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The Coral Bell School of
Asia-Pacific Affairs

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ANU College of
Asia & the Pacific

Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy
Department of International Relations
Department of Pacific Affairs
Department of Political & Social Change
Strategic & Defence Studies Centre

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Leading the conversation

The Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs continues to push the envelope when it comes to the important conversations about our region that Australia has to have.



The past few months have been extremely busy ones at the Coral Bell School. The pages that follow offer a detailed account of the highlights, but I thought it worth drawing three especially big pieces of news to your attention.

The first is the news that our newly named Department of Pacific Affairs (the unit in the School known previously as the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia program or SSGM) has been successful in winning a \$20 million Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade tender to conduct high-quality, policy-relevant research for a new Pacific Research program. DPA are partnering with the Lowy Institute for International Policy and the Australian National University's own Development Policy Centre on this exciting initiative. Huge congrats to the Head of DPA, Nicole Haley on this latest triumph.

The Coral Bell School has also just finalised an agreement with Japan's Ritsumeikan University to deliver a new undergraduate dual degree program. Our Deputy Director Education, Jeremy Youde, and our School Manager Deanne Drummond, accompanied the Vice Chancellor Professor Brian Schmidt and Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Shirley Leitch to the signing ceremony in Japan in October. The new dual degree will give students from Japan and Australia a once in a lifetime opportunity to deepen their knowledge of our region and to learn from some of the best academics in the Asia-Pacific. Special thanks to Jeremy, Deanne and Christine Sullivan from the College of Asia and the Pacific for all of their hard work to make this new dual degree program possible.

Last, but certainly not least, after a long wait but worthwhile wait, we received news in late October that Professor Toni Erskine has accepted to become the next Director of the Coral Bell School. Professor Erskine comes from UNSW Canberra, where she has been Associate Head of School for Research and Professor of International Politics. She is a world-renowned scholar in the fields of international ethics, cosmopolitan theory, cyber security, and technologies of war. We are very much looking forward to her taking up the Directorship of the School in July 2018.

In the meantime, many thanks to all staff, students and stakeholders for your wonderful support in 2017. Best wishes for a restful and enjoyable festive season with your loved ones.



EVENTS

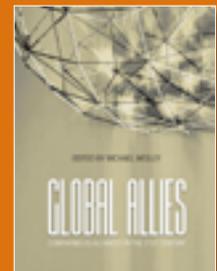
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Nov 2017:
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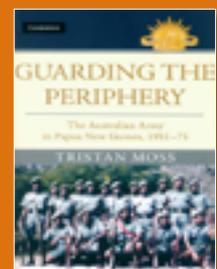
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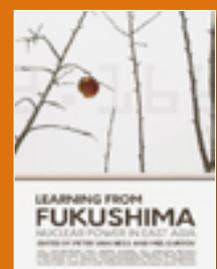
PUBLICATIONS



*Global Allies:
Comparing US
Alliances in the
21st Century*



*Guarding the
Periphery:
The Australian
Army in Papua
New Guinea,
1951-75*



*Learning from
Fukushima:
Nuclear Power
in East Asia*

Translating the refugee crisis

Following the launch of a Danish translation of his book *What is a refugee?* Professor William Maley explains why the refugee crisis is as topical as ever.

Denmark is a country which has a long history of involvement with refugee issues. In 1943 over 7000 Danish Jews were able to cross the narrow Öresund Strait into Sweden seeking protection from persecution.

“Nobel Prize winning physicist Niels Bohr was evacuated to Sweden in the face of dire threats from the Nazis,” Professor William Maley from the Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy said. “Because of his Nobel Prize he was able to see the 85-year-old king of Sweden who then agreed to his request to make space available for Danish Jews.”

As live an issue now as it was back then, Professor Maley

recently spent two days in Denmark, where the translation of his book was launched by the Chair of the Danish Refugee Council. “As in Australia, there have been right wing political parties in Denmark which have sought to agitate against more recent people seeking asylum,” Professor Maley said.

In March 2017, Inger Stojberg, the Danish minister for Integration celebrated the passing of the 50th regulation restricting immigration by posting a picture of a cake on Facebook.

Professor Maley’s book seeks to locate the issue of refugees as one within a conception of the international system where the moral justification for

states is an ability to protect their citizens. “The refugee phenomenon reflects the imperfect operation of that system,” he said. “There are some states that either cannot protect their own citizens or actively persecute their own citizens.”

