



## Politics and International Studies Newsletter



### Introductions



Welcome back to **Caroline Strickson** who has rejoined the department as the undergraduate student support officer:

“Hello everyone, my name is **Caroline Strickson** and I work for the Department in UG Student Support, and here is a little bit about me. Before I started at SOAS in 2008 I worked as a Teaching Assistant in my home town of Bexhill. As a student I studied English Literature with Creative Writing at Kent, and this is where my passion lies. Outside of work (if there is such a place!) I love cooking, watching anything sci-fi, reading fiction and writing. My main ambition in life is to become a published author and see more of the world.”



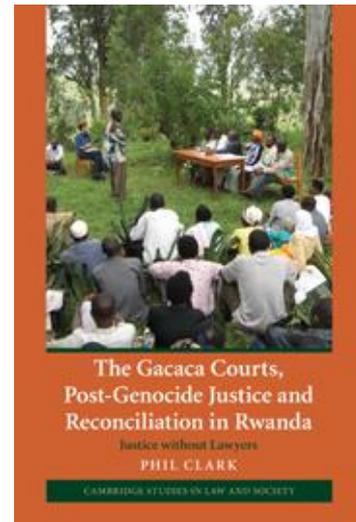
### New Publications

**Matt Nelson**, together with former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan William B. Milam, published an article entitled “Pakistan’s Populist Foreign Policy” in *Survival* 55(1).

**Rahul Rao**'s “Revisiting Cartographic Anxiety”, which reviews **Rochana Bajpai**'s book *Debating Difference* amongst other recent works on citizenship in India, was published by *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* and can be viewed here: <http://www.ohlj.ca/english/current.htm>

In January and February, **Phil Clark** published four chapters in edited collections: “Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Societies” in the *Elgar Handbook of Civil War and Fragile States* (edited by Graham Brown and Arnim Langer, Edward Elgar Publishing); “Transitional Justice after Atrocity” in the *Routledge Handbook of African Politics* (edited by Nic Cheeseman and David M. Anderson); and “Rwanda” and “Gacaca Courts” in the *Encyclopedia of Transitional Justice* (edited by Lavinia Stan and Nadia Nedelsky, Cambridge University Press).

In January, Cambridge University Press published a special Africa paperback edition of **Phil Clark**'s monograph, *The Gacaca Courts, Post-Genocide Justice and Reconciliation in Rwanda*. <http://academics.cup.co.za/?m=1&idkey=599>

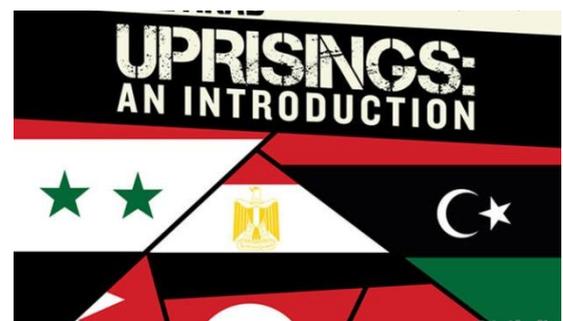


In November, **Phil Clark** published an essay on the impact of the International Criminal Court in Africa for the Africa All Party Parliamentary Group's “Security and Africa” report:

[http://www.royalafricansociety.org/sites/default/files/reports/AAPPG\\_securityreport\\_nov2012.pdf](http://www.royalafricansociety.org/sites/default/files/reports/AAPPG_securityreport_nov2012.pdf)

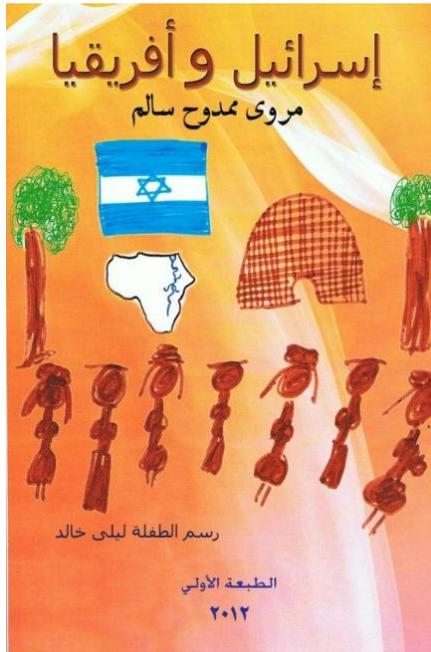
**Tat Yan Kong**'s article “Between Late-Industrialisation and Globalisation: The Hybridisation of Labour Relations Among Leading South Korean Firms” was published online in *New Political Economy* on 17 January 2013 (text copy forthcoming 2013). The article can be located at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13563467.2013.742879>

**Abul-Hasanat Siddique**, currently completing his part-time MSc in Middle East Politics, saw the publishing of his first co-authored book, *The Arab Uprisings: An Introduction* ([www.fairobserver.com/node/34506](http://www.fairobserver.com/node/34506)).



**Fiona Adamson** published “Mechanisms of Diaspora Mobilization and the Transnationalization of Civil War” in Jeffrey T. Checkel, ed. *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War* (Cambridge University Press).

