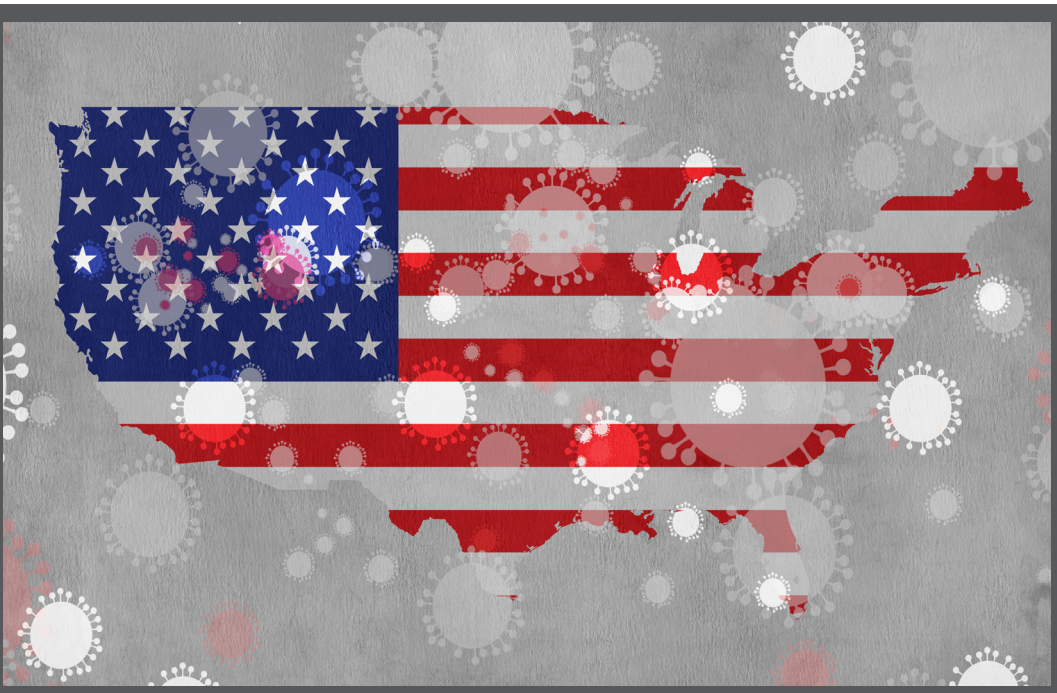
précis

SPRING/SUMMER
2020



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MIT CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

director'smessage

Richard Samuels

Richard Samuels is Director of the Center for International Studies and Ford International Professor of Political Science.

Photo courtesy Pablo Castagnola Fotograf & Einstein Stiftung, Berlin

More than 70 years ago, MIT established the Center for International Studies to conduct research to help the United States in its cold war struggle against the Soviet Union. Before long, however, the Center broadened its focus to include research and teaching in a wide range of international subjects, among them development studies, comparative politics, international relations, social movements, security studies, and international science and technology.

MIT and the Center have always sought to bridge the worlds of the scholar and the policymaker by offering each a place to exchange thoughts and perspectives with the other and by encouraging academics to work on policy-relevant problems.

As we struggle in the midst of a global pandemic and wrestle with racial and social injustice at home and abroad, it should go without saying that world affairs continue to challenge us all. The relevance of the knowledge we generate and the quality of the recommendations we make are tested daily, reminding us with often painful urgency of our responsibilities as educators and public intellectuals. Center scholars continue to strive to be up to the challenges. ■

Contesting the Iranian Revolution: The Green Uprisings

Pouya Alimagham

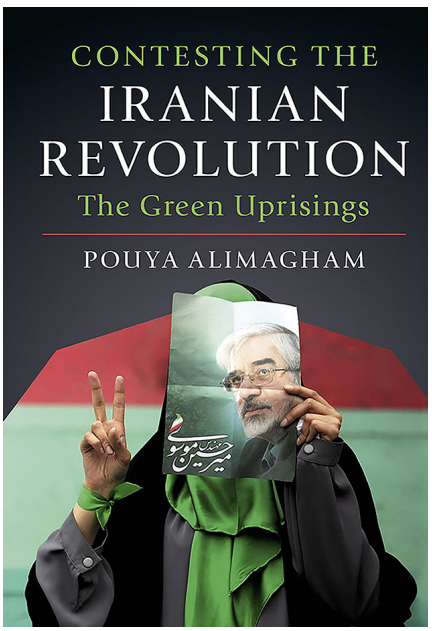
Pouya Alimagham harnesses the wider history of Iran and the Middle East to highlight how activists contested the Islamic Republic's legitimacy to its very core. This excerpt is from his recent book on Iran's Green Uprisings.

facultyfeature
Pouya Alimagham

Pouya Alimagham is a historian of the modern Middle East, with a focus on Iran, Iraq, and the Levant.

Featured here is an excerpt from his book, "Contesting the Iranian Revolution: The Green Uprisings" (Cambridge University Press, February 2020).

Photos courtesy Department of History and Cambridge University Press



Iran is one of a number of countries that give real-world application to the Orwellian mantra that "history is written by the victors."[1] Indeed, the militant clerics who consolidated power at the expense of all the other revolutionary factions have worked tirelessly to present their version of the Iranian Revolution's history as the only version, best encapsulated by the state's preferred revolutionary slogan, "Independence, Freedom, Islamic Republic" (esteqlāl, āzādī, jomhūrī-ye eslāmī). For years, the Iranian government has presented this one-sided history to the benefit of its ruling class and self-affirming ideology.

Just as the events of 1978-1979 are far more complex and disputed than the state would like to admit, the historic uprising of 2009 is equally contentious. Years after the revolt, the Iranian government continued to refer to the Green Movement as "the sedition"—a conspiracy orchestrated from abroad and without organic roots within the country.[2] Inspired by studies that have contested the official narrative of the Iranian Revolution, this work aspires to do the same with the official narrative of the uprising in 2009.

Iran's protracted post-election uprising, the Green Movement, erupted more than two years before the protest movement in Tunisia ignited the firestorm of revolution that became known as the Arab Spring ("Arab Uprisings").[3] Iran's revolt was hailed as the largest and most formidable challenge to the Iranian state since the seismic events of 1978-1979 that shaped the way regional leaders, military officers, foreign heads of state, journalists, analysts and commentators, and, most significantly, various peoples view Iran and the Middle East. The Iranian Revolution of thirty years before, perhaps more than any other revolution of the twentieth century, created a "shock-wave" with ramifications that were "felt round the world"[4] and which continue to reverberate throughout the country and the region.

In 2011, observers and politicians viewed Egypt, an Arab country that has not had formal relations with Iran since the Iranian Revolution, through the prism of the very revolution that precipitated the severance of ties between the two. As popular forces engulfed Egypt in revolt against Hosni Mubarak, the country's "Arab president for life,"[5] American and Israeli leaders invoked the specter of Egypt becoming the "next Iran." Israeli Premier Benyamin Netanyahu stated, "Our real fear is of a situation that could develop... and which has already developed in several countries, including Iran itself: repressive regimes of radical Islam."[6] In an open letter to President Obama, American Senator Mark Kirk called for direct US intervention in the affairs of Egypt to support the "secular nationalists" and take action to "defeat" the Muslim Brotherhood so the organization did not "follow Iran's revolution, turning Egypt into a state-sponsor of terror."[7] In the aftermath of Mubarak's ousting, the ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) declared that "Egypt will not be governed by another Khomeini."[8] Even Ayatollah 'Ali Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader, referenced Iran's 1978-1979 revolution, claiming that it served as an exemplar for action for fellow Muslims in the era of the Arab Uprisings.

Today's events in North Africa, Egypt, Tunisia, and several others, have a different meaning for the Iranian nation. They have a special meaning. These events are part of

"Inspired by studies that have contested the official narrative of the Iranian Revolution, this work aspires to do the same with the official narrative of the uprising in 2009."

the Islamic Awakening, which can be said is itself a result of the victory of the great Islamic Revolution of the Iranian nation.[9]

Some similarities such as strikes were key to both the Iranian Revolution and the Arab revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. Despite the fact that no strikes occurred during the heyday of the Green Movement, the Arab Spring had more in common with the Iranian activists of 2009 in terms of their goals, youth demographic, and use of modern technologies, than with the Khomeini-led revolution and its outcome, but such commonalities either made for politically inconvenient comparisons at best or Orientalist generalizations at worst.

According to Kirk, Netanyahu, the SCAF, and Khamenei, it was of no consequence that the Iranian Revolution and the uprising in Egypt were separated by more than three decades with an abundance of differences. Such a generalization and simplification minimizes the social, demographic, political, cultural, geographical, and historical factors that distinguish these two countries and their historical trajectories. The leaps of history overlooked many significant differences: economic factors, the fundamental differences between Iranian Shi'ism and Egyptian Sunnism, the role of ideology, the subtle but important distinctions in these countries' Islamist movements, and the degree of autonomy of each countries' religious institutions vis-à-vis the state. Furthermore, the Cold War context crucial to Iran in 1979 and the contemporary political nuances relevant to Egypt, and the geographical realities between Iran bordering the Soviet Union in 1978 and Egypt bordering Israel and a Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip in 2011 are all disregarded to draw problematic parallels.[10] Moreover, such a narrow perspective ignores the crucial role of the sizable Christian minority in Egypt that makes it all the more difficult for Egypt to become the "next Iran."[11]

Similarly, the Green Movement of 2009 could not avoid being seen through the prism of the Iranian Revolution. The actual connection between the two, however, is much more profound. Whereas in the context of the 2011 uprising in Egypt, foreign leaders either drew upon their limited knowledge of the Iranian Revolution in anxiety or invoked that history in the service of their political agendas, journalists inside Iran referenced the Iranian Revolution when reporting nearly every momentous occasion in the uprising in order to underscore its historical gravity. For instance, Al Jazeera's opening line in its report of the second day of the uprising referred to it as "the biggest unrest since the 1979 revolution,"[12] "The largest and most widespread demonstrations since the 1979 Islamic revolution..."[13] For outsiders the revolt did indeed invoke the Iranian Revolution because it brought millions of Iranians to the streets in defiance of their government.

