



SGIA Newsletter

School of Government and International Affairs
University of Durham

April/May 2006

Contents

Editor's Note
Page 2

The Politicization of US
Border Control
Page 3

Revisiting the Abu
Ghraib Scandal:
Photographic Imagery as
Atrocity
Page 3

A Brief History
of Lacking US-
Indonesian Relations
Page 5

In Profile:
John C. Williams
Page 6

Literary Wealth at the
University Library
Page 7

SGIA Bookshelf
Page 8

Alumni Affairs
Page 8

Staff News
Page 8

Peaceful Development, Peaceful Rise and the China Threat?

Since the end of the Cold War the world has been frantically reorganizing itself. Instances of successful and unsuccessful development alike have contributed to systemic restructuring, producing novel core-periphery relationships as well as inter and intraregional relationships which reflect a dynamic global shift toward multilateralism and regionalism. Two of the more prominent actors propelling this dynamic and subject to its effects, the European Union and People's Republic of China, were the topics of discussion at a recent conference entitled, 'The International Politics of EU-China Relations'. This



was organized by the Center for Contemporary Chinese Studies at the School of Government and International Affairs, University of Durham; it was sponsored by the British Academy and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and hosted by the British Academy London..

Much of the conference did address Sino-EU bilateral relations, yet it has become increasingly difficult - especially in consideration of China's rise and integration within the larger international system - to portray this relationship in strictly bilateral terms. Chinese development has involved a complex web of relationships, bilateral

and multilateral, so as to prevent the failure of one relationship from hindering the network of relationships by which its unprecedented growth has become characterized.

While a great deal of attention remains focused on Sino-EU relations in light of such elements as the sixteen-year-old EU arms embargo toward China, the European Union (primarily the EU3) remains China's second largest trading partner. Additionally, this year marks the 31st anniversary of Sino-EU relations and the end of 2005 witnessed the first round of an EU-PRC

'strategic dialogue', which fostered the discussion of important international and regional issues, as well as the exchange of views on bilateral issues of common concern. It is important that

we begin to conceive of Sino-EU relations and Chinese development in a wider global context. China's developments should not be regarded as definitively unquestioned integration, unfettered cooperation or the acclimation to a "Western ethic" in the conduct of international relations. Nor is this to say that China's rise should be considered an obvious threat, though the Orientalist punditry emanating from Western circles may have us believe as much.

China's "peaceful development", a phrase coined to subdue the "China threat" speculation, must be qualified in terms beyond

(continued on page 4)

Editor's Note



By this time of the year, when we are busy putting together our penultimate SGIA News layout, the jitters of launching into a new activity by the team, which has been motivated into voluntary cooperation are evident. No less, I would like to thank all of the contributors for their tireless effort as we continue to produce opinion pieces by the staff, students, and the scholars in a manner which presents a true picture of our times, and which sheds light upon the depth of scholarship within the School of Government and International Affairs. To this end I would like to welcome you to our fifth issue and hope that you will enjoy the read.

There is a sense of anxiety within academia and politics concerning the circumstances in which we find ourselves reading and learning. Tensions emanating from the US, Iran, Nigeria, Russia and China are apparent. Environmental concerns, the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty, the International Atomic Energy Agency are floundering, and the prospects for major actors within the international system to reach consensus are slim. And issues engulfing the Middle East and Africa have taken the price of oil to an all time high, which is manifested as political and civil tension within the core of industrialized nations; a scenario which has become all

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too common in an ever-globalizing political-economy.

As we go to print, the skirmish between the largest developed country in the world, the US, and the largest developing country in the world, China, over Iran, Sudan, Nigeria and North Korea gives ample opportunity for militants to make the situation explosive. In response to unprecedented global political unrest, economic volatility, and major environmental and health concerns, which are destabilizing the entire world, SGIA has been busy on all fronts to provide some rational analysis to the ongoing events, being engaged in seminars, lectures, debates, conferences and publications. History has shown us that interaction with others through diplomacy and productive dialogue could be the means for ushering in pluralism and acceptance. A path to tolerance can be traced through the exploration and understanding of different cultures.

