

2015

# INSPIRES

The Magazine for Oxford Politics and International Relations Alumni



DPIR

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS &  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Welcome to the fifth edition of *Inspires*, the alumni magazine of the Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR). We hope you enjoy reading it and will share with us your comments and suggestions for future content.

We again offer a selection of articles covering a range of DPIR's research activity, which we are sure will be of interest to our alumni. We are also delighted to bring you accounts of three alumni who completed an MPhil in International Relations, one of the four two-year MPhil courses currently offered in DPIR. Elsewhere, we focus on two of our current doctoral students whose research is being funded by Oxford Graduate Scholarships, a highly competitive scheme which rewards academic merit across the University.

It has been another busy year for DPIR's alumni programme and we enjoyed meeting many of you at our 'Political Economy' alumni event last November. If you were unable to make the session, please find the podcast of the proceedings online. We are again looking forward to welcoming you into the department at our next alumni event 'International Security: scholarship and practice' to be held in November 2015 – please find details on the back cover of this magazine.

DPIR has recently launched its new website, with a modern look and improved functionality: [www.politics.ox.ac.uk](http://www.politics.ox.ac.uk). Our new alumni pages offer the opportunity for you to stay in touch with DPIR and other alumni; you are most welcome to post an online 'classnote', giving a summary of what you are doing nowadays, or to publish a more detailed profile. Please visit the site and fill in the online form to submit your contribution. If you have any feedback on this section of the site (or indeed any other), we would be delighted to hear from you: [alumni@politics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@politics.ox.ac.uk). We also encourage you to visit our new Knowledge Exchange pages, which give more information about our involvement in public debates and our collaborations beyond the confines of DPIR and the University.

We would welcome articles authored by alumni for *Inspires* 2016 so please contact us if you are interested in writing for us.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kate Candy and Stuart White



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## GET IN TOUCH

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**Elizabeth Frazer** looks back at her second year as Head of Department and reflects on the importance of excellence in research and teaching

Welcome to the 2015 edition of *Inspires*. We have had a busy year here, and I hope that the articles in this issue reflect some of the fascinating research which is being carried out across the department. In this issue, Stuart White writes on the UK's constitutional challenges following the independence referendum in Scotland, Desmond King examines racial tensions in the US, and Sudhir Hazareesingh discusses the decline of French intellectual hegemony. We also have Janina Dill on the role of international law in regulating war; and Gwendolyn Sasse is interviewed about her recent research, which includes analysis of the current situation in Ukraine.

We had cause for celebration back in December 2014 when the results of the Research Excellence Framework exercise were announced. This is the system, conducted by the UK higher education funding bodies, for assessing the quality of research. The Department of Politics and International Relations was ranked first for volume of top quality (4 star) research in the discipline in the UK, and also rated first for the impact of our research – that is a measure of how well the research we do here gets out into the 'real' world. In large part we have our alumni to thank for our success on that score – the strong relationships we have with you and with the organisations and networks of which you are a

part, are a significant asset to the department. So a 'thank you' is due to the readers of *Inspires*.

We are always working on new ways of showcasing our research. One aspect of this is the new department website, which includes a section for 'Knowledge Exchange' – giving information on how our research is being used, on our involvement in public debates and including some informative five-minute films highlighting particular aspects of our research. If you enjoy reading the articles in this magazine, I would certainly recommend seeing what the website has to offer. We would value your feedback. Likewise with our blog, *Politics in Spires*, which has recently been very busy with a series of articles under the heading *Decision 2015* on May's General Election and the fallout from that. Our headline series on the *Great Charter Convention* continues to be popular with a wide audience, as does our series on *Migration and Citizenship* which has drawn on expertise from across the University to address the difficult questions around immigration, rights and identity, and is certainly proving to be highly topical.

All this focus on our research highlights the importance to us of attracting the very best researchers – and the very best future researchers. One of our top priorities is the training of future generations of leaders and

thinkers, and giving them a top quality education in philosophy, statistics, scholarly research methods, as well as theoretical sophistication and empirical knowledge. This starts at the Masters and Doctoral level. A flourishing department is founded on the research carried out by its students, in dialogue with their teachers, and it is vitally important that we are able to attract the very best. As Claire and Benjamin, two of our current students who have benefitted from graduate scholarships describe within these pages, such scholarships change lives – and promise to change, and set the highest standards for, our field of study.

It was lovely to meet so many of you at our Alumni Event on 'Political Economy in Times of Crisis' back in November. If you were not able to attend then please do find the podcasts online. We are currently planning another alumni event to be held in the autumn – details can be found on the back cover of this magazine, and I certainly hope that this will provide an opportunity to meet many more of our brilliant alumni from across the world.

I very much hope that you enjoy reading this issue.

*Elizabeth Frazer  
Head of Department, DPIR,  
Associate Professor of Politics,  
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# America's racial inequalities after Obama



**Desmond King** examines how the racial divide has become more entrenched in post-Obama US and discusses how this might be addressed

The persistence of material racial inequality is a major research puzzle confronting scholars of US politics. 2014 powerfully reminded Americans of the salience and divisiveness of racial conflict and inequality.

Two periods of violent confrontation in August and November 2014 in Ferguson, a suburb of the American city of St Louis, Missouri, catapulted haunting pictures of urban America globally. First, an unarmed African American eighteen year old, Michael Brown, was fatally shot and second, a Grand Jury decided not to charge the white police officer Darren Wilson for the killing. Burning cars and looting against night skylines, and the images of white militarised police forces lined up against unarmed black protesters have disturbed images of a post-racial America basking in the glow of African American president Barack Obama in the White House. The scale of the protests – which have been copied in other cities such as San Francisco, LA, Chicago, Seattle, New York as well as hundreds of smaller cities – signal not the new-ness but the depth of America's racial crisis.

## Entrenched inequality

Like the 1992 Rodney King riots in Los Angeles, the Ferguson crisis is about police discrimination toward African Americans and a justice system which fails to mete out equitable treatment. Michael Brown's killing comes in the wake of many police shootings of unarmed black men and of persistent complaints about racial profiling of black men in America's cities whereby police officers disproportionately stop and question African Americans compared with the rate at which they challenge whites. But this alleged discrimination takes on much greater salience because of the legacies of injustice and continuing material racial inequality confronting African Americans in contemporary society. A Huffington Post/You Gov poll found that close to 80% of African American respondents placed the Brown shooting in a broader pattern of discrimination and racism compared to 40% of whites, who viewed it as an isolated incident.

Despite the passage of civil and voting rights laws in the 1960s, which gave equal rights to African American citizens, and the emergence of a black middle class, the United States remains a racially divided society. Housing and school segregation persists particularly in large urban areas but is also increasing in suburbs. Wealth and jobs prospects differ dramatically by race. Data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for August 2014 report an unemployment rate of 5.4% among whites but over twice that – 11.4% – for African Americans. This disparity has persisted for decades.

American society is self-segregated.<sup>1</sup> Over 90% of white Americans have no non-white friends and participate in no networks with non-whites. The figure is much smaller for African Americans who do have non-black friends and belong to non-black networks. Residential neighbourhoods are segregated. There are few all-white residential neighbourhoods in the United States but nonetheless the vast majority remain dominated by one race.

## The new racial division

With Rogers M. Smith (University of Pennsylvania), my research explains how American politics and policy debates about racial inequality fall into two opposing positions.<sup>2</sup>

*Color blind advocates:* Color blind advocates argue that with the passage of laws in the 1960s and the spread of equal rights there is no longer a need for special government policies to remedy historical injustices. They maintain that government policy should have no special measures for any racial groups. Signing legislation to establish a Martin Luther King Jr. memorial day, President Ronald Reagan approvingly cited King's instruction to judge 'people not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character'. This statement created an emphasis on character as the basis for achievement in America, purposely belittling the significance of structural barriers or historical legacies of segregation.