The street marches were one of the most awe-inspiring and memorable aspects of the Iranian Revolution. Millions of women and men marched, often under the threat of state violence, to register their revolutionary protest against the monarch's absolutism. Charles Kurzman, author of *The Unthinkable Revolution* in Iran, notes that "It is almost unheard of for a revolution to involve as much as 1 percent of a country's population. The French Revolution of 1789, the Russian Revolution of 1917, perhaps the Romanian Revolution of 1989—these may have passed the 1 percent mark."[14] Yet, on December 10 and 11, 1978, between six and nine million Iranians (some have esti-

mated the number as high as 17 million[15], between a third and half of the population, took part in demonstrations in what Kurzman believes could have been "the largest protest event in history."[16] So vaunted and historically consequential were these street demonstrations that post-revolutionary[17] Iranian leaders advised Palestinians "to deploy the multi-million tactic to destroy the Israeli army and Israel itself."[18] The long span of three decades did not dissuade journalists from invoking the events of 1979 when the 2009 post-election uprising likewise prompted millions of Iranians to once again flood the streets against their government. As before, they voted with their feet, and under the threat of state violence, against a government that they believed did not respect the ballot box.

The uprising in 2009, however, shares a deeper history with 1978-1979 that transcends the time and space of the momentous street demonstrations. The repertoires of action that were cemented in the official narrative of the revolution informed the actions of Green Movement activists in 2009, giving their reprogrammed methods historically infused importance and meaning. ■

For the bibliography see Page 17.

briefings

The inspector general's badge of honor

Joel Brenner, CIS

Last April, we saw a new entry inscribed in the catalog of sordid presidential behaviors, and this one will wreak further damage to the nation's political culture. It was done in the dark, late at night, amid the distracting noise of the COVID-19 emergency. I mean the firing of Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community's inspector general.

Atkinson's sin was doing his job as it was meant to be done: Acting pursuant to statute, he forwarded to the Hill a whistleblower complaint regarding Trump's threat to cut off military aid to Ukraine unless Ukraine's president launched a groundless complaint into Hunter Biden's supposed corruption in Ukraine. Atkinson's action effectively spiked Trump's effort to induce a foreign government to muddy Hunter's father, Joe Biden, who is the only democrat Donald Trump is afraid of. To Trump, this was an act of consummate disloyalty, never to be forgiven. So the president bided his time until, late last Friday night, he fired Atkinson, saying he had "lost confidence" in him. Statutory obligations be damned, this president will not tolerate an executive branch political appointee who is not loyal to his agenda.

Joel Brenner, formerly the inspector general of the National Security Agency (2002-2006) and the head of counterintelligence in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (2006-2009), is a senior research fellow at CIS.

But Atkinson did not owe his loyalty to Donald Trump. He owed his loyalty to the constitution and to his duties under the statute that created his office and the Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act. As an IG he was outside the management chain of command and thus had an unusual degree of independence, but he was a senate confirmed executive branch official. Atkinson was appointed by, and could therefore be removed by, the president.

The president's power to remove senate confirmed officials is not stated in the constitution. That power is grounded in the president's constitutional duty to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." In this case, ironically, Trump removed Atkinson for having faithfully executed the law.

There is substantial if disputed supreme court authority for the proposition that congress can place limits on the president's ability to fire a senate-confirmed official who is not part of the Cabinet or the White House staff which Atkinson was not. But congress has not done so in any of the acts creating inspectors general throughout the federal government. And with a lap-dog senate on a tight presidential leash, this president faces no congressionally imposed limits on behavior that until his inauguration day was beyond the pale of American political culture.

As a result of this firing, federal IGs no longer enjoy a reasonable certainty in their tenure of office, which the IG acts intend them to have. This will inevitably and adversely affect their independence. The chilling effect is unmistakable. (In my experience, public officials are not truly independent if they cannot make a living doing something else and have not thought through the circumstances in which they would refuse to continue to serve, but that's another matter.)

Trump has consistently and often shockingly exploited the difference between the non-statutory norms of political culture and illegality. That he does so in the name of political conservatism is preposterous, because conservatives generally emphasize the importance of the decency, honesty, respect, traditions, and mutual accommodations without which no civil society can flourish, and which Trump trashes at every opportunity. Nevertheless, Trump has moved the boundaries of acceptable presidential style and action, or eliminated them altogether, and we would delude ourselves to think those boundaries will automatically revert to the status quo ante when he leaves office.

As for decency or its absence, Trump was not content to fire Atkinson. He slandered him too, calling him "a total disgrace" who did "a terrible job." This is a lie. I met Atkinson when he was in the justice department and we were on opposite sides of a difficult negotiation. He was forthright, direct, and a good listener – important traits for any prosecutor or IG. I know him to be a decent man. As the IC IG, he did his office credit. But being slandered by the president of the United States hurts. When Atkinson finishes licking his wounds, however, he will realize that being slandered by this president for having done his duty is a badge of honor. He should wear it proudly. ■

briefings

Unearthing the stories of yesterday's George Floyds

Melissa Nobles, SHASS

"When we call the victims' descendants to share our findings, they tell us 'I never thought I'd get this call.' The scars remain, and luckily, because we have found documents, so does proof." This opinion piece, written by Melissa Nobles, appeared first in **The Boston Globe** (July 17, 2020).

Melissa Nobles is the Kenan Sahin Dean of MIT's School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and a professor of political science.

Photos courtesy Department of Political Science and iStock

In 1945, a 46-year-old Black man was arrested in St Augustine, Fla.

He was on his way home. Before he, his two brothers, and a friend could get there, they were stopped by a police officer and taken to jail. Three of the four were released quickly. Probably sensing the fourth man, still locked up, might be at risk, they went to get their boss, a white manager at the turpentine camp where they all worked. When the boss arrived at the jail, the fourth man was dead. He had been beaten to death in a cell by the blackjack-wielding police officer who had arrested him.

The dead man's name was George Floyd.

There were no demonstrations after his death. No lawyer challenged the conclusion of the county coroner's jury that Floyd had resisted arrest. No one questioned the coroner's entry of "accident" on Floyd's death certificate as the cause of death. A letter to the national NAACP explained that Floyd, unarmed, protested repeated searches of his person in the cell and a scuffle ensued, whereupon the arresting officer beat him to death. The NAACP, overwhelmed with similar cases, could not assist.

Today, we are acutely aware of state-sponsored racial violence. We refer to the long history of racist police killings, often knowing far too little about that history. We now pledge to support structural criminal justice reform. Dynamic and enduring solutions depend, in part, on solid data about police violence and its victims. A national database is needed today. Historical data are needed to understand our past.

For a decade, my collaborator, Margaret Burnham, director of the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University, and I have been unearthing records that tell the stories of yesterday's George Floyds. When we call the descendants of these men and women to share our findings, they tell us, "I never thought I'd get this call." The scars remain, and luckily, because we have found these documents, so does proof.

Sometimes, there is just one article, often from a Black newspaper. With that one article as our first clue, we work with students of law and journalism, historians, political scientists, and law professors to fill out the story. The stories, many hundreds of them now, are particular in their details, as all stories are. However, there are important similarities across the cases. Most commonly, police officers and other law enforcement officials fail to protect the alleged suspect in their charge from a vigilante mob. Or there is a seemingly inconsequential encounter with the police, and a Black person ends up dead. Or, while in the care of the police, the detained man ends up dead. In many of these custodial cases—as in this George Floyd's case—police reports falsely claim the suspect was armed "with a knife."

History matters as we think about Black lives and policing today. Gunnar Myrdal, in the magisterial "An American Dilemma," published in 1944, identifies the role played by white police in the Jim Crow era. The white officer, Myrdal wrote, "stands not only for civic order as defined in formal laws and regulations, but also for 'white supremacy' and the whole set of social customs associated with this concept." That civic order, one of racial segregation and subordination by law and custom, was to be

maintained by the police. And the police were expected to be vigilant in their work. Myrdal's description also implicates white Southern society. After all, they were the ones who called the police when a Black person had allegedly committed a crime or was "out of line." The police did little to Black Americans that white Americans did not want done.

Today's demands that policing and criminal justice be reformed must be understood as the demands befitting a democratic civic order. The civil rights movement sought to democratize America. Now we must finish the work of that great social movement and democratize policing. And, as we do so, we must not forget the thousands of Black victims of police violence whose graves lay unmarked and lives unsung. Know their names. ■

Yukio Okamoto, Japanese diplomat and MIT research fellow, dies at 74

Yukio Okamoto, a Japanese diplomat and fellow at MIT, died from Covid-19 on April 24 at the age of 74. The former special advisor to two prime ministers of Japan joined the Center for International Studies (CIS) in 2012 as a Robert E Wilhelm fellow and served as a distinguished research fellow at CIS until his death.

"Yukio brought to MIT an unparalleled set of experiences on the world stage. A great loss of a great man—and friend of us all," said Richard Samuels, Ford International Professor of Political Science and director of CIS.

Samuels said in an interview with Japan's media outlet *NHK* that Okamoto never stopped working vigorously for better understanding

During his MIT tenure, Okamoto gave dozens of public presentations around the United States on topics related to tions and to Asian international relations.

between the United States and Japan, and that he has never known anyone to be more committed to maintaining healthy bilateral relations than Okamoto was.

From 1968 to 1991, Okamoto was a career diplomat in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His overseas postings included stints in Paris at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and in the embassies in Cairo, Egypt, and Washington. He retired from the ministry in 1991 and established Okamoto Associates, a political and economic consultancy.

Post-retirement, Okamoto had served in a number of advisory positions. From 1996 to 1998, he was special advisor to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. From October 2001 to March 2003, he was special advisor to the cabinet. From March 2003 to March 2004, he was special advisor on Iraq to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Concurrent with the above last two posts, he was chair of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations. Until September 2008, he was a member of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's Study Group on Diplomacy.

Okamoto was an adjunct professor of international relations at Ritsumeikan University as well as Tohoku University. He sat on the boards of directors of several multinational companies. He also served as the president of Shingen'eki Net, a nonprofit group for active seniors with 16,000 members. In addition, Okamoto wrote books on Japanese diplomacy and government and was a regular contributor to major newspapers and magazines. He was a well-known public speaker and a frequent guest on public affairs and news broadcasts.

