

## Politics and International Studies Newsletter

## Introductions



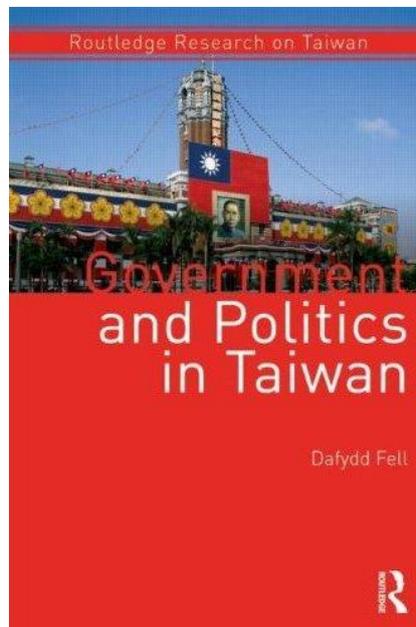
**Hardina Ohlendorf** recently began work as Senior Teaching Fellow in the Politics of China. She is covering for **Julia Strauss** this year and **Yuka Kobayashi** in term 2. She is teaching the UG course “Government and Politics of China” and the PG course “State and Society in the Chinese Political Process” throughout the year. During the second term she will be teaching the PG module “China and International Politics” and parts of the PG course “International Politics of East Asia.” **Hardina’s** doctoral research, completed in the department, was about the construction of Taiwan identity in the global field of Taiwan Studies, and she is now working on a comparison of China and Taiwan’s use of soft power in the academic spaces of Confucius Institutes and Taiwan Academies.

## New Publications

**Felix Berenskoetter** recently published two articles. In “Reclaiming the Vision Thing: Constructivists as Students of the Future” (*International Studies Quarterly* 55:3), he argues that utopias (and dystopias) have an important place in identity politics and suggests ways to study them. **Felix** also wrote “Gefährliche Freundschaft: Der deutsche Einsatz in Afghanistan im transatlantischen Verhältnis” (*Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik* 4) which was published in a special issue reflecting on a decade of German

presence in Afghanistan. In this article he argues that Berlin’s engagement in Afghanistan, initially an act of solidarity with the US, came to pose a threat to Germany’s self-image as a “civilian power”.

In November **Dafydd Fell’s** new book *Government and Politics in Taiwan* was published by Routledge. This is **Dafydd’s** second single authored book. To celebrate the publication a book launch will be held at SOAS on November 16.



Since the last Newsletter in June **Dafydd Fell** has published three new chapters in edited volumes: (1) “Taiwan’s Party System in Transition: More or Less Space for Identity Politics?” in Schubert and Damm (eds.), *Taiwanese Identity in the 21st Century: domestic, regional and global perspectives*. (Routledge, 2011); (2) “Polarization of Party Competition in the DPP Era” in Ash, Garver and Prime (eds.), *Taiwan’s Democracy and Future: Economic and Political Challenges*. (Routledge, 2011); (3) “Prospects for Taiwan and its Impact on Cross-Strait Relations” in Shambaugh (ed): *Charting China’s Future: Domestic and International Challenges*. (Routledge, 2011).

Two of **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam’s** research articles were republished by Routledge in the United Kingdom and Al-Mesbar publishers in Dubai (in Arabic) in new volumes on Iran’s domestic politics and international relations: “Discourse and violence: the friend-enemy conjunction in contemporary Iranian-American relations” appeared in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Reza Molavi (eds.), *Iran and the International System*, (Routledge, 2011), pp. 150-167.

**Lawrence Saez** has published two books this year. He is the author of *The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC): An Emerging Collaboration Architecture* (Routledge, 2011). The book has been published in Routledge’s global institution series. This work aims to evaluate what scope there is for formal institutions like SAARC to provide a permanent regional security architecture within which South Asian countries can effectively address important issues. **Lawrence Saez** is also the co-editor (with Gurharpal Singh) of *New Dimensions of Politics in India: The United Progressive Alliance in Power* (Routledge, 2011). This volume offers a critical evaluation of the performance of the first United Progressive Alliance (UPA), the current governing coalition in India. It presents a thorough analysis of the UPA coalition government, and by providing an understanding of the new innovations in the UPA’s policies, the book goes on to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies against their aims and objectives. **Rochana Bajpai** has a chapter in the volume titled “Beyond identity? The UPA rhetoric on social justice and reservations” which shows that affirmative action for religious minorities has expanded under the current Indian government.

**Laleh Khalili's** "Gendered Practices of Counterinsurgency" has been published in the *Review of International Studies* 37(3).

Doctoral student **Iro Aghedo** and his co-author, Oarhe Osumah, have published "Who wants to be a millionaire? Nigerian youths and the commodification of kidnapping" in *Review of African Political Economy* 128 (June 2011).

**Phil Clark** recently published the chapter, "Chasing Cases: The ICC and the Politics of State Referral in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda" in C. Stahn and M. El Zeidy (eds.), *The International Criminal Court and Complementarity: From Theory to Practice* Vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

A features debate co-edited by PhD student **Hannes Baumann** was published in the October issue of "Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism" (SEN). The section on "How economics can help us understand violent intrastate conflict" included contributions by Anke Hoeffler, William Zartman, Michael Pugh, and Indra de Soysa. Proponents and critics of using economic methodology in conflict studies put forward their arguments. **Hannes** co-edited the features debate with LSE-student Ulrike Theuerkauf. SEN can be accessed via: <http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=1473-8481>

**Leslie Vinjamuri's** article on the role of civil society in translating, contesting, and negotiating international norms, "Lost in Translation? Civil Society and the Negotiation of International Norms" was published (with Aaron Boesenecker), in a Special Issue on Civil Society, *International Journal of Transitional Justice*. **Leslie Vinjamuri** also published "A Review of International Justice in Rwanda and the Balkans" in the *Journal of Human Rights*.

