

Politics and International Studies Newsletter

Introductions



Harald Heubaum has been appointed Lecturer in Global Energy and Climate Policy and Convenor of the new MSc Global Energy and Climate Policy in the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy (CISD) at SOAS. Harald has been a PhD student at UCL, co-supervised by Fiona Adamson. At CISD, **Harald** joins **Suthaharan Nadarajah**, another Politics Department alumnus whose PhD was supervised by **Mark Laffey**.

New Publications

Doctoral student **Lucy Corkin** has published 'Uneasy Allies: China's evolving relations with Angola' in the *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 29(2) and 'Chinese Construction Companies in Angola: a local linkages perspective' which was published in March by the University of Cape Town at <http://www.cssr.uct.ac.za/publications/incidental-paper/2011/750>

Polly Pallister-Wilkins has a new article, 'The Separation Wall: A Symbol of Power and A Site of Resistance?' in *Antipode* 43(5).

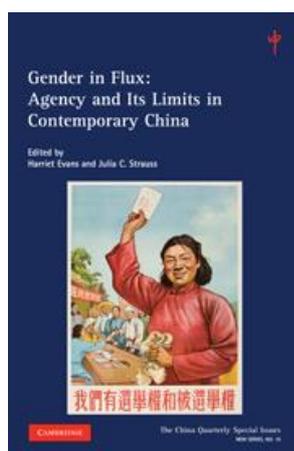
Doctoral student **Hagar Taha** has recently published her MA thesis; awarded by the American University in Cairo in 2009 and titled 'The Failure to Protect, Again: A Comparative Study of International and Regional Reactions Towards Humanitarian Disasters in Rwanda and Darfur'. The

thesis can be found at <http://tiny.cc/62t62>.

Stephen Chan released his new book, *Southern Africa: Old Treacheries and New Deceits* (Yale University Press, 2011). The photo below is of the launch on 5 May. l-r Professor Ysaiah Ross, Renee Horne, Stephen, and Dr Knox Chitiyo.



Christopher Sisserian, BA history (SOAS), and currently studying for MSc International Politics, has written a chapter on 'Armenisch-Kurdische beziehungen in Geschichte und Gegenwart' (Armenian-Kurdish relations in past and present) in *Kurdistan im Wandel: Konflikte, Staatlichkeit, Gesellschaft und Religion zwischen Nahem Osten und Diaspora* (Kurdistan in Transformation: Conflict, Statehood, Society and Religion between the Middle East and Diaspora; Peter Lang, 2011).



Julia Strauss has (with her co-editor Harriet Evans) published *Gender in Flux: Agency and its Limits in Contemporary China* (China Quarterly Special Series, Cambridge University Press, 2011). The book addresses gender as a main axis of social organization and cultural practice in China. Covering the impoverished rural 'sending' villages of western China to the big and wealthy Yangzi

valley city of Nanjing, the far northeastern village of Huangbaiyu to the major urban centres of Tianjin and Beijing, it examines gendered practices and experiences in socio-economic, political and administrative configurations, family and household organization, education, employment and mobility, and generation.

Simona Vittorini and **David Harris** have a collaborative chapter 'African governmental responses to Indian ventures on the continent: a changing arena of African politics?' in Dietz T et al (eds.), *New Topographies of Power? Africa Negotiating an Emerging Multi-polar World* (Brill, 2011).

Salwa Ismail has published 'Everyday Civilities, Neo-Liberalism and Authoritarian Government in Egypt' and 'Epilogue: Civilities, Subjectivities and Collective Action: Preliminary Reflections in light of the Egyptian Revolution' in the *Third World Quarterly* 32: 5 (June 2011).

Fiona Adamson (with Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos and Aristide R. Zolberg) co-edited *The Limits of the Liberal State: Migration, Identity and Belonging in Europe*, a special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (JEMS) (37:6; July 2011). The special issue includes a co-authored introduction by the editors and Adamson's article 'Engaging or Contesting the Liberal State? "Muslim" as a Politicised Identity Category in Europe'.

Research Centres, Groups, and Networks, Student Societies

Martin Linden, co-president of **SOAS Politics Society** (soaspolsoc@gmail.com) has written a brief comment on the Society: "We have had a good first showing of interest on the part of students with now around one hundred members and are currently planning our first events. We would very much like to be as active as possible, in the remainder of this year and the next year(s) to come. Our aim is to be as open and inclusive as possible, providing a creative and hopefully interesting platform for all those interested in politics. We hope that one aspect of

our work will be to bridge the gap between students and academics, both the established members of the department and aspiring PhD students.”

Leslie Vinjamuri participated in a Working Group of the Social Science Research Council on Religion, Peace-building and Development. This Working Group was convened by Al Stepan, Jonathan VanAntwerpen and Katherine Marshall to explore the role of religion and religious networks in achieving and consolidating peace and development. This Working Group also evaluated the role of the World Bank and the United Nations in engaging with religion and religious actors.

Tat Yan Kong and **Dafydd Fell** are coordinating committee members of the recently established **Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Sciences** <http://www.soas.ac.uk/apcss/>. This Faculty-level centre seeks to promote high quality inter-disciplinary research by combining regional expertise with social science concentration.