An added complexity, is actually defining who gets to be a refugee. “It’s not so much ambiguity as the availability of different ways of defining the term,” Professor Maley said of the question posed by his book’s title. The international legal definition rests on the 1951 Refugee Convention. “That doesn’t necessarily overlap completely with what you might call an ordinary

language understanding of the idea of refugees,” Professor Maley said.

Professor Maley hopes the translation of his book will help tease out some of those complexities for both a general and academic audience.

“I think it’s useful because there tends to be an assumption in English-speaking countries that everybody speaks English,” he said. “And in the Scandinavian countries that’s true of a lot of people but it’s not true of everybody.”

Workshopping the Security Council

At an October workshop outside Florence, Dr Jeremy Farrall joined a team of researchers exploring ways for non-permanent elected members to leverage their influence on the UN Security Council.

Not quite in Florence, but somewhere in the Tuscan hills, a group of highflying diplomats and academics came together to discuss how to leverage influence on the UN Security Council. Organisers strategised about getting the discussion dynamics right.

UN Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect Jennifer Welsh was paired with Brazilian diplomat and proponent of Responsibility while Protecting Antonio de Aguiar Patriota.

“We thought there’d be an interesting tension there, but it turns out they’re very old friends,” said Dr Jeremy Farrall, a Fellow at the Asia-Pacific

College of Diplomacy. “It just led to a terrific conversation.”

The October workshop was the product, and signature event, of an ARC Discovery Project running from 2015 to 2019 involving a team of five researchers. Discussing ways non-permanent elected members could leverage their influence on the Security Council was its chief focus.

“You have 193 member states. Five of them are permanent,” said Dr Farrall of the UN and Security Council. “So, there are 188 member states for whom the insights from this program will be not only interesting but also relevant when they sit on the council in the future.”

The workshop outside Florence sought to bring together academics and practitioners with ready insights to share. “High quality but not high pretence. Down to earth and ready to engage,” said Dr Farrall of the group that attended. “We were looking to test our ideas and get examples of where those ideas had flown or sunk according to various experiences of elected members on the Security Council”.

The format was found to be so productive that the research team are now considering future workshops in Asia and Africa. “Given how exciting and successful we felt this event was, we are quite keen

to try and run this event in different regions to harvest other experiences,” Dr Farrall said.

The research group is planning two major book projects resulting from their research, as well as special issue journal articles derived from the workshop output before the project is scheduled to conclude in 2019.

Talking down terror

How we respond to the propaganda messaging of terrorist groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda really matters, argues Dr Haroro Ingram — and we're doing it wrong.

Global leaders need to rethink the way they talk about terrorism.

Whenever a politician denounces a terror attack as an attack on all democracies everywhere, and on freedoms everywhere, they are stepping right into the propaganda traps of extremist groups.

"We reinforce their talking points... [and] the way in which they see the world and their supporters see the world. That they're this malevolent, ubiquitous kind of threat that are just everywhere" Dr Haroro Ingram from the Department of International Relations said.

These are the perceptions terror groups want to create. "We don't need to lie to counter that," Dr Ingram said.

"We also shouldn't think that counter-proselytising with 'moderate' ideology is appropriate either."

In October, Dr Ingram drew together the speakers — including headliner Peter Grete — for the Information Warfare in the 21st Century event. Across a range of panels, the event canvassed media jihad, new cold wars and fake news.

Drawing from his own research, Dr Ingram spoke about ISIS and how the group would respond in the wake of devastating losses.

"As it loses territorial control, it has become popular to think that ISIS will look to survive into the future by establishing a virtual caliphate," he said. "But their virtual propaganda

effort online is a virtual means to real world ends. Not the other way around. That's very important to understand and appreciate. ISIS will remain very much focused on the real world."

The pressure is on, then, for military and intelligence efforts to evolve in tandem with the capabilities of terrorist groups. "Part of being human is to persuasively communicate. Democracies have been grappling with these challenges since the Greeks — and we're still grappling with it," Dr Ingram said.

According to Dr Ingram, when governments engage in counter-proselytising campaigns, they invariably make things worse. "We need to develop

a far more sophisticated understanding of the diversity of threats that are involved here, and how they impact on us strategically but also on our politics," he said.

He emphasised that the Australian National University was already leading in these efforts, serving as the hub of a network extending through Europe, the US, South East Asia and the Middle East on the issue. "If we're going to understand these complex problems we have to go where these complex problems are and work with locals to understand them."

Beyond borders: Trading in tiger skin

Data never stops rolling in for academics specialising in contemporary issues, but Professor Lorraine Elliott takes some time out to explain how an ongoing book project on illegal environmental trade has evolved.

Unlike a pangolin, Tokay gecko or similar victim of the illegal wildlife trade, poaching a tiger takes some skill.

