

Regional Study Centres, Libraries, and Archives

St Antony's is unique among the Oxford colleges for its seven Regional Study Centres, each one focused on a different region of the world. The Centres, encompassing Africa, Asia, Europe, Japan, Latin America, the Middle East, and Russia and Eurasia, provide the focus for the stimulating intellectual life for which St Antony's is internationally known, and assist the College in developing our role as a source of policy advice. Collectively, the Centres organise a multitude of events, seminars and talks each term and are integral to the academic lifeblood of the College.

The College also houses several libraries, including those supporting the work of the academic Centres. These facilities include the **Main College Library**, the **Bodleian Japanese Library** (a dependent library of the Bodleian in the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies); the **Latin American Centre Library** (part of the Humanities Team of [Oxford University Library Services](#)); the **Russian and Eurasian Studies Centre Library**; and the **Middle East Centre Library**. The College also holds an extensive **Middle East Centre Archive**, a unique and outstanding collection of private and official papers and photographs of individuals and organisations that have worked in the Middle East covering 1800 to the present day. The College's archive collections both in the Middle East Centre and in the Main Library are free to use and we welcome academic researchers from around the world as well as independent authors, historical novelists, documentary and film makers and family historians.

African Studies Centre

The African Studies Centre held a wide range of events at St. Antony's College during 2022/23 addressing the continent's rich and diverse historical trajectory and contemporary challenges. Among these, two are of especial significance:

On 22 February 2023, Ghana's Minister for National Security, Hon. Albert Kan-Dapaah, spoke on the topic 'Challenges to Democracy in West Africa: Ghana's Role in Regional and International Cooperation'. The Minister spoke eloquently about the economically destabilizing effect of the Ukraine crisis, the continuing threat of jihadist insurrection, and the growing militarization of governance in the Sahel region. The Minister called for more effective international support for the region's democracies, to enable them to demonstrate their ability to deliver human security and development to their citizens. During his visit, the Minister also met with Ghanaian students and academics, including many from St. Antony's College.

On 15 June, the African Studies Centre annual lecture was given by Professor Olúfemi Táíwò (Cornell University), who spoke 'On the Idea of Freedom in Modern African Political Philosophy'. In a powerful and intellectually rigorous address, Prof Táíwò emphasized the centrality of universal notions of freedom and modernity to African demands for political and legal rights. Drawing on his influential book *Against Decolonisation* (2022), he criticised the tendency of 'decolonial' thinking to conflate African modernist thinkers with negative 'Western' influences and – in his exchanges with the audience during a lively question and answer session - insisted on recognizing Africans' historical and ongoing contribution to these universalist traditions.

In total, the African Studies Centre held 20 events at the College during the year, including weekly research seminars in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, as well as a number of conferences and bespoke events. The African Studies Centre was also home to or co-sponsored at least 20 more events organised by our associated groups and networks, including the North-East Africa Forum and the South African Discussion Group. The vast majority of events were held in person, some with a hybrid element, with speakers (and many attendees) joining from different locations in Africa and around the world.

Asian Studies Centre

Seminars

The ASC continues to host two regular seminars for MSc and DPhil students. They are both focussed on South Asia, comprising the Modern South Asian Studies seminar affiliated with OSGA and the South Asian Intellectual History seminar with History. Together they held 34 events over the course of the academic year.

Lectures

The Centre hosted 3 special lectures in the year. The annual Chun-tu Hsueh Lecture was delivered by Professor David Shambaugh, Gaston Sigur Professor of Asian Studies, Political Science & International Affairs, and director of the China Policy Program at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University. Navtej Sarna, a Visiting Fellow at All Souls and former Indian ambassador to the US, spoke about his recent book, *Crimson Spring*, about the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919 and its political and personal consequences. Miftah Ismail, the former Pakistani Minister of Finance, spoke about the economic crisis in that country for a forum on Global Order based at the Centre for Global History. And Dr. Shashi Jayakumar, a Visiting Fellow at Balliol and Head of the Centre of Excellence for National Security at RSIS, spoke about Singapore's role in the geopolitics of Asia.