Doctoral Student **Marwa Mamdouh Salem's** book *Israel and Africa* has been published in Cairo.



Doctoral student **Hagar Taha** has published a review of Brendan Simms and D. J. Trim's edited book *Humanitarian Intervention: for The Round Table*. The review can be viewed here:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00358533.2012.707518>

**Charles Tripp's** "The Art of Resistance in the Middle East" was published in *Asian Affairs* 43(3).

In November the paperback version of **Dafydd Fell's** *Party Politics in Taiwan* (Routledge) was published. The original hardback came out in 2005.



**Arshin Adib-Moghaddam's** most recent research article, "Can the (sub)altern resist? A dialogue between Foucault and Said", was published in Ian Netton, (ed.), *Orientalism*

*Revisited: Art, land, voyage* (Routledge). His article "What is radicalism: Power and resistance in Iran", was republished in George Joffe (ed.), *Islamist Radicalisation in Europe and the Middle East: Reassessing the causes of terrorism* (I. B. Tauris).

**Silvia Ferraboli's** "The League of Arab States and the international projection of an Arab collective identity" has been published in *Século XXI*. The journal is a publication of the International Relations course and the Centre for Study and Research in International Affairs (NEPRI) of ESPM South. <http://sumario-periodicos.espm.br/index.php/seculo21>

Carlo Bonura published "Theorizing Elsewhere: Comparison and Topological Reasoning in Political Theory" in the journal *Polity* 45(1).

Doctoral candidate **Marco Jowell** has written an assessment of LRA trends and activities across affected areas in 2012. <http://www.c-r.org/comment/lra-conflict-security-trends-2012-marco-jowell>

Two of **Rochana Bajpai's** writings were selected for republication: "The Conceptual Vocabularies of Secularism and Minority Rights in India" (*Journal of Political Ideologies* 7 (2)), challenges the influential contrast between a Western model of secularism, identified with separation of state and religion, and an Indian model of secularism, based on equal respect for all religions. Her "Beyond Identity? UPA rhetoric on social justice and affirmative action" (in Lawrence Saez and Gurharpal Singh, (eds.), *New Dimensions of Politics in India: The United Progressive Alliance in Power* (Routledge)) shows that affirmative action policies in India for religious minorities, notably Muslims have expanded under the current government, but through executive action rather than legislation.



## Research Centres, Clusters, & Networks

Since October, **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** has chaired the Centre for Iranian Studies at SOAS which was established in 2010. The Centre draws on the range of academic research and teaching across the disciplines of SOAS, including Languages and Literature, the Study of Religions, History, Economics, Politics, International Relations, Music, Art and Media and Film Studies. Thanks to the generosity of the Fereydoun Djam Charitable Trust, a number of Kamran Djam scholarships are available for BA, MA and MPhil/PhD studies. The Centre for Iranian Studies Chair **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** welcomed the "unique and generous" opportunity that the scholarships provide. The Kamran Djam scholarships are a part of a decisive push for Iranian Studies at SOAS facilitated by the Centre for Iranian Studies at the London Middle East Institute (LMEI). For further details, please see [www.soas.ac.uk/scholarships](http://www.soas.ac.uk/scholarships)

The **Centre for the International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice** hosted public lectures by Professor Daniel Philpott, Notre Dame University, on “Reconciliation in Politics? On the Meaning of Justice in the Wake of Massive Injustice.”

Since the last newsletter, **Dafydd Fell** and **Monique Chu** organized the following **Centre of Taiwan Studies** Seminars:

Makio Yamada (Oxford University), *Taiwan and the Middle East: Cross-Strait Relations, Energy Security and Globalisation* (21 November);

Prof. Ian Inkster (Nottingham Trent University), *High Tech Europe and the Formosan Civilization Wars circa 1860-1900. A Study in Global Connectivity* (28 November);

**Dr. Fan Yun** (SOAS & National Taiwan University), *Solidarity and Division on the Road of Rebuilding Communities: A Preliminary Study of Indigenous Self-organizations after the Disaster* (12 December);

Huang Chi-lun (Newcastle), *Environmental Justice and Public Participation: A Case Study of Nuclear Waste Management and Policy in Taiwan* (23 November);

and **Dr. Monique Chu** (SOAS), Dr. Ming-yeh Rawsley & Prof. Gary Rawsley (Leeds), **Dr Fan Yun** (SOAS)--moderated by Victor Chan of BBC Chinese Service, *Concentration of media ownership and the threat to democracy in Taiwan* (30 November).



### Appointments, Awards, Honours

Many congratulations to **Hanan Toukan** and **Sophia Hoffmann** who have received the 2012 awards for best doctoral thesis from the Middle East Studies Association and Syria Studies Association respectively. The awards are hugely prestigious and will facilitate the publication of both their excellent research theses by academic presses. Well done to Hanan and Sophia.

