visiting scholars and practitioners pursuing policy relevant research. For more details please log on to <http://www.conflictrightjustice.org/home.html>.

The London Migration Research Group (LMRG) is entering its fourth year. Jointly organized by Fiona Adamson (SOAS), Eiko Thielemann (LSE) and Claire Dwyer (UCL), the group hosts regular seminars on migration related-topics that rotate between SOAS, LSE and UCL. The first seminar of the 2010-11 was held at SOAS on October 12. It featured Professor Barbara Harrell-Bond OBE – founder of the Oxford Refugee Studies Centre and a leading advocate of refugee legal aid. We welcome everyone to our seminars. For more information see: <http://www.lmrg.org>.

The London Transitional Justice Network has been launched (co-chaired by Leslie and Chandra Lekha Sriram together with LSE's Iavor Rangelov and ISA's Par Engstrom) and held several terrific sessions including most recent a panel on the Gacaca. The Network's membership now includes most of the major NGOs, Universities and Foundations in London. For more information contact lv@soas.ac.uk.

The SOAS Centre of Taiwan Studies received some press coverage in the *Taipei Times* following an interview with Dafydd Fell. <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2010/11/02/2003487520>

Appointments and Awards

Professor **Stephen Chan** was awarded an OBE for "services to Africa and to higher education" in the 2010 Queen's Birthday Honours list, published on Saturday 12 June. "I hope the award is of benefit to SOAS as it seeks to project itself as an increasingly important actor in the world of educated public opinion," said Professor Chan in reaction to the announcement. "It's not an award I sought but, after several glasses of champagne, I've decided I'm very happy with it."

Professor **Salwa Ismail** is the recipient of a major ESRC grant for her project, *Merchants, Entrepreneurs and Public Piety: A Political Economy of Emergent Forms of Islamist Contestation in Egypt and Syria*. The project examines the links between two interrelated and mutually shaping developments: the emergence of the middle entrepreneurial and merchant classes as a socio-political force in Egypt and Syria and the production of new forms of Islamist political engagement on the part of these classes. A focal point of the inquiry is the new Islamist projects that are being promoted by and within the merchant classes and the new bourgeoisie whose ranks have expanded with economic liberalisation and whose political agency is being constituted.

Lawrence Saez was appointed to serve in the World Economic Forum's India Regional Agenda Council. The ten-member India Regional Agenda Council is composed of prominent captains of industry, civil society, and what the World Economic Forum terms to be "global thought leaders". The Council has met several times and is at present deliberating on a number of issues relating to challenges to India's economic growth and development. The Council will write a report that will be presented to India's Prime Minister and other relevant cabinet members of the Indian government. Lawrence has been actively involved in identifying the core themes of the report and, eventually, will be helping write the report. The report will focus on four core themes: energy security, corruption, global trade relations, and military competition with China. In addition, as a member of the Council, Lawrence will be attending the World Economic Forum's impressive array of events. For instance, President Obama will be meeting with members of the Council during his November visit to India. In addition, Lawrence will be in attendance at the India Economic Summit to be held in New Delhi,

following shortly after Obama's visit. At the end of November, Lawrence will also be attending the World Economic Forum's Summit on the Global Agenda in Dubai. Of course, Lawrence is also looking forward to attending the World Economic Forum's summit in Davos.

Matt Nelson has just returned from a one-year fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, US. He was also the recipient of a Senior Research Fellowship from the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (as well as the Shorenstein Fellowship from the Shorenstein Center at Stanford, which he declined). He will be taking a temporary leave from the department in January to enjoy a fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (WWICS) in Washington, DC. All of these fellowships have been awarded to support Matt's current research regarding religious education, political ideology, and competing notions of citizenship. Matt was also elected to the South Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies (2009-2011).

Politics doctoral student **Sophia Hoffmann** was the recipient of the SOAS Ouseley Memorial Scholarship, awarded to one student per year who is conducting research in one of the languages of the Middle East. Sophia has just finished her fieldwork in Syria.

Presentations and Conferences

On 13 October, **Professor Lynn McDonald (Department of Sociology, University of Guelph)** presented "Comparative Political Thought: Florence Nightingale in India" in the Politics Department Seminar. She spoke of the ways in which Florence Nightingale as a humanitarian and Liberal political activist challenged certain aspects of British rule in India.

