50 Years of Politics at SOAS

The Department's Fiftieth Birthday Party

The Department of Politics and International Studies held its fiftieth birthday on 24 February, starting at 18.30 in the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre. Panel members included past and present staff, who addressed the theme of “speaking truth to power,” while also reflecting on their personal experiences in the Department, its evolution and development over time, and its unique approach to the study of Politics.

From left: Stephen Chan (at the podium), David Taylor, Charles Tripp, Toby Dodge (LSE), David Williams (City), Rochana Bajpai, and Mark Laffey

The panel was followed by a festive and lively party in the Brunei Suite that was attended by several hundred students, alumni, current and past staff, and friends of the Department.

Leslie Vinjamuri and Brita Pouget

The Department thanks all the organisers and supporters of the event, including, among others, Dr. David Taylor (past Head of Department), Ms. Brita Pouget (past Departmental Administrator), the staff of SOAS External Relations and Events, as well as the panel participants, Rochana Bajpai, Mark Laffey, Charles Tripp (all from SOAS), Dr. Toby Dodge (LSE) and Dr. David Williams (City).

Alex Craven and Rochana Bajpai

Above all, the Department thanks all the students, alumni and other friends who came to celebrate this milestone with us. We look forward to seeing you at future events!
Introductions

From our new subject librarian, Victoria Bird:

About me: After a brief spell at Reading University, working in the Resource Centres’ for the departments of Real Estate and Planning, Economics and Management, I studied a Masters in Library and Information Management at Loughborough University. Subsequent to this, I worked for three years as a Trainee Liaison Librarian (a similar role to this one) supporting the subjects of History and History of Art, again at Reading- at this point I gained my Chartership from our official body, CILIP, before moving on to work on a project in the same Library, where I was responsible for coordinating the complete review of the Library's collections and for the closure and re-siting of one site library.

Need training?: I am able to offer a wide range of training in addition to the regular library training sessions aimed at a general audience, from 1-2-1 and small tutorials to large lectures (eg induction sessions for undergraduates) and I am an Associate member of the Higher Education Academy. I welcome both students and staff to my office in the Library (C2), or will visit academics in their departments on request. Drop in, or call (4147) and see if I am available, or alternatively email for an appointment in case of more lengthy enquiries: vb18@soas.ac.uk.

New Publications

Fiona Adamson has published “Constructing the Diaspora: Diaspora Identity Politics and Transnational Social Movements,” in Peter G. Mandaville and Terrence Lyons, eds., Politics from Afar: Transnational Diasporas and Networks (Hurst).

In May, Phil Clark published two book chapters in edited collections by Cambridge University Press: “Addressing Atrocity at the Local Level: Community Based Approaches to Transitional Justice in Central Africa” in Larry May and Andrew Forcehimes (eds.), Morality, Jus Post Bellum, and International Law and “Creeks of Justice: Debating Post-Atrocity Accountability in Rwanda and Uganda” in Francesca Lessa and Leigh Payne (eds.),
Amnesty in the Age of Human Rights Accountability: Comparative and International Perspectives.

Dafydd Fell published an article titled “Taiwan: Lessons from the Asian Orphan for Nagorno Karabakh?” in *Analyticon* 3 (March). This was published in English, Russian and Armenian.

Doctoral student Peter Brett wrote an introduction to ‘legalisation’ for e-IR [http://www.e-ir.info/2012/03/08/a-critical-introduction-to-the-legalisation-of-world-politics](http://www.e-ir.info/2012/03/08/a-critical-introduction-to-the-legalisation-of-world-politics).

MSc Middle East Politics student Laura Gribbon has co-authored a chapter in upcoming book – *Translating Egypt’s Revolution*, with Sarah Hawas (American University in Cairo), titled, “Signs & Signifiers: Visual Translations of Revolt”. The volume is edited by Professor Samia Mehrez and soon to be released by the American University in Cairo (AUC) Press and Oxford Press.


Dr Jacques Hymans, a research associate of the Department has published a book titled *Achieving Nuclear Ambitions: Scientists, Politicians, and Proliferation* with Cambridge University Press. Dr Hymans’s book sets out to explain the failure of at least half of all nuclear weapons projects since the 1970s.


Arshin Adib-Moghaddam’s recent research paper entitled “The Arab Revolts, Islam and Postmodernity” was published in a special edition of the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 5.


On 2 March, former doctoral students Julia Gallagher and David Harris launched their new books in the Brunei Gallery. Julia (now a lecturer at Royal Holloway) and Dave (senior teaching fellow at SOAS and visiting lecturer at King’s College, London) have respectively written *Britain and Africa under Blair: in Pursuit of the Good State* (Manchester University Press) and *Civil War and Democracy in West Africa: Conflict Resolution, Elections and Justice in Sierra Leone and Liberia* (IB Tauris). Both books were published in 2011 and were based on their PhD theses. From different perspectives, both books examine the intertwining of domestic and international politics in Africa and share a common source of research in Sierra Leone.
Research Centres, Clusters, and Networks

The SOAS Centre for Taiwan Studies

The Centre of Taiwan Studies has been awarded a grant of 18,000 Euros to organize a major international conference on Cross-Strait Relations at SOAS in September by the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation. The Project Director is Dr Monique Chu. The objective of the conference is to produce a book publication that will become a key component in the curriculum of the Politics department’s courses on Taiwan.