Congratulations to **Silvia Ferraboli**, **Alexej Ulbricht**, **Benedetta de Alessi**, **Zaad Mahmood**, and **Mark Sedra** all of whom have passed their doctoral vivas. **Zaad** has recently joined Presidency University in Kolkata as an Assistant Professor in the department of Political Science. **Mark** is a research scholar in the department of political science at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada where he is also senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

In January, **Phil Clark**, along with Dr. Nadine Ansorg from the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), introduced the new “Institutions for Sustainable Peace” research consortium during a series of meetings at SOAS. The consortium, comprising ten universities from Europe, North America and Australia, received a three-year €700,000 grant from the Leibniz Association to

coordinate research, events, publications and academic exchanges. These activities include opportunities for SOAS staff and PhD students to visit GIGA in Hamburg for up to three months to present research and build academic collaborations: [http://www.giga-hamburg.de/english/index.php?file=fp\\_sustainable\\_peace.html&folder=rp2/fp\\_institutions\\_sustainable\\_peace](http://www.giga-hamburg.de/english/index.php?file=fp_sustainable_peace.html&folder=rp2/fp_institutions_sustainable_peace)

**Matt Nelson** was elected for a three-year term to represent individual/non-institutional members of the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) Board of Trustees.

**Fiona Adamson** was elected to the Governing Council of the International Security Studies Section (ISSS) of the International Studies Association (ISA).

Many congratulations to former doctoral student **Dan Neep** who has accepted a tenure-track assistant professorship at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University in Washington DC. Also congratulations to **Corinna Mullin**, a former ESRC post-doc and lecturer in politics of the Middle East in the department, who has been appointed to the post of assistant visiting professor in international relations at the University of Tunis.

Professor **Stephen Chan** has been appointed Visiting Professor at the Open University of Zambia for the second term of the 2012-13 academic year, where he is conducting research on presidentialism in Southern Africa.

MPhil student **Jeremy Taylor** travelled to Juba, South Sudan from January 21 – 31 as a winner of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) prize for postgraduate students to conduct concentrated fieldwork in a sub-Saharan African country where JICA operates.

Congratulations to doctoral student **Igor Rogelja** who was awarded \$500 (SGD) for his paper “Creative Kaohsiung” presented at the annual conference for the Consortium of Asian and African Studies in Singapore (January 28-30).



### Presentations and Conferences

On 17 January, visiting Research Professor **Jack L. Snyder** presented a seminar on the “Politics of Religious Mass Movements for Human Rights.”

In December, **Charles Tripp** gave a seminar to the Faculty of Law, Governance and International Relations at London Metropolitan University on “Performing the Public: theatres of power in the Middle East.” Also, in December, Professor **Tripp** took part in a public conversation at SOAS, chaired by Dr Dina Matar, with Dr Lina Khatib about her new book *Image Politics in the Middle East*.

**Matt Nelson** delivered lectures at Nuffield College (Oxford) and the Centre for Pakistan Studies (SOAS)

regarding the comparative conceptualisation of democracy in Western and non-Western contexts.

**Matt Nelson** spoke at an academic/policy forum focused on “freedom of religion and belief” at the European University Institute in Florence. He examined freedom of conscience within constitutional contexts framed by religious establishment.

On November 14th, doctoral student **Indrè Balčaitė**, now on fieldwork in Thailand, participated in the annual symposium *Border Regions in Transition XII* that took place in Fukuoka, Japan, and Busan, South Korea. Based on the first part of her fieldwork, **Indrè** presented a paper on the perceptions of the Thai-Burmese border by the inhabitants of Mae Sot, Thailand.

**Rahul Rao** presented preliminary findings from his research on queer dimensions of the memorialisation of the Uganda martyrs at a seminar hosted by the SOAS Centre for Gender Studies. The seminar can be viewed here: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/genderstudies/seminar-series/22nov2012-re-membering-mwanga-queer-memory-and-belonging-in-postcolonial-uganda.html>

In November, **Phil Clark** was a discussant at the launch of *Reimagining Child Soldiers in International Law and Policy* (Oxford University Press), the latest monograph by Professor Mark Drumbl, Washington and Lee University. **Lewis Brooks**, an MSc student in African Politics, wrote the following response to the event: <http://thinkafricapress.com/legal/reimagining-child-soldiers-international-law-mark-drumbl>. **Phil** also spoke at a Royal African Society event on “Rwanda, Congo and the M23”, which examined the origins and impact of the M23 rebellion in eastern Congo and attracted an audience of 250 people.

In December, **Phil Clark** gave a presentation on international justice in central Africa at the LSE conference, “Ten Years On: Sierra Leone's Post-Conflict Transition”. The event included presentations by Geoffrey Robertson QC and Brenda Hollis, the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In January, **Phil** participated in a roundtable on transitional justice theory and methods, hosted by the Oxford Transitional Justice Research Network.

In November **Silvia Ferabolli** gave a lecture at the University of Brighton on the uneasy relationship between Arab regionalism and International Relations.

Doctoral students **Igor Rogelja**, **Margarita Dimova** and **Lucas Robinson** presented their research at the annual conference for the Consortium of Asian and African Studies in Singapore (January 28-30). The conference was focused on the theme of “sustainable cities” and brought together academics from a wide variety of fields.

**Leslie Vinjamuri** convened several meetings of the International Relations Speaker Series which hosted public lectures by Professor David Luban, Georgetown University on “Drones, Morality, and International Law”, Professor Tanisha Fazal, Columbia University on “Secessionism and Civilian Targeting”, Professor Lisa

Hajjar (chaired by **Laleh Khalili**) on “Lawfare and Targeted Killing”, and Professor Tom Weiss (chaired by **Stephen Hopgood**) on “The Responsibility to Protect.”