Color blind advocates oppose using quotas or affirmative action to advance material racial equality. They organise against the use of affirmative action in university admissions or in workplaces or in housing. They do not object to racial equality or equal rights of citizenship but do object to pursuing these goals collectively. It is an individualist philosophy. Ensuring the legal rights to equal opportunity should enable African Americans to succeed as much as any other American. They point to the election of President Obama and the growth of a professional black middle class as evidence that special government measures are unnecessary.

*Race conscious policy alliance.* Aligning against the conservative approach to material racial inequality are those reformers seeking to use government measures to address enduring material racial inequality. They argue that the persistence of such indicators of inequality as black-white differences in household wealth, unemployment levels, school and college graduate rates, high infant mortality rates, and involuntary housing and school segregation levels all point to the urgent need for government intervention. In the Supreme Court, Justice Sonia Sotomayor refers to the need for 'race sensitive' policies in such areas as university admissions, employment opportunities and schools if America is to make progress toward material racial equality. What the Ferguson protests point to is the additional discrimination experienced by African Americans when dealing with the criminal justice system and the police.

## Parties and race

This modern dichotomy between color blind and race conscious policy alliances maps onto the division between the political parties, Republicans and Democrats. The growth of this division coincides with the historically extreme ideological polarisation between the Republican and Democrat parties (and their supporters in the electorate) prevailing since the 1990s. President Obama received 95% of African American votes, two thirds of Hispanic and Asian American, while Republican candidate Mitt Romney got a majority of white votes in 2012.

Like a lot of reforms in Washington, policies to address racial inequality are victims of the extreme hatred between liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans which rather than abating under America's first African American presidency has deepened and become more poisonous.<sup>3</sup>

The color blind racial policy alliance dominates discussions about addressing material racial inequality. Whites and African Americans hold different opinions toward policies such as affirmative action. Color blind policies also prevail in key institutions such as the US Supreme Court, where the five justices appointed by Republicans regularly outvoted the four Democratic Party nominated members. This 5-4 division has resulted in judicial rulings weakening the Voting Rights Act, diluting the scope of affirmative action in employment and promotion procedures, and doubting the validity



“ One argument is for a reparations strategy...For reparations advocates, this is not charity but a means of honestly compensating African Americans for the ways in which white household wealth today only came about because of black exploitation ”

of arguments about how some policies have ‘disparate impact’ on African Americans. Supreme Court decisions relaxing requirements on schools to desegregate and integrate have resulted in re-segregation. In 2010, 74% of African American children attended a high school in which between 50 and 90% of the other pupils are black. This is an upward trend: in 1980 the percentage sank to 62% from the 1968 level of 77%. This trend does not alarm most white American whose children remain in predominantly white schools.

### Strategies for progress

The race conscious alliance challenges these trends. One argument is for a reparations strategy to compensate for how federal policy in such areas as housing and veterans’ benefits systematically benefitted whites at the price of depriving African Americans of comparable largesse. For reparations advocates, this is not charity but a means of honestly compensating African Americans for the ways in which white household wealth today only came about because of black exploitation.

Furthermore, the Great Recession (2008-09) has deepened material racial inequality. Because African Americans (and Hispanics) were targeted by sellers of subprime mortgages they have suffered worse consequences in foreclosures (losing their homes) and negative effects on household wealth. The National Urban League finds that unemployment rates for African American men still stand at double the white rate six years after the Recession hit. This discrepancy is higher than in 1972 indicating the scale of material racial inequality present in the United States. Amongst black college graduates aged between 22 and 27, 12.4% are unemployed compared with 5.6% of all college graduates in this age cohort. In 2012 medium white household income was \$57,009 while the figure for African American households was \$33,321.

But a comprehensive reform such as reparations or a return to the ambitious affirmative action and housing desegregation programmes of the 1965-75 decade is improbable. Majority white voter opinion stands against it and as Republicans now dominate a majority of state legislatures, governor offices and the US House and Senate, their capacity to resist such initiatives is immense. This means that the only sorts of reforms that can be adopted for improving material racial inequality are piecemeal and local ones such as the Mayor of New York City Bill de Blasio’s promises to build more integrated affordable housing and to limit police officers from disproportionately stopping and questioning African Americans without due cause.

Tragically it is exactly the inadequacy of such piecemeal reforms combined with an unwillingness to acknowledge the structural and historical barriers to material racial equality, expressed in segregated schools, neighbourhoods, labour markets and household wealth, combined with persistent instances of discrimination, that generated the violence fanned in Ferguson. But the death of Michael Brown has not disappeared from protest politics, and the outrage engendered by his killing may prove the basis of a sustained movement for radical reform to America’s wholly unequal racial order.

Desmond King  
Andrew W. Mellon Professor of American Government,  
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2. King, Desmond, and Smith, Rogers (2013), *Still a House Divided: Race and Politics in Obama’s America* (Princeton University Press).
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# The Janus faced Nature of WAR & LAW



Janina Dill asks whether warfare can ever be successfully regulated by international law

War is to International Relations what Colleges are to Oxford – numerous, ineluctable; we could not conceive of the latter without the former. Here the analogy ends, of course, and the orderly, predictable and seemingly unchanging life in Oxford could hardly differ more radically from the ‘life of states’ in International Relations.

International Relations, or so we teach our students, are conducted in anarchy. Sovereign states do not recognise a superior authority that

could adjudicate their behaviour and sanction actions that break the rules. Yes, there are rules for the conduct of International Relations. International law has over the last decades proliferated with ever more bi- and multilateral treaties entering into force. But if states, specifically powerful states, choose to defy international law, no international police force brings them back in line. The international institutions and laws that make up the international order attenuate anarchy, but do not displace it.

War is one of the most significant challenges to international order and a threat to important moral goals such as the protection of human life. Yet, because of the anarchical nature of international relations, war can also sometimes be the only means to protect that order or further those very goals. When persuasion and non-violent coercion fail, how can states stop a genocidal dictator, or reverse the aggression of one state against another? They resort to war, war which inevitably threatens

human life and whose impact on the international order is at best unpredictable. I call this the Janus faced nature of war in international relations. And the question I have been preoccupied with is whether international law can get us out of this dilemma. Can the subjection of military operations to regulation by international law ensure that war is in the end morally acceptable? If states wage war by law can we be sure that all things considered wars protect the international order and preserve human life rather than undermining and threatening them?

International law faces a significant challenge in the regulation of warfare. War is about killing people and breaking things. If it does not want to simply be ignored by states international law cannot make waging war impossible. Yet, it can hardly sanction states' killing and breaking as much as possible. The law's task is, if you will, to distribute the death and destruction that military operations inevitably cause in 'the right way'. What is the logic according to which a belligerent should accommodate the diverging demands of military and humanitarian imperatives?

International law seeks to render war as humane as militarily possible and as militarily expeditious as possible with a view to humanitarian concerns. From that aim of balancing diverging imperatives for action we can infer what violence international law permits. Humanitarianism means that law will allow no more violence than absolutely necessary. Military pragmatism dictates that it allows sufficient violence so that warfare remains possible. Modern international law thus permits killing sufficient persons and breaking sufficient things: sufficient for what? States often have complex political goals in war – war is not an end in itself. Take the example of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 which aimed to effect a regime change through the use of force. Here we need to take into account the second aim of international law in war.

War is prohibited under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. Most wars will be in violation of international law at least on one side, or in other words the political and moral reasons for why belligerents fight are often not legally valid. That means the legality of conduct in war needs to be determinable independently of those invalid reasons for going to war. International law accordingly does not acknowledge the political or moral goals of states in war. Instead it constructs the fiction of a purely military struggle, working with a concept of military victory that is valid across wars and belligerents, regardless of their different moral and political goals. I call this 'generic military victory'.

In the question of whom and what to target, international law hence addresses two commands to the belligerent. The first, which I call 'command of sequencing', is that while involved in hostilities belligerents have to bracket their overall goals and strive for generic military victory only. For a competition between enemy militaries that is sequenced in this way to proceed, it is sufficient to engage objects directly involved in it. The second command is that belligerents contain hostilities to objects directly causally related to the military struggle. I call this the 'command of containment'.