Professor Sandra Halperin (Department of Politics and IR, Royal Holloway) presented "Trans-local Social Power, Capitalism, and the Nation State" to the Politics Department Seminar on 20 October. Professor Halperin sketched an alternative "horizontal" approach to understanding the world system -- one that focused on trans-local networks of trade, exchange and social power instead of territorially-bound states. The seminar led to a lively discussion on territoriality and the sources of state power that extended into post-seminar drinks.

Julia Strauss organised a two-part workshop titled "Taiwan History

Reconsidered, 1949-1975" with Shiyung Liu; first part was held at Academia Sinica Institute of Modern History on 24 August, and the second part took place SOAS on 24 September. Julian herself presented a paper titled "Taiwan Exceptionalism: Terror, Land and Rice." Julia also attended the LASA (Latin American Studies Association) meeting in Toronto, 6-9 October, where she presented "Framing and Claiming: Contemporary Globalization and the Weight of History in China's Rhetoric towards Latin America" on a panel on China and Latin America.

Two upcoming Politics Department Seminars are scheduled on 24 November (3-5PM, Room 4418), when Professor **Patrick Chabal (History, KCL)** will talk about "Africa: The Politics of Suffering and Smiling" and on 1 December (3-5PM, Room 4418), where Dr **Carlo Bonura (Centre for Political Ideologies, Oxford University)** will present (title to be announced).

Forthcoming events also include the inaugural annual lecture for Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice (CCRJ) on 22 November 2010 (6PM, Khalili Lecture Theatre) by Professor **Carol Gluck of Columbia University** speaking on "Doing Justice to the Past: War and the Politics of Memory." CCRJ will also host a smaller workshop with her and other scholars on war and memory.

The London Migration Research Group (LMRG) will be hosting Dr **JoAnn McGregor (Geography, UCL)** on 23 November at 5pm. She will speak on "Rethinking immigration detention: removal centres as spaces of religious revival and politicization." Please see www.lmrg.org for more information.

Steve Hopgood attended a conference at the Refugee Studies Centre in Oxford on September 22 on faith-based humanitarianism and forced migration (<http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/PDFs/Programmefaith-basedhumanitarianismworkshop.pdf>). He presented both the outline of a book in which he's a co-author, *Between Heaven and Earth* (edited by Michael Barnett and Janice Stein) about religious and secular humanitarian providers, and an outline of the chapter he is co-authoring in the book with **Leslie Vinjamuri** called 'Faith in Markets'. The workshop itself, the keynote speaker at which was Dr Hany El Banna, dealt with a wide variety of forced migration issues - refugee

experiences, the politics of camps, dealing with trauma, narratives of exile, immigration politics, and the genealogy of sanctuary. At all times the response of faith communities, particularly Christian ones, was a main focus. A number of the participants clearly felt their religious motivations and beliefs had, even at the workshop, to be processed via a secular and 'academic' language, and that this opened up questions about motivation and legitimacy that could be answered more easily for many participants by the use of one word; as a senior member of the Jesuit Refugee Service put it, God.

Fiona Adamson held two international workshops on the topic "Explaining Diaspora Politics: Identities Beyond Borders" during 2009-10. The first was held at SOAS in October 2009, and the second was held at the International Studies Association (ISA) meeting in New Orleans in February 2010. She also participated in the workshop "Transnational Mobilization and Civil Wars" in Oslo, Norway in August. The workshop is part of a three-year project on the transnational dimensions of civil war. In September, Fiona presented at a conference on radicalisation and resistance in Qatar in September. The conference was co-sponsored by the ESRC and Al-Jazeera Center for Studies and featured presentations by UK academics who had conducted research on the ESRC New Security Challenges research program.

In a July research visit to Sierra Leone **Dave Harris** was asked by the DFID Sierra Leone State Building team to give a lecture/briefing on Sierra Leonean politics and how it interacts with DFID's work. On returning home, the appearance of the model Naomi Campbell at the Charles Taylor trial in The Hague briefly sparked considerable media interest in Liberia. Dave agreed to write a contextual piece for the Channel 4 website on the topic. In September Dave gave two sets of politics briefings through SOAS Enterprise for the staff of a German NGO, AGEH, who are being deployed to Sierra Leone and Liberia. Finally, in October he appeared in a two-part Radio France Internationale documentary on Charles Taylor scheduled to coincide with the announcement of the verdict.

