Freedom and Unfreedom in Turkey: Religion, society and politics

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St Antony’s College
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Introduction

When we convened this symposium on ‘Freedom and Unfreedom in Turkey: Religion, Society and Politics’ in March 2013 little did we know that major protests of discontent were about to break out only three months later. We witnessed the peaceful protests in June and their brutal suppression with both shock and hope. Yet, while we were surprised by the massive police violence and the government’s unrelenting and illiberal response to the protests, we were indeed expecting some sort of political crisis to emerge. Many of the increasing restrictions on media freedom, the freedom of speech, religion and assembly, which have occurred over the last few years, and which were subsequently explored during the Symposium, could not have suggested otherwise.

We would nevertheless like to begin this introduction with a brief overview of the human rights situation in the ten years of Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. In 2002, the AKP ushered in a phase of breath taking legal reform in conformity with the political criteria of European Union membership. From a progressive new civil code to the pacification of the military as a factor in politics, the AKP has indeed curtailed the power of non-elected guardians and reigned in the secular nationalism of the Kemalist ruling cadres. Several initiatives—from the reluctant yet ultimately effective concession of language rights to the country’s Kurdish minority, to the restoration of expropriated foundation properties to the Greek and Armenian communities, and to an albeit failed ‘Alevi Opening’—appeared to demonstrate a policy shift towards a more positive engagement with hitherto marginalised communities.

Yet, many restrictions on the freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression have continued in the last decade, and some have arguably worsened. Religious minority groups such as Christians and Alevis continue to face significant limitations to their religious and community life, while the concessions aimed at accommodation have not been translated into rights granted by law. No progress has been made either with regard to the
recognition of the right to conscientious objection to military service. Finally, there are now several dozen journalists and several thousand Kurdish activists and politicians in jail. Mass trials that are known under the epithets of KCK, DHKP-C, Balyoz and Ergenekon, have targeted the old Kemalist state and military elites as well as the Kurdish nationalist movement and socialist groups. While, in particular, pathé Balyoz and Ergenekon cases against military conspirators and the case against the violent socialist splinter group DHKP-C were at least based on some evidence, in none of them was due process granted. Indictments grew evermore fantastic to indict individuals, who are clearly not involved with any military conspiracy.

In parallel, however, the government continued with reforms that went some way towards responding particularly to demands for education in Kurdish. More recently, direct talks have begun between the AKP government and the incarcerated leader of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) Abdullah Öcalan, nurturing hopes that the long-lasting conflict between the Turkish state and Kurdish nationalists, arguably the single most important area of human right abuses, might come to an end in the near future. These hopes, however, might turn out to be premature, considering the government’s current breakdown on various forms of dissent.

What are we to make of this complex picture? In this symposium, leading scholars and human rights activists from Turkey and the UK addressed the current state of the freedoms of thought, conscience, religion and expression in Turkey, ten years since the first government of the AKP and seven years after the start of accession negotiations with the European Union. They did so under three headings: the first addressed the legal, political and administrative context of the relationship between the European Court of Human Rights and Turkey. The speakers discussed the legal traditions and notions of justice that underpin the decisions of courts in Turkey, and sought to explain why they opt for the limitation of individual freedoms rather than defending them. The second session explored the relationship between NGOs, the state and society, and considered the obstacles to the extension and deepening of freedoms in Turkey. Finally, the third session discussed the evolving relationship between religion and politics and its impact on the state of freedoms, as well as the possible outcomes for Turkey’s relationship with the EU.

With the government response to the June protests, struggles for individual and collective freedoms in Turkey have entered a new phase. We hope that this brief overview of the issues discussed at the Symposium will contribute to a better understanding of the causes of the protests of Gezi Park and Taksim Square.

