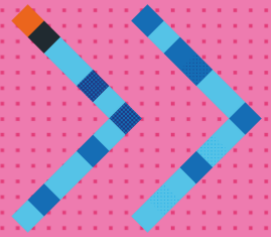


INTERNATIONALISATION

School of Humanities

Spring 2025



Welcome



Professor Giuliana Pieri

Executive Dean of Humanities and Associate Pro-Vice- Chancellor (International)

When Royal Holloway launched its new strategy in October 2024, one of the four strands, 'Civic Minded, Globally Engaged', refocused our attention on the interplay between internationalisation at home and abroad, and the vision of our university as an anchor institution in our region.

When I took on the newly created role of Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for International back in April 2022, the first item on my to do list was the application for the Turing Scheme. As a child of the European mobility Erasmus scheme, who experienced firsthand the transformative power of an international education, I was thrilled to be able to help shape the Turing scheme at Royal Holloway. I was also keen to develop further our award-winning tradition of volunteering which has supported so many of our students to contribute to important projects of social purpose. Volunteering abroad became one of the areas of strength and distinction of the Royal Holloway Turing scheme and is a tangible symbol of the power of working across the civic and the global. The new Turing scheme application, which I am busy crafting now, will continue to expand the range of opportunities available

for our students. New to 2025-26 will be shorter mobilities: two-week opportunities will for the first time be fundable under the scheme.

The appointment of our new co-directors of Internationalisation, Dr Arantza Mayo and Dr Weipin Tsai, means that we are extremely well placed to support the development and delivery of the university Global Engagement Strategic Action Plan, and to focus our attention on what global collaborations in education and research can do for our students and staff. Our first ever Internationalisation newsletter is a first important step in promoting and celebrating the range of exciting projects we are involved in on the international stage, and, importantly, the communities of international and visiting students, researchers, and scholars in the School of Humanities.

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International Research Collaboration News

Professor Jari Pakkanen

Department of Classics

Archaeological project at Naxos in Sicily

The collaborative project *Urban Landscape of Naxos in Sicily* was initiated in 2012. The principal partners are the Archaeological Park of Naxos and Taormina and the Finnish Institute at Athens, and the project co-directors are Jari Pakkanen (RHUL) and Maria Costanza Lentini (former director of the park). The fieldwork at Naxos has had three main aims: documenting the archaeological remains unearthed since the 1950s, carrying out geophysical prospection inside the city walls, and excavating new

trenches at strategic locations. The settlement was the earliest Greek colony in Sicily founded in 734 BCE. The fieldwork in 2023 and 2024 has concentrated on intersection A7 in the centre of the city. The city was destroyed by Syracuse in 403 BCE and abandoned, but the new discoveries at crossroads A7 indicate that there was limited-scale reoccupation of the area in

fourth century BCE. A further brief fieldwork season in December 2024 concentrated on aerial photography and 3D-modelling of the western section of the city walls and the main avenues.

📷 Drone photograph of new excavations at crossroads A7 with Etna in the background; J. Pakkanen, 15/12/2024.



Dr James Kent

Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Cuban Visual Narratives

Dr James Clifford Kent has collaborated with the Fototeca de Cuba, one of the largest photography archives in the Caribbean, since 2018. The institution was founded in 1986 and contains over 80,000 items—from early prints to contemporary works. Kent's NHMN project, “*¡No hay más na’!*” (There's Nothing Left, 2022–), addresses the challenges faced by Cubans amid a

worsening humanitarian crisis. His work with the Fototeca involves collaborating with Cuban artists, conducting workshops to share knowledge, and engaging with local communities to document their stories—fostering cultural exchange and development of Cuban photographic practice.

📷 Cuban photographer Raúl Cañibano in the darkroom, Fototeca de Cuba, Havana; J. C. Kent.