The **Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice (CCRJ)** is hosting its first intern, **Stephanie Pillion**, who joins us after a year of study in China, and before she returns to Smith College. Stephanie is doing research on the lessons learned from transitional justice in South Korea, the former Eastern bloc, and Latin America that may be relevant for consideration in a future transition in North Korea. This research will contribute to a project that **Leslie Vinjamuri** is participating in sponsored by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C., the University of Southern California, and the Korea Foundation.

CCRJ partnered with Humanitarian Policy Group to convene a meeting of NGOs, academics, and students to discuss Professor Michael Barnett's new book, *Empire of Humanity*, which provides a history of humanitarianism. **Steve Hopgood** chaired this discussion.

CCRJ has continued to host the **London Transitional Justice Network (LTJN)**, together with its partners at SOAS, the LSE, and the Institute for the Study of the Americas. The LTJN has hosted several discussion meetings on the role of transitional justice in Afghanistan, lessons learned from the Rwanda Tribunal, transitional justice in the former Yugoslavia, peace vs. justice, and the ICC in Colombia. In June, LTJN partners with the Open Society Foundations to host a discussion on lessons learned and their relevance for

countries in the Middle East that are currently considering plans for trials, truth commissions, and other accountability mechanisms. Londontjnetwork.org

On Friday 10 July **Steve Hopgood** ran a crisis exercise as part of the SOAS Alumni Weekend titled 'Be Obama for a Day' where 30 former students re-enacted the decision to assassinate Osama Bin Laden. On Saturday 11 July, **Leslie Vinjamuri**, **Laleh Khalili** and **Corinna Mullin** spoke and answered questions (**Steve Hopgood** chaired) from an audience of more than 70 former students as part of the Alumni Weekend under the title 'The Future of Human Rights in North Africa and the Middle East after the Revolutions'. Both events were organized by the **Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice**.

In terms 2 and 3 the **Centre of Taiwan Studies** organized the following public seminars: February 9: '[An Ecosystem of Amis aboriginal song in Taiwan](#).' Dr Shzr Ee Tan (Royal Holloway); February 14: '[Environmental Politics in Taiwan](#).' Professor Tang Ching-Ping (National Chengchi University); February 23: '[Bridging Across or Sandwiched Between the Strait? The In-Between Identity of Chinese Marriage Immigrant Women in Taiwan](#).' **Isabelle Cheng** (SOAS, Politics); March 2: '[Japanese Taiwan Through British Eyes](#).' Michael Hoare (Emeritus Reader University of London); March 9: '[A Modus Vivendi for Taiwan's "International Space"?](#)' Professor Vincent Wang (University of Richmond); March 16: '[Bringing the Chiang Kai-shek Years Back In: Rethinking Taiwan History between 1949 and 1975](#).' **Dr Julia Strauss** (SOAS, Politics); March 23: '[Competition and Cooperation: the Amoy-dialect films in late-1950s Taiwan](#).' Dr Jeremy E. Taylor (Sheffield); April 13: '[Framing Sociology in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore: Geopolitics, State and its Practitioners](#).' Albert Tzeng (University of Warwick)

Appointments and Awards

Congratulations from the department and their respective supervisors, **Julia Strauss** and **Steve Hopgood**, to newly minted doctors **Hardina Ohlendorf** and **Amaia Sanchez Cacicedo** who both defended their theses over the last few months. **Hardina** wrote about the global development of the Taiwan studies

field, while **Amaia** researched '**Global' Peace-building vs. Regional and Domestic Politics in Sri Lanka**. **Dr Ohlendorf** is currently a Teaching Fellow at the Centre of Taiwan Studies.

Professor Nirmala Rao, in her role as the SOAS Pro-Director currently on leave from the Department, has been awarded an OBE for 'services to scholarship'.

Doctoral student **Yusuf Yerkel** has won an article competition on the subject of Turkish foreign policy organized by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), Ankara, in February 2011. His article is titled "Akçura'dan Davutoğlu'na: Türk Dış Politikasının stratejik zihniyeti" (From Akçura to Davutoğlu: The strategic mentality of Turkish foreign policy). **Yusuf** has also accepted a position as special assistant to the Prime Minister of Turkey. He will continue his doctoral studies as a part-time research student while he works on Turkish foreign policy issues.

Next academic year we will be joined by **James Eastwood**, the first recipient of the Politics ESRC studentship under the new Doctoral Research Centre scheme. James will be working with **Laleh Khalili** on 'Conflict, Confession, and the Development of Israeli Militarism since 1982'.

Bhavna Dave has been awarded a British Academy small research grant of £7500 for project "“Undocumented” labour migrants in Kazakhstan's booming cities and challenges of formulating a migration policy". She conducted research on labour migration in Central Asia in Kazakhstan in March 2011 and in Uzbekistan in May 2011.

Felix Berenskoetter initiated the creation of a Theory Section within the International Studies Association (ISA), approved by the ISA Governing Council in March. The basic aim of this new section is to encourage and support theoretical debates among scholars of international politics. **Felix** will serve as section chair for two years. For more information, see http://www.isanet.org/theory_section/.