Kerem Öktem and Özgür H. Çinar
Opening remarks

Edward Mortimer, Fellow of All Souls College and Senior Programme Advisor at Salzburg Global Seminar

Edward Mortimer’s key remarks framed the proceeding discussion for the following sessions. He suggested that on paper, universal protections of freedom of speech, religion and expression exist in Turkey. While Turkey has long struggled with varying levels of suppression of freedom of expression and speech, he posited that the suppression of freedoms has become more acute since the ascendancy of AKP. Yet, to what extent is this phenomenon actually taking place? A reasonable litmus test to gauge the extent contraction of rights is taking place is to examine the present state of freedom of press – which is necessarily integral to exposing other violations and abuses, and to mobilise people to challenge them. At present, the situation is bleak. Turkey has been referred to as a “prison for journalists,” and Reporters without Borders rank Turkey among the worst violators of freedom of press in the world. This punitive atmosphere has led to (and arguably has been designed to) heighten journalistic self-censorship – particularly in relation to the Kurdish conflict, in which the label of “terrorism” is used by the state to curtail the free circulation of information. In addition, a disproportionate number of journalists have been imprisoned for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government – unconnected with the Kurdish issue. He concluded that there is sufficient cause for concern for the current state and future of freedom of speech and press in Turkey.
1. Legal framework and practice: Precarious rights?

Fundamental values of democratic societies: Freedom of religion and freedom of expression

*Symbolic Turkish cases before the European Court of Human Rights*

**Professor İşıl Karakaş, European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)**

The paper of Professor Karakaş focused on the relationship between the European Convention on Human Rights and freedom of thought, conscience and religion within all signatories. In her paper, she explored the following issues: compulsory religious classes, religious symbols in public areas, conscientious objection to military service, and compulsory indication of religion on NI cards.

The Convention is the accepted legal basis upon which freedom(s) are ostensibly guaranteed, and have provided the momentum both legally and politically in the Turkish context. The animating ethos underpinning the Convention is a commitment to a “democratic society,” and the European Court of Human Rights, the regional court which was established by the Convention, pays a good deal of attention to the characteristics of a democratic society – namely, liberalism, tolerance and broadmindedness – in which freedom of religion is well ensconced. The highly publicised Kokkinakis case (*Kokkinakis v. Greece*, no. 14307/88, 25 March 1993) brought the issue of freedom of religion into sharpened focus, as it was the first case in the Court in which a violation of freedom of religion was found under Article 9.

The Kokkinakis case observed that freedom of thought, conscience and religion was one of the foundations of a democratic society, within the meaning of the Convention. However, in multi-religious societies it may be necessary to place restrictions on these freedoms to protect the interests of the various constituencies.

In conclusion, pluralism and a respect for diversity is of paramount importance in any democratic society. Moreover, the harmonious co-existence of individuals of varied beliefs and backgrounds is essential for achieving social cohesion. The role of a neutral state, in principal, should be to act as guarantor in promoting public order, religious harmony and tolerance in a democratic society.

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1 Due to unforeseen circumstances, İşıl Karakaş, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, was unable to attend the symposium. In her stead, Dr Nazila Ghanea (University of Oxford) read the symposium paper.
Turkey’s unending reform process

Dr Kerem Altıparmak, King’s College

Dr Kerem Altıparmak continued the discussion about the legal dimensions of freedom of speech and expression by specifically looking at the proposed reform packages relating to human rights and democracy that are currently being considered in the Turkish Parliament. However, he argued, unless vital political problems in Turkey are not addressed, the effect of these reforms is destined to be limited. The Kurdish issue and the role of religion in society and state are the most prominent issues where freedom of speech is challenged today.

The suppression of freedom of speech and particularly freedom of the press is, arguably, one the most flagrant cases of human rights abuses in Turkey. Under the guise of combating terrorism, many journalists and students have been imprisoned or have been subdued by other means. The government has maintained the position that, “simply because someone carries a press card does not also mean that they are not terrorists.”

Contestation of freedom of speech rests on two main axes – “sacred values” (Ataturk, the Prophet, inter alia), and, second, violence and terrorism in contemporary Turkey. Firstly, the conceptual and legal delineation between speech and conduct must be established. Determining this delineation is a matter of on-going and complex debate within courts and among observers. However, Turkish courts use a language that shows no differentiation between these categories. Hate speech cases are recurrent and are indicative examples where we can see this problem arising. A widely held belief among some is that speech, per se, does not harm people and therefore punitive action against speech would not be legitimate.

In certain jurisdictions, as well as in Turkey, there is no distinction between hate speech and speech that incites conduct. On the other hand, the European Court of Human Rights pays much attention not only to the content of speech, but also to the means of expression - like a protest. Another legal approach is to delineate between ‘more valuable’ and ‘less valuable’ speech – for example, commercial speech can be seen as less important than political speech or propaganda.