International law also prescribes what I call the 'logic of sufficiency'. It conceives of war as a struggle between militaries (sequenced from the pursuit of politics) and it contains the struggle to a set of persons whose engagement is necessary and sufficient for this kind of struggle to proceed. Those persons are combatants who have a legal right to directly participate in that struggle and civilians who directly participate in spite of not having that right.

Let us contrast the logic of the law now with a moral approach to killing in war. In a liberal society it is permissible to kill an individual only if they have forfeited their right to live



and through their own conduct have made themselves liable to defensive, potentially lethal harm. Where would we have to direct death and destruction in war if the goal were not to unjustifiably violate individuals' rights – kill according to a logic of liability? Different criminal codes define the parameters for legitimate self-defence very differently, but we have a fairly intuitive understanding that to be *morally* liable a person has to pose or contribute to an unjustified threat and be responsible for that contribution. Are combatants – who can be killed under the logic of sufficiency – liable to that fate?

“ The law's task is, if you will, to distribute the death and destruction that military operations inevitably cause in 'the right way'. ”

There is no reason to believe that combatants contribute on the whole more to a war than civilians – compare an ill-motivated cadet to a nuclear scientist. The former is a combatant and a legitimate target of attack, the latter an immune civilian. We can also not be sure that combatants are more often responsible for their contribution. The absolute bottom line for agent responsibility is knowledge of the facts – compare a parliamentarian voting in favour of aggression to a Colonel who only has the information given to him by his superiors. So the criterion of responsible contribution creates a group of individuals that is not congruent with the group currently open to attack under law: all combatants.

The requirement that only an unjustified threat warrants a right to use lethal force is intuitively extremely compelling – after all we do not think that the assaulter acquires a right to self-defence when the victim of the assault starts scratching and biting. So from a moral point of view whether you are allowed to use violence in war depends on whether you are the aggressor or the defender. Yet, international law as we discussed, separates the permissible conduct in war from the reasons or goals for why someone is fighting and gives the same permissions to the aggressor as to the defender.

So in order to align law with morality – to make sure that deliberate attacks in war permitted by law are morally justified – we would have to radically change the law. Would it be possible to implement such a logic of liability which allows only morally justified attacks? While it would be extremely difficult in the heat of the battle to determine who contributes what to a war, it would be impossible to determine who knows what and is therefore responsible for their contribution – we are talking about a state of mind after all, which is hard enough to determine in a court room never mind a battlefield. The logic of liability rejects the simple distinction

between combatants and civilians, but it does not provide an alternative axis of distinction that is practicable.

Even more problematically, a law that allows one side more violence than the other would at least by one side never be applied. In fact, if a belligerent lacked a permissible cause for war on the liability view no violence at all would be permissible – the soldiers on the aggressor's side would be under a legal obligation to hold still – meaning we would make assumptions about the confrontation that put it much more in the category of legitimate law enforcement than war. It seems that the non-contingent reality of war makes it impossible for a combatant to act in accordance with the logic of liability.

The impossibility of following a moral principle does not necessarily make it any less valid, but it means that there would be a cost if law were to prescribe the logic of liability – if we believe in the moral value of the rule of law it would be a *moral* cost. On fairness grounds we tend to think that for law 'ought implies can'. In addition, a law that prescribed the logic of liability and hence rules that are impossible to be followed would very likely simply be ignored. It would then miss the opportunity to restrain states' conduct in war at all. Of course, the moral standard I have brought to bear for judging the morality of killing in war is that of a liberal domestic, free, yet regulated society – the kind that Oxford more or less conforms to, but the international political system resembles very little. As long as international relations are anarchical, international law cannot solve the dilemma of the Janus faced nature of war in international relations.

Janina Dill  
Departmental Lecturer in International Relations (Somerville College)



# Life after MPhil in IR

Since its inception back in 1978, 630 students have completed the MPhil in International Relations. For many former students the degree has provided the basis for a career, whilst it is also an excellent stepping stone to further study, with 180 former MPhil IR students having continued to doctoral level. Here, three alumni share their thoughts on the impact that the MPhil IR has had on their lives and careers.



**Isobel Coleman**  
New College 1987

While completing my degrees at Oxford, I was also trying to figure out what career path to take. I was interested in business but also in diplomacy (I took the State Department's Foreign Service exam) and policy work (I finished my DPhil on a fellowship at the Brookings Institution in Washington DC). In the intervening 25 years, (which included marrying and raising five kids with Struan Coleman who I met at Oxford), I've managed to craft a career that has spanned international business, foreign policy and diplomacy in ways that I never could have predicted. At every stage, I have relied on the analytical, research and writing skills I developed at Oxford.

My first job after Oxford was with McKinsey & Co. in New York. I thought I would work for McKinsey for a few years to gain private sector experience before returning to policy work. But I enjoyed the analytical challenges and stayed for almost a decade. During those years, I kept a hand in the policy world through my work with the McKinsey Global Institute and pro-bono consulting for public sector entities such as the New York City Board of Education.

In 2002, I returned to my foreign policy roots, moving to the Council on Foreign Relations as a senior fellow. At CFR, I focused on a broad range of economic development issues including the benefits of investing in women and girls; the relationship between inclusive economic growth and democratization; and the challenges of youth unemployment. While at CFR, I remained engaged with the private sector, advising multinational companies on various corporate social responsibility agendas. I also worked with the Clinton Global Initiative, a remarkable nexus of corporations, governments and non-profits.

In 2014, I made another transition when I was confirmed by the Senate as US Representative to the United Nations for UN Management and Reform. My current role as Ambassador representing US interests in the UN's Fifth Committee (management and budgetary issues) uniquely leverages my private sector and policy experiences in a world of diplomacy.

Whether working in the private sector, in policy or in government, I have consistently benefited from a foundational skill set gained at Oxford. My DPhil has been a valued credential in all of these different settings. Better than any other degree could, it has enabled me to meld a personally rewarding combination of professional experiences – from writing foreign policy books to negotiating resolutions at the UN. I loved my time at Oxford and appreciate every day all that I gained there, both professionally and personally.



**Christopher Dell**  
Balliol College 1978

I have to confess that the most direct impact of my Oxford MPhil on my thirty year career in the US Foreign Service probably happened before I ever took the oath of office. When I joined the State Department in January 1981, there were 52 US diplomats being held hostage in Tehran. It was pretty sobering to realize on day one that there were also 52 of us in the entering class. We came from a wide range of backgrounds, including a former child radio preacher, an ex-Peace Corps volunteer from Texas and another colleague who'd been the only Christian minister at a Muslim monastery in Indonesia. The single common thread was that we'd all lived abroad prior to joining the Foreign Service. Oxford may have seemed pretty tame stuff in comparison, but it got me out of the US and through the door of American diplomacy.

Over time, however, I found that the MPhil had a more subtle and persistent impact on the way I thought about issues in the day-to-day grind of formulating US policy in Washington, or implementing it in the field. The 'Oxford approach', focusing on theory and diplomatic history, helped me put the issue(s) of the day into a broader context, and to reflect on the systemic effects or historical roots of a given situation. I can't say this always led to better ideas or proposals, but more than once I think it gave me insights that proved useful in re-framing issues and finding alternative ways forward.

Knowing how to live and thrive abroad is a skill all its own, and odd as it may seem, Oxford helped prepare me for that as well. The UK of the late '70s – the winter of discontent, the first Thatcher election, Hall meals of stodge and stodge, with stodge for pudding – was certainly another country. It was surprisingly different and challenging, but at the same time intriguing and fascinating. The effect has never worn off, and it led me to not one, but two great careers (I'm again working in Africa, but now in the private sector). I count the many friends in many countries around the globe, beginning with Oxford, as yet another lasting gift from my two years there.