## Research Centres, Groups, and Networks

### *Centre of Taiwan Studies*

On June 28-30 **Dafydd Fell** and **Hardina Ohlendorf** at the **Centre of Taiwan Studies** organized the second International Conference on Migration to and from Taiwan. The conference brought together some of the world's leading specialist on migration in Taiwan from a range of disciplines including geography, political science, China Studies, sociology, film studies, and social work. At the conference **Dafydd Fell** gave a paper titled "Migration through the lens of political advertising: How Taiwanese parties discuss migration," while **Isabelle Cheng** (SOAS Politics PhD candidate) gave a paper titled "Back to the Imagined Homeland? The National Identity of Indonesian Chinese in Taiwan." In addition **Fiona Adamson** and **Julia Strauss** both joined the conference as discussants. **Dafydd Fell** is working with two Taiwanese scholars to co-edit a book based on papers from the two conferences on migration to and from Taiwan.

In October the **Centre of Taiwan Studies** organized two public seminars: October 12: Politicised Society: Taiwan's One-Party Legacy by Dr Mikael Mattlin (The Finnish Institute of International Affairs) and October 26: The Politics of Democratisation: Creating an Independent Regulatory Agency in Transitional Taiwan by Chen Ya-chi (Goldsmiths College).

On July 1-3 **Dafydd Fell** and **Hardina Ohlendorf** at the **Centre of Taiwan Studies** ran the Fifth SOAS Taiwan Studies Summer School. This year the themes of the short courses were migration, documentaries and research methods in Taiwan studies. The courses were taught by some leading scholars in the field from Taiwan and Europe. It is primarily designed for students planning or currently conducting research projects in the broad field of Taiwan Studies. Participating students this year came from universities in Germany, Czech Republic, Italy and Russia, as well as a number of UK institutions. A

particularly special feature in this year's summer school was the participation of a six person student delegation from Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan.

### *Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice (CCRJ)*

The **Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice**, with the Human Rights Consortium, hosted an international workshop "Shared Sovereignty: Rights, Religion and the Problem of Authority." More than 40 SOAS Scholars and graduate students from the Departments of Politics, Law, Development Studies, History, and Religion participated. Rajeev Bhargava (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies), Azza Karam (United Nations Population Fund), Ben Fortna (SOAS), Tariq Ramadan (University of Oxford), Jack Snyder (Columbia University) and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (Social Science Research Council, New York) all presented. **Leslie Vinjamuri**, **Matt Nelson**, **Stephen Hopgood** and **Rochana Bajpai** jointly led this initiative. To see more about this workshop, read the blog on The Immanent Frame: Secularism, religion, and the public sphere (Social Science Research Council) <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2011/11/02/shared-sovereignty>

Approximately 80 graduate students attended the **CCRJ** public roundtable (hosted in collaboration with the CISD-IR Speaker Series and the Human Rights Consortium) on "Shared Sovereignty." This roundtable considered the findings of recent scholarship on religion, secularism, and international relations theory.

**CCRJ** also hosted a talk by Dr Hannah Tonkin (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda) on her new book on private military companies in armed conflict. **Phil Clark** chaired this talk.

### *Comparative Political Thought Research Cluster*

**Rochana Bajpai, Matt Nelson,** and **Charles Tripp** organized a one-day workshop on Comparative Political Thought (CPT) at SOAS on 8 July. Bringing together members of the department and colleagues from Oxford University, LSE, and other departments at SOAS, it provided a forum for a stimulating set of discussions around key themes within this emerging field. The day was divided into three substantive sessions focusing on conceptions of *Dissent and Toleration* (Speakers: **Rahul Rao** and **Manjeet Ramgotra**), *Violence and Consent* (Speakers: **Julia Strauss** and **Charles Tripp**), *Justice and Rights* (Speakers: Michael Freedon and **Tom Young**). These were followed by a final session focusing on the ways in which the field of comparative political thought could be incorporated into the department's teaching and research. This discussion helped to lay the groundwork for a MSc in Comparative Political Thought that we hope to launch in the autumn of 2013.

Among the issues we addressed were the ways in which efforts to compare ideas might proceed fruitfully without any reference to discrete regions (the Middle East, East Asia, etc.) or discrete intellectual or cultural traditions (Liberal, Islamic, 'Indian'). We also discussed the ways in which new concepts emerge in spaces of debate that remain tied to multiple points of discursive reference. To what extent are the arguments developed by Jawaharlal Nehru, or Rabindranath Tagore, 'Indian' arguments? How do their concepts and ideas reflect multiple sources and influences? Are their ideas simply 'derivative'? And, if not – if concepts are forged in the fires of unique historical and discursive junctures – how should 'concepts' be properly compared? These are just a few of the issues that inspired the deliberations of our workshop.

The workshop also fed into two major research bids developed by the department's CPT research cluster. The first of these targeted

grant funding from the AHRC within their Research Network (Translating Cultures) theme. If the application is successful, the funds will be used to hold a series of workshops over two years in Cairo, Delhi and London to explore common interests in the developing field of CPT with colleagues in Asia and Africa. The second is a more ambitious application to the ESRC to fund a Centre for Comparative Political Thought. An Outline Proposal has been submitted to the ESRC to fund this Centre in the Department of Politics and International Studies over five years. This Centre will establish a distinctive approach to comparative political thought and ensure that, building on its core strength in the comparative political sociology of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, SOAS remains a focal point for research, teaching, and ongoing interface with policy makers in this important field.

### Appointments and Awards

The Department congratulates **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** and **Matthew Nelson** on their promotion to Reader and congratulations to **Rochana Bajpai** on her promotion to Senior Lecturer.

Congratulations to **Lucy Corkin** and **Toby Matthiesen** who successfully passed their doctoral vivas in September and November respectively. **Toby** is currently a postdoctoral fellow at Cambridge.

Doctoral student **Sophia Hoffmann** was one of seven recipients of the 2011 student travel grants to attend the annual meeting of the Middle East Studies Association in Washington, DC.