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

The CCRJ together with the London Transitional Justice Network hosted a lecture by Professor David Scheffer, Northwestern Law School. Professor Scheffer spoke to an audience of human rights NGOs, foundations, journalists, academics, and students about his recent book, *All the Missing Souls: A Personal History of the War Crimes Tribunals.*

The CCRJ also hosted a seminar given by Professor Charles King of Georgetown University on his forthcoming article, “Can there be a Political Science of the Holocaust”.

Appointments, Awards, Honours

The Department of Politics congratulates all the graduates of the class of 2012. We wish you much success and hope you will stay in touch with the Department!

Congratulations to Felix Berenskoetter who has been appointed to the position of full-time Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies. Felix currently teaches on Power in World Politics, Identity in International Relations, and Comparative and International Politics, as well as convening the MPhil course on Research Methods.

Congratulations to Linda Tabar, Tanya Walker and Sophia Hoffmann all of whom passed their doctoral vivas with minor corrections.

Recent doctoral students Hania Sobhy Ramadan and Hanan Toukan have both been awarded and accepted postdoctoral fellowships with “Europe in the Middle East – The Middle East in Europe” at the Forum Transregionale Studien. The Forum is administered by the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. Hania will be researching “Passionate Politics in the Aftermath of the ‘Egyptian Revolution’: Salafi and Revolutionary Mobilization in the 2012 Presidential Elections” while Hanan’s project is titled “Grasping the World the Way It Is? Encountering the Global in Contemporary Arab Aesthetics and the Politics of Cultural Critique”. Hanan will also be a CBRL (Centre for British Research in Levant) visiting research fellow in Amman until the Autumn, when she starts her fellowship in Berlin.

Congratulations to current MSc student and future doctoral student Gerasimos Tsourapas who has been awarded a 2012 Kathryn Davis Fellowship for Peace to attend the Middlebury College Language Schools, in Arabic this summer.

The SOAS/Birkbeck Politics ESRC doctoral studentships for 2012/2013 have been awarded to Hugh Lamarque (Supervisor: Phil Clark) for a project titled “Insulating the
Borderland: Exploring Security and Securitization along Rwanda’s Western Frontier” and to Johann Chacko (Supervisor: Matt Nelson) for “Deobandi Islam’s Institutional Response to Nationalism and the Nation-State in the Era of Competitive Electoral Politics.” We welcome Hugh and Johann to the department.

Laleh Khalili has been awarded a small grant by Palestine American Research Center (PARC) to research the Politics of Pleasure among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. After twelve years of researching massacres, martyrdom, detention, colonial warfare, and mass slaughter, she looks forward to a brief intellectual (and research) respite before returning to her favourite grin topics.

On May 18 it was announced that the SOAS Taiwan Studies Teaching Team (Professor Ash, Economics; Monique Chu Dafydd Fell, and Hardina Ohlendorf, all Politics) were the joint runners up for this year’s Director’s Teaching Prize. Some of the unique features of the SOAS Taiwan Studies teaching programme were discussed in the February 2012 newsletter. This year there were a total of 83 nominations for 57 members of staff and two teaching teams. The Department of Politics received nominations for 10 staff members, more than any other Department in the School.

Portia Roelofs, currently studying MSc African Politics, has been awarded an ESRC Studentship to study for a PhD in Public Policy at King’s College, London, next year. Her research will be on the political theory of corruption, with a focus on Nigeria.

PhD candidate Hannes Baumann will be moving to the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) at Georgetown University for a year, starting in August 2012. As a visiting assistant professor he will teach MA courses on topics such as “business and politics in the Middle East”.

Many warm congratulations to our former doctoral student Toby Matthiesen (who is now Abdullah Al-Mubarak Research Fellow in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Pembroke College, Cambridge) for having been awarded the 2012 APSA (American Political Science Association) Aaron Wildavsky Award for the Best Dissertation on Religion and Politics for his very timely doctoral thesis titled The Shia of Saudi Arabia: Identity Politics, Sectarianism and the Saudi State.

In April, doctoral student Marco Jowell was appointed country peer reviewer for Uganda at Transparency International.

Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs Training Institute titled “Academic Diplomacy in Practice: The Role of SOAS in European Taiwan Studies.” Later the same day he gave a public lecture at Taiwan’s National Central Library titled “Why is the study of Taiwanese politics so popular abroad?”