Allegations of hate speech are used by Turkish courts to prosecute people who are supposedly challenging state policies. The so-called violation of sacred values, such as insults to the Prophet, the memory of Ataturk or the state itself, the public affirmation of the Armenian genocide and critical perspectives on the Kurdish issue, is central in these cases.
Discussion

The discussion that followed the presentations revisited the issue of religious freedom through the example of the wearing of the headscarf in the institutional domain, as well as the biased content of religious education syllabi. Both at this juncture, as well as in past periods, the explicit secular character of the Turkish state did not change in practice the underlying assumption that the foundations of a religiously homogeneous society should not be challenged. Furthermore, departing from the legal definition of religious rights, questions from the audience also raised the issue of gender equality and women’s rights in contemporary Turkey. Notwithstanding the apparent deficiencies in the legal framework (e.g. Turkey is the only member of the Council of Europe where women cannot use their maiden names after marriage), the divergence between law and its implementation was pointed out. More generally, the predominance of the state and of a rigid precept of social harmony, both in its Kemalist and Islamist versions, are still omnipresent in the way human rights are dealt with. Moreover, the role of international institutions such as the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe has often raised criticism among the Turkish political-legal establishment and led to alternative readings of international treaties or Courts’ rulings.
2. Civil society: Achievements and limits to agency

Civil society in Turkey: Changing dynamics, increasing impact and chronic limitations

Mr Ziya Meral, University of Cambridge

The paper commenced by posing a fundamental question – how do we define civil society? Civil society often suffers from definitional reductionism, frequently being regarded as a collection of NGOs. However, civil society has a much greater embrace, encompassing a wide array of organizations and associations.

The conventional wisdom is that “civil society” has historically been the preserve of the West, and therefore the assistance, aid and guidance of Western organizations, most notably the EU in the case of Turkey, is necessary to facilitate the growth of civil society in other parts of the world. However, taking the historical longue durée, it can be argued that Turkey’s Ottoman legacy, specifically the denominational millet system, has, on balance, accommodated the organic growth of civil society, independent of external actors. A chronology of stages of the growth of civil society in Turkey can be charted beginning with the creation of the Republic in which the remit of civil society was curtailed by the strong state model. The post-war period to 1960 saw a fledgling growth in civil society which was concomitant with the expansion of a multiparty system, growing industrialisation, urbanisation and trade unionism. The following 30 years, however, saw a contraction in the presence of civil society as the militarised political climate regarded civil society with suspicion and as a potential foreign fifth column. The growth of free market capitalism and global neoliberalism in the years between 1990 and 2000 were hallmarks of Turkey’s emergent “liberal” democracy. Consistent with the pattern of most emerging democracies, Turkey witnessed the proliferation of civil society organizations.

To date, civil society has continued to grow in Turkey aided in part by EU funds and expertise, which has been helpful in making Turkish civil society more savvy and fine-tuned. Turkish civil society is now in a position to help fill the welfare gaps left unattended by the state, and can be effective in influencing policy. Moreover, in Turkey’s polarised political climate, in many ways civil society is the only real challenge to the government other than the formal opposition.
Is there a historical opportunity for civil society in Turkey?

Mr Ville Forsman, Raoul Wallenberg Institute

Ville Forsman elaborated on what has been seen as Turkey’s long term deficit in terms of civil society organizations. This lack of an institutionally established and functional civil society is combined with the important presence of state authorities in various spheres of social action. The Turkish state has enacted policies of limiting and controlling civil society groups, both in periods of military regimes, as well as in periods of democratic governance. This reflects the specific ideological and organizational assumptions underlying the modern Turkish state, namely a rigid and “old-school” reading of the Enlightenment tradition, as well as a very specific pattern of centralized (“top-down”) government.

Given the coincidence of this centralized form of government with an equally pervasive militaristic rationale, one can ask how these were to be combined with the potential empowerment of civil society. It is in this sense that the pattern of “top-down” government has remained salient in Turkey, while at best one could see the formation of a corporatist civil society model in the past. Even when opportunities for civil society to strengthen appeared, the state interfered in these processes.