**Sarah Percy**  
Balliol College 1999

I was an MPhil International Relations student from 1999-2001, when the Department and MPhil classes were still in the old building on George St. I had come directly from completing my undergraduate degree in Canada. I remember getting terribly lost on my first day and, when encountering my very impressive fellow students, feeling very intimidated. Fortunately everyone was so friendly that this didn't last long. Our MPhil class went for lunch to a sandwich shop in Gloucester Green after nearly every seminar and while the sandwiches weren't very tasty the company was great. We were being taught history in the first semester by John Dunbabin and Richard Crampton, and realized after a week that there was nothing they didn't know. We played a game of 'Stump Dunbabin' for a few weeks, whereby the class was going to reward a student who could ask Mr Dunbabin a question he couldn't answer, but gave it up as futile because we never even got close. We had a great time in and out of class, including showing up in black tie at the Christmas drinks so we could go off to see James Bond afterwards, suitably attired. We had the great benefit of Marga Lyall's warm welcome and calm, kind presence throughout our studies.

graduate study is that the cohort of MPhil students is fantastic: interesting people from diverse backgrounds who combine high intelligence with kindness and camaraderie. I still have never encountered groups of students as impressive as those in an MPhil IR seminar, especially ones characterized by teamwork and fellowship rather than competition.

The MPhil has shaped my future career in many ways. I can turn up in so many cities with a friend from the MPhil to look up and catch up. I obviously really liked my MPhil time as I went on to a DPhil, and then to a postdoc position where I taught on the MPhil, and then to a fellowship where I became MPhil course director... I would have had a life sentence of MPhil teaching and been happy for it had a family move to Australia, where my husband grew up, not beckoned. We now live in Perth with our two children. I am applying a lot of what I learned in the MPhil as a student and a teacher to coordinating masters courses at the University of Western Australia, where I now teach.

Despite the tyranny of distance, my MPhil IR contacts continue, as MPhil graduates are all over Australia, particularly in academia. I encounter MPhil IR graduates Evelyn Goh (ANU), Terry Macdonald (Melbourne), Jikon Lai (Melbourne), Tim Dunne (UQ), Jeni Whalan (UNSW) as often as I can, as even though we were not all of the same vintage there is a great bond between us. There are also lots of other MPhil and DPhil graduates in academia and in policy positions, so although I am thousands of miles away bumping into others is a constant reminder of how small the world can be.

The MPhil was also an amazing intellectual experience. One piece of advice I now give to students considering

# Holding a mirror up to contemporary French thought's existential crisis



**Sudhir Hazareesingh** examines the decline of French intellectual hegemony

There are unmistakable signs that contemporary French thought is facing something of an existential crisis. French philosophy, which taught the world to reason with the likes of Descartes, Rousseau, Comte and Sartre, has had little to offer in recent decades, except the blind alley of Derridian deconstructionism. French literature, with its once glittering cast of figures, from Voltaire and Victor Hugo to Jules Verne and Albert Camus, has likewise lost much of its global appeal. French thought was perhaps most influential in framing our ideas about the principles of good citizenship, as well as stimulating traditions of critical and dissenting enquiry about modern society, starting with Rousseau and the radical republican tradition all the way through to the works of Fanon, Foucault and Bourdieu. And yet little of this ideological creativity is in evidence any more, and it is noteworthy that none of the recent social revolutions, whether the fall of Soviet-style communism in Eastern Europe or the challenge to authoritarianism in the Arab world, took their cue from French thinking. In 2012 the *Magazine Littéraire* sounded the alarm with an apocalyptic

headline: 'La France pense-t-elle encore?' (Does France still think?)

I explore what this contraction tells us about French culture in my forthcoming book, *How the French Think: An Affectionate Portrait of an Intellectual People* (Penguin, June 2015). There have been many contributory factors to this decline: the slow demise of French elite universities, accompanied by the growing pre-eminence of technocratic institutions such as the École Nationale d'Administration; the morbid fascination of contemporary French thinkers and writers with death and anomie (hence the success of Michel Houellebecq's oeuvre); the retrenchment of the French language and the globalisation of English; and the loss of ideological bearings of the nation's intellectuals. As the sociologist Bruno Latour observed humorously, 'It has been a long time since French intellectuals were in the vanguard. Indeed, it has been a long time since the very notion of the avant-garde – the proletariat, the artistic – passed away, pushed aside by other forces, moved to the rearward, or maybe lumped with the baggage train.'

I argue that this malaise is also a reflection of certain fundamental properties of the French cultural mind-set. For there is a distinct French style of thinking, which manifests itself in a passion for unifying theoretical syntheses and for considering questions in their totality as opposed to their contingent manifestations. What the essayist Émile de Montégut once called the French 'rage for abstractions' is also expressed in a predilection for conducting arguments about the good life around metaphysical concepts: hence the Revolution's ideal of popular sovereignty, Comte's vision of 'science', the communists' celebration of the proletariat, and the modern republican myth of the 'grande nation'. Complementing this wholism, somewhat paradoxically, is the French habit of dividing things into two – hence the structuring of public debate around a small number of recurring themes, such as opening and closure, stasis and transformation, unity and fragmentation, purity and corruption, civilization and barbarity, progress and decadence.

Over the *longue durée*, this style of thinking (the mirror of British

empiricism) has been formidably productive, helping to generate some of the most powerful ideas about modern citizenship the world has seen – notably the French Revolution's triad of liberty, equality and fraternity; the concepts of the rights of man, patriotism and the general interest; and the vision of the State's enabling and enlightening power, embodied in Jacobinism and then Bonapartism. But this French penchant for wholism can also express itself in more troubling traits: a suspicion of independent social 'groups', a fascination with internal and external enemies, and a disposition to fall back on stereotypes, negative fantasies, and conspiracy theories. These are the tendencies which are becoming ever more powerful in contemporary France, and are the driving forces behind the nation's growing mood of intellectual closure. This can be seen in the overwhelming pessimism of the French and in the rise of the Front National, whose core values threaten the inclusive heritage of civic republicanism.

A compelling contemporary example of the perverse effects of

this wholistic mode of reasoning is the framing of the discussion around the 'integration' of post-colonial minorities from the Maghreb. These minorities – the largest in Europe – overwhelmingly consider themselves fully-fledged citizens of the Republic. Yet they are often demonised in the French conservative press, by the extreme right, and by Islamophobic public intellectuals such as Alain Finkielkraut (elected to the Académie Française in 2014). This type of vilification has been facilitated by the characteristically abstract terms of the debate about minority integration. Thus the principle of *laïcité* (secularism) has been deployed not to protect the religious freedom of the Maghrebi minorities, but to question their Frenchness; they have been spuriously accused of 'communitarianism' and 'Islamism', terms all the more terrifying that they are never precisely defined. Since the January 2015 attack on *Charlie Hebdo* there have been widespread calls for French citizens of Maghrebi origin to 'prove' their attachment to the nation. Presenting the issue of civic integration in such schematic terms has been counter-productive, not least because it

*For there is a distinct French style of thinking, which manifests itself in a passion for unifying theoretical syntheses and for considering questions in their totality as opposed to their contingent manifestations.*

detracts from the real problems confronting these ethnic minority populations: unemployment, racial discrimination, educational under-achievement and ultimately, genuine equality (another perverse manifestation of the French penchant for abstraction is that they have no precise statistical information about their Maghrebi minorities, as it is illegal to collect ethnic data).

And so this debate, which bears witness to the present state of French intellectual disorientation, has become mired in false binaries: the implication that those who question the French model of secularism are 'un-French'; the suggestion that the (white secular) French are the bearers of 'reason', while those who practise the Islamic faith are 'reactionary' (the same argument was once used against any natives who dared question French colonial rule); and the essentialist assumption of an immutable (and yet paradoxically fragile) French 'national identity'. Analysing the rhetorical style of French political and intellectual elites, Jean-François Revel was uncannily prophetic when he observed that they seemed caught between 'the fantasy of omnipresence and the fear of claustrophobia'.

Sudhir Hazareesingh  
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Image: 'La liberté guidant le peuple',  
Musée du Louvre.

# A Life-changing Opportunity

## Scholarships for DPIR Doctoral Students



“I hope that the scheme becomes a key source of funding for future graduates.”