Students, alumni, staff and academics within SGIA have been instrumental in putting together an array of articles for the current issue which hopes to shed some light on the breadth and depth of study within the School of Government and International Affairs. Once again, I am deeply indebted to the staff at SGIA News, and the many contributors who have assisted us with this issue.

I am particularly pleased to see contributors from other Durham University departments coming forward to provide us with a broader platform for the further exchange of ideas amongst our readership. In our very first issue I announced that our aim is to inspire, inform and stimulate our readers on various academic and social issues that concern the greater community. I hope this issue proves to do just that.

Lastly, as many of our readers may have noticed, there were a number of mistakes in the last issue of the SGIA Newsletter which occurred during the shuffling and formatting of articles and for this we apologize. Moreover, the SGIA staff would like to assure our readers that we are aware of these mistakes and will continue to do our best to improve the quality and structure of the newsletter.

Given our continued effort to improve the newsletter, we have made a few stylistic changes, as you may notice, to the format and colour scheme of the current issue. We hope you appreciate these alterations and we encourage any productive insight or recommendations our readers might have.

Reza Molavi,
Editor, SGIA News
April/May 2006

The Politicization of US Border Security

We live in a threatening world where a quiet, unseen evil is surely lurking. This evil will emerge from the shadows the moment we let our guard down; it will strike from the most unforeseen angle, so we must remain vigilant. Such powerful phrases are the impetus for the latest crusade manufactured by American leadership: border security.

In the U.S., fortifying border security is the most fiercely-protested undertaking since the Iraq War protests in 2004. The plan for strengthening the border has a militaristic aura; perhaps treating the border as a military battlefield has something to do with this (e.g. the establishment of the vigilante organization known as the “Minutemen”). In the eyes of the U.S. government, the border is where national security now lives and dies. The Department of Homeland Security has taken over control of the Customs and Border Patrol, and has developed the Secure Border Initiative, a comprehensive package that is designed to cut illegal immigration, tighten entry into the U.S. and target employers of illegal workers. It would seem, superficially, that the American government is trying to reduce the amount of illegal aliens living and working in the U.S., allowing better opportunities for American citizens and easing the burden of the welfare system. Is it the case that the Mexican border poses a security threat as a point of entry for fugitives, drug and human trafficking, and weapons? Absolutely. Will the SBI directly address these issues? We can count on it. But terrorism is arguably the real impetus for this new legislation. *(continued on page 4)*

Revisiting the Abu Ghraib Scandal: The Photographic Image as Atrocity

Through daily encounters with contemporary media, the photographic image has shown us an outstretched prisoner—veiled and made subservient—subject to an increasing Western gaze. This sanctioned torture by United States military personnel positions these types of photographs to perpetuate a



Tortured detainee at Abu Ghraib Prison

guilty silence by its viewing audience. Many believe this image is paramount in its ability to connote the Iraqi populace as the twenty-first century’s colonized and oppressed *other*. However, this also suggests a paradox in handling such discursive material, as it both witnesses and is willing accomplice to this type of atrocity.

One could argue that the events in 1970s Cambodia represent a good parallel to contemporary images of Abu Ghraib. The power of photography as it documented the Democratic Kampuchea’s systematic genocide of a middle-class Khmer was captured by archival photography. As both the iconic status of Cambodian and Iraqi mug shots define periods of strife. Together they project a ‘visuality’ as the images witness and portray the event in its audiences’ direct absence. These photographic similarities

present day Iraq mirrors the genocidal events of Cambodia’s past. This seems to mandate that each image is both reproducible evidence and now a fetishized commodity within a global culture’s need to ‘see’ or come in contact with these types of atrocity.

Only later does the subjectivity of such imagery, once it is dumped into mainstream culture and media, become fetishized and culturally appropriated (i.e., a New York City iPod advertisement covered over by a photostencil of the veiled Abu Ghraib prisoner as one example. Or, an independent clothing manufacturer’s use of archival photographs from the killing fields of Cambodia to sell death couture tee-shirts). This appropriation and disregard for subverted cultures dares to ask the question: What does a veiled Iraqi prisoner say about atrocity to an increasingly desensitized and photo-obsessed global culture?

