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April 2021

Newsletter

International History and Politics Department
of the Graduate Institute Geneva

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SPOTLIGHT

A Conversation with Priya Satia on the Histories of History

Priya Satia, the Raymond A. Spruance Professor of International History in the Department of History of the School of Humanities and Sciences at Stanford University, sits down with Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou (Professor of International History and Politics and Chair of the Department of International History and Politics at the Graduate Institute in Geneva) to discuss her latest book, *Time's Monster – How History Makes History* in which she investigates the role of historians in political debate.

Read the Interview

INSIGHT

Seeds of Development: Agriculture, History and Politics

By Amalia Ribi Forclaz

Food and agriculture have always been at the heart of the development narrative.

In August 1945, Herbert Lehman, the American Director General of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) – an organisation set up to help with economic reconstruction of war-torn countries in Europe – professed at one of the agency's meetings: "Seed is the most compact form of potential food value. The yield of grains runs around twelve times that of its seed. For peas and beans, the ratio is less but, for most vegetable seeds, it is much greater. One-fourth of a pound of cabbage seed will plant an acre of land to produce some 15 to 20 thousand pounds of cabbage. Seeds offered to starving peoples in Europe and China by the uninvaded countries are producing and will continue to produce the food that will eventually conquer hunger as the armies of the United Nations have conquered the foe".

Read the article

ANALYSIS | **RESEARCH PROJECTS**

On Late Europe: Lateness as a Political Perspective

By Adam Bence Balazs

Is Europe late? And if yes, “late” in what sense? There is a play on words here, a swing between the ordinary meaning of the word (“sorry, I’m late”), and another sense yet to be clarified. Lateness is a political concept that reintroduces the thorny question of time in politics. Given the aesthetic origin of the concept, the question of time is tightly correlated to style, another topic to address in contemporary politics in Europe and beyond. What are the main challenges of the European construction? How does the political concept of lateness take up these challenges? What kind of narrative is “late Europe”?

Read the article

Welcoming Two Eccellenza Professorial Fellows

In September 2021, the Department of International History and Politics will welcome two Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) Eccellenza Professorial Fellows, Dr. Antoine Acker and Dr. Mischa Suter. The SNSF Eccellenza Professorial Fellowships are aimed at highly qualified researchers developing their professorships. Eccellenza supports them in achieving their goal by allowing them to lead a funded research project with their team at a Swiss higher education institution.

Read the article

DOCTORAL FOCUS

Mona Bieling on Landscape and Power in British Mandate Palestine

Mona Bieling is a PhD candidate in the Department of International History and Politics at the Graduate Institute . She is interested in minority-majority relations and, more broadly, how power structures are formed, enforced and maintained. In her PhD research, she looks at these questions in relation to landscape changes in the British Mandate for Palestine (1917-1948). Mona holds a BA in Language and Culture Studies from the University of Utrecht and an MA in International History and Politics from the Graduate Institute. She has spent semesters abroad at the University of Haifa, Israel, as well as at the American University in Cairo, Egypt.