Doctoral student **Mehmet Uğur Ekinci** attended the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research at Syracuse University in New York June 14-25. His attendance was sponsored by a Politics Department scholarship.

Lawrence Saez has been selected to lead one of the working groups from the European Commission FP7-funded IDEAS project. The IDEAS

project aims to integrate European Asian studies, to develop European priorities for Asian studies research over the coming decade, and to consider partnerships and funding approaches for pursuing these priorities. **Bhavna Davé, Harald Heubaum** and doctoral student **Andrea Valente** will be the principal research collaborators for this working group on civil society, non-state actors, and energy security in Asia.

Doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** has been selected as the president of the **Research Student Society** for a second year.

Presentations and Conferences

The Politics MPhil students held a one-day conference at SOAS on 6 June 2011 to present and discuss their research projects. The panel sessions were well attended and showcased many interesting and challenging projects pursued by the Department's Research Students. The conference was organised by doctoral students **Verity Susman, Hagar Tahar** and **Peter Brett** and their faculty advisor, **Felix Berenskoetter**.

On 7-8 May the London Middle East Institute (LMEI) ran a PhD student conference on 'State, Society and Economy in the Middle East'. The conference provided a framework for intensive discussions of both empirical material and theoretical approaches. Four doctoral candidates of the SOAS politics department presented at the conference on a variety of topics: **Sophia Hoffmann** on Iraqi refugees in Syria, **Joseph Daher** on the *rapprochement* between the left and Islamists in Palestine and Lebanon, and **Jamil Mouawad** and **Hannes Baumann** on the state in Lebanon. Doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** was on the organising committee and the poster session.

In March, doctoral student **Alexej Ulbricht** together with colleagues from Goldsmiths and support from the department organised an event called 'Taking Control' featuring, amongst other things, a contribution from **Stephen Chan** and a keynote address by Jodi Dean (Professor of Political Science, Hobart & William Smith). Audio recordings of the entire event are available online at Backdoor Broadcasting: <http://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2011/03/taking-control/>

SOAS doctoral candidate **Benedetta De Alessi** organised a conference on the role of culture in building a new

nation at the University of Juba in southern Sudan, on 2 and 3 June. As the day of independence approaches for South Sudan, a panel of distinguished writers, researchers and activists from Sudan and UK addressed this vital subject. **De Alessi** is at present lecturing at the University while conducting her fieldwork in the country. The events are part of a continuing series organised by the Rift Valley Institute in collaboration with South Sudanese institutions to promote public discussion of emerging political and cultural issues. This year event is particularly relevant given the historical conjuncture: on 9th July South Sudan will declare its independence from Sudan and give birth to a new nation, the 54th State of Africa and the newest world country. Unfortunately the University of Juba is in a critical situation and this year it has not been able to open given the lack of funds and infrastructures. SOAS supported the University last year through the BOOKSFORSUDAN project, when over 10,000 books were donated for free by the students and professors to the University of Juba library. More support is needed from SOAS and the University of London, ideally the opening of some scholarships for southern Sudanese students for the next academic year and the years to come.

Bhavna Dave gave two lectures on Central Asia at the SOAS-organised Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art on 'Uzbek Khanates to the USSR' and 'The Great Game': Imaginations of Central Asia and the present reality' delivered in June 2011.

In March, **David Harris** delivered papers at the Pontificia Universidade Católica in Rio de Janeiro, at Edinburgh University Centre of African Studies in February, and at a '50 years of Sierra Leone' mini-conference at Cambridge University in May.

Fiona Adamson presented (with Maria Koinova) a paper at the Annual ISA conference (Montreal 16-19 March) entitled 'The Global City as a Space for Transnational Identity Politics: Nationalist, Religious and Liberal Internationalist Mobilizations in London'.

Fiona Adamson participated in the Roundtable 'Field of Dreams: Is Immigration Studies a Field, and What is Its Purpose?' at the 18th International Conference of Europeanists (Barcelona 20-22 June).

On 2 April, **Rochana Bajpai** presented a paper 'Heuristics of Hegemony: Debating Affirmative Action in Malaysia' (co-authored with Dr Graham Brown) at the Association

of Asian Studies Annual Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii.

On 31 May, **Rochana Bajpai** gave a talk 'Debating Difference: Rethinking Group Rights and Liberal Democracy in India' at the South Asian History Seminar, St. Antony's college, University of Oxford.

Julia Strauss convened and presented at a two day China Quarterly conference held at the UCLA Asia Institute on 15-16 April, 'From the Great Wall to the New World: China and Latin America in the 21st Century'. Her own presentation was 'Framing and Claiming: the Role of Rhetoric in China's relations with Latin America'. This conference will become a special issue of *The China Quarterly* for March 2012. Julia also keynoted a graduate student workshop at Columbia University, entitled 'The Transnational 1950s: New Perspectives on the Early PRC and the Outside World' on 13-14 May.

Felix Berenskoetter presented a paper at the Annual ISA conference (Montreal, 16-19 March) on 'The Political Construction of Horizons in Space and Time'. He also was discussant for the panel 'The Biopolitics of Catastrophe: Imagining and Managing the Unknown Unknowns' and chaired the panel 'Interdisciplinary Perspectives: Theory and Methodology'. He also participated in a day-long workshop on The Evolution of Human Nature in International Relations.