At the First World Congress Dr Fell gave two papers on April 26. The first was “Should I Stay or Should I Go? Patterns of Party Switching in Multi-party Taiwan.” This was part of the panel on party politics organized by Academia Sinica’s Institute of Political Science. The second paper was “Taiwan’s Claim to Multiculturalism before and after 2008: The Impact of Changing Ruling Parties on Immigration Policies.” This was co-authored with Dr Isabelle Cheng (SOAS Politics). This paper was part of a panel on Changing Ruling Parties in Taiwan: Continuity and Change in Domestic and External Policies and it was a collaborative project between the SOAS Centre of Taiwan Studies and the European Research Centre for Contemporary Taiwan, University of Tubingen, Germany. The third representative from the SOAS Politics Department at this historic conference was Dr Hardina Ohlendorf. She gave a paper on the European Perspectives on Taiwan’s Subjectivity panel titled “The Institutionalization of Taiwan Studies in Europe.”

Three of the department’s students will be giving papers on the MA Panel at the Eighth European Association of Taiwan Studies Conference in June 2012. They are Eleni Darema (Msc Asian Politics), Song Huichun (MA Taiwan Studies) and Lu Wanzhi (JYA). Lu Wanzhi is taking our undergraduate course Taiwan’s Political and Economic Development while at SOAS for a year away from National Taiwan University. She is the first ever undergraduate student to be accepted for this very competitive international conference.

Fiona Adamson presented a paper on “For the Ummah or Humanity? Islamic Humanitarianism Between Communitarianism and Cosmopolitanism” on 12 March at the University of Glasgow.

David Harris presented three papers: one concerning the upcoming Sierra Leone elections at University of Oxford with Mats Utas; and two reflecting on the Liberian elections last year: at University of Bologna with Tereza Ambrožová and at Cornell University during the Liberian Studies Association Conference.

Julia Strauss participated in a roundtable discussion, “Uneasy Partners: Africa’s relations with China”, at the Institute of East Asian Studies, Berkeley on 21 March. Dr Strauss was also invited to give a public lecture titled “Going Out (zou chuqu) and Arrival In (desembarco): China, Latin America and Contemporary Globalization” at the Center for Policy Studies at Case Western Reserve University on 26 March 26 (http://fn.case.edu/category/economy/)

Julia Strauss presented “Theatres of Land Reform: Repertoire and Campaign in Su’nan and Taiwan, 1950-1953” at the East Asia Transregional Histories and East Asia Politics, Economy and Society workshop at the University of Chicago on 27 March 27. She was also a

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Presentations and Conferences

In April Dafydd Fell visited Taiwan to attend the First World Congress of Taiwan Studies (April 26-28), at Academia Sinica. Prior to the conference, on 25 April he gave a talk to Taiwanese and European diplomats at the
On 28 April 2012, PhD student Indrė Balčaitė presented her paper “Fluidity of the Thai-Burma boundary: pre-colonial to post-colonial imaginings and border practices” at the 22nd Annual Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (ASEN) Conference “Nationalism, Ethnicity and Boundaries” at the LSE.

Doctoral student Sanaa Alimia presented a paper at Stanford University in May as part of the “South Asia by the Bay” conference. The title of her paper was “Shared Realities between Afghan Refugees and “Devalued” Pakistani Citizens: Processes of Dehumanisation and Re-humanisation in Urban Pakistan”.

Comparative Politics of Memory in Asia and Africa as part of a Departmental Research Cluster

On 22 March, Shirin Shafaiie participated in a panel discussion with Kate Hudson (General Secretary, CND), Dominique Lalanne (Abolition 2000 Europe) and Peter Burt (Nuclear Information Service): “Chain Reaction: Do all nuclear programmes stand in the way of nuclear weapons abolition?” (http://www.networkforpeace.org.uk/calendar/abolition-2000uk/2012/mar/chain-reaction-do-all-nuclear-programmes-stand-way-nuclear-weapon). Two days later, she organised a Peace-Building event (Nowruz No War) on the occasion of the Persian New Year at Amnesty International UK in London (http://www.nowruznowar.org.uk/Welcome.html). On 10 May, she presented a paper on “Memories With and Without Narratives In the Iranian War Discourse” at Matchpoints Seminar, Conflict in Memory, Workshop on Psychological Approaches to Interpersonal and Intergenerational Remembering, Aarhus University, Denmark.

On 16 February, Laleh Khalili gave a public lecture titled “Settler Colonialism, Counterinsurgency and Population Control” at the opening of the Decolonizing Architecture/Art Residency exhibition at the Nottingham Contemporary Museum. On 21 February, she presented “Gendering Counterinsurgency” at the Changing Face of War seminar at Oxford University. On 3 April, she presented “The Uses of Happiness in Counterinsurgencies” to the Graduate School of Social Sciences at the Kadir Has University in Istanbul. On 26-28 April, she also participated on a large conference in Lund Sweden, titled Arab Uprisings: Contesting Narratives, Locating Power, which brought together scholars, artists and activists from Europe, North America and the Middle East together in a fluid format to creatively discuss the transformations in the Middle East. On 10 May, Laleh and Nadje Al Ali of Centre for Gender Studies held a conversation on “A Continuum of Violence-Resistance and the Targeting of Women in Iraq” at the Mosaic Rooms to coincide with their exhibition, Iraq: How, Where, and For Whom!