PhD student **Hannes Baumann** was appointed to a one-year teaching fellowship at King's College London, where he will contribute to the Middle East and Mediterranean Studies programme, starting in October 2011. He will

continue teaching the postgraduate course "State and Development in Asia and Africa" in the department in term 1.

Former doctoral student **Marie Gibert** has –after spending a postdoctoral year in South Africa's Witwatersrand University–been appointed to a lectureship in international relations at Nottingham Trent University.

With the sponsorship of the Department of Politics and International Studies, **Mehmet Ekinici** attended the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University on 13-24 June 2011. **Mehmet** writes, "The Institute lasted 10 weekdays; each day consisted of three 1.5-hour sessions where prominent scholars in the field lectured on the qualitative methods and techniques used in political research and one 1.5-hour session where the research projects of the participants were discussed. Among the 160 attendees, the vast majority was from North American universities, while a small number of Ph.D. students from Europe and Latin America also attended. Overall, it was an excellently organised and carried-out event; it provided informative lectures and stimulating discussions on methodology, as well as a very good opportunity to meet other Ph.D. students. I would like to thank the department for making my attendance possible, and strongly recommend Ph.D. students in Politics, particularly those in their first year, to apply for the department's funding for the next year's institute."

Doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** was accepted to the Advanced Oral History Institute, at Berkeley, University of California which took place in August 2011. She shared her experience and learning outcomes of the Institute with colleagues at SOAS on a Departmental Roundtable on Research Methods in Politics and International Studies in November 2011. She is now designing a similar workshop to take place in Tehran

(led by herself) in association with the Tehran Peace Museum and the National Oral History Project on the Victims of Chemical Weapons in Iran.

## Presentations and Conferences

**Yuka Kobayashi** gave a talk at Cambridge on “China’s Creative Compliance in the WTO” in October, surveying China’s track record in the WTO on the 10th anniversary of its accession.

In September and November, **Leslie Vinjamuri** spoke at two meetings of Columbia University’s program on *Religion and Human Rights Pragmatism*. This program is funded by the Luce Foundation and hosted by Columbia’s Center for the Study of Democracy, Toleration and Religion. The program investigates the impact of efforts to spread human rights norms across cultures. At these meetings, **Leslie Vinjamuri** spoke about different types of contestation that have defined efforts to spread international justice strategies and the role of international human rights NGOs, international courts, state elites, and local secular and faith-based actors engaged in these politics.

In August, **Leslie Vinjamuri** presented a paper in Los Angeles on the “Lessons of Transitional Justice” at a workshop sponsored by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies and the Korea Foundation in partnership with the University of Southern California. This workshop brought together a group of sector experts and a group of Korea experts from Harvard, Stanford, Georgetown, the University of Southern California, the University of London, the Asia Foundation, the U.S. State Department, and the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea, Los Angeles to evaluate lessons from other transitions relevant for a future transition in North Korea.

In August, **Leslie Vinjamuri** spoke at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association on an Author-Meets-Critics panel following the recent publication of Kathryn Sikkink’s book, *Justice Cascade*. At this meeting, she also presented findings of a collaborative research project (with **Stephen Hopgood**), on the role of faith as a marketing device in humanitarian markets: “Faith in Markets.”

In September, **Matt Nelson** gave two lectures at the Centre for Middle East Studies at Lund University in Sweden on religious education and the treatment(s) of doctrinal diversity in Pakistan. Also in September, he delivered a paper in conjunction with a two-day workshop (“Islam in Modern South Asia”) sponsored by the Institute for South Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore. His paper was an updated version of his work on the challenge of applying “demographic” categories to the study of ideas (including religious ideas about pluralism).

In October, **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** took part in an international workshop at SOAS on a “Nuclear and WMD free zone in the Middle East” which brought together representatives from the region and Europe.

In November, **Adib-Moghaddam** delivered a public lecture on “Post-modern Islam and the Arab *intifadabi*” upon the invitation of the University of Southern Denmark

**Fiona Adamson** co-organised the International Security section of the 2011 Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association in Seattle, Washington (September 1-4, 2011). The theme of this year’s conference was “The Politics of Rights.” The sections included 44 panels, and over 200 papers and poster presentations on topics related to international security, including a number of special panels on security in Asia and Africa.

**Leslie Vinjamuri** presented a paper at New York University called,

“Charting Justice.” This paper maps the conceptual and strategic differences among non-state actors engaged in peacebuilding and is part of a project sponsored by Dan Philpott of Notre Dame University, and Jennifer Llewellyn of Dalhousie University.

On 2 November the Research Students’ Society (RSS) held its first interdepartmental seminar on “Fieldwork: How to Do It and How to Survive Coming Back.” **Matt Nelson** and doctoral student **Sanaa Alimia** presented alongside two doctoral students from other faculties. Doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** organised and chaired the session.

On 7 July **Corinna Mullin** taught a “Politics Masterclass” on “The Arab Spring, Cause and Consequences” as part of the SOAS widening access program.

**Corinna Mullin** participated in a lecture series on the Middle East in International Relations held from 16-30 July at An-Najah University in Nablus, Palestine. The programme was jointly organised by the UNESCO Chair, Human Rights Centre and Geography Department at An-Najah.

**Corinna Mullin** delivered a lecture on “Power and Resistance in the Middle East” to the LSE Choice Summer School on 12 August.

**Zaad Mahmood**, fourth year doctoral student, presented paper titled “Globalisation and Labour Market: locating the political economy of reforms” in the International Political Economy Conference, Turkey in September 2011. The theme for the conference was Labour and Employment under Globalisation.

**Corinna Mullin** was invited to participate in a roundtable discussion on “Revolution and Change in the Muslim world” on 29 July, organised by the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, The Aga Khan University (International) in the United Kingdom.

On 19 September, **Corinna Mullin** participated in a panel discussion organised by the Haldane Society on “Promises and Challenges: The Tunisian Revolution of 2010-2011”, chaired by Jeremy Corbyn, MP Islington North.