Often this use of photo mug shots (to classify types of subordinates) lays claim to the military, political

(continued on page 5)

SGIA Merchandise

A selection of garments is now available, ranging from sweatshirts, hooded jumpers, rugby and polo shirts, fleece jackets and mugs. Contact Reza Molavi or Justin Orenstein at: sgia.news@dur.ac.uk

(continued from cover page)

the paradigms, cooperation/conflict or integration/confrontation, which dominate much of Western China analysis. Immediate questions arise, as noted by David Kerr, concerning the differences in terms of identity, values and interests between these two international actors seeking to restructure the international order. Despite their gravity, these dimensions cannot occupy the impetus of our analysis. The quandary of China's development and simultaneous rise is systemically problematic and substantially more inclusive. The rise of world regions (as manifested by the European Union) and multipolarity (as proffered by the Chinese state apparatus) which allegedly provides greater international stability, introduces systemic contradictions and the possibility for conflict among great powers under the umbrella of United States hegemony.

The generality of this article as a result of its required brevity is testament enough to the complexity of the relationship in bilateral, regional and international terms. Therefore, it has been proposed, stemming from the success of the "International Politics of EU-China Relations" conference, that a consortium on EU-China relations be instituted. This would have, as its focal activity, the organization of an annual conference on EU-China relations. Not only can EU-China relations be seen as a metaphor for Chinese foreign relations on a global scale, but the parallel growth of the constituent agents inside a growing regional formation presupposes the necessity for the further analysis of this relationship from an international platform.

Justin Orenstein

(continued from page 3)

The development of a guest worker program would register and trace employers, highlighting networks of solicitors who provide resources for illegal immigrants who cannot access resources themselves. These names might be compiled and investigated, with the aim of discovering an incumbent web that could unknowingly abet terrorist factions.



Though it seems like a long-shot, it is clear that politicians are backing the Department of Homeland Security proposal. This may have something to do with the plummeting approval ratings of the Bush administration and a failing war on terror. Perhaps this is a battle best fought at home?

George W. Bush, already touted as the worst two-term president in American history, is backing this maneuver. The rationale for fighting terror at home is a good one. Terrorists cannot attack on American soil if there are no terrorists there; they lack the resources to attack from abroad. But the SBI façade fails on both sides of the coin: the U.S. cannot afford the effects of the SBI's stated goals and protecting its citizens by sealing of the U.S. – Mexico border is impossible.

Agriculture is the domestic cash cow of the U.S. That industry

is supported by illegal workers who are paid a fraction of the standard wage and are not entitled to benefits. Countless other industries rely on illegal labor. Cutting this amenity would deform the equation. And security-wise, Canada poses the biggest threat with the world's longest unfortified border. Will the SBI address the Canadian quandary? The U.S. imports a large percentage of its petroleum from its northern

neighbor (1.7 million barrels per day). What do you think?

So where should the U.S. go from here? That answer, unfortunately, lies with the 2008 election. Clearly, Bush is not capable of doing the job, unless the job is offending its remaining allies while destabilizing regions it occupies. This job is for the 44th President of the United States. And mark these words: The next U.S. president is going to be the most critical in the nation's history since Lincoln and Kennedy. Stopping a siege that is applauded by the military-industrial complex, and beginning to fix the problem, will take unprecedented leadership. Anything short of that will exacerbate the developing world crisis.

Luke Williams

(continued from page 3)

and even cultural dominance of one culture over another. Similarly, scholars such as Hariman and Lucaites have argued that mug shot images of atrocity forcibly illustrate the hegemonic use of photography in today's media outlets. This echoes the appropriated nature of atrocity images today. From artists, to museum culture, to global media, the photographic image streams through newspapers, the gallery wall and the Internet at a daunting and often inconsequential pace. These instances point to atrocity imagery being reconstituted, while the media and cultural institution reveal inclinations to exploit this visual material for personal, ideological and capitalistic gain.