**Leslie Vinjamuri** and **Stephen Hopgood** participated in a conference on “Humanitarianism in an Age of Globalization” that took place in Malaysia. The conference included NGOs and academics from Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom. They presented a paper on the politics of human rights in a more diversified and globalized humanitarianism sector. Workshop participants then travelled to Burma to meet with humanitarian NGOs, local UN staff, and civil society actors. The field trip was organized by Mercy Malaysia.

### Remaining Politics Department Seminars for Term 2 Wednesdays 3-5 in room 4418

February 6

**Vron Ware** (Open University), Postcoloniality and Sexuality in the Politics of Military Service and Citizenship

February 20

**Paavo Kotiaho** (University of Helsinki), Doing and Being Done by Law: Notes Towards a Materialist Account of the History of International Human Rights Law

March 6

**Lara Coleman** (Sussex), Human Rights, Corporate Responsibility and the Domestication of Dissent

March 13

**Peter Katzenstein** (Cornell), Lost in Translation? Non-State Actors and the Transnational Movement of Procedural Law

March 20

**Kamran Matin** (Sussex), The Alchemist of the Revolution: The International Dimension of Ali Shariati's Political Thought

**Rochana Bajpai** gave a talk on approaches to the study of political ideas, and the significance of liberal ideas in India at a workshop to discuss the implications arising from Sir Christopher A. Bayly's recently published book *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire* organized by the King's India Institute on 30 November

2012. Other speakers in the workshop included Professor John Dunn (Cambridge), Professor Christopher A Bayly (Cambridge), Professor Javed Majeed (King's College), and Dr Faisal Devji (Oxford). **Rochana** also gave a talk at an international workshop in Bergen on 6-7 November on caste, religion and region in India's constitutional state based on her recent book, *Debating Difference: Group Rights and Liberal Democracy in India* (OUP 2011, reprinted 2012).

**Laleh Khalili** and Lisa Hajjar (University of California, Santa Barbara) held a book launch for **Khalili's** *Time in the Shadows* and Hajjar's *Torture* on 16 January. The event was titled "Torture, Drones and Detention: The Vagaries of Liberal Warfare" and the podcast for it can be found at <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9600/torture-drones-and-detention-a-conversation-between>



In early January, doctoral student **Sara Marzagora** presented on Ethiopian historiography and the conceptualisation of the country's "internal" and "external" boundaries, and **Hugh Lamarque** presented on the securitisation of borders in the Great Lakes Region, at a PhD winter-school conference in St. Louis, Senegal, run by the African Borderlands Research Network (<http://www.aborne.org/>) at the University of Oxford.

In November, **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam** gave a talk on "Truth and Power in International Relations" at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) upon invitation of the University of Hamburg.

On 24 November, **Tat Yan Kong** gave a talk entitled "China and North Korea: New Regimes, New Relations?" at the LSE Korean Economic and Political Forum

On 10 December, **Tat Yan Kong** gave a lecture entitled "China: From Socialist to Capitalist Developmental State?" at the Chair (Department) of East Asian Economy and Society (ECOS), University of Vienna.

In December, **Felix Berenskoetter** was invited to present a paper titled "Deep Theory in International Relations: let's talk about conditions" at LSE's International Theory workshop. The paper and the ensuing discussion dealt with the meaning of theory and the argument that substantial theorizing is grounded in an exploration of human situatedness in space, time and social relations.

On 14 December, **Enze Han** gave a talk on "Dynamics of Political Resistance in Tibet: Religious Repression and

Controversies of Demographic Change" at Tsinghua University in China.

In December, **Shirin Shafaie** was invited by the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Finland, to give a public lecture on "New Popular Oral Histories and War Stories in Iran" and a seminar on "Politics of War Memories and Narratives in Iran". While there, she also organised the screening of an Iranian war documentary by Habib Ahmadzadeh, "The Statute", followed by an analysis and discussion of the documentary.

At the beginning of December, **Manjeet Ramgotra** presented a paper on the conservative roots of republicanism at the Concepta Research Training Workshop on the "Concepts of the Republic: Local, Regional and International" hosted by the European University in St. Petersburg, Russia.

On 2 December, doctoral student **Priya Kumar** presented "Diaspora in the Digital Age: A Mixed Methods Approach" as part of the series Research Methods and Migration Studies: Talking Across Disciplines, London Migration Research Group (LMRG).

On 13 December, **Priya Kumar** presented her paper, "Transnational Tamil networks: Mapping engagement opportunities on the Web", at the British Academy. She was speaking on behalf of the e-Diasporas Atlas Project.

In December, **Salwa Ismail** presented a paper titled "Popular Cairo and the Revolution" at *City Crossings: Claiming the Past, Remaking the Present in Beirut, Cairo and Istanbul*, organised by Bogazici University and Sabanci University, Istanbul.



## Current Research

**Dafydd Fell** went to Taiwan for fieldwork in December 2012. This project involved interviews and focus group sessions with activists and candidates from the Taiwan Green Party. This is a collaborative research project between Dr **Fell** and Professor Peng Yen-wen that aims to analyse the past electoral record of the Green Party and propose strategies for improving its future electoral performance.