On 3 October, **Corinna Mullin** participated in a roundtable discussion on authoritarianism in the Middle East with Dr. Ghada Karmi and the Ali Ibrahim, the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Asharq al-Awsat, organised by the UCLU Arabian Society.

**Mark Laffey** and **Suthaharan Nadarajah** (of CISD) presented “Still on a Mission: Liberalism, Peacebuilding and Critical Theory” at the Annual Millennium: Journal of International Studies conference, LSE, October 22-23.

**Bhavna Dave** presented a paper, “Undocumented labour migrants in Kazakhstan’s booming cities and challenges of formulating a migration policy,” at the Association of Study of Nationalities’ International Convention, held at The Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 29 September- 1 October. She was also a discussant at the panel on “Constructing urbanity and nation in Kazakhstan”. She also gave a lecture on “Migration Trends in Eurasia” to postgraduate students at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), Moscow State University on 27 September.

PhD candidate **Alexej Ulbricht** presented his paper “Citizen Other: liberalism, rights and difference” at the 7th Annual CRONEM conference: “Global Migration and Multiculturalism: religion, society, policy and politics” at the University of Surrey. He also delivered his paper “Eurovisions of the East: the politics of Eurovision Song Contest” at the 6th ECPR General Conference at the University of Iceland.

**Corinna Mullin** participated in a debate at UCL on 10 October with John Rees, from the Stop the War

Coalition and George Grant from The Henry Jackson Society. The motion debated was: “This House Believes that the War on Terror is Unwinnable.”

In September, **Rochana Bajpai** gave seminar talks on affirmative action and liberal democracy in India at the University of Hyderabad and the MS University of Baroda. She also chaired sessions at and participated in several conferences including Asian Values and Social Justice (Lancaster), Gendered Ceremony and Ritual in Parliament (London).

**Bhavna Dave** was invited to participate at a workshop on “Migration and Demographic Trends in Russia, China and India,” organised by the Eurasia Foundation in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung in Moscow, 22-23 June.

On 25 October, **Corinna Mullin** participated on a panel discussion on human rights violations and transitional justice at an Iran symposium in Oxford sponsored by the Oxford Transitional Justice Research in conjunction with The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation and Mr. Geoffrey Robertson, QC.

Over the summer, **Rahul Rao** offered a series of guest lectures on cosmopolitanism and nationalism at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras. He also presented papers at the Fundação Getulio Vargas (Rio de Janeiro), the ABRI Convention (Sao Paulo), a conference on Tagore at the Rabindranath Tagore Centre for Human Development (Kolkata) and a workshop on Protest at the Jindal Global Law School (New Delhi).

**Corinna Mullin** delivered a lecture on “The ‘War on Terror’ and the ‘Arab Spring’: Examining the Legacy of Western Interventionism and Complicity in Human Rights Violations” to the Justice, Violence and Rights centre at Sussex University. The seminar was held on October 26th.

In July, **Manjeet Ramgotra** presented a paper on “Eighteenth-

century colonialism, commerce and the slave-trade in Montesquieu's republicanism” at the BSA Study Theory Group Conference on “Rethinking the Modern: Colonialism, Empire and Slavery” held in Birmingham.

On 1 October, **Charles Tripp** helped to organise a one-day conference on “The Shi’a in the 20th and 21st Centuries”, under the auspices of the Centre for Academic Shi’a Studies and SOAS’s London Middle East Institute. It was co-organised with Dr Gabriele Vom Bruck of SOAS and Yusef al-Khoei and Hayder al-Khoei of the Imam Al-Khoei Foundation. It focused particularly on the themes of “Being Shi’i in non-Shi’i environments,” “The Religious and Secular Divide” and on “Shi’i Identity.”  
[http://www.shiaresearch.com/?p=5&news\\_id=27&cat=module&sub=news&seo=Second-Annual-Conference](http://www.shiaresearch.com/?p=5&news_id=27&cat=module&sub=news&seo=Second-Annual-Conference)

On June 24 **Dafydd Fell** gave a presentation titled, ‘How has Taiwan’s democratic system been affected by the China Factor?’ at the St Antony’s College, Oxford conference “An Audit of Democratic Development in the Republic of China.” In August he also gave a talk at the Contemporary China Centre, Nottingham University titled “The development of Civil Society in Taiwan.” On October 31 **Dafydd Fell** made a presentation at a Roundtable on Taiwan in the Global Economy: Opportunities and Challenges organized by Chatham House’s Asia Programme. The talk’s title was “Taiwan's 2012 Elections: Campaign, Predicted Results and Consequences.”

Doctoral student **Hania Sobhy** spoke “On Schooling and Youth Protest” at the Future of Egypt Conference in London  
<http://peace-ipsc.org/events/future-of-egypt-conference-13th-of-august-2011> and an article reflecting on her talk was published in the Guardian Weekly and online at:  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comme>

[ntisfree/2011/sep/10/egyptian-schools-breeding-rebellion](http://ntisfree/2011/sep/10/egyptian-schools-breeding-rebellion)

On 5 October, **Charles Tripp** gave a talk to the Middle East Ecumenical Network at Friends' Meeting House on the possible consequences of the Arab Spring and other recent developments in the Middle East on the rights and status of religious minorities in the region.

In October and November, **Phil Clark** gave keynote lectures on post-genocide justice in Rwanda at conferences hosted by the Centre for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities in Oslo and by Swisspeace in Bern

In November, **Phil Clark** was an invited speaker at a symposium in New York on restorative justice, reconciliation and peacebuilding, hosted by the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame and the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University School of Law

On 11 October, **Charles Tripp** took part in a panel at the British Academy on "The Egyptian Revolution of 2011: Civil Resistance and Power Politics," together with Dr Omar Ashour (University of Exeter) and Sir Adam Roberts (President, The British Academy)

On 24 October, **Charles Tripp** gave a lecture as part of the Cambridge Festival of Ideas on "Histories of the Shadow State in Iraq"

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/festivalofideas/whats-on/?uid=b35c03fd-147b-4a61-9c69-9460c0fde544&date=2011-10-24>

On 2 November, **Laleh Khalili** presented "Counterinsurgency Fictions" at the School of Politics and International Relations research seminar at the University of Kent.