Read the Interview

STUDENT NEWS

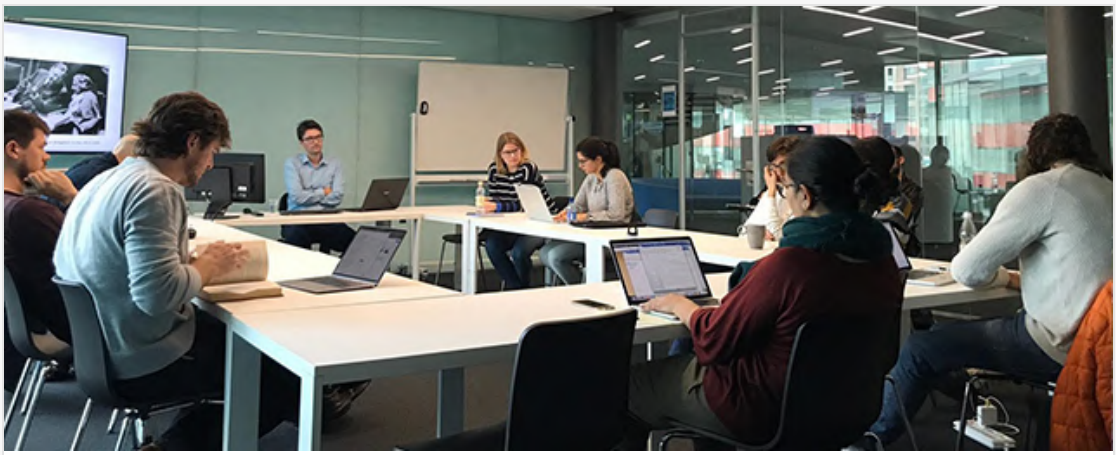
In February, doctoral student Efrat Gilad successfully defended her Ph.D. thesis entitled “Meat in the Heat: A History of Tel Aviv under the British Mandate for Palestine (1920s-1940s)”. Her Supervisor was Professor Davide Rodogno and her Second Reader Professor Cyrus Schayegh . Dr. Lisa Haushofer of the Institute for Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine, University of Zurich, was the External Expert. For her postdoctoral project in the spring 2021, she will join the Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Bern. There she will teach and continue to conduct research that brings together various fields including food history, environmental history, colonialism, and the history of Jews in Palestine. Her peer-reviewed article “ The Child Needs Milk and Milk Needs a Market: The Politics of Nutrition in the Interwar Yishuv” has recently been published in *Gastronimica* vol. 21 issue 1. In March, she gave a talk at the Graduate Institute’s Gender Center entitled: “ How to Eat in Palestine: Women, Nutrition, and the Settler-Colonial Economy under the British Mandate (1920s-1940s)”.

Recent International History and Politics graduate Benjamin Gaillard has been accepted for the post of Assistant in International History at the Faculty of Political Science of University of Lausanne.

International History and Politics Doctoral candidate Shriya Patnaik has published a research paper entitled "Marginalizing the Matriarchal, Minority Subject: A Critical Analysis of Human Rights and Women’s Reform Projects in Colonial and Postcolonial India through the Case-Study of the 'Mahari-Devadasi'" in the Special Issue of the *Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies*. In March, she published a second article in the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) blog on “ The Invisible Voices of India’s Informal Sector Sex Workers”.

Alumnus Nathaniel Powell has published his doctoral dissertation as a book with Cambridge University Press entitled *France's Wars in Chad: Military Intervention and Decolonization in Africa*. The book examines the continuous French military interventions in Chad in the two decades after its independence.

HISTORY BRUNCHES



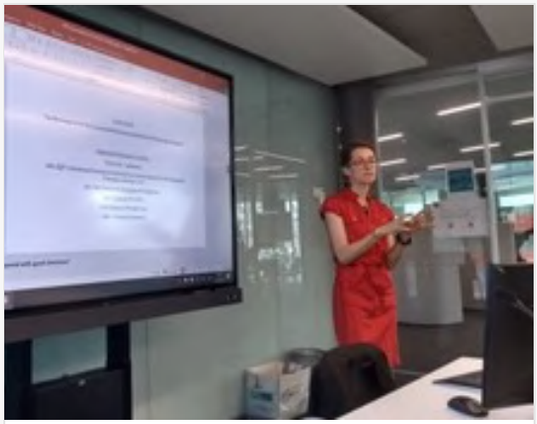
The History Brunches are a series of gatherings by members of the International History Department . The concept of the Brunches is as simple as it is effective: professors, visiting researchers and students are invited to present their projects in front of a small audience. Taking place about 3-4 times per semester since 2015, the brunches have become a forum for intellectual exchange that offer presenters an opportunity to test their ideas in a friendly environment.

Amal Shahid on Grain Riots in late 19th-Century Colonial India

Reflections on Crafting Humanity with Claire Barthelemy

The first History Brunch of the 2021 Spring semester took place on the 3 March, following the Graduate Institute's online format due to Covid-19. During this session, students explored the famine relief policies of the colonial state in the North Western Provinces of Agra and Oudh in India (NWP), as PhD candidate Amal Shahid presented her paper on "Grain riots and the moral economy of famine labour".