Professor **Charles Tripp** has given a series of lectures and talks over the last few months including presentations and seminars of world politics at the Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Command and Staff College in Kuwait (where participants were senior military officers from the Middle East, the US,

the UK, Canada, China, India and Pakistan; March); a keynote lecture on "The Evolving Nature of Democracy and Political Structures" (in April) and on "Themes of Potential Concern in the Middle East" (in June) to the Royal College for Defence Studies; a lecture on "Islam and Western Security/The West and the Security of the Islamic World" for the Chief of Defense Staff of Denmark.

Additionally, **Charles Tripp** gave the inaugural lecture ("A Sunni-Shi'i divide in the regional politics of the Middle East: myth or reality?") for the Middle East lecture series organized by the Department of International Politics at City University and the keynote speech on "The Seductions of Violence and the Making of Iraq" at a British Academy conference *Rethinking the Middle East?* He also toured the East Coast of the US, where he gave a Peter Green Lecture on the Modern Middle East at the Watson Institute, Brown University, Providence R.I. on "Shadowing Power: Lineages of the Dual State in Iraq" and at the Keivorkian Center, New York University on "Iraq's Past and the Struggle for its Future."

Rochana Bajpai presented "Is there an Indian liberalism?" at a workshop on Comparative Liberalism at the University of Oxford (February); "Liberalism in India: Three Strands" at the European Social Science and History Conference in Ghent (April); and "Heuristics of Hegemony: Debating Affirmative Action in Malaysia" at Political Studies Association Annual Conference in Edinburgh (March).

On 7 October, **the Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights, and Justice (CCRJ)** hosted, jointly with the **London Transitional Justice Network**, a panel discussion, Debating Local Justice in Rwanda: The Gacaca Courts and Post-Genocide Accountability. **Phil Clark** (SOAS, Politics Department), Jens Meierhenrich (LSE, IR Department), and Lars Waldorf (York, Centre for Applied Human Rights), authors of some of the most important books on transitional justice in Rwanda, evaluated the impact of the Gacaca courts on truth, justice, and reconciliation in Rwanda. Experts from the LSE, Oxford, Amnesty International, Sigrid Rausing Trust, International Center for Transitional Justice, Goldsmiths, and UCL, attended this contentious debate which presented the Gacaca courts as a tool of state repression (Waldorf), lawfare (Meierhenrich), versus a mechanism for introducing more accountability into local politics (Clark). The London Transitional

Justice Network is co-chaired by SOAS academics **Leslie Vinjamuri** and Chandra Sriram together with Par Engstrom (Institute for the Study of the Americas) and Iavor Rangelov (LSE Global Governance).

On 25/26 October, Politics doctoral student, **Sophia Hoffmann**, attended a doctoral workshop of the International Political Sociology section of ISA, held at Science Po in Paris. The Doctoral Workshops initiative is the result of collaboration between King's College London, Science Po Paris, University of Victoria in Canada and the Catholic University in Rio de Janeiro. Around a dozen doctoral students presented highly stimulating papers at the intersection of critical international relations theory and sociology, focused, for example, on the transfer of counterterrorism discourse to local UK government agencies or on Macedonian migration.

Felix Berenskoetter presented "Parameters of a National Biography: Conceptualising Becoming in Space and Time" and "Investing in a Euro-Vision: German-American Friendship and the Choice for NATO after the Second World War (1945-1955)" at the 7th Pan-European IR Conference of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), held in Stockholm, 9-11 September. He also presented "Deep Theory in International Relations: Bringing the Human Condition Back In" at the 2010 *Millennium: Journal of International Studies Annual Conference* at the LSE on 16-17 October.