Therefore, Turkey currently does not have really large scale grassroots organizations, and the role of foreign organizations remains an ambiguous issue within Turkish society. In order for the model of “top-down” governance to change, two things seem of crucial importance: the ongoing negotiations of the Turkish state with the PKK, possibly leading to the revision of the Turkish constitution, and the process of Turkey acceding to the EU. However, the recent past of Turkey-EU relations, and the problematic formation of a civil society within this period, should make us sceptical as to the absolute impact of EU accession on Turkish civil society.

Discussion

The following discussion began with a critical examination of Ziya Meral’s longue durée approach to civil society and the question of whether much older sub-state formations of the Ottoman past could convincingly be subsumed under the term of civil society. It also raised the issue of the current situation in Turkey and the possibilities for new groups and associations to emerge from already existing “pockets” of civil society. Occupational groups, such as doctors and nurses, and their important role in opposing state policies and reforms constitute such an example. The current state of human rights in Turkey and its correlation with the growth of
civil society was also brought up in the discussion. Ville Forsman acknowledged the advances made in the domain of human rights and democracy, but questioned whether these advances were encouraged or even welcomed by the state. Furthermore, the numerical growth of civil society associations during the last years seems to not have entailed a further interest in the human rights movement. At the same time, the term “human rights” by itself is often seen as an external term, in reference to foreign institutions and ideological discourses. Another issue that was discussed was the practical ways through which the state controls and monitors civil society organizations; while policing practices (e.g. arrests) are still a recurrent phenomenon, one should also acknowledge the more sophisticated political/journalistic nexus and its impact on silencing civil society discourses and actions.
3. Politics: Between reform, populism and authoritarianism

Religion, politics and the politics of religion in Turkey

Professor İğtar Gözaydın, Doğuş University, Istanbul

The paper focused on the Diyanet, the Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, which was created in the 1920s. The Diyanet was used as a means of 'securing' secularism in Turkey for over a period of 80 years. This apparent paradox raises intriguing questions about the representation of the construction (and deconstruction) of 'modernity' and of 'state and religion' in Turkey.

The principle of secularism, along with republicanism, was the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Religion was to become “individualised.” The exclusion of any reference to an official religion from the Constitution, and the addition of the word “secular” to the text in 1937, suggested that the “will of the people” replaced divine laws as the source of legitimacy. The resulting conception of secularism, however, was not characterized by the “separation of church and state,” as the Kemalist discourse puts it, but by the fact that the political legitimacy of the state, and thus the legal system, was based on rules and institutions derived from outside the realm of religion. It is fair to contend that from the time of the creation of the Republic, secularism has meant safeguarding the state against social forces. The official conception of secularism in Turkey complements this statist tradition. This tradition is characterized by a denial of the existence of autonomous political and cultural realms within society, regarding these as threats against the existence of the state and advocating that legitimate social practices are limited to practices supervised by the state. The official ideology inevitably approaches religion in line with this statist tradition. In other words, although it might seem contradictory, the failure to separate state and religion in Turkey resulted in a situation where religion was regulated by being subordinated to bureaucracy. This explains, to an extent, why the AKP government did not need to resort to constitutional changes in order to impose on all sections of society its own reading of Islam.
Turkey’s EU accession process and democratisation under the AKP: Parallel logics?

Mr Bill Park, King’s College

The paper commenced by observing a puzzling dichotomy between Turkey’s professed ambition to “join Europe” and its heretofore inability (and perhaps unwillingness) to conform with many EU entrance requirements. Turkey’s prospects of joining the EU in the near future remain remote.

Turkey’s protracted accession process diverges from that of other (now) member states: most of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, for example, sought to rapidly comply with the acquis in order to expedite accession. Yet Turkey balks at certain requirements, insisting that it be treated as an exception. Consequently, lack of implementation, or only half-implementation, consistently hinders Turkey’s accession momentum.

What explains this dualism between westward-looking aspirations and inefficacy implementing reforms compliant with EU accession? One important factor is the role of informal networks, which are preponderant in Turkey. Informal social, political and economic networks often provide strong alternatives to the state, and therefore have the ability to undermine the rule of law. Another impediment is the lack of a legacy of liberal democracy in Turkey. Most other EU members, to greater and lesser degrees, have benefited from this legacy, creating political conditions and a climate amenable to the adoption of liberal democratic values which underpin the acquis and embody the ethos of the EU itself. Although in more recent times liberal democratic values and practices have made inroads in Turkey, sultanistic historical antecedents, alongside an often recalcitrant government, so far have militated against conditions necessary and sufficient to “join Europe.”