Read the Full Event Summary



On 1 April, PhD Student Claire Barthélémy offered an insight of her doctoral dissertation "The Emotional Politics of the Humanitarian Gesture" for the monthly session of the History Brunches. Examining the history of emotions and humanitarianism, Claire discussed the fact that the current narrative on humanitarian actions mostly relies on terms such as "sympathy" or "altruism", without reflecting on the unconscious core of the humanitarian impulse that should also be "love".

Read the Full Event Summary

Upcoming History Brunches

22 April 2021
10:30-11:30
Reconfiguring 'Repatriation' in Global Migration Studies: The Case of Burmese-Indians in West Bengal
Saheli Chatterjee, Master's in International History and Politics candidate
Comments by Professor Michael Goebel of the International History and Politics department

6 May 2021
10:30-11:30
The Market won the Cold War: The G7 and East-West Economic Relations, 1975-1989
Mattia Ravano, PhD in International History and Politics candidate
Comments by Professor Jussi Hanhimaki of the International History and Politics department

3 June 2021
10:30-11:30
The Re-emergence of the Holding Company in Switzerland after WWII
Nicolas Hafner, Master's in International History and Politics candidate
Comments by Professor Rui Esteves of the International History and Politics department

PUBLICATIONS

Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics
Profit, Penury and the Impieties of Inequality? A Retrospective on Martin Luther's "On Trade and Usury" for Our Times

Carolyn Biltoft

Winter 2021
Read the article

Los Angeles Review of Books
Reading Roland Barthes in the Age of Misinformation

Carolyn Biltoft

March 2021
Read the article

A Violent Peace: Media, Truth, and Power at the League of Nations

Carolyn Biltoft

April 2021
Read the book

H-Diplo Article Review Forum

What Riding an Old Triumph Motorcycle Taught Me About International Societies, Academic 'Turns' and Dead-Ends

Davide Rodogno

September 2020
Read the article

Journal of Economic History

The Rise of New Corruption: British MPs during the Railway Mania of 1845

Rui Esteves

Forthcoming

The Economists' Voice

The COVID-19 and Bond Spreads

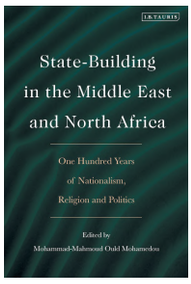
Rui Esteves and Nathan Sussman

August 2020
Read the article

Pax Transatlantica America and Europe in the post-Cold War Era

Jussi Hanhimäki

October 2021
Read the Book



State-Building in the Middle East and North Africa One Hundred Years of Nationalism, Religion and Politics

Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou

November 2021
Read the book

EVENTS

Faculty Activities

Professor Carolyn Biltoft published her book *A Violent Peace - Media, Truth and Power at the League of Nations*, with the University of Chicago Press, and published an article on the semiotics of misinformation in the March issue of the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, entitled " Reading Roland Barthes in the age of Misinformation". She also wrote the forward to issue three of *Capitalism: a Journal of History and Economics* (of which she is an editor), " Profit, Penuary and then Impieties or Inequality? A retrospective on Martin Luther's 'On Trade and Usury' for Our Times".

In December, Professor Nicole Bourbonnais was invited to moderate in a screening co-hosted by the Graduate Institute's Queer International Students Assembly (QISA) and the Gender Centre entitled "Mr. Gay Syria: Film Screening and Panel". Also in January, Professor Bourbonnais participated in the discussion on "Beyond Hero(in)es and Villains: Telling the History of the Global Family Planning Movement," convened by the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU). In March, Professor Bourbonnais was invited by the Department of History Research Colloquium at the University of Basel to give a talk entitled "From Tea Parties to Global Conferences: Grassroots Activism and the 20th Century Family Planning Movement ". She also moderated and participated in two further events: one co-hosted by Graduate Institute's Black Conversations and the Gender Centre entitled "Decolonising the Curriculum and Racism in Academia," and "Belly of the Beast: Film Screening and Panel" co-hosted by the Human Rights, Conflict and Peace Initiative, GISA and the Gender Centre.

Professor Amalia Ribi Forclaz is currently working on a book entitled *Fields of Progress - The International Labour Organization and the Problem of Agriculture, 1920-1960*, under contract with Oxford University Press. Professor Ribi Forclaz is examining interdisciplinary approaches to historical changes in agricultural living and working conditions, a topic she explores this semester with the students of the Interdisciplinary Programme at the Graduate Institute in a course titled " Agrarian Transformation, Land, Labour and Technology". Her recent publications on agriculture include articles for the *International History Review*, the *Journal of Global History* and a forthcoming essay for *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics*.