Felix Berenskoetter presented two papers at the annual BISA conference (Manchester, 27-29 April) entitled 'Hegemony by Invitation: Neoclassical realism, soft power and US-European relations' and 'Reclaiming the Vision Thing: Constructivists as Students of the Future'.

Manjeet Ramgotra organized a panel at the PSA conference (April 2011) on 'Ideas in South Asian Thought: Articulations of Freedom and Constitutional Foundings'. The panel included a paper by **Rochana Bajpai** on 'Liberalism in India: Some Reflections' and a paper by **Manjeet** on 'India's republican moment: freedom in Nehru's political thought'.

In April **Laleh Khalili** was invited to present on the Arab intifadas at Georgetown University in Washington DC. The title of her talk was 'Too Soon to Tell?' In May, she participated in a workshop titled 'Will the Empire Strike Back?' at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, where she presented 'Tensions of Liberal Warfare'. Her talk was modified and published in *Jadaliyya* as 'What Churchill Said' and can be found at

<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1444/what-churchill-said>

Corinna Mullin participated on 17 April in the 'Sunday of Resistance' panel discussion at SOAS, organised by **Ali Fathollah-Nejad**, PhD candidate in International Relations, SOAS. She also gave a lecture on 16 March at the University of Tunis on 'The Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions: Implications for US foreign policy in the Middle East and North African Region'.

Rahul Rao has presented his work on the queer movement in Uganda at workshops at SOAS and LSE.

In May **Dafydd Fell** was one of the organizers of the Eighth European Association of Taiwan Studies Conference held at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. This is the largest annual conference focused on Taiwan in Europe. At the conference **Dr Fell** gave a paper titled, 'Marketing Internally: How Politicians Campaign in Inner Party Elections in Taiwan'.

In April **Dafydd Fell** was invited to give an intensive weeklong course at Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic titled 'Government and Politics in Taiwan'. This also included a fiercely fought football match between Dr Fell's class and the University's Religious Studies Department.

In February 2011 **Charles Tripp** gave the 3rd Annual King Hussein Memorial Lecture on Cultural Dialogue at Durham University on 'Capitalist Practice and the Muslim Subject: Grounds for Dialogue or Terrain of Resistance?'

In March 2011, **Charles Tripp** returned to the Royal College for Defence Studies to give a keynote lecture on 'Democracy, Democratisation and the Middle East'. The participants comprised staff officers from a range of NATO countries, as well as from Middle Eastern and South Asian states.

In March 2011, together with his colleague Professor **Stephen Chan**, **Charles Tripp** took part in a panel in the Symposium 'Belief in Dialogue' organized by the British Council and the British Academy, speaking on aspects of the topic 'International Relations in a Secular Age'.

In May 2011, **Charles Tripp** gave a talk on 'The Public and the Nation' as part of a panel on 'Revolutions, Protest and Recent Unrest: Reflections on Nationalism in the Contemporary Middle East' in the ASEN 2010/11 seminar series 'Nation Building for the 21st Century' at the LSE

In February, **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** gave a lecture as a part of the 13th Asian Security Conference in New Delhi which was convened and inaugurated by the Defence Minister of India. In March, he delivered the key note lecture for a two-day international conference on Iran at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. In April he returned to London, to deliver two invited lectures. At the end of the month, he took up a Professorial Fellowship at the Centre for Middle East Studies at the Metropolitan University in Prague where he delivered another key note address and a public lecture on his new book, *A Metahistory of the Clash of Civilisations*, at the Institute of International Relations. In May, **Adib-Moghaddam** was invited to speak at a symposium on civil society, politics and the public sphere in Frankfurt organised by Medico International. In June, he delivered a public lecture on Orientalism and Islamophobia at Nottingham's Contemporary Art museum.

CCRJ members (**Leslie Vinjamuri**, **Matt Nelson**, **Rochana Bajpai**, and **Steve Hopgood**) have convened a series of planning discussions on the role of religion, secularism and shared spaces. These sessions will result in an international workshop on 'Shared Sovereignty: Religion, Secularism, and the Problem of Authority' to be held at SOAS on 21 October 2011. Workshop participants will include scholars from Columbia University, the SSRC New York offices, SOAS, Oxford, and other parts of the University of London. Please contact **Leslie Vinjamuri** (lv@soas.ac.uk) for further information.

Rochana Bajpai, **Matt Nelson**, and **Charles Tripp** are organising a workshop on comparative political thought to be held at SOAS on 8 July, 2011. This workshop builds on previous work with the Centre for Political Ideologies, Oxford, to advance the subfield of political theory by establishing everyday political thinking as an important realm of scholarship alongside canonical texts while, at the same time, stressing political concepts, (e.g. justice or participation), rather than regions or cultures, as an important unit of comparison. The workshop will involve three sessions, on Justice/Rights, Violence/Consent, and Dissent/Toleration, with talks by colleagues from Oxford and several members of the department, including **Tom Young**, **Julia Strauss**, **Rahul Rao** and **Manjeet Ramgotta**.