Conferences

The ASC hosted three conferences over the year. Co-hosted with the China Centre, one was a day-long event in hybrid mode on the geopolitics of the South China Sea with 13 international speakers. And the other two comprised a conference to launch Taiwan Studies at Oxford followed by the first regular Taiwan Studies Conference to be held in September 2023.

Scholarships

The ASC awarded two scholarships tenable from Michaelmas Term 2023. One was the Wai-Seng Senior Research Scholarship, which was awarded to Katherine Wong, whose DPhil thesis at DPIP is on growing old in digital China. And the other a Sino-British Fellowship Grant, made this year to Weishen Zeng at ODID, who works on the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Media

The ASC published 7 podcasts on the University's website. It has also distributed 200 books from Tambapanni Academic Publishers in Colombo. Bandura Dileepa Witharana's monograph, *Negotiating Power and Constructing the Nation*, was mailed out to university libraries globally. While Mythri Jegathesan's *Tea and Solidarity* was sent to university libraries across India.

[European Studies Centre](#)

The European Studies Centre held around 30 events during the academic year 2022/23.

The ESC seminars included talks on Ukraine's democratic transition, the impact of the new geopolitical context on European trade policy, church and state in contemporary Poland, the European Parliament's engagement in international human rights, right-wing populism, on Spanish politics and on Italy and the EU, (where the former PM of Italy Giuliano Amato participated as a speaker).

Several book launches took place, which also included latest books from our ESC fellows Timothy Garton Ash's *Homelands: A Personal History of Europe*, Othon Anastasakis et al *Diaspora engagement in times of severe economic crisis* and Tim Vlandas' book, *Foreign states in domestic markets*.

The ESC Annual Lecture was given by Charles S. Maier (Harvard University) with the title 'Beyond Civil Society: Renewing the traditions of reform in Europe' on May 30.

A key event was the conference 'War and the Future of Ukraine' organized in cooperation with REES, OSGA, & RESC at St. Antony's College, and with the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna and the Centre for East European and International Studies in Berlin. Another key event was the 'Oxford-

Berlin Roundtable on Germany, Ukraine and the Future of Europe and Global Order' organized in association with the Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership.

The Dahrendorf Programme concluded the main phase of its Europe in a Changing World project, with a major conference, *Europe and Freedom*, which served as the fourteenth annual Dahrendorf Colloquium. The conference featured multiple distinguished panellists from the fields of History, Political Science, and International Relations. Professor Timothy Garton Ash gave the annual Dahrendorf Lecture, 'Europe Whole and Free' as part of this event. Professor Garton Ash will remain involved in the Dahrendorf Programme during the 2023-24 academic year, as it wraps up the work on the Europe in a Changing World project with the publication of an edited volume and a conference report.

SEESOX (South East European Studies at Oxford) organized several panels on contemporary regional developments including on the 2023 general elections in Turkey, migration from Albania to the UK, democracy promotion in Central and South Eastern Europe after accession, and a centenary panel on 1922 Greek-Turkish population displacements and its wider global implications.

The final event of the academic year was the workshop 'The European Condition: Looking back, looking forward' to mark the departure of Professor Kalypso Nicolaidis from Oxford after 24 years as Faculty member.

During the last academic year the ESC hosted a number of visiting fellows (EU fellow, Weizsaecker fellow, the WZB Dahrendorf post-doc and the ESC visiting fellows). In July 2023, the Warden signed an agreement with the Spanish Foundation Ramon Areces for the establishment of a Spanish fellowship programme which is due to start in Michaelmas 2024.

[Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies](#)

The Nissan Institute Seminar Series in 2022/23 covered topics ranging from robots to poetry, consumption to defeated samurai, with speakers from Oxford, the UK, Europe and further afield. Most were held in person, except the Trinity Term seminars, which were held online, enabling speakers to deliver from Japan and the USA. As well, two conferences were organized in Hilary Term. The two-day conference 'Reforming capitalism, going digital and green: Does Japan hold answers?' critically explored Society 5.0, digital and green transformation, sustainable capitalism and 'new form of capitalism' initiatives in Japan, generally pairing Japanese and non-Japanese speakers in each session. It was followed by a Ph.D workshop with presentations by students from Oxford, UK and other European institutions. The second conference, 'Missing Bodies, Missing Voices', was organised by DPhil candidates Alice Baldock and Chiara Comastri, and similarly featured academics from Japan, the US, Europe and other UK universities, who focused on the idea of embodiment as a lens to refocus accepted narratives of postwar Japanese history. Both conferences attracted over 150 participants, and will result in a special journal issue and edited volume respectively. The Oxford Japanese History Workshop continued to hold seminars across the academic year. Members also organised the 5th Tanaka Symposium on the concept of religion in Meiji Japan. And the Graduate Seminar provided a venue for presentations by researchers from other disciplines.

The Directorship of the Nissan Institute passed from Sho Konishi to Hugh Whittaker, who also served as Associate Head of School (People) for the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. Returning from sabbatical leave, Takehiko Kariya received the Japanese Medal of Honour with Purple Ribbon, which is awarded to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to academic and artistic developments, improvements, and accomplishments. Roger Goodman continues to serve as Warden of St Antony's College. Giulio Pugliese was active in Track 1.5 dialogues in Japan, Italy, the US and UK. The intellectual life of the Institute continues to be enriched by JRFs and other Fellows, including Natalia Doan (Okinaga Fellow), Chinami Oka (Tanaka Fellow), and Olga Khomenko (British Academy Cara Fellow), as well as its DPhil and other graduate students, and by the activities organized by the staff of the Bodleian Japanese Library, led by Alessandro Bianchi.

Latin American Centre

This was the LAC's first proper academic year with all activities running as normal since the pandemic. It was a successful and rewarding year, if challenging at times.

We had another busy year welcoming visitors from the region. At the very start of the academic year, we welcomed a delegation from the Dominican Republic, including the Minister of Education and the Ambassador, to officially launch ten new scholarships for students of the Dominican Republic to study at Oxford. Later in the year, this was followed by a visit from another delegation from the Dominican Republic, this time representing Congress. In January, Former President of Colombia, Mr Iván Duque Márquez, held an informal conversation on 'The Current State of Latin America' with LAC students, faculty members, and academic visitors. And in May, Carlos Scartascini, Head of the Development Research Group at the Research Department and Leader of the Behavioural Economics Group of the Inter-American Development Bank, presented the Bank's new report on trust and social cohesion.

As we welcomed our new cohort of students this year, we also celebrated our network of former students and held a wonderful alumni drinks reception at the In and Out Club on St James's Square in London, in conjunction with The Canning Club. We are very grateful for the support of the Argentine Educational Trust, which through the William de Segundo scholarship, continues to offer financial support to one of our students. We will be holding another alumni evening this coming autumn at the In and Out Club on November 1st. It promises to be a fantastic evening.

And we have continued to celebrate the success of our faculty. In February, Francesca Lessa visited Duke University as winner of the 2023 [Juan E. Méndez Book Award](#) for Human Rights in Latin America for her highly acclaimed book, [The Condor Trials: Transnational Repression and Human Rights in South America \(Yale University Press, 2022\)](#). The judges were unanimous in choosing her as the winner, praising her book which exposes the secrets of Operation Condor, a transnational system of repression in South America between 1969 and 1981. In May, Julia Zulver, our current Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the LAC and OSGA won the Conflict Research Society (CRS) prize for her book, *High-Risk Feminism in Colombia: Women's Mobilization in Violent Contexts*. Julia will accept the prize in London in mid-September. And in September, The Academia de Historia of Venezuela elected three new Corresponding Members: our own Eduardo Posada-Carbó, Emeritus Fellow, Malcolm Deas, and LAC associate, Brian McBeth. This is a wonderful honour for all three, and indirectly a recognition of the consistent involvement of the Latin American Centre with Venezuela since its foundation.