Professor Rui Esteves has continued to work and circulate his research on international finance - both on the historical background of finance and recent developments. In an article co-authored with Professor Nathan Sussman, he showed how Covid-19 disproportionately affected emerging economies not through the health emergency but their ongoing financial fragilities, which calls for a more resilient safety network and cooperation among monetary and fiscal authorities. In another article forthcoming in the *Journal of Economic History* , Rui Esteves and Gabriel Mesevage test for the presence of vote trading among British MPs to promote bills in which they had a conflict of interests. The article shows that allowing politicians to vote on regulations that benefit them can have a large negative cost for society. Rui Esteves has also given talks at several venues, namely, the annual meetings of the Economic History Society and the Economic History Association. He has also co-organised with Nathan Sussman and Professor Ugo Panizza one of the sessions of the Distributed Sovereign Debt Research and Management Conference (D-DebtCon4) on the topic of Sovereign Debt in History.

Professor Jussi Hanhimäki has been completing his forthcoming book *Pax Transatlantica: America and Europe in the Post-Cold War Era* that will be published by Oxford University Press in June 2021. In November, he delivered a lecture on the theme of the book for the SAIS Bologna Foreign Policy Institute and spoke at a conference at the University of Genova in February 2021. Professor Hanhimäki continues to direct the Swiss part of trinational project The CSCE Follow-up Meeting in Vienna (1986-1989). Struggling for Human Rights and European security at the End of the Cold War.

Professor Susanna Hecht is completing work on her new book entitled *The Last Unfinished Page of Genesis - Amazonia and its Futures*. In March, she gave a lecture at the University of California at Santa Barbara Bren School of Environmental Science and Management on " Is there a Future for the Amazon? From Eco Catastrophe to Zero Deforestation and Back". She has been pursuing her work with the Science Panel for the Amazon , an international collaboration of over 200 scientists of Amazonia preparing a comprehensive assessment report on the ecology, dynamics of change and urgency of alternative models. In May, she will address the "Rethinking Nature and Society in Latin America" at Columbia University, and in June will deliver a keynote lecture before the Earth Archive Congress.

Professor Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou has been working on his new book, *State-Building in the Middle East and North Africa – One Hundred Years of Religion, Nationalism and Politics* , coming out this autumn with Bloomsbury London. In March, he delivered a lecture with Professor Carolyn Biltoft on "The Arab Spring in History", and recorded a podcast for the series *What Matters Today* on the same topic at the occasion of the ten-year anniversary of the Arab Spring. In January, he spoke on a panel on reforming democracy at the Sciences Po Youth and Leaders Summit 2021 "Wars and Peace: Solving Conflicts and Building Human Security", and published an article in *Violence – An International Journal* on the topic of "What is Contemporary Violence? ". In February, he was invited by the students of the Sorbonne University School of Law to speak on right-wing extremist movements in the United States. In March, he co-chaired with Professor Davide Rodogno an international discussion on "Addressing Systemic Racism and Promoting Justice at Home as a United States Foreign Policy Imperative", a high-level Human Rights Council side event co-convened by the United States Mission in Geneva and the Graduate Institute, and took part, with Professor Rodogno, in a debate on the journeys of fear at the Festival Histoire et Cité. He also took part in a discussion convened by the City of Geneva on the question of statues, public celebration and history. In April, the International Studies Association (ISA) organised an international roundtable entitled "Thinking International Relations Beyond the West" in honour of Professor Mohamedou at the occasion of his receiving the 2021 Global South Distinguished Scholar Award. Amongst the participants were Sciences Po's Bertrand Badie, University of Pennsylvania's Robert Vitalis, King's College Funmi Olonisakin and American University of Cairo's Bahgat Korany.