Discussion

A vibrant discussion ensued beginning with a question asking whether or not there is a risk of pigeonholing Turkey along Huntingtonian fault lines. Is it too facile and deterministic to explain Turkey’s heretofore unsuccessful attempts at accession with largely historic and cultural explanations? It was suggested that perhaps Turkey is struggling with a crisis of “place” – in other words, wrestling with questions of belonging which have militated against Turkey adopting resolute actions which would aid and expedite accession. On the other hand, it was suggested, given the EU’s current existential crisis, is it not reasonable to tread cautiously with accession aspirations? That notwithstanding, what kinds of alternatives exist to accession – Putinization? Erdoganization? None of the obvious alternatives seem palatable.
Speakers

**Introduction**
Kerem Öktem (Research Fellow, St Antony’s College, Oxford)
Özgür H. Çınar (Senior Associate Member, St Antony’s College, Oxford)

**Opening remarks**
Edward Mortimer CMG (Vice President of the Global Salzburg Seminar; Fellow, All Souls College, Oxford)

**Legal framework and practice: Precarious rights?**
İşıl Karakaş (European Court of Human Rights)
Kerem Altıparmak (University of Ankara)

**Civil Society: Achievements and limits to agency**
Ziya Meral (University of Cambridge)
Ville Forsman (The Raoul Wallenberg Institute)

**Politics: Between reform, populism and authoritarianism**
İştar Gözaydın (Doğuş University, Istanbul)
Bill Park (King’s College London)
Biographies


Özgür H. Çınar completed his PhD at the School of Law, University of Essex. Currently he is a senior associate member at the European Studies Centre, St Antony's College. He is a lawyer and works as a legal expert for the Council of Europe. His main research interests are the right to conscientious objection, freedom of thought, conscience and religion and freedom of expression. He is the author of The Effects of the European Court of Human Rights’ Decisions on the Turkish Legal System (Istanbul Branch of the Human Rights Association, 2005) (in Turkish) as well as a number of articles in Güncel Law Journal, Legal Journal of Labour and Social Security Law, Crimen e Poena, and the Turkish Bar Association Journal. In addition, he is a co-editor of Conscientious Objection: Resisting Militarized Society (Zed Books, 2009) and Sand in the Wheels: Conscientious Objection – Philosophical Sources and Experiences (İletişim Yayınları, 2008) (in Turkish).

Ville Forsman is currently Head of the Istanbul Office of the Lund/Sweden-based Raoul Wallenberg Institute on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. He has previously worked for Åbo/Finland-based Åbo Akademi Institute for Human Rights, the Finnish Consulate in Istanbul and as Director for Amnesty International in Turkey.

Nazila Ghanea teaches International Human Rights Law at the University of Oxford. Her international human rights research focuses in particular freedom of religion or belief, minority rights and human rights in the Middle East. These interests have continued some of the avenues of research that she started out with in her doctorate, which addressed the impact of UN human rights mechanisms on the amelioration of the situation of Baha’is in Iran. She has
worked with a range of governments and international organisations and her research has received support from the ESRC, AHRC, OSI and the Qatar Foundation.

Dimitrios Gkintidis is the 2012/2013 A.G. Leventis Fellow in Contemporary Greek Studies at SEESOX, ESC, St Antony’s College, Oxford. He is a graduate of the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies at the University of Macedonia, in Thessaloniki, and has a Master’s degree in Sociology from the University of Strasbourg II “Marc Bloch”. He obtained his PhD from the University of Macedonia in 2011, with a specialization in Social Anthropology. His thesis focused on the local public sphere of the Greek border region of Evros and the changing perceptions of nationalism, economy and culture in the context of national and EU policies. His current research interests focus on the multifaceted relation of Greek society with the European Union, on the wider hegemonic framework of “Europeanization”, as well as on the reformulation of Greek nationalism within the conjuncture of the world economic crisis.