Yuka Kobayashi presented her findings on 'China's compliance with the WTO' at the Annual ISA convention 2011 (Montreal), University of Arkansas, Warwick University and Durham University. She is also participating in a US government funded project examining 'China's first 10 years in the WTO' in collaboration with scholars from the US and the PRC. Her current project examines 'China's participation in Climate Change post- Kyoto' which will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Chinese Political Studies.

Since February, the International Relations Speaker Series (chaired by **Leslie Vinjamuri**) has hosted several notable visiting speakers including: Professor Ngairé Woods, of Oxford University, who spoke about the prospects of another financial crisis (chaired by **Steve Hopgood**), Professor Cynthia Weber (chaired by **Rahul Rao**), Professor John Ikenberry of Princeton University (cohosted by LSE/IDEAS and Chatham House, and organised by **Leslie Vinjamuri**), Professor Kristian Stokke, University of Oslo (chaired by **Sutha Nadarajah**), Ms. **Dorothy Thomas** (SOAS), and Professor Hugh Gusterson of George Mason University (chaired by **Sutha Nadarajah**).

Leslie Vinjamuri presented findings from her research on the impact of transitional justice on war and peace to an audience at Columbia University. Aryeh Neier, President of the Open Society Foundation, was the discussant on this panel.

Mark Laffey presented 'Four Dead in Ohio: The Politics of Public Memory at Kent State,' to the Oxford Transitional Justice Seminar, Oxford University, 8 March 2011.

On 4 May, **Yuka Kobayashi** and **Dafydd Fell** gave a presentation to the MSc students focused on East Asian politics titled '[Research case studies from China and Taiwan](#)'. In this session we discussed some of our experiences of designing and conducting research projects in East Asia.

During the Spring of 2011 **Matt Nelson** was a full-time Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC, where he presented two papers related to his work on religious education, citizenship, and pluralism in Pakistan.

On 2 April 2011 **Matt Nelson** convened the South Asia Council panel for the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii. His panel was

entitled 'Rhetorics of Resistance: Maoists in Nepal and India; Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan.' He was joined by Michael Semple from Harvard, Mariam Abou-Zahab from CERI (Sciences Po), Jeevan Sharma from Tufts, and (as a last-minute replacement for Nandini Sundar from Delhi), Michael Spacek from Carleton University in Ottawa.

At the International Studies Association conference in Montreal, **Leslie Vinjamuri** presented her research on the role of civil society actors in adapting or obstructing international norms to domestic conflict and post-conflict situations. She also spoke on two roundtables, one on the International Criminal Court a year after the review conference, and another evaluating the role of the International Journal of Transitional Justice, of which she is a member of the Editorial Board.

Together with **Steve Hopgood**, she presented a paper, 'Faith in Markets', on the role that identity plays in mobilizing financial commitments from donors for humanitarian organizations, and limiting or enabling greater access in local humanitarian markets. **Leslie** also spoke on a panel that honoured Professor David Baldwin, formerly of Columbia University.

Salwa Ismail gave a number of presentations on the Egyptian revolution and on the Arab protest movements, most recently at the Transnational Institute Fellows' Meeting in Amsterdam (June 2011).

On 28 March, **Yuka Kobayashi** organised an event assessing the preliminary impact of on March 11th Japan's domestic and international policies together with the Embassy of Japan in London. On 29 March, she also organised a conference examining 'Peace in East Asia' hosted at the Department of Politics and International Studies and the Embassy of Japan in London. The event was opened by HE Ambassador Hayashi with Professor Hiroshi Nakanishi (Kyoto University) and Professor Steve Tsang (Oxford/Nottingham University) as keynote speakers and Dr John Swenson-Wright (Cambridge) as discussant.

Doctoral student **Jamil Mouawad** made a presentation on Lebanon and the Arab Revolt at Chatham House on Monday 18 April.

On 31 January, **Lucy Corkin**, third-year PhD student, presented 'Uncovering Agency: Angola's Management of Relations with China' at 'China in Africa: challenges and opportunities for Angola' international conference organised by Durham

University and the Catholic University of Angola in Luanda.

Current Research

Salwa Ismail spent most of the last six months doing fieldwork in Damascus, focusing on questions of violence, memory and contestation in Syrian politics. During this time, **Salwa** interviewed participants in the protest movement, particularly youth activists. She is now writing a manuscript on contemporary Syrian politics based on research conducted over the last ten years. It is scheduled to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2012.

Outreach

In May 2011, **Charles Tripp** had a meeting with Sharon White, Director General for the Middle East and North Africa at the Department for International Development to discuss issues of development in the region in the wake of the uprisings of the past six months. This was followed in **June** by a meeting with the Secretary of State for International Development, The Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell, MP, to discuss similar questions arising from the upheavals in the Middle East.

On 10 June, **Laleh Khalili** briefed the Near and Middle East Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on the Arab intifadas, and on 20 June, she and 6 other experts on Lebanon and the Masriq had a working lunch with the new British ambassador to Lebanon, Tom Fletcher to brief him on what awaits him in the region.

On 12 February, doctoral student **Lucy Corkin** participated in a panel discussion with Goldman Sachs' South Africa manager Colin Coleman at the Saïd Business School conference 'Enterprise Africa' at Oxford University.