And that, really, forms the crux of Professor Lorraine Elliott's research into environmental black markets: How a tiger skin might pass through different specialists, across borders, as a product.

"It has to be tanned and there's taxidermy involved. That's a skill," said Professor Elliott from the Department of International Relations. "In something like the pet trade, the fur trade, it's not that you have one set of people doing the illegal stuff and one set of people doing the legal stuff — almost

always these two things are connected."

This research, for a book project, is just one cut of Professor Elliott's broader research agenda. Her work ranges from research on climate change to human security. Outreach and engagement with the policy community are active pursuits. She has sat on numerous boards and chaired various bodies.

But Professor Elliott is also the project leader of the Transnational Environmental Crime project, founded in 2011 and funded by an ARC linkage grant.

Her book project, looking specifically at the nature of

criminal networks involved in transnational environmental crime, is about halfway there. "I want to understand how we can conceptualise the actual trade itself," Professor Elliott said. "So much of the work that's done around trying to interdict and stop the illegal wildlife trade is looking at trying to either stop demand or trying to stop supply."

Professor Elliott's own work seeks to understand these networks as transactional, rather than simply criminal. "Saying *this* is the illicit space and *this* is the licit space, those boundaries... that simply doesn't work," she said. A farmer, whose chief means of

income is legal, might know that if they find a pangolin in the wild, somebody will pay them a small amount of money for it. An ivory carver might see themselves as an artisan rather than a participant in the criminal trafficking of elephant tusks.

"So much of what happens in the illicit space relies on what happens in the legal space," Professor Elliott said. "I'm hoping that this framework may provide some broader value for both scholarly work but also the policy community."

Minister launches new Pacific Research Program (PRP)

The launch of a new research initiative demonstrates Australia's growing investment in understanding the Pacific region.

On 24 October, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, launched the Pacific Research Program (PRP). The PRP is a consortium led by the Bell School's State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program (SSGM) and including the ANU Development Policy Centre and the Lowy Institute.

The PRP was awarded to the consortium following an open selection process conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade earlier this year. The program builds on previous support, through DFAT, for Pacific research at the Australian National University (primarily through SSGM). At the same time, it represents change in some important ways and in particular through what

the Development Policy Centre and the Lowy Institute will bring to the program.

In launching the PRP, the Minister stated that "high quality research that ANU and Lowy are renowned for producing... will lead to a much greater understanding, not only amongst academics and researchers, but from the media and more importantly, from the public." The Minister said, "as a Government we value ferociously independent and objective research and opinions, so we are looking forward to the benefit[s] of our investment in this Pacific Research Program."

Speaking at the launch, Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian Schmidt acknowledged the significant commitment the

Government is making in the PRP and the alignment of the PRP's purpose and expected outcomes with those of the ANU Strategic Plan, which commits the University to building on its tradition of research excellence and study of the Pacific at ANU.

The PRP is designed to:

- Produce high-quality policy relevant research that is available, accessible and communicated to policy makers and program designers in Australia, the Pacific and from around the world.
- Play a central role in fostering and facilitating a strong and vibrant Pacific-Australia-New Zealand-wide network of research on the Pacific.

- Connect to Australia's broader engagement with the Pacific and foster a greater knowledge and understanding of the Pacific among the Australian community.

- Demonstrate a high degree of effectiveness in contributing to evidence-based policy-making and program design primarily in Australia, the Pacific and around the world.

In conjunction with the launch of the PRP, SSGM has also undergone a name change to the *Department of Pacific Affairs (DPA)*. This change does not diminish the unit's focus on Melanesia, which will remain essential to its work, but is intended to reflect better the full scope of the work it undertakes.

Constituency funds and Solomon Islands

A team of international researchers are exploring how funds provided to politicians for their electorates are managed and just how much development impact they have.

Public funds directly allocated to elected officials for use in their electorates are often referred to as Constituency Development Funds (CDFs). Since the turn of the millennium the use of such schemes has spread to well over 20 countries. The institutionalisation of CDFs in developing countries has generated controversy, with supporters and critics alike arguing over the efficiency and effectiveness of CDFs as a policy tool for development.

In recent years, CDFs in Solomon Islands (and in its close neighbour Papua New Guinea) have risen to globally unprecedented levels: CDFs

now make up around one third of the development budget in Solomon Islands, or between 10-15 percent of total budget outlays. As elsewhere, CDFs have generated considerable controversy in Solomon Islands. In addition, CDFs have been a bone of contention over many years between Solomon Islands governments and the donor community, including Australia.