DPIR scholars Claire Peacock and Benjamin Martill explain how their scholarships have allowed them to continue their studies at Oxford

The department is delighted that several of its doctoral students, including Claire Peacock and Benjamin Martill of University College, were this year awarded funding under the highly competitive Oxford Graduate Scholarship scheme. These scholarships are the result of a ground-breaking fundraising initiative, the Oxford Graduate Scholarship Matched Fund, whereby the University contributes 40% towards endowing the cost of a scholarship, the remaining 60% being funded by the generosity of supporters of the University and its colleges. The final endowment will fund more than 180 new scholarships in perpetuity.

Claire says, ‘Being an Oxford Graduate Scholar has enabled me to continue the research I began as an MPhil student and to embark on a DPhil - without this generous opportunity, I would not have had the means to remain at Oxford and pursue my DPhil research. I hope that the scheme becomes a key source of funding for future graduates.’ Claire’s research focuses on the emergence, design, and uses of human rights clauses in international trade agreements. The project is part of a larger collaborative study that maps non-trade issues, such as social and environmental clauses, in trade agreements. After the DPhil Claire aims to pursue a research career so that she can continue to explore international trade, human rights, and the role of NGOs in international cooperation.

Benjamin is clear that the scholarship has enabled him to continue working on his research, which he would not otherwise have been able to do: ‘During my master’s degree I had to work several jobs to pay for fees and living and this would have been unsustainable over the number of years necessary for a PhD.’ Benjamin’s research concerns the effects of political ideology on grand strategy during the Cold War. By analysing the politics of foreign policy in Canada, France, West Germany and the UK, he demonstrates how the centrist parties, in contrast to those on the left and the right, were more predisposed to embrace the US-led strategy of containing the Soviet Union. This is interesting in his view because it undermines the conventional view that rightist parties were more ‘hawkish’ during the Cold War and challenges the use of the traditional left-right model as the best means of understanding the effects of ideology on foreign policy. Benjamin’s longer-term plan is to go into academia. He observes, ‘Without a PhD this would not be possible. Without my scholarship, the PhD would not be possible. So the funding really is an opportunity for me to achieve much longer-term ambitions.’

World-class research such as Claire and Benjamin’s underpins Oxford’s Politics and International Relations’ place in the academic sphere - the research that transforms understandings of political structures, and builds the foundations for the education of future generations. We educate world leaders and outstanding scholars. Full funding for our doctoral students is key to our continuing to attract and retain the most gifted students from around the world. We invite you to be a part of our success.

Elizabeth Frazer  
Head of Department DPIR,  
Associate Professor of Politics,  
Official Fellow, New College

David Hine  
Associate Professor of Politics,  
Official Student, Christ Church



“The funding really is an opportunity for me to achieve much longer-term ambitions.”

If you are interested in making a gift to support a DPIR student under the Oxford Graduate Scholarship Matched Fund, please return the donation form enclosed with this magazine (UK and USA), donate online at [www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/politics-and-international-relations](http://www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/politics-and-international-relations), or get in touch with us.

Every gift, however small, can have a life-changing impact. We extend a sincere thank you to those who have so generously supported our students to date.

Further information about the Oxford Graduate Matched Funding Scheme can be found at [www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/priorities/students/graduate-matched-fund](http://www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/priorities/students/graduate-matched-fund)

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# Does the UK need a constitutional convention?



**Stuart White** examines the case for a constitutional convention in the UK and how a convention process might be designed



The current situation in the UK is arguably exceptional in the way a number of basic questions about the nature of the political system have been raised at the same time. Should the UK remain in the EU? What is the future of Scotland within the UK? How should government arrangements in Wales, Northern Ireland and England change in the light of further 'devolution' to the Scottish parliament? Should we change the voting system to the House of Commons? Create an elected second chamber? Should the UK government abolish the Human Rights Act and introduce a 'British bill of rights'? Do business corporations wield too much influence in the political system? This list of questions could easily go on.

What is the right way of responding to this situation? One idea that has been floated since the 2014 referendum on Scotland's independence is that the UK should hold a *constitutional convention* to address the future of its political system (Renwick 2014).

A constitutional convention can mean many things, but here we mean by this an assembly of people, wholly or largely distinct from the body of professional politicians, who deliberate about basic questions of how we are ruled, and who make recommendations that are then subject to ratification (or rejection) in a wider, democratic political process.

Two recent examples include conventions in Iceland and Ireland. In Iceland, following the financial crash of 2008, a 25-person convention was elected from the general public to discuss and draft changes to the constitution. It made considerable use of the

internet to circulate ideas and get feedback from the Icelandic public, introducing a distinctive degree of popular input into the constitution drafting process itself (Landemore 2015). In Ireland, the government set up a convention to consider eight possible amendments to the constitution. The convention had 100 members, of whom 33 were politicians, one was a government-appointed Chair, and 66 were chosen at random from the general public but so as to be representative of the population as a whole. Its recommendations went back to the Irish parliament and, if the parliament agreed, then on to a national referendum (Farrell 2014, Honohan 2014). The recent referendum to recognise same-sex marriage in the constitution was a product of this process.

The case for a convention of this sort is that when basic questions of political structure are to be decided, 'We the people' should be directly involved rather than leaving things wholly to politicians. As a matter of principle, the people should author the rules under which they are ruled, and the convention process is potentially a way of achieving this. The results might be fairer and be seen as more legitimate than if, say, politicians determined the answers according to the interests of their particular political parties.

Following the 2014 independence referendum, reform groups like the Electoral Reform Society (ERS) and Unlock Democracy organised an online petition for a convention in the UK. A range of political parties, including the Greens, Labour, the Liberal

Democrats and UKIP, supported the call for some kind of convention. Academic research played a major role in the thinking behind Ireland's convention (Farrell, O'Malley and Suiter 2013) and is feeding into the UK debate. ERS have partnered with the Crick Centre at the University of Sheffield to organise two pilot conventions on the future government of England, looking at how different designs affect the deliberation in the convention.

For the design of the convention process does matter. The major design questions include, firstly, membership of the convention. How far should this be drawn from members of the general public? Should it be determined by election or by lot? On the one hand, there is a risk of including politicians as they might try to dominate the debate. But if they are completely excluded, as in Iceland, this might cause them to oppose the recommendations of the convention and make it less likely that its work results in actual constitutional change (Renwick 2014).

A second design question concerns agenda and agenda-setting power. According to one model, parliament or the government should set the agenda for the convention. Alternatively, the convention can have some power to set its own agenda. In this situation, citizens can campaign for their concerns to be addressed by the convention, and this might draw a wider public into the convention's deliberations. It would mean the convention could be responsive to the people's concerns and so, in this sense, be genuinely 'people-led'.

A third design question concerns what happens to the recommendations of the convention? Do they go back to parliament or, perhaps, straight to a binding referendum?

Underlying these questions is the issue of the respective power of the convention and the parliament. In Iceland, the constitution drafted by the constitutional convention never came into effect: the parliament retained the final say and shelved it. In Ireland, the parliament has been criticised for not being responsive enough to the recommendations of the convention, effectively shelving many of its recommendations.

A further design question is how to coordinate a convention process across the different territories of the UK. Do we need to start with conventions at national and regional levels, building up to a UK-wide convention? If so, how exactly should this process be organised?

Going into the 2015 UK general election campaign, a number of the parties included a call for a constitutional convention in their manifestos. The Conservative party won the election, however, and the new government has no plans to call a constitutional convention. It remains to be seen, then, whether this idea will continue to gather support. Given the extent of the constitutional challenges facing the UK, I think it would be rash to assume that it is bound to fade away. If the idea is taken forward, the answers to the questions raised above will be crucially important.

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# Get Charta?

## Debating Magna Carta's Legacy Today



As Magna Carta approaches its 800th anniversary, **Elizabeth Greenhalgh** reflects on its ongoing relevance to contemporary politics and society.

Have we reached Magna Carta fatigue yet? The commemoration of Magna Carta's 800th anniversary this year has been a focus of a campaign of media programmes, public exhibitions and community events with a centrally funded programme driving a celebration of Magna Carta as the Foundation of Liberty.