**Professor Stephen Chan** has been travelling to give plenary and named lectures. He was plenary speaker at LSE's Millennium 2011 Annual Conference on 23 October; was respondent to the celebrated Olivier

Roy at the University of Sussex's The Postsecular in International Politics conference on 27 October; and gave the third Hans Singer Memorial Lecture in Bonn on 7 November. In between, he found time to interview Seun Kuti on stage at SOAS on 1 November.

**Peter Brett** (2nd year Phd student) gave a presentation entitled "International Lawyers: IR theorists and practitioners" at the annual conference of Millennium: Journal of International Studies at the LSE on the 22nd October.

Thus far we have had two sessions of the Departmental Research Seminar. On 19 October, Professor Indra Nath Choudhuri (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi) presented on "The concept of nation-state and Tagore's idea of nationalism."

On 2 November, the Department held a roundtable on research methods. The panellists were **Dr Lawrence Saez** and doctoral students **Mehmet Ekinici**, **Shirin Shafaie**, and **Priya Kumar** and the session was chaired by **Fiona Adamson**.

### Upcoming Politics Department Seminars

"Autonomy and Heteronomy: On the New Revolutionary Movements as Encounters between Social Imaginaries"

Speaker: **Dr Raluca Soreanu**, Research Associate, SOAS

Chair: **Fiona Adamson**

23 November, 4-6, Room 4418

### Current Research

**Yuka Kobayashi** and research assistant, **Xuan Jin** are working on a new project examining "Identity in China", funded by the Qatar Foundation. **Xuan** is currently conducting fieldwork in Beijing. **Kobayashi** together with colleagues

in the US and Japan, has started a new project examining the "Effects of 3/11: Fukushima on Nuclear Power/Policy in East Asia."

**Bhavna Dave** spent 5 weeks conducting field research on foreign labour migrants in Kazakhstan during July-August and a week of research and interviews in Moscow in September 2011. She gave a lecture on the "The Problems of Management and Regulation of Labour Migration in Kazakhstan" at the Kazakhstan Institute of Sociological Research, CESSI, Astana, Kazakhstan, 8 August.

**Phil Clark** spent six weeks over the summer conducting fieldwork in northern Uganda and north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, completing the final phase of a six-year book project on international, national and community-based transitional justice processes

### Outreach

MSc student **Gerasimos Tsourapas** served as a European Union (EU) short-term elections observer during the Tunisian Constituent Assembly elections of 23 October 2011. Read his account at the end of this newsletter.



**David Harris** was invited on the Carter Center Electoral Observation Mission for Liberia and made two trips to Liberia to observe the first round and run-off elections.

On 29 September, **Charles Tripp** took part in the Security Policy Course organized by the Chief of the Danish Defence Staff at Toruplund, Hundested, Denmark. He gave a lecture and held a seminar that addressed the

questions arising from the ways in which Islamist politics might affect Western security interests.

**Leslie Vinjamuri** is on the advisory board of a project that is investigating the Drivers of International Justice. In November, she worked with country experts to develop a framework for analysing a series of case studies of the actors that have shaped transitional justice in conflict states. The first meeting of this project took place in Bergen, Norway at the Chr. Michelsen Institute.

MSc student **Dan Gorman** has been busy launching a new e-book, films about the music and music on the Reel Festivals website (<http://www.reelfestivals.org>).

**Cornelia Schiller**, in her third year of PhD work supervised by Tom Young, was contracted by UNICEF Madagascar as the in-house researcher to assist a research team working on a report mapping Chinese investment activity in Madagascar. She will participate in a seminar disseminating the findings of the report at the UN in Antananarivo at a date to be determined at the end of November.

On 12 September, **Charles Tripp** took part in a day-long workshop at the FCO, organized by colleagues at the University of Durham to discuss the question of 'impact' in the context of the study of political and social science. It focused on questions relating to the Middle East and to political developments in the region. It brought together representatives of a range of government agencies, of the private sector and of the ESRC, as well as colleagues from universities across the UK, to discuss the problems of framing research that was intellectually grounded, thorough, detailed and critical, but that would also inform policy makers and practitioners.

**Lawrence Saez** attended the Global Agenda summit sponsored by the World Economic Forum (WEF). The summit was held in

Abu Dhabi from 9-12 October. As a member of the WEF's India regional council, **Lawrence Saez** is taking the lead in a collaborative project between the WEF, Transparency International, and the World Justice Project to develop a ranking of corruption among state governments in India.



**Lawrence Saez** was a delegate of a UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) sponsored trade delegation to Nepal. **Lawrence Saez** represented SOAS as well as British academic institutions of higher learning. His remit was to establish academic exchanges between SOAS and Nepalese universities, to enable British students to undertake internships in Nepal, and to encourage Nepalese students to attend British universities. **Lawrence Saez** received a grant from UKTI that enabled him to attend this trade delegation.

**Phil Clark's** expert report on conflict patterns in the Democratic Republic of Congo is a central piece of evidence in the case of Callixte Mbarushimana currently before the International Criminal Court. In September, his report was debated at length during the pre-trial hearings in The Hague: <http://iwpr.net/report-news/defence-challenge-case-against-mbarushimana>

In August, **Phil Clark** took part in a US State Department expert briefing on Rwanda, held in Washington DC

In September, **Phil Clark** gave expert briefings on conflict in Africa to the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development, and the new Irish diplomatic mission to Uganda and Rwanda

Over the last few months, **Phil Clark** has been consulted by Control Risks, Allen & Overy international legal firm, REDRESS and the Institute for Public Policy Research on various issues regarding conflict and political instability in Africa.