In April, Leslie Vinjamuri participated in a workshop in Berlin on “the New Terrain of Law and Politics” hosted by the Free University of Berlin and the American Academy of Berlin. Leslie also participated in a Workshop on Integrated Transitions at a Meeting of the Board of the Institute for Integrated Transitions in Barcelona.

Additionally, Leslie hosted a session of the International Relations Speaker Series with Professor Dan Byman, of Georgetown University and The Brookings Institution, Mr. Mark Fitzpatrick, Director Nonproliferation and Disarmament Programme at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, for a discussion of Professor Byman’s recent book, A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism

Rahul Rao made 3 presentations at the International Studies Association convention in San Diego in April 2012: (i) Researching Sexuality in ‘Difficult’ Contexts, the text of which can be found here: http://thedisorderofthings.com/2012/04/24/what-we-talked-about-at-isa-researching-sexuality-in-difficult-contexts/; (ii) Reflections on postcoloniality and resistance in the work of Ashis Nandy; (iii) roundtable on Lea Ypi’s Global Justice & Avant-Garde Agency. He recently wrote an expert report on Uganda for an applicant requesting asylum in the UK from persecution on the basis of sexual orientation, whose claim was ultimately successful. He is currently in Uganda, doing fieldwork at the Uganda Martyrs’ Shrine.

PhD candidate Hannes Baumann presented a paper at the annual BRISMES conference in March. In the presentation titled “What Tunisia’s revolution tells us about perceptions of corruption” Hannes explained why the high degree of corruption of the Ben Ali regime was not picked up by indices such as Transparency International’s “corruption perception index”.

PhD candidate Alexej Ulbricht presented his paper “Multiculturalism and the -Immunisation of Liberalism” at the annual PSA conference in Belfast.
In February, Arshin Adib-Moghaddam gave two televised public lectures in Madrid and Cordoba (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nom0EKD7BzA) on the Arab revolts, Iran and his latest book *A Metahistory of the Clash of Civilisations*. As a part of this lecture tour in Spain he gave several interviews to the media including to Spanish national TV. In March he gave a talk on Iran and Palestine at the 8th annual conference of the SOAS Palestine Society. In May 2012 he gave a lecture on the Arab revolts and Iran at the University of Cambridge as a part of a lecture series organised by the Centre for Islamic Studies and the Department of Politics and International Studies.

On 23 February, Professor Charles Tripp gave a talk on “The Politics of Resistance and the Arab Uprisings” at the Middle East Centre of the LSE: http://www2.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/videoAndAudio/channels/publicLecturesAndEvents/player.aspx?id=1368.

Four days later, Professor Tripp spoke on “What can Iraq’s History tell us about its Future?” at Netherhall House, London. On 14 March 2012, Charles Tripp lectured on “The Art of Resistance in the Middle East” at the Royal Society of Asian Affairs.

On 16 March 2012, Charles Tripp spoke on “The resilience of political institutions in Iraq” at a panel on *Iraq’s Future after the American Departure* organized at UCL jointly by the Association of Iraqi Academics and the British Institute for the Study of Iraq. On 1 May 2012, Charles Tripp gave a talk on “Art and Uprisings in the Middle East” at the University of East London as part of the series of events on *The Tahrir Square meme* organized jointly with openDemocracy: http://www.opendemocracy.net/freeform-tags/tahrir-square-meme-series-at-university-of-east-london

On 7-8 May, Charles Tripp organized part of the course on the Middle East for the International Training Course in Security at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and gave a talk on “Iraqi Security under the Parliamentary Republic.” On 1 June, Charles Tripp spoke at the launch event of ‘Shiapedia’ at the Centre for Islamic Shi’a Studies, London.

Salwa Ismail was an invited panelist for the panel *The Syrian Uprising* sponsored by the Project on Middle East Political Science, George Washington University, February 21, 2012. http://pomeps.org/2012/02/syrias-uprising-3/

Salwa Ismail took part in the international conference *Urban Revolutions in the Age of Global Urbanism*, co-organised by the University of California Berkeley and the University of Minnesota, and held in Jakarta, Indonesia, March 16-20, 2012. Ismail presented a paper entitled “Urban Subalterns in the Arab Revolutions: Cairo and Damascus Compared.”

Between 16 and 21 April, Salwa Ismail visited Oslo to give a number of talks and presentations. During this visit, Ismail was the invited guest of the bi-annual Public Anthropology Series organized by the Social Anthropology Department at the University of Oslo. As the guest of the Series, she was hosted at the House of Literature for an open conversation on *Islamism and the Arab Uprisings* with Professor Bjørn Olav Utvik and Dr Sindre Bangstad. She also gave a talk on the Role of Subaltern Forces in the Egyptian and Syrian Revolutions, at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Oslo. She presented a paper on the Political Economy of New Forms of Islamism at FAFO.