### A powerful symbol

Interpretations of the detailed historical events that led to the treaty between King John and the rebel barons in 1215 are, of course, critically contested, but Magna Carta remains widely accepted as an important moment on the way to establishing the principle that everybody is subject to the law. As such Magna Carta has come to embody fundamental values and has been a powerful symbol and a source of inspiration in defining political rights and freedoms.

The call to Magna Carta as the wellspring for the rule of law, rights to justice and resistance to impositions of arbitrary power has, as the current British Library Magna Carta exhibition sets out, been made many times by political movements, new states and referenced in modern formulations of constitutions and citizen rights.

### Contemporary relevance?

Its symbolic power is still potent. The legacy of Magna Carta provides a timely and very valuable opportunity to think again about the accountability of the Westminster parliamentary system, the development of UK constitutions and the processes that can engage an electorate.

After the referendum on Scottish independence and the devolving of further powers to the Scottish Parliament, this centenary year will

see the working through of elements of a new constitutional settlement for Britain. In the lead up to this anniversary year, Parliament's Political and Constitutional Select Committee ran a public consultation to ask the question: what would a new Magna Carta say and what could a new constitutional settlement for Britain look like? As it turned out this was not a whimsical question but a live and vital debate.

In support of this debate the DPIR's blog site *Politics in Spires*, together with *Our Kingdom* (a section of the openDemocracy website), the Institute of Public Policy Reform (IPPR) and the Department of Politics at the University of Southampton are hosting a publishing project called the *Great Charter Convention*. It is a year-long open forum to reflect on Magna Carta, its legacy and relevance to the challenges we face now in defining and containing sources of arbitrary power and authority.

### Constitutional change

Since last October the *Great Charter Convention* has published articles on constitutional change – should Britain have a codified constitution? What are the options for UK level decision making? Is there a role for constitutional conventions in the formulation of further change? If so, how might they work?

The Fixed Term Parliament Act, passed without much fanfare as a part of the last coalition government, is attracting interest. Has it worked to curb the calling of elections for governmental advantage? And, are our Parliament's caretaker conventions adequate to cover the formation of governments in hung parliaments?

The series has tapped into a new interest in localism, city mayors, devolution and the re-emergence of northern regional identities. The vigorous debate in Greater Manchester on arrangements for a (yet to be elected) mayor to oversee significant devolved spending is not a dry issue of local government but a deeper questioning of whether or not the 'northern powerhouse' mantle conferred by government really does represent a democratic step.

Understanding the importance of the legacy of Magna Carta to inspire political movements such as the Chartists, who explicitly borrowed the idea of the charter in the presentation of the People's Charter in 1838, is to understand an appeal of a distinctly English political tradition.

### The future of the commons

Linked to Magna Carta is its companion the Charter of the Forest (due its own anniversary in 2017), which re-established some rights of access to lands for 'free men' and restored some traditional rights of people to land that had once been held in common. The notion of defining rights to commons is a powerful one and could be extended to cover modern day social commons such as parks, public libraries and even perhaps to commonly used resources such as the internet.

The series has begun to explore ideas of digital rights and freedoms and whether there are new threats to fundamental liberties as well as new opportunities to think about how digital technologies can serve a common good. The speed of technological change can present challenges to our laws, institutions and regulatory systems and to our abilities to articulate ethical responses with which to frame and evaluate them.

Magna Carta may be mixed up in a politics of nostalgia but it remains buoyant, and truly resilient, as a tool with which to reflect on democratic reform.

The *Great Charter Convention* will run until the end of the year on [politicsinspires.org](http://politicsinspires.org). If you would like to contribute to the debate please contact: Blake Ewing, Editor, *Politics in Spires*, [Oxbridge.blog@gmail.com](mailto:Oxbridge.blog@gmail.com)

Elizabeth Greenhalgh  
Knowledge Exchange, DPIR

The background image on these pages shows Magna Carta (MS. Ch. Glouc. 8) - an original engrossment of the second reissue of Henry III, 1217, which features the seals of his two guardians, the papal legate Cardinal Guala and William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke. This is currently on display in the Bodleian exhibition 'Marks of Genius' in the new Weston Library, until 20 September 2015.

## Migration, Conflict and Identity: an Interview with Gwendolyn Sasse

**Gwendolyn Sasse**, Professor of Comparative Politics and Professorial Fellow at Nuffield College, talks with **Rebecca Fradkin**, DPhil Candidate in DPIR and at Nuffield College, about migration, political remittances, and the current conflict in Ukraine.

Gwendolyn Sasse is a Professor of Comparative Politics at DPIR and the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies (SIAS) and a Professorial Fellow at Nuffield College. Her previous research has engaged with regime change and ethnic conflict among other central fields of inquiry within comparative politics, utilising cases from Eastern Europe and the Post-Soviet space. Her current research interests have turned to migration, examining political remittances and understanding the political impact of migration. Additionally, given Sasse's previous research experience on Crimea and Ukraine, her expertise has been sought out by numerous news outlets including BBC Radio 3 and NPR among others. In light of the current conflict in Ukraine, Sasse is further extending her research on Ukraine and Crimea.

The literature on migration has primarily centred on immigrant integration and behaviour in democratic countries, rather than how migrants interact and potentially transfer impressions of their destination country to their home country or country of departure. The literature on remittances has debated whether remittances have an impact on development, and if so, whether this impact is normatively positive or negative. Moreover, studies on remittances have previously focused on economic remittances, with less attention paid to political

remittances. While it is difficult to estimate economic remittances and their potential impact, far less is known about political remittances. Political remittances include norms and practices that migrants or other transnational actors send back to their home countries.

Professor Sasse's current research project, *Political Remittances: Understanding the Political Impacts of Migration*, is funded by the Leverhulme Trust. It explores such questions as: Do migrants affect political change in their homelands? How does the migration experience affect the political identities of migrants, and to what extent do they communicate this experience to family members and friends back home? Do the patterns of interaction between migrants and their homelands differ by group and/or historical period?

This research project currently has several areas of exploration. The first consists of surveys and interviews with Polish and Ukrainian migrants. Sasse, along with Professor Anar Ahmadov (Leiden University), recently published an article in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 'Migrants' regional allegiances in homeland elections: evidence on voting by Poles and Ukrainians'. This article reveals that some political identities can be 'bundled up in "suitcases"',

as demonstrated by the fact that voter choice among Ukrainian and Polish migrants can be strongly predicted according to a voter's region in her/his country of origin.

Additionally, previous research has often examined migrants in one destination location and has not examined one migrant group in different destination countries, introducing a selection bias. Thus, the second component of the research project is to assess one migrant group, Ukrainian migrants, in multiple locations (15 different countries), in order to analyse the determinants of transnational engagement. An additional component of the *Political Remittances* project (with Felix Krawatzek who recently completed his DPhil in DPIR and is about to embark on a British Academy post-doctoral fellowship) assesses over 6,000 letters from 'ordinary' German migrants in the United States during the 19th and 20th century utilising discourse network analysis and topic modelling.

Furthermore, as part of the *Political Remittances* project a dataset is being compiled of political elites (presidents, government ministers and members of parliament) in Central Eastern Europe from 1989 to the present (in collaboration with SIAS, and Nuffield Research Fellow Sarah Garding and Nuffield DPhil student Jutta Kawalerowicz). This part of the project includes mapping



whether these elites spent time abroad before assuming office and assessing whether any patterns or effects can be identified. More specifically, legislation will be traced in order to assess who proposes what types of legislation (e.g., who proposes bills related to privatisation or other issues that may be associated with western neo-liberal concepts of economics).

In addition to Sasse's ongoing project on political remittances, her work has also returned to Ukraine and Crimea. Sasse's doctoral thesis and subsequent book, *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition and Conflict*,

utilised Crimea in the 1990s as a case to address a bias in comparative conflict studies in focusing solely on cases which result in violent ethnic conflict. While the 'ingredients' for ethnic conflict were present in Crimea, *The Crimea Question* assesses why violent ethnic conflict did not occur. In the case of Crimea, her research highlighted the importance of mechanisms that defuse conflict.