In January 2013, **Rochana Bajpai** conducted field-work in India for her new project on political representation, including interviews in Delhi with Indian parliamentarians and government ministers.

**Laleh Khalili** has continued her research on "politics of pleasure" through the autumn in short trips to Beirut, where has been interviewing old stalwarts of the Lebanese left on the development of convivial spaces in Beirut since the 1960s.



## Outreach

**Matt Nelson** provided evidence for a parliamentary select committee (International Development) regarding the shape of DFID's significantly increased investment in Pakistan.

In November, **Phil Clark's** written submission to the UK Parliamentary select committee on international development generated two questions by MPs to the Secretary of State for International Development, Justine Greening, about UK aid to Rwanda:

<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=11772> (10:11:37 and 10:33:30)

In December, **Phil Clark** was quoted in the UK Parliamentary select committee on international development's final report on aid to Rwanda: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmintdev/726/72605.htm#a4>

**Leslie Vinjamuri** attended the annual Munich Security Conference. She also participated in a day closed meeting at Chatham House on U.S. Foreign Policy after the elections.

In December, **Charles Tripp** gave a talk to the Saudi-British Society on "Art and Power: the Arab uprisings and the challenge to authority" in which he spoke about the incendiary pieces that different regimes in the region remove from the public sphere. He gave as example two works removed from *Art Dubai 2012* at the insistence of the UAE authorities:



'After Washing' Shadi al-Zaqzouq (2012) and



'You were my only love' by Zakaria Ramhany (2012)

In November, doctoral student **Shirin Shafaie** gave a talk on "Post-1979 history, politics and culture in Iran in relation to the Iran-Iraq War" on an all- Iranian-women panel on *Art, History and Politics in Iran from Ancient Times to Modern Days* at the Nour Festival:

<http://www.nourfestival.co.uk/resources/Nour-2012-Programme.pdf>

In January, **Shirin Shafaie** gave a talk and led the workshop on "Nuclear Proliferation and Non-Proliferation: A Comparative Study of Iran, Israel, UAE and the UK" at the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) Annual Conference and General Meeting.

In January, doctoral student **Johann Chacko** facilitated a dialogue on "Ethnic relations, Militancy and Sectarianism in Pakistan" between PhD researchers at SOAS and a group of researchers and policy-makers at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Doctoral students **Sanaa Alimia** and **Najia Mukhtar** discussed their research, alongside **Johann**. An ongoing series of seminars is scheduled in collaboration with the King's College Afghanistan and India research groups and the FCO.



## Media and Blogs

**Laleh Khalili** was quoted by CNN in <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/30/world/meast/egypt-unrest-explainer/index.html?iref=obinsite>. She also appeared on the BBC's Weekend programme at the beginning of December.

**Laleh Khalili** conducted an interview with *Jadaliyya* on her new book, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies*: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/8951/new-texts-out-now-laleh-khalili-time-in-the-shadow>

**Enze Han** was interviewed by BBC, CNN, Sky News, and several other news outlets on China's leadership transition in November 2012. Dr. **Han** also contributes regularly to Asian News analysis at Monocle Radio 24.

**Arshin Adib-Moghaddam's** commentary and interviews on world politics appeared in several languages including in Danish (*Dagbladet Information*), Persian (*Mebr News Agency*), Norwegian (*Klassekampen*), Russian (*Penza News*) and English (*Global Politics*). In addition, **Adib-Moghaddam** was interviewed for feature length news stories by *News.Az* in Baku (<http://www.news.az/articles/politics/72019>) and *Iran Review* in Tehran. In the latter he confessed that he would happily die a dreamer... (<http://www.iranreview.org/content/Documents/If-world-Peace-is-an-Idealistic-Dream-I-Would-Happily-Die-a-Dreamer.htm>). It was republished as "An Interview with **Arshin Adib-Moghaddam**" by the *Fair Observer* in London (<http://www.fairobserver.com/article/interview-arshin-adib-moghaddam>).

Between November and February, **Phil Clark** coordinated a radio programme exploring personal stories of post-atrocity forgiveness and reconciliation in Rwanda and northern Uganda. The programme is part of a 2-year research project funded by the Fetzer Institute, a US-based non-profit organisation. The English version of the radio programme is currently being considered by the BBC World Service, while Radio Rwanda and Mega FM in Uganda will broadcast it in Kinyarwanda and Acholi, respectively, later this year.

