

## POLIS alumni news - January 2017



Dear POLIS alumnus/na,

Happy New Year! Thanks for all your responses and contributions to our Michaelmas newsletter.

As always, we love to hear from you. If you would like to be featured in our 'Spotlight' section, please do get in touch. You can also connect with POLIS via our [website](#), [Twitter](#), [Tumblr](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) or on [LinkedIn](#).

Yours,

Lydia  
Graduate Secretary

### Professor Jason Sharman is new Sir Patrick Sheehy Professor of International Relations

Professor Sharman, who received his PhD in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1999, succeeds Professor Christopher Hill. As an undergraduate, Professor Sharman studied history and politics at the University of Western Australia.

Professor Sharman will be teaching the second year undergraduate paper 'POL3: International Organisation' and the MPhil in Public Policy. His recent publications include *International Order in Diversity: War, Trade and Rule in the Indian Ocean* (2015) which won the 2016 Jervis-Schroeder Award and the 2017 Francesco Guicciardini Prize.



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# SPOTLIGHT: Ahir Shah

## Our termly alumni interview

NAME: Ahir Shah

DEGREE OBTAINED: PPS, 2012

COLLEGE: Clare College

I read PPS at Cambridge between 2009 and 2012, arriving in the aftermath of the financial crisis and then re-entering the world on a wave of 'Gangnam Style'. It is hard to tell which of these global upheavals that bookended my formative years had the greater impact on my personal and professional development...



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## Dr Roxane Farmanfarmaian and Dr Ali Sonay awarded Philomathia Forum grant

The 2017 Philomathia Forum will discuss how the media empower or exclude different citizen groups at times of crisis and what this implies for democratic resilience. To be held on 10 April 2017, the Forum is entitled 'Democratic Resilience and the Media: The Effects of Policy and Communication Strategies on Community Cohesion in Times of Threat'.

Based on research produced by the University of Cambridge-Al Jazeera Media Project over the past three years, the Forum will examine the relationship of media to policy and the implications for community culture, social cohesion and citizen fear in the UK. The workshop will include scholars at the University, policymakers, media professionals and representatives of faith communities.

The Forum precedes the annual Philomathia Symposium in November 2017.



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# Polis alumna is 'Falling Walls' finalist

Gathering described by BBC as 'the brightest minds on the planet'

Alexandra Dobra (Lucy Cavendish 2011) was selected as a finalist to present at the 'Falling Walls Lab Finale' in Berlin in October 2016. Alexandra's idea, the 'High-Performance Corporate DNA Transformation Model', was developed as part of her PhD thesis and aims to break the walls of unethical corporate behaviour. Watch a video of [Alexandra's presentation](#).

Falling Walls is a unique international gathering of leaders from science, business, government and the arts. The Falling Walls Lab is a challenging, inspiring and interdisciplinary format that offers the opportunity to academics and professionals to present innovative ideas, research projects and social initiatives. Each participant is asked to present his/her work in three minutes.

[Read more >](#)

## Professor Mayall visits India

Emeritus Professor's India trip reaps benefits for POLIS

In December James Mayall visited India as a member of the Pavate Foundation selection committee at Karnatak University Dharwad. For the past 17 years the Foundation has sent a visiting fellow, first to the Centre of International Studies and now to POLIS, for a four month stay.

This year the committee selected Dr Jayashree Vivekanandan, an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the South Asian University in New Delhi. During her visit between May and the end of August she will work on a comparative project investigating the politics of display in museums. While at POLIS she will focus on several museums in Cambridge and London, and the role they play in framing memories of the past.

While in India Professor Mayall also delivered a public lecture on 'Sovereignty and Self Determination in International Politics' at the Karnataka State Law University in Hubballi. Next, in Delhi he took part in a panel discussion which established an Indian chapter of *The Round Table - the Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, while simultaneously launching a special issue of the journal devoted to Brexit and its implications for the Commonwealth. The other panellists included Shashi Tharoor, member of the Lok Sabha and former Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, and Kamalesh Sharma, former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. The event was organised at the request of the editor by Sanjay Pulipaka, a senior fellow at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations and the 2012 holder of the Pavate Fellowship.

## In memoriam: HSPS graduate Baraka Khan (Emmanuel 2009)

We are sad to announce the passing of Baraka Khan, HSPS student between 2009 and 2012. Baraka passed away in February 2016 aged just 24 after a battle with lung cancer. During her treatment, Baraka raised nearly £600,000 for charitable causes close to her heart, and her family and friends are continuing to fundraise and have set up a website in her memory where friends and fellow students can upload their tributes and memories.

Dr Devon Curtis, who was Barak's Director of Studies, said: "POLIS was very sad to learn that our former student, Baraka Khan, passed away in February 2016. Her lecturers, supervisors and fellow students all remember her bright smile and joyful presence in POLIS and Emmanuel. She had boundless enthusiasm, insightful questions and a keen intellect, and her lecturers and supervisors remember her engaging ideas, her optimism, and her curiosity about the world. Every supervision could have gone on for hours with Baraka, since she always had astute observations about what she had read, together with a lively sense of humour. She was an effective communicator, a spirited debater, an avid rower, and above all else, a compassionate and kind individual. She will be greatly missed and very fondly remembered in POLIS."



[Go to site](#)



## 'In The Long Run'

POLIS is pleased to announce the launch of 'In The Long Run', an online platform for ideas, opinions, and comment about politics and public policy. The editorial team is based in the Department of POLIS and includes academics and graduate students from across the fields of politics, development studies, public policy and international relations.

If you would like to submit an article to 'In The Long Run', you can do so via the blog.

[Go to blog](#)



## POLIS academics in Hungary

POLIS academics Emeritus Professor John Dunn and Dr Duncan Kelly travelled to Budapest in November to give plenary talks at a Hungarian Academy of Sciences conference on political realism.

In addition, Professor Dunn visited Singapore in December for a conference arranged by the Kennedy School and Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy on China and Democracy.

Our campaign for the University and Colleges of Cambridge is raising funds to attract the brightest minds, create the finest facilities and give the freedom to create more world-changing ideas. To do this, we need your help.

Dear World...  
Yours,  
Cambridge