International Research Collaborations News

Dr Carlotta Paltrinieri

Department of Languages,
Literatures and Cultures

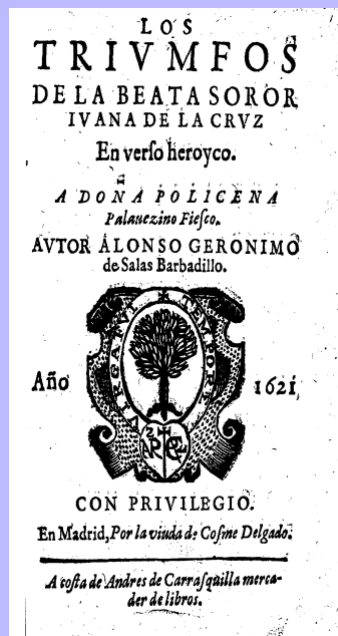
Dr Paltrinieri is part of the [Historical News Discourse in a Comparative Perspective](#) network, founded in 2004. The network provides opportunities for exchange and discussion of research into the global production and consumption of historical texts associated with the domain of news, and brings together scholars of different disciplines from across the world. Dr Paltrinieri spoke at their latest [conference](#) held at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, and is currently developing a grant application in collaboration with some of the network members. Since 2020, Dr Paltrinieri is an Honorary Senior Fellow of the [Medici Archive Project](#), a US research institute founded in the early 1990s to study and digitise the epistolary collections of the Medici Grand Dukes (1532-1743) housed at the Archivio di Stato in Florence. Dr Paltrinieri has recently led a workshop for their annual [Paleography and Archival Studies seminar](#).

📷 Volume of handwritten newsletters from the collection of the Mediceo del Principato, held at the Florence State Archive. C. Paltrinieri.



Dr Arantza Mayo

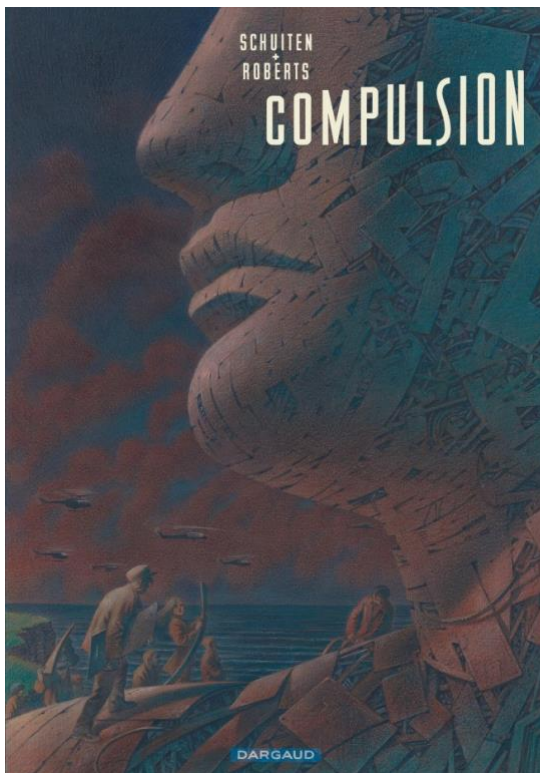
Department of Languages,
Literatures and Cultures



Dr Arantza Mayo is part of an international research group which is collaborating to produce critical editions of the complete works of two important early modern Spanish authors: Alonso Jerónimo de Salas Barbadillo (1581-1635) and Alonso de Castillo Solórzano (1584-1647). The team brings together specialists from institutions across Europe and the USA: Universidad de Córdoba (Spain), Universidad Complutense (Spain), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), Università di Ferrara (Italy), University of Michigan (USA), Université de Nanterre (France), Università di Pavia (Italy), University of Oxford (UK), Universidad de Jaén (Spain), Università del Piemonte Orientale (Italy), Université de Grenoble Alpes (France), Università di Macerata (Italy) and the University of Exeter (UK). The project is supported by a grant from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

📷 Courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de España.

International Research Collaboration News



Professor Adam Roberts, Department of English

Professor Roberts collaborated with noted Belgian artist and *bande dessinée* creator François Schuiten to produce *Compulsion*, a richly illustrated science-fiction novel, published by Dargaud (Brussels) in French. The story concerns a strange compulsion that overcomes certain members of the population, by which they take items, of many kinds—junk, high-tech equipment, household items and furniture, small, large—and reassemble them into bizarre, gigantic structures and sculptures.

[Bandes dessinées - Compulsion - DARGAUD](#)

Professor Finn Fordham, Department of English

Professor Fordham will soon start teaching at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow for the Spring semester. He will be teaching a Masters Course with colleagues there comparing English and Polish poetry of the 1930s, when European politics were in a particularly dark place. The team will be comparing and contrasting how poets responded to their ever-shifting political contexts, whether the public roles for poetry were seen differently in the two countries, how they tried to hold something back from the nightmare of contemporaneous history. They will also be looking at cultural and political links between the UK and Poland at that time.