In November, the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria posted a podcast summary of Phil Clark's presentation on current responses to conflict in eastern Congo:

[http://www.issafrica.org/clips/2012/Seminar\\_6\\_Nov\\_PS\\_Great\\_Lakes.mp3](http://www.issafrica.org/clips/2012/Seminar_6_Nov_PS_Great_Lakes.mp3)

In November, a report co-authored by **Phil Clark** and Nicola Palmer (King's College London) on witness protection during genocide trials in Rwanda was quoted extensively by News of Rwanda and The New Times in Kigali:

<http://newsorwanda.com/irembo/14929/witness-protection-program-forced-rwanda-ineffective-report/> and

<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15181&a=60829>

In November, **Phil Clark** appeared on the BBC World Service "Weekend" programme to discuss, among other issues, violence in Congo, the Sierra Leone and US elections and Israel's attacks on Gaza:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010c45b> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010c45d>

In November, **Phil Clark** was interviewed by Radio Netherlands Worldwide on whether international policymakers should fund domestic courts in Africa rather than the International Criminal Court:

<http://www.rnw.nl/africa/radioshow/radio-show-iccs-tenth-birthday-a-happy-one> (7:07)

In November, **Phil Clark** was interviewed by FM4 in Austria and the BBC "World Have Your Say" programme on the current violence in eastern Congo and quoted at length in The New Times in Rwanda in an article entitled, "Congo: Top UK Researcher Casts Doubt Over UN Report": <http://fm4.orf.at/stories/1708344/> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010pd6h> and <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15189&a=61143>

In December, Phil Clark was interviewed by BBC World News, Sky News, Voice of Russia and Radio France International about the UK's decision to withdraw aid to Rwanda: [http://ruvr.co.uk/2012\\_11\\_30/UK-suspends-Rwanda-aid-Congo-rebel/](http://ruvr.co.uk/2012_11_30/UK-suspends-Rwanda-aid-Congo-rebel/) and <http://tinyurl.com/d3wqkjc>

In December, several reaction pieces in the New Times in Rwanda quoted **Phil Clark** on the UK's aid withdrawal: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201211270159.html> and <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15193&a=61316> and <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15195&a=61363> and <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15195&a>

[=61363](http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15195&a=61363) and

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201212310263.html>

In December, **Phil Clark** was interviewed by Radio Netherlands Worldwide on the impact of the International Criminal Court on the upcoming Kenyan elections:

<http://www.rnw.nl/africa/radioshow/radio-show-kenyas-most-controversial-candidates>

In December, **Phil Clark** took part in a 30-minute Australian Broadcasting Corporation programme on the historical context to the current Congo conflict:

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvision/conflict-in-the-democratic-republic-of-congo/4398944#transcript>

In January, **Phil Clark** was quoted by UN/OCHA's IRIN News on the challenges an under-funded International Criminal Court is facing in Africa:

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97359/Analysis-Cash-strapped-ICC-takes-on-Mali>

In January, **Phil Clark** published an op-ed in the *Huffington Post* entitled, "Why the Congo Experts Need More Scrutiny": [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dr-phil-clark/congo-experts-need-more-scrutiny\\_b\\_2391470.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dr-phil-clark/congo-experts-need-more-scrutiny_b_2391470.html)

The article was reprinted in the Sunday Monitor newspaper in Uganda and discussed on the LA Progressive website:

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/Insight/Why-the-DRC-experts-need-more-scrutiny/-/688338/1657974/-/format/xhtml/-/dfd0x3z/-/index.html> and

<http://www.laprogressive.com/obama-administration-silences-congo-rebels/>

In January, the Cambridge University Press "African Branch" website published a short essay by Phil Clark to mark the publication of a special Africa edition of his monograph on the gacaca community courts in Rwanda: <http://academics.cup.co.za/?m=1&idkey=599>

Excerpts from MSc student **Abul-Hasanat Siddique's** new book can be found at Fair Observer, where he is also co-managing editor/Middle East editor:

1: [www.fairobserver.com/article/rise-islamists](http://www.fairobserver.com/article/rise-islamists)

2: [www.fairobserver.com/article/qatars-riches-regional-power-balance](http://www.fairobserver.com/article/qatars-riches-regional-power-balance)

3: [www.fairobserver.com/article/after-arab-uprisings](http://www.fairobserver.com/article/after-arab-uprisings)

4: [www.fairobserver.com/article/united-states-and-arab-uprisings](http://www.fairobserver.com/article/united-states-and-arab-uprisings)

Doctoral student **Eddie Walsh** published an *Al Jazeera English* op-ed on the negative side effects of wildlife conservation groups securitizing poaching enforcement in Africa: "WWF Drones Raise Serious Questions for International Security." He also wrote an assessment of the recent Google executive visit to Pyongyang for the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). It was later rerun by the East Asia Forum under the title "Google in North Korea: The More Things Change, The More They Stay the Same."

**Eddie Walsh** also published an *Al Jazeera English* op-ed on social verification technologies titled "Instagram Arms Control: WMD prevention versus Internet Freedom."

Doctoral student **Mohammad Ali Shabani** wrote an op-ed in the *New York Times* on “How to Talk to Iran” ([http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/04/opinion/how-to-talk-to-iran.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/04/opinion/how-to-talk-to-iran.html?_r=0)), and was interviewed by Christiane Amanpour on CNN in January (<http://amanpour.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/07/israeli-diplomat-attacks-on-hagel-are-vile-vicious-ugly-and-unfounded/>).