This year has also been a year of change. Andrezza left the LAC to take up the post of Director of the Brazil Institute at King's College London and Francesca will leave us this summer to join UCL's Institute of the Americas as an Associate Professor. Javier Pérez Sandoval also leaves us to take up a BA Postdoctoral Fellowship in the DPIR. All three have been wonderful colleagues.

We are delighted to be joined this year by Dan McDonald, a historian of modern Latin America who specializes in the study of Brazil. Dan will be a Postdoctoral Fellow at the LAC as part of a transnational project, ["The Global Pontificate of Pius XIII: Catholicism in a Divided World"](#) convened around the recent release of records from the papacy of Pope Pius XII (1939-58). We have also been joined this year by Dan Robins, a human geographer working on issues around human mobility and immobility with a focus on Latin America. Dan is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow working on the project, 'New Strategies of Survival in Venezuela: migration and alternative remittances'. And next

year, we looking forward to welcoming back our two Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellows, Julia Zulver and Maryhen Jiménez Morales. Finally, this summer, Laura Trajber Waisbich will be joining us as the new Director of the Brazilian Studies Programme. Laura first joined the University of Oxford in 2022 as a Social Sciences Division Postdoctoral Fellow. Laura is particularly interested in unpacking the disputes surrounding the growing role of rising powers countries like China, India, and Brazil in the geopolitical landscape.

Finally, a sombre note. This summer, our Emeritus Fellow, Malcolm Deas passed away. The entire LAC community joined together to mourn his passing. He will be sorely missed.

Middle East Centre

In the 2022/23 academic year, the Middle East Centre returned to a level of activity not witnessed since before the COVID-19 pandemic. We welcomed our sixth permanent Fellow, Dr Maryam Alemzadeh, who took up her Associate Professorship in the Politics and History of Iran in September 2022. In the autumn, the University advertised the Chair in Contemporary Islamic Studies and, after a global search, Dr Raihan Ismail of the Australian National University was appointed. Now back to a fellowship of seven scholars, the Centre is back to historic strength in numbers.

The Centre has also attracted a record number of postdoctoral fellows. We revived our cooperation with the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in Tokyo which supports two postdoctoral fellowships in modern Middle Eastern studies – one from Japan and one from the international community. We were delighted to welcome Dr Kenichi Tani, an anthropologist who works on rituals of remembrance in Tehran; Dr Antonella Acinapura, a political scientist whose research examines Palestinian Islamic Jihad; Dr Zeinab Azerbadegan, an Ottoman historian who completed her doctorate under the supervision of Professor Rashid Khalidi in Columbia; and Ms Lana Judeh from the Department of Architecture as our second George Antonius Birzeit Visiting Fellow. Kenichi, Antonella, Lana, and Zeinab have injected tremendous vitality into the social and academic life of the Centre. Every room in the Centre is now full, bringing a welcome level of activity after the sleepy years of lockdown.

The academic year began and ended with memorials for Fellows as, for the first time, we had the freedom to organize large events. In September 2022, the Centre hosted a major event to honour the memory of our friend, most generous benefactor, and the founder of our Advisory Board, Nemir Kirdar. We were delighted to welcome distinguished guests, members of the Kirdar family, a large contingent from Investcorp, and the Oxford community to remember our much missed friend in ‘the house that Nemir built,’ the Investcorp Building. In June 2023, Centre Fellows reunited to celebrate the life and accomplishments of our late colleagues Derek Hopwood OBE and Celia Kerslake. Student numbers are at a record high. We admitted nine students for the one-year M.Sc. and twenty for the two-year M.Phil., which left us five students over target. Combined with the fourteen second year M.Phil. candidates, our master’s programme boasted a total of forty-four students – a record high.