While at MIT, Okamoto was an informal mentor to graduate students and a highly valued colleague to faculty and research staff. He worked with a study group from MIT and Harvard University to produce most of the text for a forthcoming memoir. The Center for International Studies will continue to work with his family and colleagues to bring this to fruition.

Okamoto also, during his MIT tenure, gave dozens of public presentations around the United States on topics related to US-Japan relations and to Asian international relations. He did all this while working vigorously behind the scenes to repair Japan's relationship with China and to help those in need in northeastern Japan after the triple catastrophes of March 2011—the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdown. He also founded the Signal of Hope Fund, an initiative he established to assist the Tohoku fisheries industry recover from these disasters. ■

briefings

Fellowship is at the heart of Covid-19 response in Nigeria

MISTI

Ameer Mohammed (center, in suit) showcases prototypes early last month to the Nigerian chief of air staff at the Air Force Institute of Technology.

Photo courtesy MISTI

When Amir Bature came to MIT from Bayero University Kano (BUK) in Nigeria as part of the Empowering the Teachers (ETT) program, he was amazed at his shift in perspective during his time on campus. "The first time we arrived at MIT, there were a lot of things where we said 'no, this is impossible.' But before we left, it was all possible!" He had no idea that he would soon be applying this mindset to a public health crisis in his home country of Nigeria.

As Covid-19 began to overtake the world, the ETT fellows watched the disease wreak havoc on countries with a far more robust medical infrastructure than Nigeria. With the virus fast approaching, they knew there had to be something they could do to help their country. One of the most urgent problems they saw arising worldwide was the lack of ventilators. While Nigeria has a population of 200 million (nearly two-thirds of the United States), the country only has a few hundred ventilators, with most of those clustered in a few urban areas. It was evident that coming up with an affordable and portable solution was going to be critical in order to save lives in the fight against Covid-19.

When ETT Faculty Director Professor Tayo Akinwande first came across plans for the MIT Emergency Ventilator (E-Vent), he saw the potential the device had to assist with the health crisis in Nigeria. The E-Vent project proposed an innovative plan to automate manual resuscitators as a potential means for longer-term ventilation. Its portability and affordability made it an ideal solution, and he knew it could be deployed by ETT alumni in-country. "ETT fellows all have a trailblazing spirit," says Akinwande. "They are leaders in their fields and well-positioned to make a life-and-death impact across Nigeria." He digitally approached the fellows with the plans for MIT's E-Vent, and they were instantly inspired.

President of ETT Fellows Alumni Network Victor Odumuyiwa helped mobilize the plan. "After talking with Tayo, we said, 'OK, let's see what the fellows' network can do so that we can have more people contributing to this,'" says Odumuyiwa, senior lecturer and director for the Center for Information Technology and Systems at the University of Lagos. Through the network, they quickly worked to unite groups of fellows nationwide.

Many of the fellows had already been hard at work with their respective teams across the country. They quickly unified their efforts and began strategizing together. This cooperative effort was critical in facing the endless hurdles faced when trying to take the E-Vent from design to fabrication in Nigeria. The lack of resources and current lockdown required a great deal of creativity and teamwork to manage. "I didn't have access to my workshop, but I immediately knew who could do this," says Olusoji Ilori, senior lecturer in the Department of Electronic/Electrical Engineering at Obafemi Awolowo University. "I have been to the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT), and I knew Dr. Ameer Mohammed had everything he would need in-house. They were able to make drones with local materials, so I knew they would be able to make such a thing very fast."

Empowering the Teachers (ETT) program is offered through the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI).

The fellows have been met with overwhelming support from their respective teams as they work on their prototypes. Mohammed's team at the AFIT showcased prototypes early last month, and the Nigerian chief of air staff offered them any necessary support for the project. Fellows at BUK mobilized a team consisting of other members of staff in the faculty of engineering and obtained special permission to access their labs, even with the rest of the city in full lockdown. "We try to show that whatever we say, we can push and make it happen," says Muhammad Buhari. "Whatever we say we want to do, the university feels that, yes, this is going to happen and this is going to help."

Teams have been successfully advancing on the E-Vent project using locally available materials. "We were able to develop a prototype in which we use a car wiper motor due to the non-availability of the required DC motor," says Mubarak D. Muhammad from the BUK team. "We also developed our own control algorithm." This new milestone is key, as while MIT's plans for the E-Vent are available, their code to operate it is still being finalized. Now that the team at BUK has successfully developed their code (control algorithm), they have created the first working prototype. The next challenge is testing (animal and clinical trials). As this is perhaps the first medical device ever built in Nigeria, teams have had to create their own rigorous testing protocols.

The ventilator was only the beginning of the fellows' work to help support their country in the fight against Covid-19. They have other plans in progress, including designing sanitization machines, isolations units, and personal protective equipment, as well as developing new data visualization and prediction models.

"I am so amazed by what the fellows have been accomplishing," says ETT Program Manager Yoav Danenberg. "They truly embody what our program is all about: investing in people to make a real difference in the region." The MISTI team is excited for the future of the ETT program. It is evident that their mission to support teachers and research in Nigeria has spread far beyond the classroom, and they look forward to welcoming the future fellows as a lasting part of the MIT community.

As for the fellows on the ground in Nigeria, they are just getting started. A running prototype and active models have been substantial early wins, but these are just the first steps for the teams on a mission to save lives. The fellows are checking in regularly on a consistently growing list of concurrent projects that have also attracted support from Total Nigeria. Total is a major partner that makes MISTI's ETT program possible, and their interest will help the teams save even more lives across the country, creating a much better forecast for the country than might have been imagined one month ago.

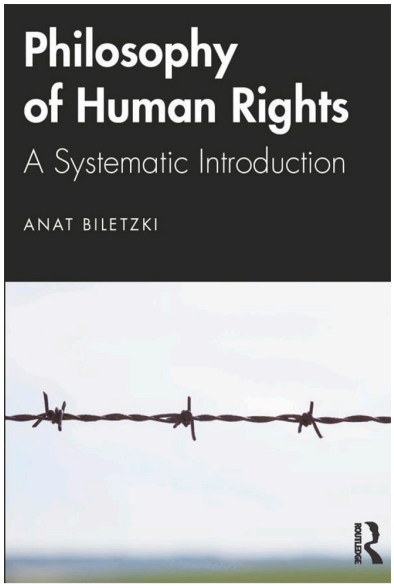
"That's the MIT spirit, you have to find a way," says Buhari. "We don't see anything as insurmountable. We feel we can do anything we want to do. We are free to do it." ■

précisinterview

Anat Biletzki

Biletski served as chairperson of B'Tselem—the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (2001–2006) and was nominated among the "1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize—2005."

Her most recent book is "Philosophy of Human Rights: A Systematic Introduction" (Routledge, October 2019).



Anat Biletzki is the Albert Schweitzer Professor of Philosophy at Quinnipiac University, a research affiliate at CIS, and founding co-director of the MIT Human Rights and Technology Fellowship Program.

précis: Can you tell us about the work that the Human Rights and Technology Program does and what it offers to MIT students?

AB: The program is invested in teaching human rights, but teaching in a very deep sense of the word "teaching." It is not about classes. It is about actually getting students to engage with human rights. The "work" is getting students to think of their own projects, which can be completed in a semester or a year, that link human rights with technology.

For a brief background: The Center had a human rights and justice program when I first arrived in 2007. That program, unfortunately, became inactive. Years later, John Tirman, Richard Samuels, and I started talking about a new human rights program. We determined that the program should focus on MIT's strength in technology. Our vision, then, was to add the human rights component and thus explore on a grand scale how technology either aids or hinders human rights.

John Tirman and I co-direct the program. Each fall we send out a request for proposals to MIT students to apply for the annual fellowship. The program started just last year, in 2018-19, with its first cohort of students.

We've now accepted our second group which involves seven projects and ten students. The projects are amazingly diverse and come from both undergraduate and graduate students across the Institute.

One student is working on the use of technology in monitoring migrants at the US-Mexico border. Another student is working in Micronesia, looking at Facebook Groups and the issue of labor exploitation of migrant workers. An evolving group project began with looking at how social media promotes activism for workers' rights. And we have other students working on questions of indigenous knowledge, indigenous culture and indigenous groups, and how access to their own resources is helped or hindered by technology..

précis: What has been the reception to the program by undergraduate and graduate students?

AB: The reception has been less than I had imagined. I expected we would have 100 applicants for six positions. Last year we accepted something like 50% of applicants. This year it is probably 30% of the applicants. As these things go, it takes a while for students to hear about new research opportunities. It takes a longer while for students to think it is worthwhile to participate in. But what we are seeing, and what gives me great hope, is that the students involved are getting more and more excited. And going forward, I suspect the public relations aspect will be much easier because these students will be sharing their enthusiasm with their peers.

This goes beyond the level of what you need for a resume: It is about the awareness of human rights in the very technological world that we live in. In that sense, the students have said that it has opened their eyes to a different level of engaging with technology. This gives me great gratification because it is always the human rights factor that is in the forefront of my mind.

précis: How do you hope the program will continue to grow in the future?

AB: Of course, I'd like it to "grow" in the very mundane sense of having more people. For example, if we could have 20 projects a year, we'd have a more vibrant program. What we're noticing now is how the projects are enriching one another and how the group as a whole is working together. If it's a bigger group with more projects, it widens the horizons of what we can do.

On a less concrete level, I want the program to be asking deeper questions about whether technology is good or bad for human rights, and grappling with how we deal with the encroachment of technology. In that sense, I see this program as being a great contribution in the way human rights is perceived and done all around the world, not just at MIT.

précis: What has surprised you the most in founding and directing the program?

The biggest surprise to me is how little MIT students—and such brilliant students—know about human rights. They bring with them a certain idea that anybody who wants to do good for humanity is doing human rights. But human rights is a very well-defined area. There is a language, there is terminology, there is human rights law. And you have to know those! On the positive side, I have been amazed at the speed and depth with which these students do their work. Within two weeks of our first meeting, they are human rights "experts." They read, they investigate, they absorb everything they hear.

précis: You recently wrote a book, "Philosophy of Human Rights: A Systematic Introduction". What inspired you to explore human rights through this lens?

AB: There is much work done on human rights in legal studies and just as much in political science. Far less so in philosophy. (Ironically, because it took so long to write the book, there are now many more philosophical works on human rights as well.)