As a result, the photographic image is perpetually reconstituted and filtered through the everyday experience by the demand of a visually consuming audience. It could be said that media photography can be seen to use archival evidence in witnessing both US military torture and the calculated archiving of Cambodian counter-revolutionaries as both contentious and helpful in understanding these types of atrocities.

However, as this 'atrocity photography' refuses to go away in our visual economy, its oversaturation and malleability can be problematic. Commemoration and reconciliation of an event are often replaced by repetition of image, changing economic and political value, and the general vacuous consumption of such material. Furthermore, as this type of photography continues to be marginalized and its cultural status made to fit a hegemonic role, it will remain in a state of flux and continue to be fetishized by forms

of mass media and its accompanying institution.

Keith Wagner

A Brief History of Lacking US-Indonesian Relations

Following the emergence of the United States as a major power in the global order after World War II, emphasis has often been placed on the double standard practiced by the U.S. in its dealings with non-democratic nations. While the U.S. espouses the benefits of democratic good-governance, it has proven all too willing in the past to associate with governments that have had less than representative governments in order to accomplish tasks viewed as critical by the American government. Recent American-Indonesian developments properly convey the dialectical foreign-policy manifestations facilitated by the West during the post-war period.

The conclusion of World War II led to the Netherlands fighting a four-year war to regain control over its former colony before conceding to heavy American pressure advocating Indonesian independence.

Soon after independence, the liberal values originally practiced by the U.S. towards Indonesia gave way to indifference as the government of Suharto ruthlessly tortured and killed leftist opposition and religious groups viewed as a threat against his grip on power. Due to the realities of Cold War politics, the United States did

not intervene in the situation, opting for the support of Indonesia at the expense of the population's well-being.

After the Indonesia Revolution of 1998, Suharto was removed from power and a representative form of government took control. Although well conceived and supported by the United States, the situation in Indonesia deteriorated without the strong-armed tactics of Suharto to maintain its territorial integrity. Consequently, the long running conflict between East Timor militias and Indonesian-supported militias escalated, drawing attention towards the hundreds of thousands of civilians either displaced or killed by Indonesian-supported forces.

As a result of the Indonesian government's support of militias fighting against East Timor forces, the United States Senate introduced the Leahy Amendment, severing all military ties to the Indonesian government in 1999. Such an action diverges from decades of American indifference towards human rights violations in the country in the name of countering communism. While the intent of the amendment was to encourage Indonesia

into withdrawing support for militias in East Timor by withholding military aid, it would take over five years for the Indonesian government to finally withdraw support for the militias.

It can be argued that the rationale behind the change in American policy

(continued on page 6)



Indonesian soldiers

Courtesy of BBC

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(continued from page 5)

was to reverse decades of Cold War 'real politik' by introducing human rights into the equation of bi-lateral relations. However, the US suffered a great deal because of the moral stand it struck by severing vital ties with the Indonesian counter-terrorist forces at a time of heightened concerns in the region. This complicated American efforts to track down and eliminate terrorist infrastructure within Indonesia.

Although full diplomatic ties were restored towards the end of 2005, the effect of the American position is dubious at best. By supporting the principles that it



Presidents Bush and Yudhoyono BBC

advocates, the United States earned credibility but potential threats were not addressed because of formerly broken military ties. Such a situation raises the question of how the US can take the moral ground while still advancing its national agenda.

As for the current status of the relationship, in the words of the US State Department, the relationship is described as, 'good'. Citing a mutual interest in countering terrorism based on the Bali

and Jakarta terrorist actions along with a desire to ensure regional stability, Indonesia serves as a valuable American ally. However, despite the pleasantries and cordial nature of the relationship, no treaties exist between the two over security.