Leslie Vinjamuri participated in a workshop at the Kroc Institute (Notre Dame University, US) on Reconciliation and Restorative Justice - this project is directed by Dan Philpott and Jennifer Lewellyn and was the launch workshop of their new initiative on religion and reconciliation. She also took part in workshops at Oxford and Ulster on amnesties and the role of databases in transitional justice. The SSRC is holding a working group on Religion and Development (directed by Al Stepan and Katherine Marshall); Leslie is participating in this initiative which brings together scholars from Europe and the USA to evaluate the state of the literature in this area.

Rochana Bajpai and **Charles Tripp** took part in a workshop held by the Centre for Political Ideologies on 6 November 2010 at Oxford. The workshop examined how theoretical sources are conceptualized in comparative political thought, looking in particular at the constitution of knowledge and polemic through which philosophical traditions and practices

cohere. Discussion papers were presented by Prof Christine Keating (Ohio State University), Prof Megan Thomas (University of California, Santa Cruz) and Dr Carlo Bonura (University of Oxford). Based on the success of this workshop and its predecessor, **Rochana Bajpai**, **Matt Nelson** and **Charles Tripp** will be organizing a further workshop on 17-18 December 2010 focusing on freedom and dissent in comparative political thought. It will be hosted by the Centre for Political Ideologies at Oxford, but will allow a number of SOAS colleagues to present discussion papers.

In March 2010, **Dafydd Fell** was one of the organizers for a two day International Conference in London on Taiwan in the East Asian Region. This was a collaborative initiative involving the SOAS Centre of Taiwan Studies, British Academy, Taiwan's National Science Council and Academia Sinica. In April 2010 he was one of the main organizers of the Seventh European Association of Taiwan Studies Conference held in Tubingen, Germany. This is the largest annual Taiwan Studies conference in the world, outside of Taiwan. He also presented lectures and presentations at the Department of Political Science, National Chungcheng University, Taiwan (January, on Taiwanese party politics), at the Taiwan in the East Asian Region Conference, London (March, on European Taiwan Studies), at the 7th European Association of Taiwan Studies Conference, Tubingen, Germany (April, on "Taiwanese Parties' Candidate selection in the Aftermath of Electoral Reform" and also a roundtable speech on European Taiwan Studies), and at the Shanghai Institute of International Studies (June, on Taiwan's electoral and party politics).

Sossie Kasbarian presents "Return to the 'Homeland' – Diaspora Sojourners in Armenia" at the *Migration, Mobility and Globalization* Consortium for Asian and African Studies (CAAS) Symposium and Workshop, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris.

Current Research

Rahul Rao is currently researching ideas of space and place in queer advocacy in Uganda against the Anti-Homosexuality Bill. He is particularly interested in the way sexuality is implicated in Ugandan encounters with Christian missionaries in the late 19th and early 21st centuries.

Fiona Adamson hosted Dr Maria Koinova from the University of Amsterdam on an ESRC-SSRC Fellowship. Adamson and Koinova are working on a joint project on transnational identities and diaspora politics in London and Amsterdam.

Rochana Bajpai's current research has to do with scope and method in the field of comparative political thought. She argues that the field should encompass three irreducibly distinct modes of doing comparative political thought: normative political theory, the history of political thought and interpretive social science. With regards to method, she is interested in exploring the conceptual analysis of the rhetoric of legislative debates.

Leslie Vinjamuri is working with **Steve Hopgood** on a major initiative funded by the Luce Foundation (and directed by Michael Barnett and Janice Stein) on faith-based humanitarianism; the project met twice in Geneva recently and we are applying for grants to fund the next phase of this project.

Corinna Mullin is currently working on Islamist approaches to minorities, both in theory and practice, focusing on the AKP (Turkey) and Hamas (Palestine) as case studies.

Doctoral student **Sambaiah Gundimeda** is currently working for Prof David Mosse's ESRC-funded project on Christianity and caste in South India.

Sossie Kasbarian is currently participating in *Citizenship, Identity and Authority* Project, a major research project organised at the Centre for Developing Area Studies at McGill University in Montreal (2009-2012).