Professor Davide Rodogno gave a paper entitled "About to Die: Variations on a Theme, Visual Rights and (Invisibilities)" during the launch of Professor Patricia Spyer 's Swiss National Science Foundation project "Images, (In)visibilities and Work on Appearances". In January, he participated in two seminars, one on humanitarianism and another on American Women's Hospitals, by Professor Mlada Bukovansky at a conference on International Organisations at Smith College. In February, he took part in an online event organised by the Graduate Institute Executive Education Programme on "What Future for Advocacy Campaigns? Black Lives Matter – A Case Study"; and worked in collaboration with professors Sandrine Kott and Véronique Stenger for the History of International Organizations Network (HION), holding a roundtable on "Covid-19 and the Access of International Organizations". In December, Professor Rodogno also participated in an online exchange with the Justice Rapid Response on the pros and cons of online presentations as part of a Graduate Institute event entitled "Advocacy in Pandemic Times: Between a Rock and a Hard Place". Together with Professor Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou , Professor Rodogno chaired a discussion in March on "Addressing Systemic Racism and Promoting Justice at Home as a United States Foreign Policy Imperative", a high-level Human Rights Council side event on racial justice, co-organised with the US Mission in Geneva in partnership with the Graduate Institute. Professors Rodogno and Mohamedou also co-convened an event for Histoire et Cité on "Voyages aux Sources de la Peur" on 27 March 2021 in

Geneva.

Recent and Upcoming Events

Thursday 8 April 2021 (Rescheduled to later this Spring)
16:15-18:00
Neither Settler nor Native: The Making of and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities
Mahmood Mamdani, Columbia University

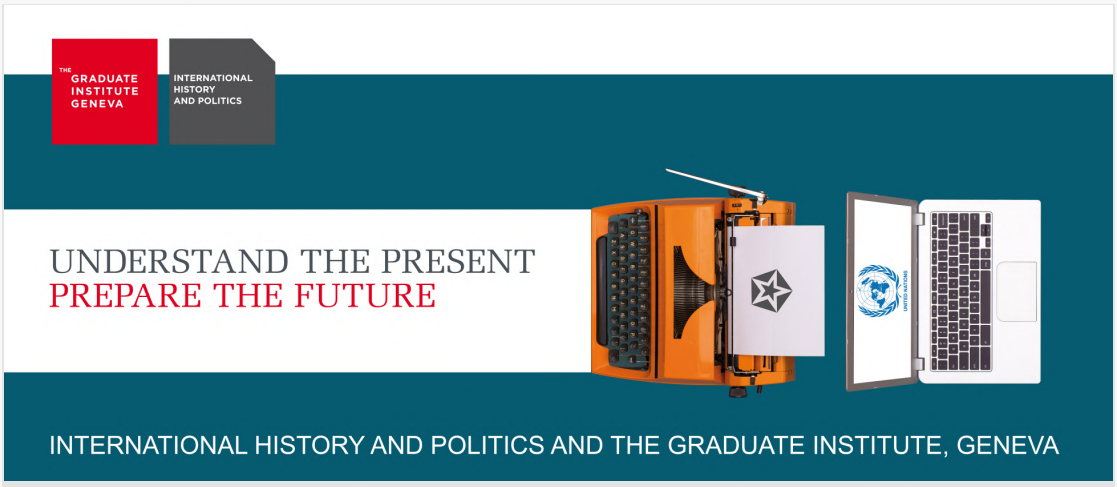
Monday 12 April 2021
16:00-17:30
Disclosing the Problem of Empire in the International Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois
Adom Getachew, University of Chicago

Tuesday 13 April 2021
16:15-18:00
The Politics of Rural Domesticity in Segregationist South Africa
Julia Tischler, University of Basel

Tuesday 27 April 2021
16:15-18:00
The United States as a Developing Nation: Disciplining Capital on the American Frontier
Noam Maggor, Queen Mary University London

Tuesday 11 May 2021
12:30-13:30
Contested Sites of Birth: Faith-Based Birthing Homes and the Search for Legitimacy in Nigeria
Ogechukwu Ezekwem, Creighton University

Wednesday 2 June 2021 - Friday 4 June 2021
15:00-18:30
Eighth CEPR Economic History Symposium
Generously supported by The Graduate Institute, Geneva, the University of Geneva, the Swiss National Bank and CEPR



Uniquely located to study the making of international policies and the global history that stands behind it, the International History and Politics Department of the Graduate Institute researches and teaches the contemporary world through its different histories and from a multiplicity of perspectives.

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