On 5 May, doctoral student Priya Kumar spoke at TEDxGoodenoughCollege, “The Future of Humanity: the big picture”. With focus on the South Asian community, her talk, “Where are you from again?” explored the complexities of hybrid identity in today’s contemporary digital age. She also attended “Homeland Connections:
E-Diasporas Atlas / A Century of Transnationalism” an international symposium on the transnational connections of migrants (23-25 May in Paris, France). Priya engaged in a variety of panels and workshops on social networking and comparative digital research methodology. As researcher for the e-Diasporas Atlas project, Priya also presented Sikh, Tamil and Palestinian digital corpus maps. For more information see: http://e-diasporas.fr/.

In February, Phil Clark gave lectures on post-conflict justice in Rwanda at Washington and Lee University in Virginia and George Washington University in Washington DC. He also co-organised a panel on the politics of memory in Washington.

In March, Phil Clark gave a lecture on conflict in central Africa to the Royal College of Defence Studies in London.

In April, Phil Clark gave a presentation on the impact of the gacaca courts in Rwanda at the official 18th anniversary genocide commemoration conference in Kigali.

In May, Phil Clark gave a presentation on the gacaca courts at the Africa Research Institute launch of his Counterpoint on the same subject, with a response by Sir Edward Clay, former British high commissioner to Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi: http://www.africaresearchinstitute.org/audio-article.php?i=7VBUUlJMKJ&p=1

In May, Phil Clark (along with Stephen Chan and Chandra Sriram) spoke at an IC Publications conference on the work of the International Criminal Court in Africa: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gljTv7tE4wg; http://allafrica.com/stories/201205310828.html

In February, doctoral student Shirin Shafai participated in a debate concerning “The Iranian Uranium Controversy” on Voice of Russia with James Blake, Patrick Hayes and Leonid Savin (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AG1D-1Lex4). On 3 May, she presented a paper on “Iran’s Popular War Narratives: Discovering A New Past” at the workshop on Comparative Politics of Memory in Asia and Africa as part of a Departmental Research Cluster.

In December 2011 Hanan Toukan was invited to and attended a workshop at the University of Marburg entitled “The Middle East from Below: Dynamics of Subversion” at the Centre for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Marburg University, Germany. In March 2012 she presented a paper at a conference organised by the Arab Media Centre at the University of Westminster Media, titled “Media, Youth Subcultures and the Politics of Resistance in the Arab World.” In May Hanan was invited to present a paper at the University of Exeter’s workshop titled “ Cultures of Resistance: The Case of Palestine and Beyond”.

Professor Stephen Chan gave the Kenyon Institute Lectures in East Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Nablus in April 2012.

Mark Laffey has presented “What about China? The Limits of Postcolonialism in International Relations” (with Jane Hayward), at Critical Voices in Swiss IR: Feminism, Difference and Beyond at The Graduate Institute, Geneva in May. He also presented “The Hybridity of Liberal Peace: States, Diasporas and Insecurity” (with Suthaharan Nadarajah) to the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association in San Diego in April.

Bhavna Dave presented a paper “Migration Regime in Kazakhstan: Vested Interests and Challenges of Establishing a Legal Framework” at the Annual Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities at Columbia University, New York on 19-21 April.

Bhavna also participated at a International Conference “Migration in Host Countries: Social Constraints, Cultural Context and Political Consequences” at Higher School of Economics, Moscow on 12 April. Bhavna Dave gave two lectures on aspects of Islam in Central Asia as a part of training for international diplomats at the German Foreign Service Academy in Berlin in March and in May.

Corinna Mullin presented a paper on “Re-Thinking U.S. Relations with the WANA Region: An Analysis of Policies, Discourses and Practices in Light of the ‘Arab Spring’” at the BRISMES Annual Conference held on 28 March at the LSE. She also helped to organise and participated in a delegation of human rights lawyers and academics to Egypt from April 20-27, sponsored by the US-based National Lawyers Guild. The delegation’s aim was to investigate US complicity in human rights violations committed by the deposed Mubarak regime as well as in the ongoing rights violations of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), Egypt’s de facto ruling power. The delegation will release a report of their findings in July 2012 and some issues will be followed up with litigation. http://muftah.org/national-lawyers-guild-international-committee-condemns-egyptian-military-violation-of-human-rights/. Corinna Mullin gave a lecture on 16 May on the Arab uprisings to a diplomats’ training session in Berlin organised by The Aga Khan University (International) in the United Kingdom. She chaired a panel entitled “Beyond Egypt” at a conference...
Politics Department Seminars

In term 2 the department had a rich seminar programme in which colleagues from other universities presented on a variety of the topics. The talks included

18 January - Professor Dvora Yanow (University of Amsterdam), “Conundrums in migrant policies: State-constructed categories and the politics of difference”

8 February - Dr Harald Heubaum (SOAS), “Framing coalitions and the politics of climate change”

20 February - Dr Leigh Jenco (National University of Singapore), “Theorizing the culturally unprecedented: Cultural difference as historical discontinuity after May Fourth”

29 February - Ms Rachel Brulé, (Stanford), “When Reform Works: A study of property rights reform’s impact on women’s empowerment in rural India”