Anat Biletzki

"I have been amazed at the speed and depth with which these students do their work. Within two weeks of our first meeting, they are human rights 'experts.' They read, they investigate, they absorb everything they hear."

As I was writing the book, however, the critique of human rights became more and more substantive and I realized that the questions we have been raising over the past few decades are very deep interrogations. Alas, I got stuck because I realized how much critique there actually is from the philosophical perspective, which is different from the criticisms of practice. Criticism means you think something is being done wrongly. Critique is asking questions to better understand both what you think you are doing and what you really are doing.

Interestingly, that became the double impetus: the reason I wanted to write the book was to explore the philosophical angle, and the reason it became more convoluted than I wanted was the questioning of everything I was writing.

précis: Can you give us a brief overview of how you thought about systematically approaching a topic as amorphous as human rights?

AB: I am nothing if not systematic. When I do philosophy that is other than human rights, what I do is logic, philosophy of science, philosophy of language. This is called, in philosophical jargon, "analytic philosophy." The original goal was to do analytic philosophy, i.e., to analyze the concepts that invigorate human rights. I then realized that I had to do some historical conceptualization because this is a field that has a history (though many would say not a very long history). Some scholars start it after World War II with the United Nations, others start it with the concept of liberal rights in the 17th century. I thought this should be relayed systematically, so that we understand where we are coming from. Next, I aimed to conceptualize the main terms: what does "human" mean, what are "rights"; the concept of "dignity," etc, and that also was a systematic part. So I aimed to tell the history, analyze the concepts, and then ask philosophical questions about the practice.

précis: What is the most common misunderstanding that academics and practitioners have about human rights that you sought to dispel in writing this book?

AB: A leading misconception is the acceptance of the conventional wisdom that human rights are a matter for individuals—that human rights are the rights of individuals against their state. I say that this is a misconception because, even though that is what human rights were or were thought of originally, beginning in the second half of the 20th century, and definitely now in the 21st century, we are witnessing thinkers and practitioners challenging this concept of human rights.

Human rights needs to be widened to talk about group rights, not just individual rights, and to deal with rights of equality, not just rights of liberty. This is something we have to deliberately teach more of now, because our regular traditional way of teaching human rights was based on the old individualistic, liberal worldview. We have to rethink what we mean by human rights, and such rethinking has to happen even under our smaller umbrella of technology and human rights**.** ■

Bibliography from Faculty Feature: "Contesting the Iranian Revolution: The Green Uprisings" (Page 3)

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2. Fetneh-ye 88 tot'eh-ye doshman 'alayh-i īrān būd." *Fars News Agency*, Aug 10, 2014. www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13931007001669. Also see: "Fīrūzābādī: yowm allāh-i nohom-i dey masūl-i ensejām-i 'omūmī-ye mardom shod." *ISNA*, Jan 1, 2014. http://goo.gl/Ymi2h3. There is no doubt that the US government, especially during the second Bush administration, was spending millions of dollars to "promote democracy" in Iran. There is significant doubt, however, about the destination of the allocated US$75 million, an amount that was increased in later years. While the Iranian government suspected that the money was used to finance dissidents and groups to launch a "velvet revolution," the bulk of the funds, according to one seasoned observer, was used for Persian language programming such as Radio Farda and Voice of America. What is certain is that the news of the fund's establishment undermined "the kind of organizations and activists it was designed to help, with U.S. aid becoming a top issue in a broader crackdown on leading democracy advocates over the past year, according to a wide range of Iranian activists and human rights groups." See Robin Wright, "Iran On Guard Over U.S. Funds," *The Washington Post*, April 28, 2007. www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/27/AR2007042701668.html.
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briefings

Plana receives the inaugural Jeanne Guillemin Prize

Michelle English, CIS

"I am truly humbled to be a recipient of the Jeanne Guillemin Prize. Jeanne was a model scholar and mentor, especially to women, and embodied the guiding ethos of SSP. I hope that my work can live up to her expectations."

If we can better understand the causes and consequences of war, then we can contribute to its prevention.

That is the guiding philosophy of faculty and students at the Security Studies Program (SSP), explains Sara Plana, a fifth-year PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science.

Plana was recently named the inaugural recipient of the Jeanne Guillemin Prize at the Center for International Studies (CIS). The prize provides financial support to women studying international affairs and was endowed at CIS by the late Jeanne Guillemin. Guillemin, an authority on biological weapons, was a senior advisor at SSP.

Plana will apply the funds toward her dissertation research into the phenomenon of proxy warfare.

"There's actually a lot of variation in the degree to which states are able to use their leverage over non-state proxy armed groups," says Plana. "I'm trying to understand when states are able to use proxies as intended, and when they can't."

The proxy war in Syria is among her case studies. This multi-sided civil conflict, which began in 2011 and is ongoing, is among the deadliest wars of the 21st century. A 2018 report by the World Bank estimated more than 400,000 deaths, 5 million people seeking refuge abroad, and over 6 million displaced internally.

"The question of whether states can or can't control proxy groups has important implications for international peace and security," explains Plana. "My project illuminates when states can motivate proxies to take risks, keep them from taking actions that could escalate a conflict, or prevent them from victimizing civilians."

The human cost of war

As the daughter of Cuban immigrants, Plana grew up understanding the ways that global politics is personal. Her grandparents and parents fled Cuba after the ascent of the regime of Fidel Castro and ultimately settled in South Florida.

Plana's familial history is connected, if not intentionally, to her research agenda. "My family experienced the human cost of a war so I bring that ethos into what I do. I try to be objective and rigorous but also recognize that what I study has a very real human impact."

Sara Plana is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science and a student at the Security Studies Program.

Photo courtesy Department of Political Science

Plana graduated magna cum laude with an AB in government from Harvard University. Her undergraduate thesis on war crimes in the Bosnian civil war received the Thomas Hoopes Prize for outstanding scholarly work.

Jessica Blankshain, her thesis advisor—now an assistant professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval War College—suggested Plana continue on with her research.

"I never thought a doctorate degree was possible," says Plana. "But Jess and another of my faculty mentors, Dr Stephen Rosen, really inspired me to consider it. If it weren't for their encouragement, I would not be where I am today." Rosen is the Beton Michael Kaneb Professor of National Security and Military Affairs at Harvard.

Plana feels incredibly fortunate to be a part of the political science department and SSP community.

"SSP is really a unique offering among political science departments. It's saturated with both faculty and students who work on international security topics but from a variety of angles. Everyone here is seeking knowledge, doing rigorous research, and applying it to real-world problems. This ethos extends beyond SSP and is manifested in every department, lab, and center at MIT."

Helping women in the field

Like Guillemin, Plana is committed to helping support women pursuing careers in security studies—a field traditionally dominated by men.

She and Rachel Tecott, also a fifth-year doctoral candidate in political science at SSP, launched the Future Strategy Forum (FSF), a conference series amplifying the expertise of women scholars and practitioners in international security while creating opportunities for connection.

FSF was inspired in part from earlier work by both Plana and Tecott as co-chairs of a working group, Women in International Politics and Security. Guillemin was instrumental in establishing this working group at CIS, which has proven effective in connecting women graduate students, fellows, and faculty in the greater Boston area.

"I am truly humbled to be a recipient of the Jeanne Guillemin Prize. Jeanne was a model scholar and mentor, especially to women, and embodied the guiding ethos of SSP. I hope that my work can live up to her expectations."

studentfeature

The cult of the persuasive: The organizational origins of US strategy in military assistance

Rachel Tecott, PhD Candidate, Department of Political Science

"More money, more training, and more equipment were considered the keys to more military competence in recipient states.[4] The disappointing results in Iraq and Afghanistan despite enormous expenditures have forced interrogation of this conviction."

Rachel Tecott is a PhD candidate in political science at MIT. Her research interests include US grand strategy, military strategy, security force assistance, and civil-military relations. Before attending MIT, Rachel studied nuclear proliferation and worked in political risk consulting.

Photos courtesy MIT Department of Political Science and (left) Wikipedia Commons

In June 2014, nineteen Iraqi Army brigades collapsed at the hands of a few hundred Islamic state fighters in pickup trucks.[1] The disaster was less a testament to the strength of the Islamic State than to the weakness of the Iraqi Army, and, by extension, to the failure of a vast military assistance program that absorbed billions of dollars and occupied thousands of personnel for more than a decade. Why, despite the colossal effort, did the United States fail to build an Iraqi Army capable of providing security in Iraq?

The collapse of the Iraqi Army is the most vivid contemporary illustration of the United States' persistent struggle with military assistance. In 1936, General Douglas MacArthur (with the assistance of Major Dwight Eisenhower) set about building the Philippine Army from the ground up. In 1942, President Roosevelt sent General Joseph Stilwell ("Vinegar Joe") to professionalize the Chinese army to face Imperial Japan. The US dismantled and rebuilt the militaries of Germany and Japan in the wake of WWII, supported the Greek military during the Greek Civil War, rebuilt the Korean military after Japanese withdrawal, and hemorrhaged cash and equipment in the ill-fated effort to professionalize the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN).

The United States' long record building militaries in partner states is decidedly mixed. Though efforts in Greece and South Korea bore fruit, efforts failed in South Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The spotty results do not appear to have dampened US enthusiasm for the project. Between 1999 and 2016, the US trained some 2,390,080 trainees from almost every country in the world.[2] And the US is not the only player in the game. The US encourages its allies to strengthen the militaries in their own backyards, and gazes warily on as the People's Liberation Army trains and equips soldiers around the world.

Although military assistance has emerged a core competency of the US military, a central pillar of US foreign policy, and a ubiquitous feature of international relations, the international relations literature to-date remains largely silent on the subject.[3]

My research seeks to explain why the United States sometimes succeeds but more often fails to build stronger militaries in partner states.

Framing the challenge

For a long while, the conventional wisdom within government around military assistance could have been summed up in one word: more. More money, more training, and more equipment were considered the keys to more military competence in recipient states.[4] The disappointing results in Iraq and Afghanistan despite enormous expenditures have forced interrogation of this conviction.