The project run through seeks to provide a comparative evidence base for how CDFs are used at the constituency level in Solomon Islands. It aims to examine the CDF spending process from planning and decision making through to how projects are implemented

and their impact on households and communities.

The project examines the type of pressures that managing CDFs place on MPs, and how public attitudes and expectations are affected by CDF spending. Fieldwork was undertaken between April and July 2017 in three constituencies in Solomon Islands.

Drawing on data from the most recent national elections (2014), in each constituency the research team visited locations where the MP had strong, mixed and weak political support. The research involved in-depth interviews, community focus groups, and surveys.

In total, over 300 individuals were interviewed or surveyed. Analysis of the data collected during fieldwork is currently underway.

It is expected that this will provide fresh insights into the operation of CDFs in Solomon Islands, contributing to the growing international literature on this subject, as well as to a better-informed public debate in Solomon Islands itself.

Myanmar: Narratives of communal violence

Gerard McCarthy sat with Buddhist nationalists in Myanmar to try and understand why Muslim groups are being scapegoated, as myths and ethnic violence spiral out of control.

Conducting field research in provincial Myanmar in 2015 and 2016, Gerard McCarthy spent hours talking with local snack-merchants who had gone village to village disbursing propoganda sermons from Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu.

In 2013 Wirathu featured on the front page of TIME magazine as the face of Buddhist terror. He is something of a spiritual leader for those who circulate widespread anti-Muslim narratives in Myanmar. “We just sat with these people who were espousing these stories,” said McCarthy, Associate Director of the Myanmar Research Centre.

In November, alongside

Dr Nick Cheesman, he will speak at an ANU conference on interpretive approaches to understanding communal violence. “The biggest thing that frames people’s perceptions of Myanmar is communal violence and issues around the Rohingya, but also the status of Muslims,” McCarthy said. “Listening to these people you get past the initial ‘we hate Muslims’ and dig into what’s going on,” McCarthy explained of his field work.

Muslims, he argues, have been portrayed as deviant, cast as outsiders and blamed for any array of crimes – what anthropologists might call ‘folk devils’.

He unpacked the myths and rumours circulating about Muslims in a co-authored article on gendered rumours earlier this year. “It’s economic grievances – people are fundamentally angry that the authoritarian period saw them suffer so much as a result of economic mismanagement, a weak education system and the military junta’s greed.”

The projection of prevailing narratives in Myanmar sees Muslims become the scapegoat for these economic grievances, McCarthy argues. “And it’s not factually true,” he said. “It doesn’t just come from this idea that primordial tensions between Buddhists and Muslims

have always been there.”

There is, actually, a long history of collaboration between Buddhists and Muslims in Myanmar. “But the Rohingya are the most extreme expression of this perception of Muslims being the other,” McCarthy said. “Really listening to people’s narratives and how people place and understand communal violence within a larger perspective and a larger narrative is essential.”

His ongoing research on distributive politics and inequality in Myanmar seeks to do just that.

Putting history on trial

It won him a prize at the NSW Premier’s History Awards, but the key insight from Professor Robert Cribb’s research on Japanese war crime trials is that politics and justice are intertwined.

Nearly 6000 Japanese military personnel were tried for war crimes at the end of the Second World War.

Professor Robert Cribb points out there is a Wikipedia entry for the famous Tokyo Trials but no such entry for the other 2200 trials, spanning war crimes from New Guinea to Indochina. “Which is a sign of how much they’ve been neglected,” Professor Cribb said. “It was a huge exercise in trying to bring to justice people who had committed atrocities against prisoners of war and against civilians during the Second World War.”

Distilling that exercise into an award-winning book took

four researchers five years. They travelled to the archives of 14 different countries and pooled their linguistic talents. Professor Cribb contributed Dutch, Indonesian and enough Japanese to order coffee – “technically it’s a smattering,” he said.

They called their book *Japanese War Criminals: The Politics of Justice after the Second World War* and in September, it won the prestigious *General History Prize* in the NSW Premier’s History Awards established by Bob Carr.

For Professor Cribb, the warcrime trials make for a very long story, of which criminal

investigation forms only one half. “The politics of dealing with people who’ve already been convicted is another,” he said. “There’s a question of proportionality, of even-handedness.”

Politics showed itself in the selectivity of justice. Questions of Allied war crimes, mistreatment of prisoners, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, fell by the wayside. “It ended being only the Japanese in Asia, the Germans and Italians in Europe who were brought to justice,” Professor Cribb said.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has been going for more than two decades

and indicted only 161 people. “That’s just a drop in the bucket, for millions and millions of dollars,” Professor Cribb said.