7 March - Dr Robbie Shilliam (Queen Mary), “Slavery, abolition and constructivism”

14 March - Dr Dave Rampton and Dr Suthaharan Nadarajah (both SOAS), “Liberal peace and biopolitical war in Sri Lanka”

2 May - Professor Alexander Cooley (Barnard College, Columbia University), “The Price of Influence: Geopolitics and Human Rights in Central Asia, 2001-2011”

Outreach

Doctoral student Marco Jowell undertook a consultancy from February to March at DFID preparing a business case for remote management planning in their humanitarian programming. He also was part of a briefing session on Burundi post elections at a joint FC/O/DFID seminar in March. Marco was also part of a panel for the Royal Africa Society on the DR Congo and beyond the 2011 elections. Marco presented on the international approach to Congo during the elections and possible future trajectories. Further, he has been contracted by Conciliation Resources for 6 months to develop and edit a newsletter produced by civil society organisations across Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Uganda. The newsletter, called Voice of Peace, focuses on the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and aims to promote the opinions and views of local communities across affected areas. http://www.c-r.org/resources/voice-peace. Two editions have been produced so far, in English and in French.

In May, Doctoral student Anna Rader briefed a selection of senior 16 AAB officers from at Colchester Barracks on the situation in Somalia, sharing a platform with the new British ambassador for Somalia.

David Harris co-wrote and edited a Country Briefing on Sierra Leone for the International Rescue Committee UK and briefed the new Deputy Irish Ambassador to West Africa.

During the Spring of 2012, Matt Nelson provided tailored briefings for the Irish Ambassador to Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, the Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan, and corporate leaders from Mitsubishi and Menas Associates.

Marco Jowell briefed the head of Irish development cooperation and second secretary on the Democratic Republic of Congo both to be posted to South Africa. The briefing was part of a broader SOAS briefing day on the Southern Africa region.

In March, Phil Clark briefed the Kosovo minister of justice and the Kosovo ambassador to the UK on transitional justice issues in central Africa. In March and April, he assisted with a DFID governance assessment in Rwanda. Also in March and April, he briefed members of the UN Group of Experts for the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In April, Phil Clark conducted field research into witness testimony and protection in Rwanda. The research forms the basis of a forthcoming report for REDRESS, the London-based NGO which focuses on issues of torture and justice for victims. Also in April, Phil Clark briefed the British High Commissioner to Rwanda and several of his Kigali-based staff on political developments in Rwanda.

In May, Phil Clark was invited to provide a comparative analysis of transitional justice in central Africa at a Foreign and Commonwealth Office roundtable exploring justice options in Syria.

Dr Lawrence Saez wrote a report on the Brazilian economy for PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). The report, entitled “Brazil – attractive investment destination and engine for Latin America,” appeared in the Spring 2012 issue of Trade & Finance, PwC’s in-house research journal. Dr Saez was later asked to comment on his key findings for Monocle radio. The podcast of his radio interview is available at http://www.monocle.com/monocle24/?openepisode=11200093

PhD candidate Hannes Baumann participated in a roundtable discussion on Lebanon at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 4 May. He focused on the implications of the Syrian conflict on Lebanon, arguing
that the arming of the Syrian opposition would hasten a “spillover” of the conflict.

Media Appearances

Salwa Ismail gave a featured Interview on the Egyptian and Syrian Uprisings, Uniforum, on 18 April

Ismail was an invited Panelist on the BBC World Today Weekend Programme (a three-hour long programme) on 28 April 28.

Doctoral student Benedetta de Alessi has published an article titled “The selective implementation of the Sudan CPA and today’s crisis along the North South border” in The Sudan Tribune.

In May, Dr Lawrence Saez appeared on CNBC’s programme “Investing Edge” to comment on the Egyptian presidential election.

http://video.cnbc.com/gallery/?video=3000091120&play=1

Doctoral student Peter Brett has written a piece on the African politics of reparations for LSE Ideas
http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/ideas/2012/01/european-governments-and-african-demands-for-reparations/

For the launch of the new Anticapitalists.org website MSc student Joana Pinto has conducted an interview with Arshin Adib-Moghaddam on Iran and the possibility of war: http://anticapitalists.org/2012/05/06/bullying-iran/

MSc Middle East Politics student Dimi Reider appeared on MSNBC’s Up With Chris Hayes on 22 April, to discuss Israeli public opinion on a possible attack on Iran. Dimi also published an overview of anti-democratic processes in Israel with the New York Review of Books on March 15 (http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nvrblog/2012/mar/15/israel-knesset-democracy/), and took part in a number of panels on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including events the Frontline Club, Queen’s University Belfast, and at SOAS.

Doctoral student Seyyed Ali Alavi has written a short article that was published by LSE’s weblog titled as “Can Turkey be a role model for the Arab world?”