Sasse asserts that the analysis in her doctoral work remains valid, but that the current context also raises interesting questions moving forward. Why was it relatively easy for Russia to take Crimea? It also

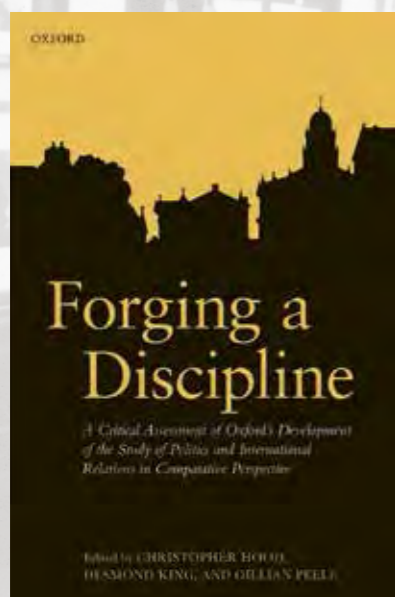
presents interesting questions about linkages between Crimea and Kyiv and Crimea and Russia and how quickly such linkages can be activated and changed under certain political conditions. Moreover, with reference to the case of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Sasse is interested in assessing if and how a conflict, in this case a war, can change people's political identities. She is in the process of applying for funding for collaborative projects to survey the Ukrainian population, ideally including people displaced by war.

The relatively nascent literature on migration and more specifically, political remittances, presents exciting opportunities for further research. Sasse says, 'My research suggests that scholars should be cautious in assuming that migrants always serve as agents of change in their countries of origin or departure and should be more precise in assessing what kinds of changes and information migrants transmit to their countries of origin. Furthermore, the current conflict and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, with tragic real life costs, presents research opportunities to better understand the potential impacts of conflict on identity (particularly regional identity) within Ukraine.'

Rebecca Fradkin  
DPhil Candidate in Politics

# The Politics of Political Science

**Christopher Hood, Desmond King and Gillian Peele** analyse the growth of a discipline



*Forging a Discipline: A Critical Assessment of Oxford's Development of the Study of Politics and International Relations in Comparative Perspective* is published by Oxford University Press (OUP). A full list of contributors is available on the OUP website.

There are well over 2,000 academic members listed in the current directory of the UK's main political science association (the PSA) – more than twice the number of elected members of the Westminster, devolved and European parliaments put together. But it has not always been so; a century ago, all of Britain's 'politics' academics could have comfortably fitted into a small room. Since then, and particularly in the later twentieth century, academic political science grew spectacularly. Indeed, the United States' main political science association (APSA) is running out of cities with sufficient hotel space to host its annual conference, now attended by over 8,000 political scientists.

As the subject has grown, its content has changed too, with the empirical study of government organisation all but disappearing from mainstream political science research and teaching, the development of international relations and electoral studies as the two largest and most powerful subfields, and a notable drive to greater scientific 'professionalisation' in the form of ever more abstraction, quantification and a puzzle-solving rather than knowing-about style of scholarship.

So what accounts for this remarkable historical development? Political scientists themselves can be forgiven for putting it down to the inherent intellectual fascination and self-evident importance of their

subject and to the value of its discoveries, such as the median voter theorem and collective action theory. But that is hardly an uncontested view; after all, the US Congress last year (after a long campaign by Republican Senator Tom Coburn of Oklahoma) narrowly voted to ban federal funding of any political science research projects not deemed essential for promoting the national security or economic interests of the United States – a restriction that was removed by a spending bill passed in January of this year. But even if Coburn and his political colleagues who voted for last year's ban are wrong to think their country can do very well without most political science research, it still prompts the question of why the academic study of politics should be so much more fascinating and important today than it was a century ago as to drive this notable expansion.

It seems obvious that part of the answer lies in the development of mass higher education over the past century, and the professorial population explosion that has gone along with it. But that does not of itself explain why political science grew as a field of research and teaching not just absolutely but relative to other subjects, such as languages, history or classics. A century ago in Oxford, Modern History was one of the major launch pads for those seeking careers in government, politics and public service, but it began to take a purer academic view of its mission, leaving a space into which PPE could move. And that

was not an isolated development, as political science became more common as an educational background for politicians and bureaucrats. Indeed, at least one of Senator Coburn's Republican allies in his battle against federal funding of political science research (Senator Jeff Flake of Arizona) has a graduate degree in that very subject.

What of the future? Will the rise and rise of political science over the last hundred years continue with a similar rate of growth in the present century, such that by 2100 there might be 250,000 or so academic political scientists facing the impossible task of finding contiguous hotel space for APSA's annual conference? Will the growth slow down and change into some sort of stability? Or must what goes up come down, perhaps as a result of the kind of political reaction illustrated by the efforts of Senator Coburn and his colleagues?

Time will tell. Even after a century of such spectacular growth, there is no more agreement about what – or who – political science teaching and research is for than there was a hundred years ago. Is it a curiosity-driven puzzle-solving science aimed at an international peer-reviewing professoriate? Is it to serve the practical needs of governments and bureaucracies, for example in promoting national security or national economic interests, as the UK's ESRC now tends to expect? Is it to serve the citizenry and 'civil society' at large, as Oxford tried to do in

the 1880s, with extension classes in 'political science' aimed at (then disenfranchised) women, trade unionists and working class students interested in politics and political activism? Can political science continue to live with these contradictory views of its mission for another hundred years? Will one of those visions win out against the others? Or will the subject fragment further, for example by partly turning inwards to a purer academic orientation, as Modern History did in Oxford a hundred years ago and partly developing into more applied leadership training, such as that offered by Oxford's new Blavatnik School of Government and other institutions like it? All of these are possibilities. But if the past is anything to go by, a stable equilibrium seems an unlikely future for this subject.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

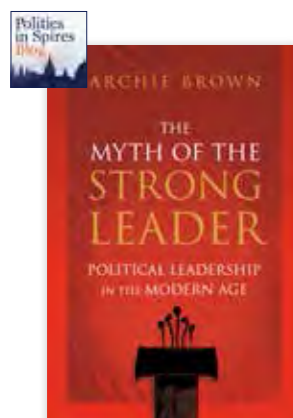
Below is a selection of the many publications produced by DPIR faculty and alumni in the last year.

We welcome details of alumni publications and will publish a selection of them in *Inspires* 2016, on the DPIR website and in the *Alumni Newswire* newsletter.

Please send information to [alumni@politics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@politics.ox.ac.uk). Thank you to all alumni who have sent details of their publications over the past year.

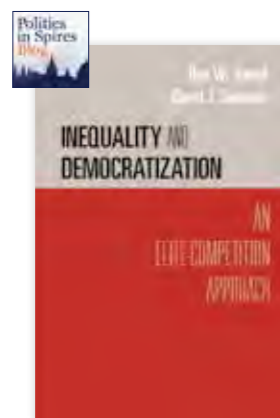


## DPIR PUBLICATIONS



**The Myth of the Strong Leader: Political Leadership in the Modern Age**  
**Archie Brown**  
Bodley Head/Vintage Publishing

Archie Brown challenges the widespread belief that 'strong leaders', dominant individual wielders of power, are the most successful and admirable. Within authoritarian regimes, a collective leadership is a lesser evil compared with a personal dictatorship. Within democracies, although 'strong leaders' are seldom as strong or independent as they purport to be, the idea that just one person is entitled to take the big decisions is harmful and should be resisted. This landmark study pinpoints significantly different types and qualities of leadership. Overturning the popular notion of the strong leader, it makes us rethink popular preconceptions about what it means to lead.