**Mohammad Ali Shabani** also published a commentary on the Iranian nuclear talks and the effects of the sanctions on Iran which appeared in Al-Monitor (<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/contents/authors/mohammad-ali-shabani.html>). He has also written about the possibility (or absence thereof) of nuclear talks between Iran and P5+1 before Iranian elections: <http://www.lobelog.com/low-chance-for-nuclear-deal-before-irans-2013-presidential-election/>

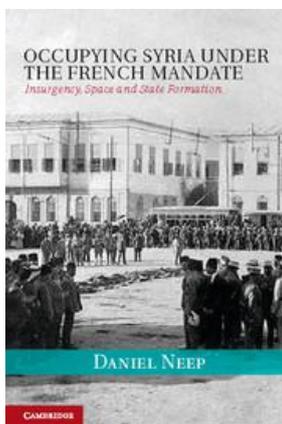
**Leslie Vinjamuri** contributed to *The Immanent Frame*, a blog of the Social Science Research Council. Her piece, “Recasting an Agenda for Peace” reviews Daniel Philpott’s book, *Just and Unjust Peace*. **Leslie** also contributed a piece, “Is the International Criminal Court Following the Flag in Mali?” to the blog *Political Violence @ a Glance*.

On 19 January, **Salwa Ismail** was an invited panelist on BBC World Today Weekend.



## Events

Former doctoral student **Dan Neep** held a book launch at SOAS on 11 December for his newly published *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate: Insurgency, Space and State Formation* which was based on his doctoral thesis, completed at SOAS under the supervision of Professor **Charles Tripp**.



On Wednesday 16 January, **Dafydd Fell** hosted a special workshop for undergraduate and postgraduate students taking Taiwan related politics courses. This featured a

Q&A session with the former student movement leader and sociologist Dr **Fan Yun**.



## Notices

### Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship at SOAS Department of Politics and International Studies

The Department of Politics and International Studies at SOAS, University of London, is accepting applications from candidates for a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship. Innovative and theoretically-grounded projects in the Politics of Asia, Africa and/or the Middle East; International Relations Theory and Global Politics; Conflict, Rights and Justice; Comparative Political Thought; Energy Security; Migration and Diaspora Politics and other relevant research areas are welcome. Information on the Department and its staff can be found here: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/politics/>. For further information on the Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship Programme, including eligibility, please see: <http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/ecf/ecf.cfm>

Expressions of interest should be sent by e-mail to Dr Laleh Khalili ([lk4@soas.ac.uk](mailto:lk4@soas.ac.uk)) by 5pm Friday, February 15th, and should include the following:

1. Cover Letter
2. 1500 word research proposal, outlining the project that will be undertaken during the Fellowship appointment
3. Curriculum vitae
4. Names of two academic references

Successful candidates after the first round will be notified the week of February 18th, and will be expected to work closely with the Department and the SOAS Research Office to prepare a final application for submission to the second round of selections by March 7th.

### MSc in Comparative Political Thought

Duration: Full Time: 1 Year, Part Time: 2-3 Years

The programme is designed for graduate students who wish to learn about the diverse strands of political thinking in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and the different approaches to comparison in political thought. It is highly relevant to students who wish to embark on doctoral

studies in the area of non-Western political thought. It is also relevant for practitioners working in or intending to work in governments, international organizations, think tanks and advocacy groups who wish to acquire deeper knowledge of ideas and values that inform political practices in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

For more information, including on how to apply, see <http://www.soas.ac.uk/politics/programmes/msc-comparative-political-thought/>

### MRes in Politics with Language

Duration: Two calendar years (full-time).

The MRes Politics with Language is a two-year degree programme designed to prepare students for further research, particularly PhD research, in politics with an area specialism. It allows students to combine the study of politics with advanced methodological training in the social sciences and extensive study in an African/Asian/Middle Eastern language. As such, the programme provides two years of intensive language study at SOAS (e.g. Arabic, Chinese, Swahili, etc.) along 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 more information, including on how to apply, see <http://www.soas.ac.uk/politics/programmes/mrespolitics>

### MSc Politics of Conflict, Rights & Justice

Duration: Full Time: 1 Year, Part Time: 2-3 Years

The programme is designed for Masters students who are interested in the politics of human rights, humanitarianism and international and transitional justice especially in conflict and post-conflict states. It is also highly relevant to anyone working or intending to work in international NGOs, international organizations, think tanks and advocacy groups in the areas of rights, humanitarian assistance and transitional justice. It also looks more broadly at the future of global human rights in a world where, many claim, the influence of the West is declining and asks critical questions about the legitimacy and effectiveness of transitional justice mechanisms and humanitarian intervention.

For more information, including on how to apply, see <http://www.soas.ac.uk/politics/programmes/msc-conflict-rights-justice/>



## Observing Elections in Somaliland

Doctoral student **Anna Rader** was an international election observer to the Somaliland local council elections on 28 November 2012. She writes:

Designed to appoint municipal representatives, the Somaliland elections in November 2012 were significant in that they nominated the three national parties able to contest the presidential and parliamentary polls for the next ten years. A new open party list system led, in some cases, to hundreds of names on the ballot paper – a challenging prospect for a voting population with high levels of illiteracy and unfamiliarity with the process. At the final count, 2,368 candidates contested 379 positions across Somaliland's six regions.