📷 [Collegium Novum](#), Jagiellonian University



International Research Collaboration News



Professor Sarah Ansari and Dr Markus Daechsel Department of History

In September 2024 colleagues in History (Markus Daechsel, Sarah Ansari) and then again in January 2025 (Markus) delivered two further writing workshops at Government College Lahore for PhD historians in Pakistan. Funding by the British Academy's international office, this initiative aims to build confidence among early career academics in countries with developing economics, and to encourage them to publish their research internationally. Markus also delivered lectures and workshops on what makes a good PhD for students at nearby Punjab University.

Dr Weipin Tsai, Department of History

Dr. Weipin Tsai joined a three-year project at the Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, exploring the trading and manufacturing networks across East and South East Asia, focusing on the records of a Chinese-run, Nagasaki-based company that operated across the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The image below is from the cover of a box of matches produced by the company.



International Research Collaboration News

Professor Sarah Ansari, Department of History



In December 2024, Professor Ansari co-organised a winter school and conference on the historiographies and methodologies of the 1947 Partition of India. Funded by the Indian government's SPARC programme and held at NIT Silchar, Assam, both drew participants from across India. Thanks to further generous funding provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Sarah is also helping to organise two further conferences on the same theme at universities in Dhaka and Lahore in February 2025.

Dr Akil Awan, Department of History

Dr Akil Awan is leading a large international research bid with colleagues from the University of Georgia (US), University of Queensland (Aus), and UK institutions (Newcastle, Leeds, Birmingham). The project focuses on the US Military-Entertainment Complex from the Cold War to 'The Global War on Terror' and beyond, mapping its contours, and assessing the ways in which the US popular culture media ecology is symbiotically and inextricably connected to narratives of US foreign policy, military intervention, and counter-terrorism. The project seeks to understand how military, cultural, and political elites shape and wield popular culture, priming societies, either through a naturalizing effect that makes a politically constructed reality seem inevitable and normal; or an enabling effect that provides culturally-resonant representations from which political actors draw to persuade audiences. The group will hold a research workshop in Central London in June.



International Research Collaboration News



📷 Saara Hanna Mildenberg

Dr Harvey Wiltshire and Professor Robert Eaglestone, Department of English

Dr Wiltshire and Prof Eaglestone, had chapters in *The Routledge Companion to Literatures and Crisis* (2025), a volume edited by an international team of Silvia Pellicer-Ortín (Spain), Julia Kuznetski (Estonia) and Chiara Battisti (Italy). The shared work on the volume also stimulated a large research funding bid, involving RHUL and a consortium of other European universities (failed, but in the process of being repurposed) and a launch event at the University of Tallinn, to which both Harvey and Bob were invited. The event was very lively, given the rather depressing subject matter, and a range of further collaborations were discussed. After the event, Dr Wiltshire also spoke at the International School of Tallinn.



📷 Saara Hanna Mildenberg

International Research Collaboration News

Dr Emilio Zucchetti, Department of Classics

Dr Emilio Zucchetti organised the three-day international conference “The Roman Republic and the 70s BCE: a period of crises and uncertainty” with Dr Juan García González (University of Girona), Dr Bertrand Augier (University of Nantes), and Dr Robinson Baudry (University of Paris Nanterre). Thanks to the generosity of the Humanities & Arts Research Institute (HARI) at Royal Holloway University of London, the Institute of Classical Studies, Universitat de Girona, Nantes Université and the Pays de la Loire Region, through the CRRITIC (Crises de la République Romaine: Identités, Transformations, Imaginaires et Conflits) project, the conference took place at RHUL London Campus, Steward House, between 9 and 11 January 2025. The event aimed to present innovative studies on the 70s BCE in Rome and the interconnected Roman Mediterranean, as this decade has often been neglected in the scholarship, even though it played a fundamental role in the crisis of the Roman Republic. The event brought together historians working in British, American, Australian, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and French universities, from PhD students to full professors.