In June and November, **Phil Clark** was an advisory committee member for international conferences on international justice and local ownership at the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies in The Hague and transitional justice during ongoing conflicts at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem

## Media Appearances

**Salwa Ismail** is the author two recent editorials. "Bashar al-Asad's Fall is Inevitable" appeared in *The Guardian* on 26 August 26 (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/26/assad-fall-inevitable-syrians-intervention>) while "Silencing the Voice of Freedom in Syria" was published in the July edition of *Index on Censorship* (<http://www.indexoncensorship.org/2011/07/silencing-the-voice-of-freedom-in-syria/>)

**Corinna Mullin** published an article on the significance of 9/11 memorialising in *Opendemocracy* on 18 September: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/corinna-mullin/%E2%80%98war-on-terror%E2%80%99-memorialising>

**Rahul Rao** has written about the London riots at <http://thedisorderofthings.com/2011/08/22/dalston-a-worms-eye-view/>

On 31 October, MSc Student **Dimi Reider** has had two opinion pieces

published in *Ha'aretz* (<http://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/1.1535389>) and in *The New York Times* ([http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/01/opinion/in-israel-press-freedom-is-under-attack.html?\\_r=1&ref=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/01/opinion/in-israel-press-freedom-is-under-attack.html?_r=1&ref=opinion)).

**Laleh Khalili** has been quoted in articles on events in the Middle East on Al Jazeera Online (<http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/features/2011/10/20111012182756680834.html>), *Shabrvand* in Iran (which the Iranian government has now closed down), Chilean *Al-Damir* magazine, and Reuters. She also appeared on BBC World Service's *The World Today* on 30 October.

Masters student **Lana Asfour** has reviewed James Barr's *A Line in the Sand* in *The Statesman* (10 October 2011) at <http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2011/10/british-french-france-arab>

Doctoral student **Hagar Taha** has contributed an editorial to e.IR entitled: "Darfur and South Sudan: United in Struggle, Divided by Future?" <http://www.e-ir.info/?author=1239>

**Polly Pallister-Wilkins** has continued to work on European migration-management in the Mediterranean region. As part of this ongoing research she published two articles on openDemocracy: "Playing Politics with Schengen." openDemocracy. 16 July, 2011. <http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/polly-pallister-wilkins/playing-politics-with-schengen> and "Criticism of EU-Libya migration policy is too little, too late." openDemocracy. 29 August, 2011. <http://www.opendemocracy.net/polly-pallister-wilkins/criticism-of-eu-libya-migration-policy-is-too-little-too-late>. In addition she was specially commissioned to write a third piece on accountability in European migration-management: "Searching for accountability in EU migration-management practices." openDemocracy. 19 October, 2011.

<http://www.opendemocracy.net/polly-pallister-wilkins/searching-for-accountability-in-eu-migration-management-practices>

**Phil Clark** was interviewed by Time magazine about the African Union's reaction to the conflict in Libya: <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2090615,00.html>

**Dafydd Fell** published an article for the Brookings Northeast Asia Commentary titled 'Election Season Returns to Taiwan: Prospects for Taiwan's National Elections in 2012.' This piece analysed the early stages of Taiwan's national level election campaigns that will be held in January 2012. The article received extensive coverage in the electronic and print media in Taiwan and China. In October **Dafydd Fell** was interviewed by Deutsche Welle about China-Taiwan relations (<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,6638349,00.html>). In October he was also interviewed by Reuters about Taiwan's upcoming elections. This was featured in news reports in Asia, Europe and America (<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2011/10/18/2003516051>).

**Phil Clark** was interviewed by the Los Angeles Times for an article on the post-genocide gacaca courts in Rwanda (<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/aug/19/world/la-fg-rwanda-trials-20110820>) and took part in a half-hour programme for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation on the same topic: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/rearvision/stories/2011/3318217.htm>

Second year undergraduate **Marianna Pope-Weidemann** has written about her experience of Occupy London Stock Exchange (at St Paul's Cathedral) at <http://www.counterfire.org/index.php/articles/opinion/15008-ceos-stuff-of-nightmares-occupations-go-global>

In July **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** gave a feature length interview on Iran to *Veteran's Today* and *The Public*

*Record* in the United States (<http://www.veteranstopday.com/2011/08/02/the-allegation-that-iran-is-developing-nuclear-weapons-is-a-mirage/>), and two additional feature length interviews on his book *A metahistory of the clash of civilisations* and the Arab revolts were published by *IranAnders* in Germany (<http://irananders.de/interviews/news/article/interview-der-nahost-diskurs-ist-ideologisiert.html>) and *The Prisma Magazine* in London in two parts both in Spanish and in English (<http://www.theprisma.co.uk/2011/09/12/tunisia-ii-the-global-favela/>).

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of 9/11, **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** was interviewed by the Danish Daily *Kristeligt Dagblad* on his book, Islamophobia in Europe and the legacy of the terror attacks on the United States ([http://www.kristeligt-dagblad.dk/artikel/431572:Udland--Et-faatal-skaber-myten-om-civilisationernes-sammenstoed?image=1#layout\\_center](http://www.kristeligt-dagblad.dk/artikel/431572:Udland--Et-faatal-skaber-myten-om-civilisationernes-sammenstoed?image=1#layout_center))

**Arshin Adib-Moghaddam's** opinion pieces on world politics, Iran and the Arab revolts were published by: *The Daily Star* in Beirut (<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Commentary/2011/Aug-13/A-post-American-world-can-benefit-Iraq-and-Iran.ashx#axzz1UtUNA9qk>), *OpenDemocracy* in London (<http://www.opendemocracy.net/arshin-adib-moghaddam/after-911-ripples-of-global-violence>), *Bitterlemons-International* in Jerusalem (<http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/inside.php?id=1450>), and *CNN* (<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/10/28/opinion/adib-moghaddam-tunisia-islam-shift/>)

**Phil Clark** was interviewed by UN-OCHA Irin News on accountability for sexual violence crimes in Rwanda: <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=92876>

Doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** was interviewed by the German magazine *Iranicum* to comment on the new round of EU sanctions against Iranian banks and businesses in Europe. The text of her interview is available in German and English at the following links: "Der Westen kann sich einen souveränen Iran nicht leisten":