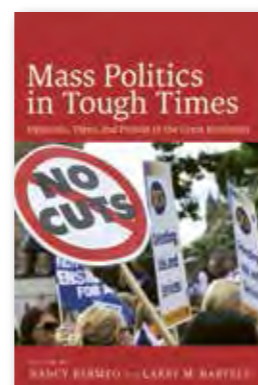
**Inequality and Democratization: An Elite Competition Approach**  
**Ben Ansell and David Samuels**  
Cambridge University Press

Research on the relationship between inequality, development, and regime change has seen a recent surge of interest. But while many argue that inequality harms the prospects of democracy because wealthy elites fear that the poorer majority will use the vote to 'soak the rich', this book presents a different explanation that identifies the real tension as existing between property and autocracy, not property and democracy. Instead, it is fear of the autocratic state by politically disenfranchised, but economically rising groups who are wary of the power of autocratic elites to expropriate their assets that drives efforts at democratic transitions and regime change.



**Echoes of Empire: Memory, Identity and Colonial Legacies**  
**Kalypso Nicolaïdis, Berny Sèbe and Gabriel Maas (edited)**  
I.B. Tauris

The memory of colonial power and the power of memory today is the thread that runs through the 'echoes' of empire charted in this edited collection. The book brings together 28 authors from four continents to explore the changing relationship between Europe and its former colonies within a broad comparative perspective with other imperial stories. It links colonial international relations to the post-colonial world, with the aim of de-centring erstwhile Eurocentric analyses of imperial power. The various contributions move from the challenges posed to European visions of Empire by local environments, to how imperial ideas are bound up in the contemporary European project of 'ever closer Union', as well as the more subtle contributions of the imperialisms of the past upon discourses of the present.



**Mass Politics in Tough Times: Opinions, Votes, and Protest in the Great Recession**  
**Nancy Bermeo and Larry Bartels (edited)**  
Oxford University Press

In electoral terms, the 'Great Recession' of the recent decade has thus far been more like a normal recession. This edited collection examines the early public response to the recent economic crisis in advanced economies, highlighting the continuity in voting behaviour and the limited headway that parties of the far left or right have made, in contrast to the tumult of the Great Depression. States that have had strong welfare systems have seen the least political realignment, while those with weaker social support have been subject to greater political turmoil – but voters have responded to the Recession with a 'relatively stoic acceptance'. Where massive protests occurred they were brought on by austerity and not by the recession itself.

### Is the EU Doomed?

**Jan Zielonka**  
*Polity*

The eurozone crisis has thrown the future of the European Union in doubt as it struggles to not only deal with its currency turmoil, but underlying challenges of socio-economic cohesion and political trust. Rather than the polar scenarios of collapse or federalism, this book sets out a vision for an integrated, but decentralised Europe. The weakening of the EU and end of supra-government will not strengthen its member states, but instead strengthen sub-national and non-state political actors, giving rise to 'polyphonic' governance of simultaneous but independent networks of actors. With integration driven by functional, and not territorial imperatives, the result will be a more effective and responsive European project.



### Legitimate Targets? Social Construction, International Law and US Bombing

**Janina Dill**  
*Cambridge University Press*

One of the central questions regarding the use of force in international relations has been the definition of a legitimate military target. This book investigates how the tension between humanitarian and military imperatives in war influences target selection. On the 21st Century battlefield the distinction between combatants and civilians has become ever harder and the question of proportionality looms large. Drawing on empirical studies of US aerial bombing campaigns since 1965, *Legitimate Targets?* demonstrates how international humanitarian law has influenced the conduct of hostilities over this time period, and probes how effective it has been and can be in regulating war, that most fundamental institution of international relations.



### Politics Meets Parties: The Emergence of Programmatic Political Parties

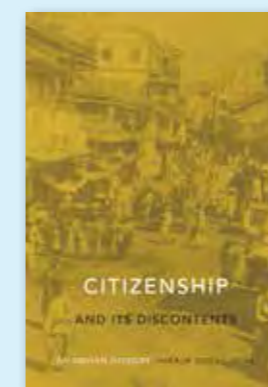
**Nic Cheesman, Herbert Kitschelt, Juan Pablo Luna, Dan Paget, Fernando Rosenblatt, Kristen Sample, Sergio Toro, Jorge Valladares Molleda, Sam van der Staak, Yi-Ting Wang**  
*International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)*

Multi-party elections are central to a functioning democracy, but the reasons for electoral success vary. This research report examines the causes and contexts which underpin the progress towards 'programmatic' political parties based on policy platforms, and away from parties based on patronage or clientelistic practices. At stake in such transitions toward 'programmatic politics' are greater democratic accountability and the effectiveness of public policies and development strategies. Drawing on both case studies of seven countries and quantitative methods, the findings review the prospects of greater electoral competition that focuses on policies, and the conditions under which these are likely to emerge.



Publications marked with this logo have been reviewed on the *Politics in Spires* blog.  
[politicsinspires.org](http://politicsinspires.org)

## ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS



**Citizenship and its Discontents: An Indian History**  
**Niraja Gopal Jayal**  
Harvard University Press

In the world's largest democracy, the formal equality of citizenship runs up against the social and economic hierarchies that express themselves unevenly across India. This book, the winner of the Association of Asian Studies' 2015 Coomaraswamy Prize, explores the contested interpretations of citizenship from colonial times to the present. Between legal status, rights, and identity, the question of who is a citizen and what that means goes to the heart of how to understand both contemporary debates on citizenship and the character and future of India's democratic polity. This book was first presented as the 2009-2010 Radhakrishnan Lectures on Indian Studies at All Souls College.



**Good Children**  
**Roopa Farooki**  
Headline

From Lahore in the 1940s to London and the United States at the turn of the millennium and back, Farooki's sixth novel tells the tale of four siblings who leave the Punjab and the lives they carve out in the shadow of their mother's expectations of being 'good children'. As they build their own families and lives in distant climes and different ways, they find themselves inexorably drawn back to their childhood world and the figure who dominated that world. Evocative of generational change this book probes into the saga of the South Asian migrant experience, and portrays a world of both compassion and violence, and love and loss.



## UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD ALUMNI WEEKEND 2015

Join us in Oxford this September for the biggest of our collegiate University events. This inspiring programme of discussion and debate is led by some of Oxford's brightest minds.

Whether you can take part for three days, or only drop in for a couple of hours, we hope that you'll find something in our diverse programme to tempt you. Our lectures and panel discussions cross subjects and centuries and there is a focus on the real-world impact of University research. You can learn from academic staff at the top of their fields and engage with fellow alumni in an intellectually challenging environment.

This is also a good chance to revisit your University and see what has changed since you left. In addition, our small-group behind-the-scenes tours offer an opportunity to explore 'hidden' Oxford and offer unique insights into the city and University across the ages.

Booking for the Weekend opens on 29 June and will close on 8 September. To join the Alumni Weekend mailing list, please visit [www.alumni.ox.ac.uk](http://www.alumni.ox.ac.uk).

### DPIR at the Alumni Weekend

#### Wake Up Europe! Why Britain should stay engaged and transform the EU

**Kalypso Nicolaïdis**

Professor of International Relations and Fellow of St Antony's

**Saturday 19 September 2015**

**2:30pm – 3:45pm Saïd Business School**

As the Eurozone crisis leads to increasing 'Euro-contestation', debate has intensified over how the European Union should be reformed. The UK has a crucial role to play in this debate.

We will engage in a conversation as to why and how. Controversy welcome!



## POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ALUMNI EVENT

### International Security: Scholarship and Practice

**November 2015**

(Saturday, date to be confirmed)

Please join us for our fourth Politics and International Relations alumni event, which this year will be organised around the theme of 'International Security: Scholarship and Practice'.

Learn about some of the more pressing challenges to international security - intractable civil wars, violent extremism, cyber security, the ethics of drone warfare - and how Oxford academics are helping to meet those challenges. The day will feature a conversation with a distinguished practitioner in the field of international security and will be capped by a formal dinner in college.

The Politics and International Relations annual alumni event is a fantastic opportunity for DPIR alumni to return to Oxford, catch up with former classmates, learn about the latest cutting-edge research in international security, and engage in discussion and debate about some of the most important issues of the day.

Full details of the event and how to register will be available shortly on [www.politics.ox.ac.uk](http://www.politics.ox.ac.uk).

If you would like us to send you a 'save the date' email once we have confirmed the date, please let us know: [alumni@politics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@politics.ox.ac.uk).



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