In early May 2011, **Charles Tripp** gave a lecture on 'Iraq after the American Withdrawal' at the International Training Course in International Security, organized by the Geneva Centre for Security Policy. And in late May he returned to the GCSP to convene the week long module on the Middle East for the New Issues in International Security Course. The course examined such issues as the domestic causes and regional repercussions of the uprisings

of the 'Arab Spring', the question of refugees and the vulnerable in time of war and in post-conflict situations, the uses and abuses of sectarian difference in the politics of the region, the impasse in Palestinian-Israeli relations and the problems of Iran's security perceptions. The students on the course comprised 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, as well as representatives of UN agencies and of NGOs such as Médecins Sans Frontières.

On 17 May, **Simona Vittorini** briefed Mr Trouvé, the Swedish Special Envoy to Afghanistan on India's perceptions on the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan not least with regards to the prospects for the development a political settlement and particularly in view of recent developments (such as the death of OBL).

In June, **Phil Clark** appeared before the UK House of Commons International Development Committee to give evidence about development assistance to fragile states in central Africa.

In April 2011, **Matt Nelson** conducted a special briefing on Pakistan for the Swedish Foreign Office. This involved the head of their South Asia desk and the head of their Asia desk.

Julia Strauss conducted a briefing on Taiwan for researchers at the Royal Geographical Society on 8 June

Corinna Mullin participated on 31 March in The Dialogue Society roundtable discussion with Professor Helen Rose Ebaugh. She also spoke on 28 March on a panel discussion at the House of Lords organised by Society Outreach. The talk was entitled: 'Tunisia, Egypt and Libya Unrest: A Democracy Domino in the Middle East? Repercussions on the Regional Peace Process'. **Corinna** also participated on a panel discussion on 8 March 2011 organised by the Gulf Cultural Club Seminar on 'The Arab Revolt: from Dictators to Democracy.'

Corinna Mullin travelled to Tunisia on 12- 19 March as part of a Human Rights Delegation investigating the human rights violations of the Ben Ali regime, US/EU complicity, transitional justice, etc. The group was comprised of UK, US and Turkish based lawyers, NGOs, academics, and human rights activists. A report of their findings and recommendations for US/EU governments regarding how they can best support the democratic transition in Tunisia has been released and can be found at

<http://nlinternational.org/report/Tunisia-Report-2011.pdf>.

On 3 March, along with Nadim Shehadi, Khaled Hroub and Hugh Roberts, **Laleh Khalili** sat on a panel chaired by Adam Shatz, discussing the Arab revolutions. The panel was organised by the *London Review of Books* and was held at the LRB Bookshop.

Tat Yan Kong was a member of the SOAS delegation that met with a visiting delegation led by Mr Choe Thae-Bok, the Speaker of the Supreme People's Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and member of the Political Bureau of the Workers' Party of Korea (attached picture). The two sides discussed educational and cultural exchange between SOAS and HEIs in the DPRK. The DPRK delegation was visiting the UK on the 10th anniversary of the establishment of UK-DPRK diplomatic relations.

Leslie Vinjamuri spoke to an audience of international lawyers, academics, and foreign office staff, at the British Institute of International and Comparative Law's Rapid Response Seminar on the crisis in Libya. She also participated in a high level Working Group session at Chatham House on the US-UK relationship on the occasion of Obama's visit to the U.K. and in advance of the G8. She also spoke at a conference on Colombia and the International Criminal Court.

Leslie Vinjamuri spoke on a panel convened by the United Nations Population Fund, the Interfaith Center of New York, and the Social Science Research Council to investigate the role that religion plays across the United Nations.

David Harris and **Tom Young** joined colleagues from Oxford and Cambridge Universities on a trip to Brazil in March to teach an Introduction to African Politics course. The week-long course was organised by Richard Al-Qaq for prospective diplomats at the Instituto Rio Branco in Brasilia.

(<http://www.soas.ac.uk/news/newsitem67453.html>).

Media Appearances

In February, **Charles Tripp** took part in the BBC4 programme 'Thinking Allowed' presented by Laurie Taylor, on the subject of Islam and Capitalism (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00yjcnt>). In March, he took part in the

BBC3 programme 'Night Waves' presented by Philip Dodd, on the subject of the recent upheavals in the Arab Middle East

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00z646h>).

Leslie Vinjamuri appeared on BBC News Hour, BBC's World at One, and BBC News (Television) to speak about Zuma's trip to Libya, Obama's visit to London, and the ICC's role in Libya. She also debated the relevance of the War Powers Act on Russia TV, and was quoted in *The China Daily* on the G8 Summit. She published a blog post on the role of the ICC in Libya, "ICC Sheriff too quick on the Draw" (co-authored with Jack Snyder) at (<http://duckofminerva.blogspot.com/2011/05/icc-sheriff-too-quick-on-draw.html>)

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam has written opinion pieces for CNN and OpenDemocracy. He gave several interviews including two extended ones on his new book and the Arab revolts: They can be accessed here (<http://www.e-ir.info/?p=8424>) and (<http://www.thefreshoutlook.com/index.php?action=newspaper&subaction=article&toDo=show&postID=4892>)