Dr Mrinalini Venkateswaran, Department of History

The Centre for Global South Asia has recently concluded a research project entitled ‘Exhibit Asia’ which explored the use of exhibitions in nation-making in postcolonial South and East Asia; this was done in contrast to the scholarly preoccupation with investigating the region’s history of museums and exhibitions primarily in a colonial context. Its academic outcomes were a conference and a related publication (in process). The project also ran a curatorial fellowship for an international cohort of ten students from Taiwan, Japan, India, Pakistan and the UK, leading to a co-curated online exhibition ([Tea and Tigers | Exhibition](#)). Several of the students involved worked with Dr Mrinalini Venkateswaran of CGSA and Prof Edward Vickers of Kyushu University to co-author a submission to the ‘Roundtable’ section of the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* which has just been published open access and is available [here](#).

International Research Collaboration News



Professor Dan Stone and PhD student Roxy Moore, Department of History

On 9 September 2024, Prof Dan Stone and PhD student Roxy Moore spoke at a public workshop on *Elderly Jews and the Holocaust* at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC. The event was co-organised by USHMM, the Claims Conference, the Wiener Holocaust Library, and several other charitable organisations, and was followed by a workshop for graduate students and early career researchers in December 2024 at the Wiener Holocaust Library, London, at which Dan Stone gave the keynote lecture. A book entitled *Older Jews and the Holocaust*, edited by Elizabeth Anthony (USHMM), Joanna Sliwa (Claims Conference) and Christine Schmidt (WHL) will be published by Wayne State University Press in early 2026.

International Postgraduate Spotlight

Alessia Gagliardi

MRes candidate

Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

I graduated in History of Art and Visual Culture and Comparative Literature and Culture in summer 2024. I thoroughly enjoyed researching for my undergraduate dissertations so the choice to stay at Royal Holloway and the Department of Languages, Literatures and Culture for a MA by Research just felt natural for me. My years at the Department have been filled with gratifying experiences, inspiring people and positive challenges. If I were given the opportunity to rethink my choices, I would choose Royal Holloway over and over again. I can firmly say that this is the right place for me. As International student, I thought it was going to be impossible for me to find a place in the UK where I could feel fully comfortable, but joining Royal Holloway made me realise that the concept of 'home' can be adapted to different places, and our campus is definitely part of that now.

My research project focuses on how the Renaissance and Surrealism influence today's society in terms of advertising, fashion, cinema, photography, music, and architecture. I consider the work of Leonora Carrington, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst, and René Magritte to demonstrate the intersection between Surrealism and Renaissance motifs and how it came to impact, among others, Elsa Schiaparelli and Alexander McQueen's fashion work.



📷 AI generated image to represent the interrelation between the Renaissance, Surrealism, and today's society

International Postgraduate Spotlight

Sunanda Kar (History) Visiting PhD Student

Since 2020, Sunanda has been conducting her PhD research in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at NIT Silchar (Assam). While her core academic interest lies in literary studies, Sunanda has broadened her research horizons over time to encompass history, digital culture, and digital humanities, and she is very keen to expand her explorations of the methodological intricacies associated with the digital realm. This passion has led her to apply digital methods to diverse areas of study, including history, literature, and interdisciplinary fields. Sunanda's scholarly contributions include presentations at prestigious international conferences, such as the University of Warsaw, Poland, and California State University, Long Beach, while her research has been published in esteemed journals, including *South Asian Popular Culture* (Routledge) and *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* (Penn State University Press). Sunanda is an active student collaborator in the project 'Canonizing Partition: Historiographies and Methodologies around the 1947 Partition', and in this role she has been instrumental in collecting, organizing, and analyzing related data, with a particular interest in examining how Partition is approached and understood in academic contexts worldwide. While at Royal Holloway, Sunanda aspires to foster meaningful collaborations, expand her academic networks, and further strengthen her scholarly fellowship through interdisciplinary engagement.



Diyali Bhattacharya (History) Visiting PhD Student

Diyali has been a doctoral candidate at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, NIT Silchar (Assam) since January 2024. Her PhD research interests pivot around questions of sub-nationalism in the Bengali identity, and, in relation to this, she is interested in the historiography of Bengali folk cultures and their relationship to Bengali identity. While at Royal Holloway she plans to access British archives and libraries to find primary resources about Bengali folk to help her better understand the genealogy of the genre, the speaking subject, and how what circulated as Bengali folk got documented, articulated and handed down in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As an active student collaborator on the 'Canonizing Partition: Historiographies and Methodologies around the 1947 Partition' project, she has been collecting, sorting and analysing data relating to this key mid-twentieth century event. Using the above dataset, she, along with other project members, are working towards unpacking the methodological nuances of the 1947 Partition as it is understood across different academic domains.

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