Sean McNeil

In Profile: Dr. John C. Williams

Occasionally, universities have professors or lecturers who not only attract students to the university and a particular field of study, but also prove to be an inspiration for the students they attract. These lecturers are not only staples of a specific area of study or discipline, but staples of the larger academia. The School of Government and International Affairs at the University of Durham is one of these departments and Dr. John Williams is one of these lecturers. He spent five years at the University of Aberdeen before beginning his tenure at the University of Durham in 2001 where he lectures in 'International Theory', 'The International System', 'Theories of International Relations', 'The Ethics of Violence in International Relations', 'Dynamics of Change in International Relations' and 'Introduction to International Relations'. His research interests include international relations theory, ethics in international relations, ethics of territorial borders and the ethics of violence.

Dr. Williams has authored, edited and contributed to a number of books and academic journals including his most recent authored work, "The Ethics of Territorial Borders: "Drawing Lines in the Shifting Sands", which was inspired partially by Gordon



Graham, who posed to Dr. Williams the inclination of the insubstantiality of borders without ethical or moral standing. "The Ethics of Territorial Borders" develops a distinctive line of argument, drawing on political theory and geography as well as international relations. It argues that although borders have played a role in ethical discussions about war, about intervention and about identity in international politics, these treat them as possessing derivative significance. Instead, this book critiques such an approach to argue for the ethical significance of borders themselves, pointing to their role in human diversity and the enduring appeal of territorial division.

Additionally, Dr. Williams has recently edited with Richard Little a commentary of Hedley Bull's, *The Anarchical Society*, entitled *The Anarchical Society in the Globalized World* which brings together leading writers on the English school, and analyzes how Bull's account of order fares in the face of globalization. Dr. Williams has also recently been appointed External Examiner for undergraduate degrees in the Department of International Relations at the LSE, and at its AGM in St Andrews in December 2005 I was elected to the Executive Committee of the British International Studies Association, the UK professional academic body for international relations.

Library Wealth at the University of Durham

"There are no great universities without great libraries." This remark by the late Harvard University Professor, sinologist, John King Fairbank summarizes the role of academic libraries in producing first rate university graduates and first rate research production.

Concerning the professional and academic interests of the School of Government and International Affairs, Durham University Library is amongst the best equipped libraries in the United Kingdom. This is clearly reflected in the vast amount of information resources, specialist staff, information skills instruction and partnership between the University of Durham library and the SGIA community.



The Library's information resources include online and print access to key academic journals in English in Middle Eastern and East Asian area studies, politics and international relations, specialist magazines such as the *Middle East Economic Survey*; and over 2000 *Chinese journals*.

Bibliographic databases such as *Web of Knowledge*, *Index Islamicus* enable SGIA researchers and students to track down research, in European languages,

politics and international relations, Muslim world and Asia from as early as 19th century.



The *Middle East Documentation Unit in Durham* is a research resource of national and international importance. The collection, which currently amounts to 215,000 items, comprises statistical publications, policy documents, and economic and social development plans issued by government agencies, political parties and international organizations.

Important scholarly books, principally in English, Chinese and Arabic, are purchased and accessed by an online catalogue that is searchable in the original language of the publication. The *Sudan Archive* in Durham was recognised by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as having outstanding national and international importance under the Designation Scheme in 2005.

The SGIA Liaison Librarian, *Mamtimyn Sunuodula*, has in-depth knowledge of information resources relating to the School's interests as well as competence in Chinese and Arabic. He provides *information skills instruction* to SGIA students and is available for *consultation*. He liaises with the SGIA community, monitors scholarly developments and manages the Library's resources.

Find out more about the Library resources at:

www.dur.ac.uk/library/subject/sgia.htm

Mamtimyn Sunuodula

Conference on Political Reform in GCC countries

The Civility Programme at the Foreign Policy Centre organised a seminar to assess political developments in the GCC countries and determine the direction and future prospects of reform in the region.

Neil Partrick, Senior Analyst at EIU, Dr. Emma Murphy from the University of Durham and Dr. Gerd Nonneman from Lancaster University delivered presentations at this event. In bringing the three speakers together, the seminar attempted to address the following key questions: What are the steps taken to promote political reform within the GCC and what is the progress made by different countries? What are the internal and external pressures for reform in the GCC region? And what directions and future prospects for reform are expected from the GCC countries?