In May, David Harris wrote an article concerning the Charles Taylor trial verdict for the website, Fair Observer, http://www.fairobserver.com/article/taylor-guilty-all-there

Ramin Amighi, an undegraduate finalist, is the European Ideas (EI) representative at SOAS. EI is a non-partisan, student-run internet platform than encourages an open discussion about European affairs. EI has representatives like Ramin spread all over Europe’s top universities and has established partnerships with seminar series at Oxford University and medias such as LSE’s EUROP blog.

Guido Westervelle, Vivian Reding, Didier Bigot, Simon Hix and numerous Members of the European Parliament have been some of EI’s contributors. EI is also currently representing Austria in the competition for the €5000 EU Charlemagne Youth Prize. Ramin and his colleagues are looking to expand EI’s existing online-collection of articles, opinion pieces, videos, interviews etc. from/with academics and policy-makers. Apart from publishing Dr Tom Young’s kind contribution (an opinion-piece, “On Liberal War”), EI has filmed and published a panel discussion held at UCL on European-Libyan relations with Dr Felix Berenskoetter.

Doctoral student Hagar Taha has contributed an article to Think Africa Press titled “Finding Civil Society in Darfur”: http://thinkafrica.com/sudan/darfur-understanding-conflict-cultures-politics-civil-society-bashir

Leslie Vinjamuri participated in an online interview series hosted by the Canadian International Council on peace vs. justice. Her interview was published here: http://www.opencanada.org/features/leslie-vinjamuri/

Dafydd Fell’s book has been reviewed in http://taiwanreview.nat.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=190967&CntNode=1337

In February, doctoral student Anna Rader was interviewed about the London Conference on Somalia on radio programmes for BBC Scotland and the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation, and in print for the Guardian.

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam wrote several commissioned opinion pieces and short articles including for The Guardian (http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/feb/15iran-isaelfdiplomats-attacks) and Afkar Magazine in Spain (http://www.politicaexterior.com/archives/12830). In addition, Adib-Moghaddam wrote the introduction to a special series of posts commissioned by LSE IDEAS exploring Islamabad and the Arab Spring (http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/ideas/2012/04/islamutopia-a-very-short-history-of-political-islam/). A co-written opinion piece was co-published at Harvard University’s Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs (http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/21998/iran_netanyahu_and_the_holocaust.html?breadcrumb=%2Fexperts%2F2626%2Fsharin_adibmoghad).

Further, Adib-Moghaddam gave an extensive interview to the US based e-magazine truthful.org (http://truth-
On 23 March 2012, Charles Tripp published on the openDemocracy website an article entitled “The Seductions of Violence in Iraq” in which he argued that violence in Iraq has a logic and a constitutive power of its own fully in line with the contemporary experiences that Iraqis have undergone both before and after 2003. Furthermore, it seems to be regarded by those in power as a good deal less troubling than public accountability.


In March, Phil Clark was interviewed by World Politics Review about the Kony2012 internet campaign: http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trendlines/11727/stop-iras-kony-but-how


In April, Phil Clark appeared on an Australian Broadcasting Corporation programme to discuss rebel groups in Africa:
http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvis/n/african-rebel-leaders/3917112

In April, Phil Clark’s op-ed on the Charles Taylor verdict at the Special Court for Sierra Leone was published on the CNN website:

In May, Phil Clark’s report on the gacaca courts for the Africa Research Institute was reprinted on the front page of the New Times newspaper in Rwanda and in the Independent magazine in Uganda:

In May, Phil Clark was quoted in an International Bar Association article on conflict minerals in eastern Congo: http://www.ibanet.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=D F22FE32-C048-4711-A7B1-FE1E2838AF8A

In May, Phil Clark appeared on BBC World News TV to talk about the recent rebel mutiny on the Congo-Rwanda border.

In May, Phil Clark was interviewed by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting on the ICC’s pursuit of warlords in eastern Congo: http://iwpr.net/report-news/prosecutor-seeks-new-charges-drc

In May, the Independent magazine in Uganda published an interview with Phil Clark on the upcoming closure of the gacaca community courts in Rwanda: http://www.independent.co.uk/rwanda-ed/rwanda/5842-gacacas-legacy

Julia Strauss published “Latin America and Asia: Globalization Trumps Power Politics” in Hemisphere Vol 21 (Spring).


Events

On 15 March 2012, Masters student Abubakr Al-Shamahi and the department organized a showing of the powerful documentary film Karama has no walls http://karamabasnowalls.com/ directed by Sara Ishaq and capturing the events of 18 March 2011 in Sana’a, the turning point of the Yemeni uprising.

On 15 March 2012, Charles Tripp and Corinna Mullin took part in the Widening Participation Schools Your World, Your Voice Debate organized at SOAS. They debated the motion “Military Intervention by Western powers in the Middle East creates more problems than it solves,” with Corinna arguing in favour of the motion and Charles arguing against. Corinna won.
On 25 February, the MSc Middle East Politics students Omar Sirri, Amir Sadafi, Ellen Berry and Carolyn Barnett hosted a conference in the Khalili Lecture Theatre supported by the Politics Department and the SOAS Events office titled *After the Spring: Which Way Forward for the Middle East?* The conference featured 15 speakers including SOAS faculty members Nadje Al-Ali, Ruba Salih, Corinna Mullin, Leslie Vinjamuri, and Charles Tripp. Panel topics included gender and sexuality, human rights and transitional justice, social change, international politics, and thinking through the challenges ahead. The conference also featured an exhibit of MSc student Laura Gribbon’s video and photography from Tahrir Square during the initial 18 days of Egypt’s uprising. More than 150 people attended throughout the day.