Events

Politics doctoral student, **Benedetta de Alessi** has been instrumental in establishing the *Books for Sudan* project. *Books for Sudan* aims to overcome the lack of books at Juba University Library in Southern Sudan, in order to support the University's research capacity. Juba University has very few resources and its library was forced to shutter in 1985 during the war. The library has just reopened, but only old books are available. *Books for Sudan* bought a 40ft container in February 2010, which SOAS offered to host on its premises for free. By May 2010 over 10,000 new and quality used academic books were collected for free from UK university students, professors, libraries, research institutions (i.e. House of Lords

library, Nobel Peace Library), NGOs, publishing houses and private donors. After 3 months of travel the container (below) has now successfully reached Juba University. The books are now being catalogued and will be ready for use before the next academic year starting in February 2011. For more information on *Books for Sudan* contact Benedetta De Alessi bda@soas.ac.uk and SOAS Student Union <http://booksforsudan.soasunion.org>



In June 2010, Professor **Charles Tripp** convened the week-long programme devoted to the Middle East as part of the module 'Anticipating and Managing Regional Crises', for the 11th New Issues in Security course organized by the Geneva Centre for Security Policy. The course took in such issues as 'Arms Races & Arms Control', 'Iran & Gulf Security', 'Identity Conflicts & National Interests', 'The Human Cost of Insecurity in Iraq', 'Palestine & Israel' and 'Regime Challenges in the Middle East'. It brought together colleagues from SOAS and other colleges of London University (Prof Nadje al-Ali, Prof Wyn Bowen, Prof Fawaz Gerges), as well as Prof Ali Ansari, Dr Ahmad Khalidi and General (retd.) Shlomo Brom to address a multinational audience of officials from the ministries of defence, foreign affairs and other agencies from a range of countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Central and East Asia.



Since the end of its civil war and an inconclusive 2008 Constituent Assembly elections, Nepal has been embroiled in a constitutional crisis. At the invitation of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, leading Nepalese politicians met in London in November to attempt to work out a

possible compromise. At the invitation of Nepal's ambassador to the UK, H.E. Dr Suresh Chandra Chalise, **Rochana Bajpai** and **Lawrence Saez** (on the left, above) attended a private dinner at the Nepalese embassy in London to share their expertise on minority rights protection, parliamentary bargaining strategies, federalism, and fiscal policy with the Nepalese parliamentary delegation. Bajpai and Saez had ample opportunity to provide concrete inputs on how to seek a resolution to Nepal's constitutional crisis and how to move forward in various aspects of Nepal's public policy.

Rochana Bajpai briefed the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams on Indian secularism and minority rights in India. She also shared her expertise on contemporary trends in Indian politics with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; on constitution-making and minority rights with members of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal; and on affirmative action debates in the US and Malaysia, with government ministers and opposition leaders in India.



On Thursday, 30 September, the Department held its away day at Dorich House in Richmond, where research and REF strategies, teaching, and various other matters of long-term significance were discussed (above and below).



New Courses

This September the Politics Department launched two new Taiwan courses. The first is titled "**Taiwan's Politics and Cross-Strait Relations**" (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/courseunits/15PPOC252.html>). This is the first year-

long course devoted to Taiwan's domestic politics and international relations at any institute outside of Taiwan. The second course is titled "**Taiwan's Political and Economic Developments**" (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/courseunits/153400072.html>) which focuses on Taiwan's history, domestic politics, economic development and international relations. A major three year grant from Taiwan's Ministry of Education enabled SOAS to hire a Senior Teaching Fellow in Taiwan Studies to contribute to these two new courses.

In Term 2, Phil Clark will be teaching "**Violence, Justice and the Politics of Memory**" (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/courseunits/15PPOH019.html>) which offers historical, theoretical and empirical perspectives on the nature and causes of conflict and its impact of on social and economic development in Africa and Asia over the past century, as well as memory and justice responses to violence.

Notices

Students interested in the Politics Society should contact Dr **Tom Young**, ty@soas.ac.uk.

The Department of Politics and International Studies was originally established in 1962 as the Department of Economic and Political Studies, but became independent in 1990. The department was ranked very highly in the 2008 UK HEFCE Research Assessment Exercise, coming 7th out of 59 departments in the UK.

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 a year's 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.
- Political Theory: political Islam, non-western political thought, multiculturalism.

The current officers of the department are:

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This quarterly newsletter is produced by Laleh Khalili. Send any announcements or notices to lk4@soas.ac.uk