Indeed, faith in "more" belies a mature academic literature showing that military effectiveness depends not only on what states have—or what they receive—but on what states do with what they have. Political and military leaders up and down the chain of command may have access to resources but misallocate them, they may have large populations but implement personnel practices that fail to bring the best and brightest to key commands, they may have advanced equipment but neglect to

invest in sustainment. Patterns of decisions around personnel, training, command structures, and information management shape performance on the battlefield.[5]

And leaders may not always choose wisely. Civilian and military leaders may be deeply committed to building a more competent military, and yet lack the expertise to make the optimal decisions. Alternatively, civilian and military leaders may make suboptimal decisions around personnel, training, command structures, information management, and doctrine, not in error, but in pursuit of parallel or even directly competing objectives. For instance, political leaders may be more interested in reducing the risk of a coup than in building stronger militaries, and employ personnel practices intended to ensure loyalty rather than competence on the battlefield.[6] Some military leaders may seek opportunities for personal enrichment, and happily pocket the salaries of AWOL soldiers rather than seek to inspire esprit de corps or impose discipline.

The problem of motivation is often particularly acute in the nations selected by the United States for the largest scale military assistance projects. In a textbook illustration of adverse selection, the United States tends to provide the most assistance to the nations with the weakest militaries—these are often nations whose leaders are less than deeply committed to building stronger militaries.

The central challenge for military assistance providers, then, is influence over the political-military decisions of recipients. The United States builds stronger militaries in partner states when it successfully encourages recipient leaders to implement and sustain professional military organizational practices. Often, however, recipient leaders take US cash and equipment but ignore US guidance, and continue to prioritize coup-proofing, rent-seeking, or other objectives that undermine the professionalization of the armed forces.

Strategies of influence

What strategies of influence does the United States employ to encourage military assistance recipients to implement professional military organizational practices?

Both the alliance management literature and the nascent military assistance literature emphasize bargaining—the conditional application (and promise) of carrots and sticks tied to compliance and defiance.[7] According to the assumptions underpinning both literatures, the United States employs a bargaining strategy to shape behavior, and fails to build stronger militaries in partner states when it lacks the bargaining power necessary to shape recipient decision-making. Bargaining is not, however, the only strategy of influence the United States employs to shape the behavior of allies and partners, nor is it even the United States' preferred strategy of influence in military assistance. Indeed, bargaining is actively discouraged in military assistance doctrine. FM 31-20-3, for instance, admonishes advisors against using "bribery or coercion, since results achieved from these actions are only temporary."[8]

The preferred strategy of influence in US military assistance is persuasion. Persuasion is an umbrella strategy of influence that encompasses at least four distinct tactics. US servicemembers (1) engage in conversations and debates with recipient leaders

designed to convince them to comply; (2) demonstrate "what right looks like" to inspire counterpart emulation; (3) provide no-strings inducements intended to lead to reciprocation; and (4) build relationships in hopes that personal rapport and trust will encourage concessions.

The preference for persuasion is clear in US military assistance doctrine and practice. FM 3-22, for instance, counsels personnel developing partner militaries to "accomplish their mission by building relationships and rapport with [local forces], motivating and influencing them to accomplish tasks." It is through "their interpersonal skills [that they will] positively affect the actions and decisions of their counterparts and work toward shared goals. The measure of effective rapport is whether Soldiers can inspire foreign counterparts to take the desired action and guide them to succeed." In service of rapport-building, FM 3-22 further instructs advisors to study human nature, to study the particularities of the host-nation culture, to "smile often," to "remember and use people's names, encourage others to talk about themselves, listen to others, discuss what the other person is interested in, and make the other person feel important." The manual cautions: "It is important to remember that genuine rapport is developed slowly, but it can be ruined in an instant."[9]

Practice appears to match doctrine. From commanding generals down to embedded military advisors, the strategy of influence US servicemembers usually employ to shape recipient decisions is not bargaining, but persuasion. Succinctly summarizing the theory of influence through relationships that guided US military assistance in Iraq, former Coalition Military Assistance Transition Team (CMATT) commanding general Brigadier General James Schwitters explained: "We needed people who were temperamentally and experientially trained to go in, put their arms around a bunch of folks and develop relationships from which they could then influence action and behavior and develop capabilities."[10] Embedded American advisors generally practiced what their doctrine, training, and commanding officers preached.

Persuasion does not appear to be an effective strategy of influence in military assistance. Conversely, the exercise of leverage is positively associated with improved recipient military organizational practices and stronger recipient militaries.[11] Earlier US efforts to strengthen partner militaries relied more liberally on bargaining, and tended to produce better results. Contemporary military assistance largely eschews bargaining, relies almost exclusively on persuasion, and has generally produced poor results.

The cult of the persuasive

Why does the United States lean so heavily on a strategy of influence that has proven largely ineffective?

My research suggests organizational ideology at work. Just as the European militaries embraced the "cult of the offensive[12] in years before WWI, the US military has embraced what may be called the "cult of the persuasive" in contemporary military assistance. Like the cult of the offensive, the cult of the persuasive is an organizational ideology characterized by normative beliefs blind to conflicting norms, and efficacy beliefs impervious to conflicting information. The normative belief is that persuasion

is the appropriate strategy to influence allies, partners, and friends, whereas "bribery," "transactionality," "coercion," and "bullying" should be reserved for adversaries. The efficacy belief is the conviction—sticky despite all evidence to the contrary—that persuasion is a more effective strategy of influence than bargaining.

Like other military doctrines and ideologies, the cult of the persuasive is strengthened, formalized, promulgated, and perpetuated through a variety of mechanisms including standard operating procedures (SOPs), training courses, doctrine, statements by influential military leaders, and bar-room conversations.

The cult of the persuasive serves the interests of the US military, which has no organizational incentive to adapt. A persuasive approach to military assistance reduces the risk of conflagrations with partners that could spark the attention of and precipitate intrusion by civilian leaders. The military can generate the metrics necessary to claim progress, even while acutely aware of the rot within the militaries it builds. All throughout the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example, the US military presented metrics to the executive and legislative branches—e.g. number of partner soldiers who graduated from basic training, training hours completed, etc.—designed to create the appearance of progress to the untrained (or uninterested) civilian eye. The persuasive approach also creates a permission structure for failure (consider the refrain "it is up to Iraqis to build Iraq").

In short, an important factor undermining United States efforts to build stronger militaries in partner states is the powerful—and powerfully sticky—organizational ideology of the United States military. So long as the White House and the Congress continue to grant the military the autonomy and the resources to perpetuate military assistance projects without serious evaluation (equipment distributed and hours trained are inadequate measures), the military will have no incentive to reform its approach, the cult of the persuasive is likely to persist, and US military assistance projects are likely to fail. ■

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briefings

Will the Covid-19 pandemic change national security?

Peter Dizikes, MIT News

"Since 9/11, we've had a certain mindset on national security," said Joe Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation. "The pandemic has fundamentally altered the equation."

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to inflict huge damage around the world, international affairs experts are increasingly wondering: Will the virus make countries reconsider their national security strategies? After all, conventional defense capacities have been of limited use against a devastating contagion—and more viruses like Covid-19 may well be out there.

While few people will confidently forecast exactly how the pandemic will alter the world, defense experts have at least started discussing some of its implications for security policy. That conversation continued in an online MIT event on Thursday, "Rethinking National Security in the Age of Pandemics," as experts from inside and outside the Institute evaluated some key questions driven by the current crisis.

The panel was the latest iteration of MIT's Starr Forum, a series of events on foreign policy issues held by the Center for International Studies.

For some observers, rethinking security starts with defense spending and budget priorities. For all the trillions spent on military buildups in recent decades, most military functions do not apply to a pandemic.

The virtual Starr Forum, "Rethinking National Security in the Age of Pandemics," featured (clockwise from top left) Yasmeen Silva (Beyond the Bomb), Jim Walsh (MIT), Joe Cirincione (Ploughshares Fund), and Vipin Narang (MIT).

Photo courtesy MIT News Office

"Since 9/11, we've had a certain mindset on national security," said Joe Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation. "The pandemic has fundamentally altered the equation."

As evidence for a shifting midset in policy circles, Cirincione cited a series of foreign-policy experts who have been calling for a reorientation of security thinking in light of the pandemic. The neoconservative thinker Max Boot, Cirincione noted, recently wrote in The Washington Post that we "have to rethink the whole concept of national security" because "the last 20 years have seen us face these threats that do not have military solutions to them," including pandemics, climate change, and cybersecurity problems.

Given that annual US spending on nuclear weapons exceeds the amount spent on public health, Cirincione added, there is a clear imperative for changing budget priorities, so the U.S. can "start right now having a savvier 21st century definition of national security."

Yasmeen Silva, partnerships manager at Beyond the Bomb, an advocacy group against nuclear war, also made a case for significantly altering the approach to U.S. security.

"Due to this misplacement of priorities, we're seeing that we're not able to meet the threats of the 21st century that actually make us less safe," Silva said.

Security, Silva noted, can be measured by "preventable deaths" for "everyday Americans," and she suggested an array of spending priorities, beyond weapons, to

advance that cause—including health care, direct economic relief, aid for workers and communities, aned protection for democratic functions. Those things, Silva added, would help the country "move forward in a way that sets an agenda for true safety and security."

Vipin Narang, an associate professor of political science at MIT and a leading expert in nuclear strategy, said that an effective response to the pandemic would almost certainly require more extensive international collaboration and work.

"There will be a fundamental transformation in how we think about pandemic identification, response, and preparedness, and hopefully, at the global level," Narang said. "This requires cooperation between China, European partners, the Middle East, India, East Asian countries, the United States, to set up early monitoring capabilities, so that when this happens again ... we will be better prepared to identify novel pathogens. And that will require money and cooperation."

Moreover, Narang said, the nature of a response has to be global, given the virtual impossibility of shuttering international travel and the global links in the economy.

"The idea we could shut the borders and be immune to the virus was mistaken from the beginning," Narang said.

Narang also identified some short-term implications for national security brought about by the pandemic, such as massive troop illnesses, as seen on the USS Theodore Roosevelt, the aircraft carrier with hundreds of Covid-19 cases on board. Narang also noted that the incapacitation of leaders in nuclear-equipped countries — such as British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who was hospitalized for Covid-19 this month — might raise tricky defense-leadership issues as well.

While the reorientation of security thinking may have a clear logic to it, actually enacting things like budget changes or support for new policies is no sure thing — as the panelists acknowledged in response to an audience question.