MSc student **Lana Asfour** has written on Tunisian feminism at (<http://www.granta.com/Online-Only/A-Revolution-of-Equals>)

Lawrence Saez made a guest appearance on Bloomberg TV's The Pulse with Maryam Nemazee to discuss the resignation of former IMF managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5OzGhQwgg8>). He also wrote an editorial for CNN arguing that the next IMF chief should come from a developing country: (<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/OPINION/05/19/saez.imf.developing.world/index.html>). In addition, **Dr Saez** was quoted on CNN regarding his views on the emergence of China as a military superpower at (<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/06/10/china.military.superpower/index.html>)

Lawrence Saez was also interviewed by Deutsche Welle on the prospects for military confrontation between India and China (<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,6509465,00.html>) an by the *Christian Science Monitor* on Chinese investment in Europe (<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2011/0311/Europe-makes-room-for-Chinese-investment-but-not-without-concern>).

Bhavna Dave was interviewed by Radio France International English

service on Kazakhstan's presidential elections on 1 April 2011

Corinna Mullin published an article on 3 May on 'The Hamas-Fatah unity deal: regional and international power dynamics' on openDemocracy at (<http://www.opendemocracy.net/corinna-mullin/hamas-fatah-unity-deal-regional-and-international-power-dynamics>). She also participated alongside Baron Richard Dannatt, former head of British Army, in a panel discussion on BBC World Service Sunday morning panel on 3 April 2011, 6-9am. The subject was 'Arab spring'.

Laleh Khalili has appeared on Brazilian Television GloboNews (February), BBC NewsNight (February), CBC News (February) and El Pais (March); been quoted in China Daily (February) and *Sanlian LifeWeek* of China (April). She also joined a former RAF wing commander and a legal advisor to the FCO on a live-chat on Libya for *The Guardian* (March). Finally, she responded to and challenged Niall Ferguson on interventionism in the *Evening Standard* (February).

Doctoral student **Yusuf Yerkel** was quoted in a *New York Times* 'Week in Review' article on Turkey's relationship with the Arab world on 28 May (<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/29/weekinreview/29ottoman.html?pagewanted=1&r=4&ref=world>).

Rahul Rao has written about the global implications of the revolutions in the Middle East for The movement of India (the magazine of the National Alliance of Peoples' Movements in India). He was recently on Cape Talk Radio (South Africa) and Lithuanian National Radio to discuss the implications of the assassination of Osama bin Laden.

May 2011 was the 50th anniversary of the founding of Amnesty International; to discuss this **Steve Hopgood** appeared on Radio 3's live discussion show Nightwaves, on the BBC's The World Tonight and in a BBC documentary titled 'When they are all free' shown on May 30th. He also appeared on panel discussions about Amnesty at the Frontline Club and the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith.

Salwa Ismail was interviewed numerous times on the events in Syria, including by BBC radio and RTE Television (Ireland). She was an invited panelist on the BBC's *World Today Weekend* (June 11). She was interviewed on the Egyptian revolution by radio stations in South Africa, South Korea, and Finland.

Salwa Ismail published a number of opinion pieces on the Syrian uprising, including 'Syria and the Sectarian "Plot"', in *The Guardian*, April 29, and posted on *Comment is Free*, April 28. Available at:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/apr/28/syria-media-sectarian-plot>. Her background article on the Egyptian Revolution was published in *Index on Censorship*, March 2011 and is available at: <http://www.indexoncensorship.org/2011/02/egypt-days-of-anger/>. She also wrote on artistic expression by Syrian dissidents in *The Guardian* at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/21/syria-cultural-revolution-art-comedy>.

PhD candidates **Hanan Toukan** and **Hannes Baumann** contributed to *Jadaliyya*, an E-Zine on Middle East politics, culture, and economy.

Hanan examined a recent scandal over politically inconvenient artwork at the Sharjah biennial. She used the affair to illuminate the uneasy relationship between autocratic Gulf rulers and the commercialised global art world. **Hannes** gave his perspective on the controversy of Saif Gaddafi's relationship with the LSE. Their contributions can be found at <http://www.jadaliyya.com>

Corinna Mullin was interviewed on 20 February by the BBC World Service on the regional implications of the Egyptian Revolution, and on 19 February by Colin Brazier on Sky News regarding Arab revolutions/uprisings.

To mark the centenary of International Women's Day, **Rochana Bajpai** participated in a panel discussion on Asian women held at the Nehru Centre, London on 7 March 2011.

Rochana Bajpai was interviewed about Indira Gandhi for a documentary in a series entitled 'Extraordinary Women' for BBC Worldwide.