<http://iranicum.com/2011/08/der-westen-kann-sich-ein-souveranes-iran-nicht-leisten/1365.html> and

"The West Cannot Afford a Fully Independent Iran":

[http://www.iranreview.org/content/Documents/The\\_West\\_Cannot\\_Afford\\_A\\_Fully\\_Independent\\_Iran.htm](http://www.iranreview.org/content/Documents/The_West_Cannot_Afford_A_Fully_Independent_Iran.htm)

Doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** wrote a piece reflecting on the horrific images that emerged from Libya in October 2011. *Monthly Review* has published it here: "A Requiem for Humanitarianism":

<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2011/shafaie281011.html>

**Phil Clark** was interviewed by Voice of America on the post-conflict refugee crisis in Cote d'Ivoire (<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Amnesty-International-126339428.html>) and appeared on BBC World television news to discuss the recently established Ivorian truth and reconciliation commission

**Phil Clark** was interviewed by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting on amnesties and domestic war crimes trials in Uganda: <http://iwpr.net/report-news/uganda-future-war-crimes-trials-question>

## Events

The **Department of Politics** held its second annual Away Day at the British Academy on Friday, September 23rd. The Away Day provided an opportunity to reflect on the past year and plan for the coming year, and saw the introduction of a number of new

initiatives, such as an MSc optional course in Theory, Methods, Research and Writing, as well as Politics Drop-In Sessions during Welcome Week. The afternoon was devoted to discussing departmental research initiatives and the national Research Excellence Framework (REF).

On 28 October, **Charles Tripp**, with Venetia Porter of the British Museum, gave an illustrated lecture on the "Art of Resistance in the Middle East", as part of the Chapel Lecture series, Burrowbridge, Somerset.



[Ganzeer, Cairo 2011]

For the fourth year running **Dafydd Fell** organized a Centre of Taiwan Studies team to join the annual Overseas Taiwanese Sports Day. This was our most successful year ever, including winning the prestigious tug of war contest for the first time and a number of track events. To get a taste of the Centre's team spirit see the team's event Youtube photo video: see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4xaqBeYKf8>

On 4 July, **Laleh Khalili**, along with Professor Khaled Fahmy of the American University in Cairo, appeared on a panel to discuss the Arab Revolutions. The panel was organised by the *London Review of Books* and the British Museum as part of the London Shubbak Festival. **Professor Charles Tripp** chaired the session.

On 25 October, MSc Student **Dimi Reider** participated in a debate at the LSE Student Union over the future of the two-state solution in Israel/Palestine. The two sides of the debate included Michael Brodsky (from the Israeli embassy), Dr Tony Klug (from the Oxford Research Group), Professor Alan Johnson (of BICOM) and Yossi Mekelberg (of Chatham House).

## Notices

The SOAS/Birkbeck Politics cluster has been allocated two ESRC studentships for next year (an increase on last year). For more information about applying for ESRC studentships, see <http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/scholarships/economic-and-social-research-council-esrc-studentships.html> (Note: the site has not yet been updated with information about the TWO studentships). Thanks to **Matt Nelson** and Rosie Campbell (of Birkbeck) for all the effort.

The Department has launched a new **MSc in Politics of China**. We had our first students in academic year 2011-2012, attracting a diverse student body, having candidates from Europe, Canada, and the US. The unique program features year long courses examining the Domestic and International Politics of China, and Cross-Strait Relations/Taiwan. The SOAS MSc Politics of China will give students an understanding of the political processes of China by using the concepts, theories and methods of comparative politics and international relations and a deeper knowledge of how political problems are analysed as well as knowledge of the regions themselves.

This academic year the department introduced a new course titled **North East Asia: Japan, Korea and Taiwan**. The course uses comparative politics and political economy frameworks to analyse and compare Japan, Korea and Taiwan. The course is co-taught by **Dafydd Fell** and **Tat Yan Kong**. For more information see <http://www.soas.ac.uk/courseunits/15PPOC253.html>

In September the Senior Teaching Fellow in Taiwan Studies **Monique Chu** returned to the Centre of Taiwan Studies from maternity leave. In January she gave birth to

twins named Sophie and Olivia. **Dr Chu** teaches on two Taiwan courses in the department.

## Political Commentary

### *Occupy London Stock Exchange and the Politics of "Tranquillity"*

**James Eastwood, Doctoral Student**

Sleeping in a tent in central London is no easy experience. One thing that the protestors learned soon after their arrival at St. Paul's is that they attracted a lot of nocturnal attention. Most of this is friendly but, when most occupiers survive on precious little sleep, it can also be unwanted. Altercations between protestors and passers-by, arrests of suspected PKK members staying at the camp, and intrusive journalists wielding thermal cameras have all formed part of the night-life of "tent city".

The response of the demonstrators has been to form a new "working group" (teams which help run the camp) called the "Tranquillity Team". These officers move around the camp at night, attempting to defuse noisy or aggressive situations, and thereby helping protestors to sleep. The protestors have deliberately shied away from labelling this a "security" measure. At a time when security has become a huge field of intervention for the state and its agents, the protestors want to set their community apart and prevent the creation of power hierarchies. Protestors were reluctant to mark out tranquillity officers with anything more than badges. And at the camp's general assembly, a leader of the "Tranquillity Team" even said that he had discouraged its members from surveying the camp from the high ground of St. Paul's steps.

Should we applaud this eschewing of the panoptic methods of carceral society? Perhaps. But at the same assembly, each of the protestors was encouraged to be more vigilant, to be mindful of others, and to attempt to resolve difficulties

among themselves. From another perspective, we might say that "tranquillity" risks concealing a more dangerous arrangement, one in which invisible enforcement is widely distributed in an informant society. If part of the movement's aim is a social experiment in communal living counter-posed to the security obsessions of late capitalism, students of politics should watch these innovations in "tranquillity" with interest.