Quoting comments by Rep. Ro Khanna of California, Cirincione said, "This is not something that necessarily happens automatically. Especially in Washington. You've got to fight for it." Silva, for her part, advocated for a "united front" among constituents to pressure Congress for meaningful new directions.

And while there are clear incentives for new international cooperation during pandemics, as well as potentially shifting budget priorities for many countries, international tensions may not necessarily be reduced by the Covid-19 crisis, as Narang noted in response to another audience question.

"I don't take it for granted that economic shocks necessarily lead to peace," Narang said. "That's one argument, to be sure. But there is an alternative argument that you can have diversionary war incentives also, if this economic downturn really starts undermining the legitimacy of some countries and governments."

Thursday's Starr Forum event was moderated by Jim Walsh, a research associate in MIT's Security Studies Program and a leading expert in weapons proliferation and foreign policy. The event drew a virtual crowd of 420 audience members.

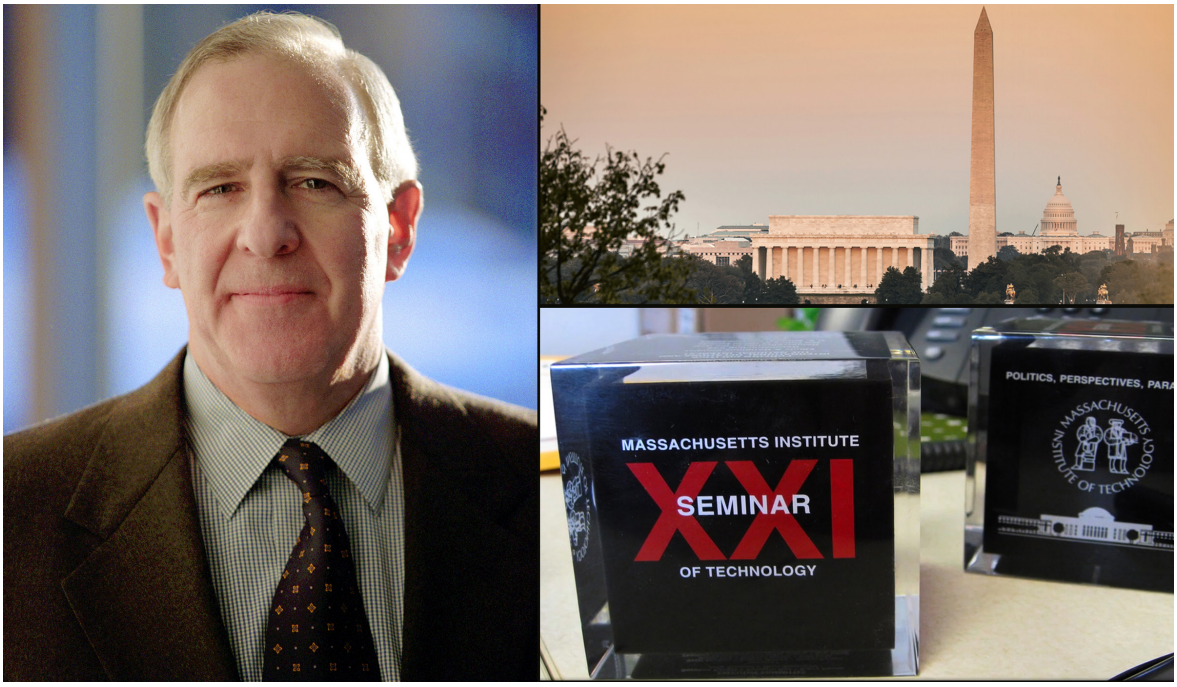
Events in the series are ongoing and have been moved to an online format during the Covid-19 crisis, which has led to the temporary closure of the MIT campus.

"I don't take it for granted that economic shocks necessarily lead to peace," Vipin Narang said. "That's one argument, to be sure. But there is an alternative argument that you can have diversionary war incentives also, if this economic downturn really starts undermining the legitimacy of some countries and governments."

briefings

Robert Art retires as Seminar XXI Program Director

Michelle English, CIS



Robert Art will step down from his role as the director of the Seminar XXI Program effective June 30. Art is the Christian A Herter Professor of International Relations, Emeritus at Brandeis University and a senior fellow at the MIT Security Studies Program (SSP). He has directed the CIS Seminar XXI program since 2000.

The Seminar XXI Program is one of the most successful and competitive post-graduate education programs in the national security arena. It links policymaking and academia by bringing together military and civilian executives with scholars from MIT and beyond.

Since its inception as an MIT program in 1986, it has inspired its graduates to apply the compelling insights of social science to the most pressing challenges of our times. It currently boasts 2,530 alumni, who serve or have served in high ranking positions in government, including the CIA, the US Department of State, and the US Department of Defense.

"I consider it an honor and a privilege to have been affiliated with Seminar XXI for two decades because of the quality of the people I worked with: the staff—Tisha Gomes and Jen Kempe; the many faculty at MIT and other universities, here and abroad; and, of course, the fellows from the US military and the senior civilian ranks of the US government, whose dedication, integrity, and patriotism I deeply respect. Seminar XXI immeasurably enriched my life and for that I am profoundly grateful," said Art.

Since its inception as an MIT program in 1986, Seminar XXI has inspired its graduates to apply the compelling insights of social science to the most pressing challenges of our times.

Under Art's leadership, the US—and US security—faced several of the greatest challenges in living memory, including 9/11 and Covid-19. Through it all, his steadfast commitment and dedication to the mission of Seminar XXI ensured the program's continuing success. His guidance and coordination of the fellows, alumni, faculty, and the staff have cultivated a diverse and enduring network of professional relationships.

"Few can chair a panel discussion that blends scholarship and policy analysis in national security, and which ensures the participation of speakers and audience, as well as Bob. Most of what I know about chairing such meetings I learned from him. All of us are grateful for his long tenure as Seminar XXI director," said Barry Posen, Ford International Professor of Political Science, director emeritus of SSP, and a member of Seminar XXI's executive board.

"Art has made prolific contributions to the field of security studies," said Posen. Art's co-edited book, *The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics*—a compendium of analysis by influential thinkers—is a boon to young faculty. Art also served on the founding editorial team of the Cornell University Press *Security Affairs* series.

On July 1, Art will pass the stewardship of Seminar XXI to Kenneth Oye, a professor of political science in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and a professor of data systems and society in the School of Engineering. Oye also directs the Program on Emerging Technologies at CIS

A long-standing executive board member of the program, Oye is well-known to generations of Seminar XXI fellows and faculty. He will serve as the program's interim director for one year.

Beginning in July 2021, Kelly Greenhill, a professor of political science at Tufts University—and a Seminar XXI veteran and an executive board member—will become a visiting professor at MIT, a senior fellow at SSP, and the director of the Seminar XXI Program.

Greenhill received her PhD from the MIT Department of Political Science in 2004 and is a member of SSP.

"The impact of Art's leadership of the Program—for the faculty and for the program's participants—will long endure. He leaves Seminar XXI in a strong position for continued success, and all of us at the MIT Center for International Studies thank him for his dedication and service to this most impactful of our many programs," said Richard Samuels, Ford International Professor of Political Science, director of CIS, and a member of the Seminar XXI executive board.

Training the Covid-19 cohort: Adapting and preserving social science research

Fotini Christia & Chappell Lawson, Department of Political Science

Fotini Christia is a professor of political science at MIT. She is presently conducting research on sectarianism in Iraq, refugee return in Syria, and gender-based violence in Egypt during Covid-19.

Chappell Lawson is an associate professor of political science at MIT. He directs the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) program and the Policy Lab at CIS. His recent book, co-edited with Alan Bersin and Juliette Kayyem, is, "Beyond 9/11: Homeland Security for the 21st Century."

This article was first published by the Social Science Research Council.

Photos courtesy Department of Political Science

The Covid-19 pandemic is forcing natural scientists to wrestle with how to keep laboratory research going and how best to do peer review. Social scientists and humanists are similarly having conversations about what Covid-19 means for social science research.

In the short term, Covid-19 has disrupted the plans of graduate students and faculty members conducting fieldwork that cannot be readily transferred online. In the long run, the research norms and practices that emerge will affect social science more broadly. We see three crucial questions: 1) How should we approach social science research related to Covid-19 itself? 2) How can we adjust to the impact of Covid-19 on field work? 3) How can we manage and mentor a cohort of scholars who could not do the conventional field work that is essential to their professional development?

Setting research agendas

As with the natural sciences, Covid-19 has set an agenda for social scientific inquiry. For instance, work is already underway on what the pandemic can tell us about public opinion, political communication,voting behavior, political mobilization, and protest. Several questions on inequality have become salient too, with scholars interrogating the differential effects of income and race on the likelihood of testing,fatality rates, and the degree to which orders for shelter in place,and preferences about social distancing measures match people's "objective" interests. And of course, the varied responses of governments (national and subnational) to the pandemic will undoubtedly become both dependent and independent variables in social science research. In the latter case, they will prove crucial in informing policy choices.

These research projects span the globe. For instance, some Europeanists are examining the role of intergenerational ties in the hard-hit case of Italy, while others have lauded the examples of good governance and citizen compliance in Denmark and Greece.Other researchers are investigating increasing gender violence in Egypt, while in India there is ongoing research on in-country migrant flows and displacement associated with the pandemic. Scholars of East Asia are researching cases like Taiwan and

Singapore that exhibited early success in combating the disease, while some Latin Americanists are focusing on Mexico and Brazil, and the impact of their governmental responses to remain open.

There is, however, the danger that research dollars may flow too freely into Covid-19–related projects. The topics that most social scientists have studied to date—such as violence, culture, economic development, regime change, distributional politics, survival strategies, and public policy—remain salient and deserve to be funded. As reviewers for grant proposals and advisors of graduate students, we must avoid a situation where Covid-19–related projects crowd out equally qualified projects on other topics.

Doctoral students contemplating their dissertations should also proceed with caution. Projects related to Covid-19 may seem appealing, especially if funding is readily available, but there may well be a glut of research and fatigue with the topic by the time students go on the market in in a few years. In the meantime, many Covid-19–related outcomes remain rapidly moving targets, making them risky subjects for junior scholars.