İşıl Karakaş studied political science and law. She obtained a PhD in public law at the University of Istanbul. She was a professor of public international law at the Faculty of Law of Galatasaray University and director of the Research and Documentation Centre on Europe. She taught in several universities
of France as a visiting professor. She has been a Judge, elected in respect of Turkey, at the European Court of Human Rights since May 2008.

**Ziya Meral** is a researcher and writer. He publishes on Middle East and Turkish politics, human rights, as well as political theory and comparative literature. His last book in Turkish was a comparative study of thoughts and lives of Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky. He worked as a human rights advocate on Middle Eastern affairs and wrote numerous briefings and reports in that capacity. He frequently comments on the region in the international media. He is a PhD candidate in politics at the University of Cambridge and a Research Associate of the Foreign Policy Centre.


**Kerem Öktem** is the Open Society Research Fellow at the European Studies Centre and an Associate Faculty Member at Oxford’s Oriental Institute. He obtained his D. Phil. from Oxford's School of Geography in 2006 and an M. St. in Modern Middle Eastern Studies from the Oriental Institute in 2001. His research focuses on Turkey’s politics and international relations, and on Muslim politics and networks in the Balkans and Western Europe. Dr Öktem also acts as the coordinator for Turkey-related studies at South East European Studies at Oxford (SEESOX). He has published in Nations and Nationalism, Journal of Muslims in Europe, Journal of Southeast European Studies, Multicultural Discourses, European Journal of Turkish Studies, and Patterns of Prejudice (forthcoming 2013). Dr Öktem is the author of Angry Nation. Turkey since 1989 (Zed, 2011), and co-editor of: The Western Condition. Turkey, the US and the EU in the new Middle East (SEESOX, 2013), Another Empire? A decade of Turkey’s Foreign Policy under The Justice and Development Party (Bilgi University Press, 2012) with Ayşe Kadioğlu et. al., and Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity. Conflict and Change in the 20th Century (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) with Celia Kerslake and Philip Robins. He comments on current affairs in Open Democracy, Middle East Report, Jadaliyya and EU Observer.

**Bill Park** is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Defence Studies, King’s College, London University, and is based at the UK Defence Academy, Shrivenham. He is the author of journal articles, book chapters, and monographs on a range of Turkish
foreign policy issues, including its EU accession prospects, Turkey and ESDP, the Cyprus problem, Turkey’s policies towards Northern Iraq, Turkey-US relations, the Fethullah Gulen movement, and the Ergenekon affair. Among his publications is ‘Turkey’s policy towards Northern Iraq: problems and prospects’, Adelphi Paper No. 374, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. His book, ‘Modern Turkey: People, State and Foreign Policy in a Globalized World’, was published by Routledge in 2011. He is currently conducting a study of the three way relationship between Turkey, the US and the Kurdish Regional Government in Northern Iraq in the wake of the US troop withdrawal from Iraq, for which he has been awarded a grant by the US Army War College. He is a frequent visitor to Turkey, and has given papers on Turkish affairs at various academic and official workshops and conferences around the world. He has appeared as a Turkey expert on British, Turkish, Iranian, Russian, French and Australian TV and radio, has given written and oral testimony on Turkish issues to both UK Houses of Parliament, and is occasionally used as a consultant on Turkish issues by various UK government agencies. He serves as a trustee and council member for the British Institute at Ankara, and is an Advisor to the Dialogue Society in London.
South East European Studies at Oxford (SEESOX) is part of the European Studies Centre at St Antony’s College, Oxford. It focuses on the interdisciplinary study of the Balkans, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. Drawing on the academic excellence of the University and an international network of associates, it conducts policy relevant research on the multifaceted transformations of the region in the 21st century. It follows closely conflict and post-conflict situations and analyses the historical and intellectual influences which have shaped perceptions and actions in the region. In Oxford’s best tradition, the SEESOX team is committed to understanding the present through the longue durée and reflecting on the future through high quality scholarship.

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- To organise conferences, workshops and research seminars;
- To promote the multi-disciplinary study of the region within the University of Oxford (e.g. politics, international relations, anthropology, sociology, economics) working in collaboration with other Centres and Programmes within the University, including student societies;
- To spearhead intellectual exchanges and debate on these issues among networks of individuals and institutions beyond Oxford;
- To foster cooperation between the academic and the policy making communities.