Hannes Baumann contributed an analysis to the LSE Ideas Blog. Why did Ben Ali's Tunisia perform so well in various corruption perception indices when it was obviously riddled with cronyism? Hannes argues that corruption in Tunisia requires a political explanation. Economic reforms since 1987 fostered a loyal business elite. As long as the Tunisian regime kept the door open to foreign investors, "corruption" was tolerated. The contribution can be found at <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/ideas/>

Phil Clark made the following media appearances on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12985617> and <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/OPINIO>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2011/04/04_2011_1350_onwards and <http://audioboo.fm/boos/322430-ouattara-faces-a-divided-country-and-its-unclear-how-he-will-control-his-forces-ivory-coast-expert-phil-clark-from-soas-says> and <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/ivory-coasts-troubles-far-from-over/story-e6frg6ux-1226035554388> and <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/rearvision/stories/2011/3178511.htm>

Phil Clark published an op-ed on the International Criminal Court in *The East African*: <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/-/2558/1141438/-/03vj7z/-/index.html>

Tom Young has published an article on humanitarian intervention, titled 'On Liberal War' on the website of the Royal African Society. The article can be found at <http://www.royalafricansociety.org/component/content/article/894.html>

Doctoral student **Arash Sedighi** has commented in *The Guardian* on FIFA's exclusion of Iranian women's football team at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/13/fifa-iran-women-football-strip>

Doctoral student **Jamil Mouawad** has published an article on Lebanon as "the last conservative regime in the region" at Democracy Now: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/jamil-mouawad/lebanon-last-conservative-regime-in-region>

Doctoral student **Lucy Corkin** was quoted in Inter Press Service on Angola's relations with China. The article can be found here: <http://ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=54326>

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam wrote on Bahrain for CNN (April). His commentary can be found at <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/OPINION/04/25/bahrain.saudi.iran.arshin/>

Salwa Ismail celebrated the victory of the Egyptian revolution in <http://www.redpepper.org.uk/the-first-lesson-from-the-egyptian-revolution/>. **Prof Ismail** also discussed Syria in <http://aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/03/201132811521026278.html> and <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/apr/28/syria-media-sectarian-plot>

Felix Berenskoetter contributed to the LSE IDEAS blog with a

commentary entitled 'Caught between Kosovo and Iraq: Understanding Germany's Abstention on Libya'. The item is available at <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/ideas/2011/04/germany-libya/>

Simona Vittorini and **David Harris** have written on India-Africa relations at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-13519119>

Polly Pallister-Wilkins has written on the impact of the Arab uprisings on European immigration policies at <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1710/entry-denied-revolution-in-north-africa-and-the-co>

Events

During April, Phil Clark launched his book on post-genocide justice in Rwanda at events in Nairobi, Arusha, Butare and Kigali: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201104110964.html> and <http://allafrica.com/stories/201104210015.html> and <http://kigaliwire.com/2011/04/22/gacaca-book-launched-in-kigali/>

New Degrees and Courses

Yuka Kobayashi is the convenor of the new **MSc Politics of China**, which brings together the unrivalled strengths of academic staff in Politics and International Studies at one of the world's leading institutions for the study and research of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and the home of the leading scholarly journal in China Studies – *The China Quarterly*. This course specialises in the politics of the greater China region and covers the historical and contemporary as well as the domestic and international aspects of Chinese Politics. It can be taken as a one year full-time postgraduate taught degree or over two/three years part-time.

Rahul Rao is offering two new MSc level courses. **Comparative International Political Thought** will explore what counts as 'international' political thought, why so much of what passes as 'international political thought' is of European or Western provenance, and how we might identify and compare different traditions of political thought on questions of common interest. **Queer Politics in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East** will serve as

introduction to queer theory, as well as engaging with its relevance outside the North Atlantic world. It will use struggles for sexual self-determination as a prism through which to consider broader questions about the constitution of modernity, the proliferation of identities, rights and claims for justice, the consolidation and deconstruction of postcolonial national identities, the aspirations and anxieties of postcolonial elites, etc.

Notices

From librarian **Jo Tate** (jt33@soas.ac.uk): I would be grateful if colleagues in the Department could send me requests for new items for reading lists by the end of July in order to ensure they are in the library for the start of the academic year. This is especially important this year as I am on annual leave for most of September.

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:

Head of Department:
Dr Fiona Adamson, fa33@soas.ac.uk

Undergraduate Admissions Tutor:
Dr Rochana Bajpai, rb6@soas.ac.uk

Undergraduate Tutors:
Dr Steve Heder, sh32@soas.ac.uk (Term 1)
Dr Corinna Mullin, cm39@soas.ac.uk (Terms 2 and 3)

Postgraduate (MSc) Tutors:
Dr Lawrence Saez, ls4@soas.ac.uk (MSc Exams Officer & Convenor)
Dr Mark Laffey, ml23@soas.ac.uk (Admissions Tutor and Programme Convenor, MSc International Politics, Term 1)
Dr Leslie Vinjamuri, lv@soas.ac.uk (Admissions Tutor and Programme Convenor, MSc International Politics, Term 2)
Prof. Charles Tripp (Admissions Tutor, and Programme Convenor, MSc Middle East Politics)
Prof. Stephen Chan (Admissions Tutor and Programme Convenor, MSc State, Society and Development, MSc Asian Politics, MSc African Politics)

Postgraduate (Research) Tutors:
Dr Matthew Nelson, mn6@soas.ac.uk (Research Tutor, Term 1)
Dr Laleh Khalili, lk4@soas.ac.uk (Research Tutor, Term 2)
Dr Felix Berenskoetter, fb12@soas.ac.uk (Convenor of Research Methods Training)

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