Adapting research methods

Covid-19 has largely forced the suspension of face-to-face data collection, including most ethnographic work and participant observation, in-person interviews and surveys, field experiments, and archival research in locations that have been closed (or to which researchers can no longer travel). Many scholars must now choose between abandoning their original question or using a suboptimal method to answer it. Social scientists have been here before—for instance, when conflicts or natural disasters compelled graduate students to halt research in a challenging location or when the 2008 financial crisis dried out research funds—but not on this scale. The central concern now is that fieldwork, an essential element of social science research, will be sacrificed, even as inquiry based on other methods (statistical analysis, lab experiments, library research) proceed. Scholars must seize the opportunities that the new environment presents, while salvaging as much as they can of conventional fieldwork.

As the pandemic is closing off some options, it is opening others. Online experiments—through Amazon's Mechanical Turk or virtual labs such as Harvard's Digital Lab for the Social Sciences— may actually be easier given that a large amount of social life has moved to the virtual realm. And although the pandemic makes in-person interviewing more problematic, it makes teleconferencing feel less like a "second best" alternative. Initial rapport may be a bit harder to build with unknown informants, but the logistics of conducting the interview are now easier: it is no longer awkward for the researcher to be typing or looking at notes, and it is easier to record the session. With no associated travel time or costs, in some cases scholars can reach a larger universe of sources more easily, and some interviewees who are normally less accessible (such as senior bureaucrats) may have more time on their hands.

"We will meet again—in the field, in a couple of years or sooner—and the new generation of scholars needs to have the tools to engage with the field as we have known it."

There are also exciting opportunities for researchers to charge ahead in the online world, with user-friendly tools for online data collection and analysis of text, images,voice, or video. With the pandemic pushing an array of interactions to the virtual space—Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, or more exotic platforms like Telegram—the online population has now become increasingly more representative of society as a whole and thus considerably more interesting to scholars who previously engaged less with it. In a world of social distancing, it is increasingly clear that cyberspace counts as "the field" and "virtual ethnography" is fully legitimate, as colleagues working in these spaces have long attested. Adapting the traditional qualitative interpretive research methods to the virtual space for communities that have migrated online will renew attention to questions of positionality, embeddedness, and the ethics of field work (including privacy concerns).

The migration to the online space affords real openings for computational social science research, as well as for scholarship in digital humanities. Interdisciplinary programs that have been set up to have social science inform big data research, such as MIT's Institute for Data Systems and Society and Digital Humanities program, are now faced with unprecedented opportunities for fruitful collaborations.

But how about those of us whose work absolutely requires in-person field presence, such as conventional ethnography? Given that the world has now already started opening up, is there room for traditional fieldwork in the Covid-19 space? For younger researchers without underlying conditions, the risks of death from Covid-19 fade into the background level of risk from fieldwork, so there could be an argument for their charging into the field as fast as they can.

But even if scholars are not concerned about being infected themselves, they must avoid becoming a vector for contagion. Several human subjects' review boards that have imposed a near-universal ban on human subjects' research need to consider the appropriate protocols to inform such work. For instance, they may consider testing regimes for researchers, a prohibition on in-person research with new categories of vulnerable populations (eg, people in refugee camps, the elderly, or those with underlying conditions), or mandatory use of a face mask for in-person interviews. Lessons about how to conduct field research in these environments may be found in scholars who have already been doing fieldwork where they or informants wear masks (as in parts of Asia) or have dealt with past epidemics such as MERS, SARS, or Ebola. One valuable outcome would be for Institutional Review Boards to adopt a broader conception of when researchers might inadvertently endanger or inconvenience informants.

The pandemic will not be with us forever, and we should not allow the opportunities it affords for new research topics and methods to undermine the role of conventional field research. We must work aggressively with funders of research (Fulbright, SSRC, etc.) to keep the fire of fieldwork alive by making accommodations for research that must be rescheduled, awarding grants for projects we suspect will have to be delayed, and accepting proposals that make adequate accommodations to the pandemic even if these accommodations render certain elements less than perfect.

Advising the Covid-19 cohort

As scholars who have relied on fieldwork for our own research and who teach qualitative methods to doctoral students, we are cognizant of the problems in educating a cohort of PhD students who may have no experience with traditional fieldwork. The challenge extends beyond their specific dissertation projects to the intellectual capital they gain about local culture, personal connections with individuals in-country, language training, and the like. What can we do to avoid losing a generation of field work and field researchers?

First, programs should try to build in mechanisms that would allow younger scholars to go back into the field at a later date, even if it means insisting that they finish their dissertations earlier. We can do the same for recently hired junior scholars, and we should also consider allowing them to come up for tenure later on an exceptional basis. Second, programs should actively assist students who have the opportunity to take temporary leaves from the program to work in the "real world" or undertake some other practicum experience until they can return to their originally planned field research. Third, editors of journals should be prepared to offer expedited review for doctoral students and junior scholars who could credibly demonstrate that their projects were delayed because of Covid-19, allowing them to make up for some of the lost time.

Fourth, we need to nourish the self-supporting activities and communities that are already springing up. There has been an increased demand for guidance and new directions including webinars and increased discussions and inquiries on Facebook pages dedicated to social science methods. A crowd-sourced Google document lists an array of data collection methods to consider during the pandemic with a list of relevant references to go with it. These include substituting in-person focus groups with online group interviews; have subjects record data on audio or video about their activities or keep diaries (ie, to cut out the researcher from the data collection process; using YouTube data and podcasts as a way to study culture and context).

Finally, because some students will inevitably move away from their original fieldwork-intensive topics, we must offer methods training for our graduate students that exposes them to the techniques and tools that enable virtual fieldwork. In practice, this requirement translates into enhanced training in web scraping; machine learning techniques, including natural language processing for text and voice; newly developed tools for image and video processing; and incorporating training on online interviewing to classes on fieldwork method. Several departments across the country cover some of these concepts in their advanced methods sequence, but they now need to consider how to make them more mainstream and easily accessible (including via online learning platforms such as edX).

These are unprecedented times for the world and for social science scholarship. And while we dash ahead to embrace the new opportunities of the online world, we should not overshoot. We will meet again—in the field, in a couple of years or sooner—and the new generation of scholars needs to have the tools to engage with the field as we have known it. ■

cis activities

Starr Forums explore topics through the lens of Covid-19

The Center hosted several public forums that touched upon the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, including: "Rethinking National Security in the Age of Pandemics," with Jim Walsh (MIT), Vipin Narang (MIT), Joe Cirincione (Ploughshares Fund), and Yasmeen Silva (Beyond the Bomb); "Amazon Burning. Covid 19. Ghosts of Climate Future?" with Carlos Nobre (University of Sao Paulo) and Elizabeth Leeds (MIT); "Violence Against Women and Girls: The Case of Saudi Arabia" with Hala Aldosari (MIT) and Rothna Begum (Human Rights Watch); and "When Culture Meets Covid-19," with Chappell Lawson (MIT), Suzanne Berger (MIT), Yasheng Huang (MIT), and Peter Krause (Boston College). Visit the Starr Forum web site for a full listing of spring 2020 events, including videos and transcripts.

Covid-19: On the ground in India

The MIT India program and the Sloan School co-sponsored an event featuring MIT alumni working in India on Covid-19 initiatives. Highlights included: Anirudh Sharma, founder of Graviky, who spoke about collaborating with experts across different disciplines to provide low-cost PPE kits. Anushka Shah, founder of Civic Studios, who teamed up with the Indian Police Foundation to produce videos to help address the challenges faced by law enforcement officers on the frontlines of the pandemic; and Hank Levine, founder of iPlace, who described the efforts of his recruiting team to simultaneously adjust to working remotely and, through hard work and innovative ideas, ensure people are still placed in jobs amidst the pandemic.

CIS awards 17 summer study grants

Seventeen doctoral students in international affairs at MIT were awarded summer study grants. Each will receive up to $3,500. Among the students was Sara Plana, who was awarded the first annual Jeanne Guillemin prize. “The awards were made to an outstanding cohort of MIT students from across the Institute. We're so pleased that the appeal of these grants has broadened and students are responding,” said John Tirman, CIS executive director and principal research scientist.

SSP Wednesday Seminars

The Security Studies Program's lunchtime series included: Bridget Coggins, University of California, Santa Barbara, on "Domestic Anarchy in a World of States"; Robert Johnson, Oxford University, on "The Revolution That Failed: Nuclear Competition, Arms Control, and the Cold War"; Annette Idler, Harvard University, on "The Strategic Challenge of Society-centric Warfare"; Charles Glaser, George Washington University, on "Borderland Battles: Violence, Crime, and Governance at the Edges of Colombia's War"; and Jacqueline L Hazelton, US Naval War College, on "National Security Challenges Posed by China's Rise."

Visit our website and events calendar for a complete listing of spring and summer 2020 activities. Many of our events are captured on video and available to view on YouTube.

FEATURED

Policing in America and Beyond

The Center hosted a Starr Forum that involved a two-part discussion on "Policing in America" and "Policing Around the World." The forum was chaired by Melissa Nobles, MIT Kenan Sahin Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and professor of political science.

The speakers included: Rachael Rollins, Suffolk County's 16th District Attorney; Elizabeth Leeds (MIT PhD '84), senior fellow, Washington Office for Latin America (WOLA), founder and honorary president, Brazilian Forum for Public Safety, and a research affiliate at CIS; and Rodrigo Canales (PhD '08 MIT), associate professor of organizational behavior, Yale School of Management.

A video of this event is archived on the Center's YouTube channel: youtube.com/user/MITCIS.

Patricia Gercik memorial fund established

A core group of Patricia Gercik's former students and friends has raised the initial seed funding required to establish and name a fund in Gercik's honor. Gifts to the Patricia Gercik Memorial Fund will provide supplemental stipends to students participating in the MIT-Japan program. Patricia Gercik (1944-2019), the visionary manager of the MIT Japan Program and of MISTI in its early years, passed away after a long illness at her home in Cambridge.

Myron Weiner Seminar Series on International Migration

The International Migration Committee's seminar series explores global population movements and their impact upon sending and receiving countries and relations among them. The spring events included: Lama Mourad (Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania) on "Open Borders, Local Closures: Municipal Curfews and the Lebanese Response to the Syrian Refugee Influx"; and Mario Zucconi, Princeton University, on "The Failed Accession of Turkey to the European Union and the Migrant Crisis."