The Japanese war trials cut corners. There were wrong convictions and unreasonably heavy penalties. “These were done quickly. It was quick and dirty.”

As Professor Cribb and one of his colleagues return to examine the war crimes themselves for a future book, there remains just one point to make. “Justice is entwined with politics,” he said. “They are not separate.”

Our mob served

Interviewing around 200 Indigenous Australian veterans, their families and descendants for the *Serving Our Country* project was all about recognition, says Professor Joan Beaumont.

For years now, contingents of Indigenous Australians have marched in the wake of traditional ANZAC Day parades holding banners calling for the recognition of colonial frontier wars.

The issue of recognition is evolving, says Professor Joan Beaumont, and is echoed by a broader call for recognition of Indigenous Australia's contribution to the country's defence forces. "There are some people that believe the recognition that has been given to the traditional military service on the part of Aboriginal Australians is a way of diffusing the debate about whether institutions such as the War

Memorial should acknowledge frontier conflict as war," Professor Beaumont said. "I think it's time to acknowledge that there were these conflicts in the 19th century."

Frontier wars are a feature, not a focus, of the *Serving Our Country* research project, which does seek to acknowledge the service of Indigenous Australians in the wars of the 20th century. Funded by an ARC linkage grant, the multi-institutional project is led by Professor Mick Dodson of the National Centre for Indigenous Studies. A new website hosting the project's Yarn Ups – oral history recordings – will launch by the end of the year, with two

books on the way as well.

Professor Beaumont, from the Strategic & Defence Studies Centre, is a contributing author and one of the chief investigators. "The story, essentially, is one of exclusion from military service," Professor Beaumont said. There are subtleties and complexities to that aspect, but for a long time only people of European descent were obligated to serve.

A second story the research turned up, rather surprisingly, was one of mateship. "Once Indigenous personnel got into the defence forces they didn't experience the kind of racism they were experiencing in Australian society more

broadly," Professor Beaumont said. "They talk about being accepted as part of the platoon and being embraced by the mateship that is so much part of the ANZAC legend."

The limitations of that are found in a third story, of frustration. "Frustration in having experienced a more egalitarian environment, and then having risked their lives in military service, to come back to a society that was still deeply racist and discriminatory."

That much of this has changed over the last 20 years should be acknowledged, Professor Beaumont said. In bringing history and memory together, her project plays some small role in that.

The Battle of Beersheba: History and myth

There is much hullabaloo in Australia about the charge of the Light Horse during the Battle of Beersheba, but as a historian, Dr Jean Bou is more than happy to debunk a few myths.

The day was getting on when Harry Chauvel, commander of the Australian Light Horse, ordered a cavalry charge to take the town of Beersheba in Palestine on October 31, 1917.

The charge took the Turkish and German troops by surprise, sweeping past their defences in time to secure the town's precious water wells – wired to blow.

"And you beaut, they've got Beersheba," Dr Jean Bou from the Strategic & Defence Studies Centre said of the charge successfully achieving its mission. "It's set up an example of Australian derring-do in the face of all odds. The reality of course is much more prosaic

than that."

Dr Bou's research background in Australian military history has seen him called into service for the 100th anniversary of the battle. He will speak in Melbourne, hold a special seminar at ANU and speak again at a memorial in Canberra, with a few publications to go to print – all in order to commemorate the event.

But he is more than ready to debunk a few myths along the way. For instance, the focus on the charge of the Light Horse often ignores the contributions of other troops. It was actually British infantry who made the first move on Beersheba. "It's completely forgotten in Australia

the Brits did that, they took about 1100 casualties," Dr Bou said. Indian troops, New Zealand Mounted Rifles and British Yeomanry also charged alongside the Australian Light Horse.

Perhaps most famously, the battle is often said to symbolise the last great cavalry charge in history. "It's certainly not the last cavalry charge in history. Whether it's the last great one – that's neither here nor there," Dr Bou said.

Not least, the battle has been immortalised in films like *Forty Thousand Horsemen* and *The Lighthorsemen*. "In the way that only a movie could, it cements it in the public mind," Dr Bou said.

"In Australia, the battle takes on this mythical status."

Modern Beersheba even hosts an Australian Soldier Park. "It gets used as a vehicle for modern day political aspirations or certain interpretations of the past," Dr Bou said of the battle.

He is not out to burst anyone's bubble, and thinks Beersheba is an interesting event in itself – without any embellishments. "History is more useful than myths," Dr Bou said. "History as a field of study, as a way to examine things is useful to us. Mythmaking is mostly self-congratulation."



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