On 28 May 2012, the department held a very well attended session on careers in or related to the Middle East for our MSc Middle East Politics students. The meeting was organised by Professor Charles Tripp and addressed by Evan Hancock of the SOAS Careers Service and Peter Kemp, editorial director of Energy Intelligence.

On 3 May, the “Comparative Politics of Memory in Asia and Africa” research cluster (comprising Phil Clark, Steve Heder, Andrew Johnston, Laleh Khalili, Rahul Rao and Shirin Shafaie) hosted a workshop on the politics of memory at SOAS, sponsored by the Department. The presentations included those by Rahul Rao, “Remembering Mwanga: Queer Memory and Belonging in Postcolonial Uganda”; Laleh Khalili, “Remembering Sparta: Reproducing the Warrior Ethos in SEAL Memories”; Shirin Shafaie, “Iran’s Popular War Narratives: Discovering A New Past”; Steve Heder, “Local Perpetration under the Khmer Rouge: Policy and Practice”; and Phil Clark, “Community-Based Justice and Memorialisation in the African Great Lakes.” The panel was very well-attended and the discussion very lively.

On 1 June, the EU-MENA cluster held a workshop on *Critical Perspectives on European-MENA Relations in Light of the ‘Arab Spring’*. Polly Pallister-Wilkins, Corinna Mullin and Felix Berenskoepter organised the workshop with the sponsorship of the Department. In addition to the cluster members, Rosemary Hollis (City), Laila Fathi (SOAS), Reem AbuElFadl (Oxford), Cengiz Günay (OII), Martin Lemberg-Pedersen (Copenhagen), Abdessamad Fatmi (Liverpool), Thomas Demmelhuber (Hildesheim), Michelle Pace (Birmingham), Richard Gillespie (Liverpool), and Eva Gross (VUB) participated. Corinna Mullin presented “The ‘Arab spring’ Uprisings and the Legacy of Western Interventionism,” while Felix, Polly and Arshin Adib-Moghaddam chaired panels.

### Notices

**Politics MPhil Conference**

All are welcome to “Pondering the Political”, a one-day conference to be held by the department’s MPhil students on 13 June 2012 in G51. Students will present their work-in-progress on rethinking the state, political identity and subjectivity, borders and diasporas, and international institutions and policy-making, followed by comments from faculty-member discussants and a Q&A. The conference will take place from 9am to 6pm. For more information and for the programme, please contact Felix Berenskoepter at fb12@soas.ac.uk.

**MRes Politics**

The Department of Politics is pleased to announce the launch of a new two-year **MRes in Politics** with [Language] in 2012-2013. This exciting new degree programme, designed for area studies scholars with plans
to conduct PhD research in Politics, will provide two years of intensive language study at SOAS (e.g. Arabic, Chinese, Pashto, Swahili, etc.) with two years of high-level social science methodology training at neighbouring Birkbeck College. Applicants are also invited to apply for ESRC funding to support a 2+3 programme of MRes/PhD study. For details, please contact Dr Matthew Nelson (mn6@soas.ac.uk).

MA Pakistan Studies

SOAS is pleased to announce a new MA in Contemporary Pakistan Studies. This degree will involve two core courses—one focusing on history and culture in the Department of South Asian Studies ('Imagining Pakistan') and one convened in the Department of Politics ('Pakistan: Politics, Law, and Development')—as well as one optional course and a dissertation. For details, please contact Dr Matthew Nelson (mn6@soas.ac.uk) or Dr Amina Yaqin (ay@soas.ac.uk).

T-Shirts Available!

Would you like a commemorative T-shirt from the “Speaking Truth to Power” 50th Anniversary Event? There are a few remaining T-shirts still available from the Student Union Shop. For more information contact the Student Union Shop: http://shop.soasunion.org/ or Brita Pouget (bp@soas.ac.uk). T-shirts are £10 and have the following design:

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
PG Training Coordinator – Phil Clark
MSc Convenors
- African Politics – Phil Clark
- Asian Politics – Daifydd Fell
- International Politics – Mark Laffey
- Middle East Politics – Charles Tripp
- Politics of China – Yuka Kobayashi (Term 1) and Daifydd Fell (Terms 2/3)
- State, Society and Development – Yuka Kobayashi (Term 1) and Daifydd 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 Berenskoteer

This newsletter is produced three times per academic year by Laleh Khalili. Send any announcements or notices to lk4@soas.ac.uk
Department of Politics is on twitter; please follow @soaspolitics
On Facebook, you can find us at SOASPolitics.