Reform has tended to be top down and largely in response to external and internal pressures for greater accountability and participation. The key question here is whether rulers are willing to push the reform process forward and how this is likely to take shape. Essentially, therefore whether recent developments are indicative of a long term process of change?

A focus on individual country processes is an imperative. Deeper and more targeted examinations of each country's circumstances are essential as we proceed further. The Civility Programme is looking to organise further seminars that will look at particular case studies within the GCC.

*Conference held on April 5, 2006
by The Civility Program (FPC)*

SGIA Bookshelf

“The Ethics of Territorial Borders: Drawing Lines in the Shifting Sands”, by John Williams develops a distinctive line of argument, drawing on political theory and geography as well as international relations. It argues that although borders have played a role in ethical discussions about war, about intervention and about identity in international politics, these treat them as possessing derivative significance. Instead, this book critiques such an approach to argue for the ethical significance of borders themselves, pointing to their role in human diversity and the enduring appeal of territorial division.

“The Anarchical Society in a Globalized World”, by John Williams and Richard Little offers a contemporary commentary on one of the most enduring and important works of international theory: Hedley Bull's “The Anarchical Society”. It brings together leading writers on the English school, and analyzes how Bull's account of order fares in the face of globalization. Following Bull's structure, it considers key concepts, major institutions and alternative approaches to order, and reasserts the enduring insight of Bull's work, whilst responding to major developments in the theory and practice in international relations.

“The Hamas Victory: Shifting Sands or Major Earthquake?”, by Mahjoob Zweiri discusses the background to the Palestinian elections, and it highlights the fact that it is the first democratic elections since 1996. It discusses the reasons for Hamas' participation in the election and the problems they have encountered.

This article also discusses which issues the electoral candidates needed to address in order to win this election. The article highlights the fact that Fatah's days are over due to widespread corruption; further, Zweiri touches on Hamas' need to cooperate with the international community and compromise with Israel. The article emphasizes that Hamas has been democratically elected and, because many obstacles lie ahead, the international community should allow them time while monitoring their progress within the real political realm. This article will be published in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.27(4)2006.

“Communists and British Society 1920-1991: People of a Special Mould”, by Gidon Cohen, Andrew Finn and Kevin Morgan considers the revolutionary appeal of Communism in 20th-century Britain is analyzed in this examination of why Communist Party members joined, how they participated in the party's activities, and why, in many cases, they left the party. The role of Communism in British politics and society is illuminated by discussions of constructions of political authority; the role of gender, generation, and social class; and the significance of political space and mobility in recruitment.

Alumni Affairs

A former graduate student of the department, Kirsti Westphalen currently works in the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Her role involves fostering a greater engagement with the Islamic World. At the moment Kirsti is busy preparing for the Finnish EU Presidency which they will utilise to propose a new approach to this vital issue.

A summary of the Finnish proposals is contained in a speech by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Erkki Tuomioja, entitled ‘Beyond the Cartoon Crisis’, given at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Helsinki on March 14th 2006. A copy of the speech can be located on the website of the Finnish Government: www.government.fi/etuvisu/en.jsp

Will Baharrell, who graduated from the School of Government and International Affairs at the University of Durham, is helping with the initial stages of setting up a project in Kabul called the ‘Turquoise Mountain Project’. ‘It's aim is to conserve part of the medieval city, work with householders to improve their living conditions, restore ancient buildings and create an academy to preserve and develop traditional skills’. The Prince of Wales is the patron of the project.

Staff News

Dr. Julia Stapleton, a senior lecturer in the School of Government and International Affairs, has been successful in securing a grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council for her research project, “The England of G.K. Chesterton: Patriotism, Christianity and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Britain”.

Dr. Gidon Cohen, a lecturer in Politics at the School of Government and International Affairs since September 2005, has received substantial funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council for a two-year project entitled “Party Membership and Activism in the North-east of England, 1945-1974”.