I was based in central Somaliland, observing rural polling stations and regional tabulation centres, one of 50 observers from 17 countries deployed to sites across Somaliland. For observers and polling staff alike, election day was protracted and tiring, beginning before sunrise and continuing for as long as 24 hours, since the initial counting of ballots was to be done immediately following the closure of polling stations. The polling station staff showed admirable and sterling commitment to the task at hand, working without a break or food for hours at a time, and doing their best in the face of sometimes blatant attempts at underage and multiple voting. The lack of a voter register made it difficult to assess voters' eligibility; the weak adhesiveness of the indelible ink also made it easier to vote again. Some voters used creative means to scrub off the ink – observers noted the use of bleach, petrol and window cleaner – which mirrored the inventive ways polling station staff addressed challenges like the lack of electric light. Domestic election observers also displayed innovation, filing reports during the day via SMS.

The international mission organised by Progressio, UCL's Development Planning Unit and Somaliland Focus UK is yet to release its final report, but in general, the elections were considered to be largely peaceful and transparent, offering an updated benchmark with which to assess Somaliland's democratization.



## News From Alumni

**Omar El-Khairy**, who received his BA in Politics from SOAS in 2005, went on to an MA in Migration and Diaspora studies at SOAS and has just been awarded his doctorate from the LSE, began writing plays while still an undergraduate at SOAS. His newest play, *Sour Lips* is showing at the Ovalhouse Theatre 29 Jan - 16 February (<http://www.ovalhouse.com/whatson/detail/sour-lips1>).



*Sour Lips* follows the story of Amina Arraf and the events fomented by the media's coverage of her kidnapping. The truth being that Amina never actually existed. Or she did at the fingertips of a middle aged American postgraduate student in Edinburgh, Tom MacMaster. The play examines the contentious link between the magic of fiction and docu-dramatic performance. **Omar's** play explores the extraordinary tale of Amina Arraf and the viral hoax that fooled bloggers, activists, journalists and even the US State Department. Set against the backdrop of the Arab Uprisings and the on-going Syrian crisis, this multi-lingual piece fuses fantasy, non-fiction and dynamic action, to create its own speculative account of events.



### **Rahul Rao** reviews the play:

Anyone who followed the controversy over the fictitious 'Gay Girl in Damascus' blog, created by Scotland-based US graduate student Tom McMaster writing as Amina Arraf, might have despaired of the prospects of subalterns speaking for themselves.

In an era when sexual rights have quite literally become sexy again, Amina seemed the perfect embodiment of left liberal fantasies about the possibilities for intersectional politics. Female, lesbian, Arab and an anti-Assad protester, McMaster's Amina quickly became a posterchild of the Arab Spring for a wide swath of the liberal media and activist blogosphere. **Omar El-Khairy's** *Sour Lips* deftly weaves together the impulses of benevolence, ventriloquism and viral endorsement that are the principal lineaments of this troubling story.

**El-Khairy's** McMaster (played by Simon Darwen) is a complex figure, driven by a desire to counter Orientalist stereotypes of Arabs, a need to occupy the positionality of the native so as to be taken seriously in the online communities in which he seems to spend most of his life, and a more prosaic hunger for fame, book deals and

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:

**Fiona Adamson**, fa33@soas.ac.uk

Senior Tutor & Director of Student Welfare

**Rochana Bajpai**

#### **Undergraduate Tutors:**

UG Tutor – Steve Hopgood

Deputy UG Tutor – Yan Kong

UG Admissions Tutor – Bhavna Dave

Year 1 Tutor – Rahul Rao

Year 2 Tutor – Tom Young

Year 3 Tutor – Arshin Adib-Moghaddam

UG 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 – Enze Han

International Politics – Mark Laffey

Middle East Politics – Charles Tripp

Politics of China – Dafydd Fell

State, Society and Development – Yan Kong

(Term 1) and Julia Strauss (Terms 2/3)

PGT Exams Board Chair – Lawrence Saez

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

Research Tutor – Matthew Nelson

MPhil Research Methods Course Convenor – Felix

Berenskoetter

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

Department of Politics is on twitter; please follow @soaspolitics

On Facebook, you can find and befriend us at SOASPolitics

Also find our blog at soaspolitics.org

everything else a PhD candidate might want. Unlike the ‘real’ Arraf, Amina in the play (Lara Sawalha) is not an empty signifier—a vessel into which the liberal media and activist hordes pour their desires for intersectional harmony—but an active subject, arguing with Tom and troubling his authorial sovereignty. The violent eroticism of their interaction seems to dramatise the inner conflict that one supposes McMaster experienced in the course of perpetrating his extraordinary fraud on a global scale, but perhaps more fundamentally the always fraught relationship between author and character.



Perhaps most compelling and discomfiting about the staging of *Sour Lips* is the three-member chorus (Takunda “TK” Kramer, Celine Rosa Tan, Eden Vik) whose herd-like, frenzied canonisation of Arraf and equally frenzied demonization of McMaster—‘share to Twitter, share to Facebook, share to Google plus’—are the motor driving the plot. Who were these people in real life? The sorts who would trek to a fringe theatre in south London to watch plays about the Arab Spring. If this is what civil society looks like, it’s enough to make you shudder.

*Sour Lips* is showing at the Ovalhouse Theatre 29 Jan - 16 February  
<http://www.ovalhouse.com/whatson/detail/sour-lips1>.