For the first time, the MEC conducted a census of doctoral students working on the modern Middle East across the different faculties of the University. The task has always been challenging, given there is no centralized doctoral programme in our field, and that students of the region are distributed among nine different faculties. We were thus genuinely surprised to find that there were no fewer than 68 doctoral candidates actively working in 2022/23. Given that all our Master’s and doctoral students write theses, Oxford boasts a research-active community of over 110 postgraduate students in the field, which must make it the largest specialist community in our area of study in any Western university. We have worked to bring this interdisciplinary doctoral community together in the past academic year, convening social meetings and round table discussions on publishing, the job search, and other areas of common interest, which have been well

attended. We hope increasingly to make the MEC a reception area for all doctoral candidates working in our area.

As the COVID restriction were lifted globally, the Centre began to re-engage with its international partners across Asia and in the MENA region. The seminar programme in the MEC has also been entirely in person for the first time since the pandemic. We have abandoned hybrid formats, but continue to post audio podcasts of all lectures. Attendance at lectures reached pre-pandemic levels, with students turning out each Friday for the traditional seminar, asking probing questions of our speakers. Two master's students joined the Fellows and our speakers each week, ensuring every M.Phil. and M.Sc. candidate came to High Table at least once this year.

The most exciting new development in Centre outreach was made possible by our Board member, Mr Hazem ben Gacem, who established a new scholarship to support Tunisian students to undertake postgraduate study in any of the areas in the humanities and social sciences represented by St Antony's College. The Fellows are incredibly grateful to Hazem for his vision and generous support in helping the Centre to fulfil its mission of outreach in the region – and, overall, the Centre awarded a record amount of scholarship support in 2023, for new and returning students for the 2023/24 academic year totalling £225,000.

Russian and Eurasian Studies Centre

The Centre convened a total of 39 in-person seminars (four jointly with other centres) during the year on a wide variety of topics, with a major focus on Ukraine and other non-Russian states and republics. In this spirit the Michaelmas Term Monday Seminar series took the historical theme of *The end of empire? The USSR's non-Russian republics and successor states after 1953*. In Hilary Term the Monday Seminar offered a further eight seminars centred on *Political participation, mobilization and legitimacy in the former Soviet space*. In Trinity Term the Centre broke new ground for the Monday Seminar with a concentrated focus on the *Environmental perspectives* of the region, featuring novel research in environmental humanities.

Max Hayward Fellow Darya Tsymbalyuk, who convened this last series, also launched a Ukraine Cultures Reading Group in Michaelmas Term and in Hilary Term convened a highly topical and poignant series of six special seminars on *Ukraine: resisting cultural erasure*. This followed a packed meeting in October at which Andrey Kurkov, the internationally acclaimed Ukrainian novelist and President of PEN Ukraine, discussed his approach to writing and contemporary threats to Ukrainian culture. Russia's war against Ukraine was the topic of a major conference in November organised by Russian and East European Studies in OSGA, with assistance from RESC and the European Studies Centre, which gathered leading authorities on the effects of the war on many dimensions of contemporary Ukraine.

The Centre also hosted speakers for insights on the critical questions of how Russia's authoritarian political structure and its society are evolving during the war. In November Leonid Volkov, the Chief of Staff for the imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, discussed the future prospects of the Russian political system. Next month the Russian domestic security specialists Andrei Soldatov and Irina Borogan talked on *Russian expatriates, Russian citizens and the Russian state in war*, while at a separate seminar Sir Laurie Bristow, the President of Hughes Hall, Cambridge and a former UK Ambassador to the Russian Federation, reflected astutely on Russian current policy objectives. Given the wider international repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine war, the Centre is also pleased that seminars could be organised jointly with other College centres, such as on the war's impact on the Gulf States (with the Middle East Centre) and its impact on European trade policy (with the European Studies Centre).