### *Evolution, Not Revolution?*

**Jon Pillay, Y3 undergraduate in Politics and Economics**

The occupation at St Paul's Cathedral has drawn broad attention from the media and the country. But who are these people and what are their demands? The internal structure of the movement in London has been that of a general assembly, with working groups conducting open discussions on logistical matters; decisions and options are then fed back to the general assembly and voted upon. Horizontal power, instead of vertical power, is the aim of many of the attendees, and the achievements of the movement seem to show it has worked. Generators have been brought in; working kitchens, university tents and toilets have been set up. A strong feeling of an open community is prevalent, with film screenings, lectures and spontaneous discussions. Some of the younger crowd with whom we spoke were excited about the prospect of living in a community so different from their everyday lives.

"Anti-capitalist" is a term that the mainstream media seem to have settled on in their description of the movement, but this is an oversimplification of the issues and multitude of opinions present. Mothers, hackers and green groups have helped to mobilise people, alongside groups that can be described as anti-capitalist; there are also a large proportion of people who have no affiliation with activist

networks. In the leaderless environment people have been reluctant to give a definitive opinion, not wanting to speak for the entire movement. There are many answers from every extreme, but "evolution, not revolution" was heard more than once. The feeling is common amongst all that a stand must be taken; and to say "no" even if a definitive answer is not offered. A young visitor from Hong-Kong said that the camp acted as an "alarm clock" for "the people to wake up", and as with all protest it has the ability to stimulate debate within wider society, and this is of great importance. After first trying to evict the protesters, the Church has now decided to drop its legal challenge against them and instead has declared its support for the movement. The Occupation looks like it will last although it is too early to speculate on how it will develop.

Danny Mitchell, Ali Bingo, and Jon Pillay are members of the Conscious Collective which has made the following film about the Occupy movement.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSGi5bgBi78>

### *Tahrir in London*

**Daniel Gorman, MSc Student**

Only an hour after OccupyLSX formed outside St Pauls, a perfectly crafted replica of a London street sign appeared on a wall. "Tahrir Square, WC2. City of London." This conscious attempt to have a direct link with something bigger, not just with its equivalent in New York, has been particularly interesting. And it's an approach which was rewarded within one week, when the highly respected Egyptian writer and activist Nawal El Saadawi visited the Occupation and celebrated her 80th birthday there.

She drew clear links between the movements. "For me to see Tahrir Square in London, it's great, it's like a dream... We are 99% of the world. We are fighting together, it is

a global revolution". A number of organizing committees in Egypt have gone on to make these links even more explicit. Recently there was a march on the US embassy in Egypt to protest at violent evictions of the #Occupy movement in Oakland and on 2nd Nov a call was made for #Occupy movements internationally to demonstrate in defence of the revolution in Egypt. As for the "Tahrir Square, London" sign, it's gone on to Egypt with Dr El Saadawi.



### *Observing the Election in Tunisia*

#### **Gerasimos Tsourapas, MSc student**

The first post-Ben Ali elections in Tunisia –held on 23 October– also marked the first time the EU dispatched a mission to the country, composed of 89 long-term and short-term observers. Based in Tunis, I was also deployed in Belgium, where I participated in the EU's first attempt at monitoring out-of-country voting.

Elections day in Tunisia and abroad was marked with great enthusiasm. Given the unexpectedly high turnout, long queues of voters were a common sight, with people waiting patiently in line, sometimes for hours. Inside the polling stations, the staff's busy work was sporadically interrupted when voters broke down in tears, overwhelmed by their emotions. Parents brought their children along, proudly lifting them up so that they could cast the vote for them, even though the latter seemed more enthralled by the

semi-permanent ink adorning the voters' index fingers (to prevent double voting). Youth participation was also significant – groups of friends voted together and immortalized this historic moment with their cell phone cameras, to the chagrin of the poll centres' staff who were struggling to implement a no-photography rule. Throughout the day, citizens brought tea and snacks for the polling stations' volunteers, many of whom chose not to take a single break.



Having observed the electoral process across 1,649 polling stations, the EU team praised Tunisia's transition to democracy. However, its preliminary report also underlined a few shortcomings, namely the lack of training in tabulation methods, the overall shortage of officials and the complexities of the new electoral law – especially with regard to the thorny issue of campaign finance. The most noticeable concern to Tunisian observers was the breakdown of the SMS service which provided the location of polling stations to unregistered voters leading to some confusion. This service, a victim of the elections' turnout success, was inundated by demands on elections day and quickly stopped being responsive. Such issues do not, however, detract from the progress Tunisia has made or the hard work that turned these landmark elections into a success.

The Department of Politics and International Studies is one of the most cutting edge 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 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 Tutors:**

UG Tutor Corinna Mullin  
 UG Admissions Tutor - Bhavna Dave  
 Year 1 Tutor – Rahul Rao (Term 1) Steve Heder (Terms 2 and 3)  
 Year 2 Tutor – Tom Young  
 Year 3 Tutor – Arshin Adib-Moghaddam  
 UG Exams Officer and Exam Board Chair – Steve Heder  
 Deputy Exams Officer and Exam Board Chair – Tom Young

#### **Postgraduate (MSc) Tutors:**

PG Tutor - Leslie Vinjamuri  
 PGT Training Coordinator – Phil Clark  
 MSc Convenors  
 African Politics – Phil Clark  
 Asian Politics – Dafydd Fell  
 International Politics – Mark Laffey  
 Middle East Politics – Charles Tripp  
 Politics of China – Yuka Kobayashi (Term 1) and Dafydd Fell (Terms 2/3)  
 State, Society and Development – Yuka Kobayashi (Term 1) and Dafydd Fell (Terms 2/3)  
 PGT Exams Board Chair – Lawrence Saez  
 Deputy Exam Board Chair – Tat Yan Kong

#### **Postgraduate (Research) Tutors:**

Research Tutor - Matthew Nelson  
 MPhil Research Methods Course Convenor 2011-12 – Felix Berenskoetter

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

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