The Policy Lab completed 5th annual call for proposals

The Policy Lab at CIS works with MIT researchers across the Institute who seek to build relationships with the policy community and engage with policymakers. The program helps identify policy-relevant research and implement strategies to engage relevant policymakers and other stakeholders. The program concluded its fifth call for proposals with a near record turnout of 40 proposals from faculty across the Institute.

MIT challenge: Africa takes on Covid-19

MIT hosted a series of open challenges to take action on the COVID-19 crisis. Among them was the virtual event, Africa Takes on Covid-19. This was part of a series of virtual hackathons with partners from across the MIT (including the MIT Africa Program) and healthcare ecosystems.

SHASS Infinite Miles Awards

Alicia Raun (assistant director at MISTI and managing director of the MIT-Spain and MIT-Portugal Programs) and Fatih Basaga (Systems Administrator) are among the winners of this year's Infinite Mile Awards sponsored annually by the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Raun was recognized in the category of "Great Ideas" for her many contributions to the MISTI program and the direct impact she has had on MIT students and faculty. Basaga was named an "Unsung Hero" for his numerous and varied contributions that regularly extend beyond the job description.

end notes

PEOPLE

CIS Robert E Wilhelm Fellow **Hala Aldosari** gave a talk on violence in women in girls, with a focus on Saudi Arabia, at a MIT Starr Forum.

Professor of Political Science **Nazli Choucri** presented to the Science of Security and Privacy Program (Department of Defense) on the results of Year 2 of the MIT research project on *Analytics of Cybersecurity for Cyber-Physical Systems* in January. Choucri also presented to the British High Commission and Internet Society on Contextualizing IOT Security Threats for Consumers Forum in February.

Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science **Taylor Fravel** presented "*Active Defense: China's Military Strategy since 1949*" at Stanford University in January. Fravel also participated in the Trans-Atlantic Symposium on US and European Relations with China in Berlin in February.

MIT-Africa Managing Director **Ari Jacobovits** collaborated with MIT Hacking Medicine, Sloan Global Programs, and the Africa Business Club to organize "Africa Takes on COVID19" at MIT as part of the COVID19 Challenge series in May.

Assistant Professor of Political Science **Erik Lin-Greenberg** was named the 2020 National Security and Foreign Policy LGBTQIA+ Out Leadership List and received the American Political Science Association's 2020 Merze Tate Award for his dissertation, "Remote controlled restraint: The effect of remote warfighting technology on crisis escalation."

Ford International Professor of Political Science **Barry Posen**, joined by Stephen Walt, took part in a conversation hosted by the Middle East Institute (MEI) on "The Middle East in an Era of Great Power Competition" in April.

PhD Candidate **Erik Sand** received the America in the World Pre-Doctoral Fellowship from the Kissinger Center at John Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

PhD Candidate **Meicen Sun** presented her research on China's participation in UN peacekeeping at the "Rebuilding State and Society after Civil War" symposium co-hosted by the Department of History and School of Peace and Conflict at Kent State University in February.

PhD Candidate **Rachel Tecott** received a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship from the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs.

Ford Professor of Political Science **Kathleen Thelen** received the Friedrich Schiedel Award for Politics and Technology. Thelen was also named Hans Fischer Senior Fellow at the Technical University of Munich.

Professor of History at Tufts University **Reed Ueda** was on the steering committee and a contributing author for The Atlas of Boston History (University of Chicago Press, 2019).

PUBLISHED

PhD Candidate **Marsin Alshamary**, "Iraqi protesters will likely push forward despite violence," *The World PRI* (February 7, 2020).

Former Robert E Wilhelm Fellow **James E Baker**, "It's High Time We Fought this Virus the American Way," *The New York Times* (April 3, 2020).

Senior Research Fellow **Joel Brenner**, "The Inspector General's Badge of Honor," *CIS Analysis and Opinions* (April, 8, 2020).

end notes

Professor of Political Science **Fotini Christia**, "Deal-Making During the Coronavirus Pandemic," *MIT News* (April 2, 2020).

_____with Associate Professor of Political Science **Chappell Lawson**, "Training the Covid-19 cohort: Adapting and Preserving Social Science Research," *Social Science Research Council* (July 30, 2020)

MIT PhD alumnus **Christopher Clary**, "Trump and Modi will meet in India this week; Here's what to expect," *The Washington Post* (February 23, 2020).

_____with Professor of Political Science **Vipin Narang**, "India's Pangong pickle: New Delhi's options after its clash with China," *War on the Rocks*, (July 2, 2020).

Research Fellow **David Edelman**, "Here's how to regulate artificial intelligence properly," *The Washington Post* (January 13, 2020).

Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science **Taylor Fravel**, "China's 'World-Class' Military Ambitions: Origins and Implications," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol 42, No 4 (2020).

_____"Stability in a Secondary Strategic Direction: China and the Border Dispute with India After 1962" in *Routledge Handbook of China-India Relations*, Kanti Baipai, Selina Ho, and Manjari Chatterjee Miller, eds. New York: Routledge, 2020.

_____"Does the Global Pandemic Open New South China Sea Opportunities for Beijing? Not Really." *The Washington Post* (May 7, 2020).

_____"Mike Pompeo criticized China for not respecting its neighbors' territorial integrity. What's the story?" *The Washington Post* (February 21, 2020).

_____"China's sovereignty obsession," *Foreign Affairs* (June 26, 2020).

_____ "Why are China and India skirmishing at their border? Here's 4 things to know," *The Washington Post* (June 2, 2020).

SSP Affiliate **Peter Krause**, "Yemen's Proxy Wars Explained," *Political Violence at a Glance* (March 26, 2020)

_____"Trump's Peace Plan is a Paradigm Shift," *Political Violence at a Glance* (January 28, 2020).

PhD Candidate **Jung Jae Kwon**, "Red under Blue: Chinese Humanitarian Action in UN Peackeeping Missions," *International Peacekeeping* (2020).

Research Associate and IWMF Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow **Shola Lawal**, "Coronavirus halts street protests, but climate activists have a plan," *The New York Times* (March 19, 2020).

_____"Tweak ocean ecosystems? Maybe not, study says." *The New York Times* (February 26, 2020)

_____"Fireflies have a mating problem: The lights are always on," *The New York Times* (February 3, 2020).

_____"Temperatures at a Florida-size glacier in Antarctica alarm scientists," *The New York Times* (January 29, 2020).

Associate Professor of Political Science **Chappell Lawson** (with Alan Bersin and Juliette Kayyem)**,** *Beyond 9/11: Homeland Security for the Twenty-First Century* (MIT Press, 2020).

PhD Candidate **Kacie Muira**, "America and China have hampered peace progress on the Korean peninsula," The National Interest (July 15, 2020).

PhD Candidate **Aidan Milliff**, "Tension high, altitude higher: Logistical and physiological constraints on the Indo-Chinese border," *War on the Rocks*, (June 9, 2020).

Associate Professor of Political Science **Richard Nielsen**, "Women's Authority in Patriarchal Social Movements: The Case of Female Salafi Preachers," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol 64, No 1 (2020).

end notes

Kenan Sahin Dean of MIT's School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and professor of political science **Melissa Noble**s, "Unearthing the stories of yesterday's George Floyds," *The Boston Globe*, (July 17, 2020).

PhD Candidate **Sara Plana**, "Proxy War: The 'Least Bad Option' or the 'Second-to-Last Resort'?", as part of "Book Review Roundtable: Understanding Proxy Warfare," *Texas National Security Review*, Mar 17, 2020.

_____(with PhD Candidate **Rachel Tecott**, "Pandemic Politics: How the Future Strategy Forum Amplifies the Expertise of Women," *Medium, International Affairs Blog*, (August 5, 2020).

Ford International Professor of Political Science **Barry Posen**, "Do Pandemics Promote Peace?" *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2020).

_____"Courting War," *Boston Review* (March 3, 2020).

MIT Political Science alumnus **Miranda Priebe**, "Don't Classify the FYDP; Budget Transparency Helps Allies, Taxpayers," *Breaking Defense* (April 28, 2020).

PhD Candidate **Ignacio Puente** and Ford International Professor of Political Science **Ben Ross Schneider**, "Business and Development: How Organization, Ownership, and Networks Matter," *Review of International Political Economy* (February 2020).

Ford International Professor of Political Science and CIS Director **Richard Samuels**, "Special Duty: A History of the Japanese Intelligence Community," *The Ambassador's Brief* (January 26, 2020).

_____ "Why President Truman insisted on unconditional surrender," *The New York Times* (August 3, 2020).

PhD Candidate **Erik Sand**, "Desperate Measures: The Effects of Economic Isolation on Warring Powers," *Texas National Security Review*, Vol 3, No 2 (2020).

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MIT Professor of Public Policy and Organization, Emeritus and the former director of the MIT Security Studies Program **Harvey Sapolsky**, "Beware of Latvians bearing gifts." *The National Interest* (August 9, 2020).

SSP Affiliate **Joshua Shifrinson**, "How Donald Trump Should Handle China's Growing Power," *The National Interest* (March 8, 2020).

Department Head and Professor of Political Science **David Singer** (with Mark Copelovitch), *Banks on the Brink: Global Capital, Securities Markets, and the Political Roots of Financial Crises*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

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Ford Professor of Political Science **Kathleen Thelen** (with Yonah Freemark and Justin Steil), "Varieties of Urbanism: A Comparative View of Inequality and the Dual Dimensions of Metropolitan Fragmentation," *Politics & Society* (2020).

_____(with Pepper Culpepper), "Are We All Amazon Primed? Consumers and the Politics of Platform Power," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol 53, No 2 (2020).

_____(with Anke Hassel), "Europe has kept down pandemic unemployment, US hasn't: here's why," *The Washington Post* (April 24, 2020).

SSP Senior Research Associate **James Walsh**, "4 Things That Will Happen if Kim Jong-Un Died," *The National Interest* (May 8, 2020).

Assistant Professor of Political Science **Bernardo Zacka**, "An Ode to the Humble Balcony," *The New York Times* (May 9, 2020).

précis n. a concise summary of essential points, statements, or facts.

précis is published twice each academic year in order to familiarize readers with the work of the Center for International Studies at MIT.

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