

Oxford *Development Matters*

THE MAGAZINE OF THE OXFORD DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HOUSE



Inside this issue:

JUSTICE ACROSS BORDERS

OUR COVID YEAR

RAP THERAPY

FIELDWORK ARTWORK

FROM QEH TO ODID





Welcome

Welcome to the 2021 issue of *Oxford Development Matters*.

This issue marks an unexpected milestone – our second alumni magazine of the COVID era. When we compiled last year’s magazine the pandemic was still new and we were all just beginning to adjust to what we hoped would be a brief change in our working and personal lives. Unfortunately, things were harder than we expected, and this has been a challenging academic year for everyone. Yet the adaptability and resilience of students and staff has been impressive, as you can see on pp 4–5, where three members of the ODID community describe how they coped with disruption to planned fieldwork and adjusted to study in the family home, how they transitioned to teaching online and recalibrated research priorities, and how they made the herculean efforts required to keep the department safe and maintain our sense of community.

Now, we are starting to take some hesitant steps out of restrictions in the UK, but how quickly the life of the department – its teaching, its research and its daily social interactions – can fully resume remains unclear. I, nevertheless, remain hopeful that we will have many (most?) events face-to-face in the upcoming academic year and look forward to seeing some of you in Oxford in the months to come.

Looking back to pre-pandemic times, on pp 10–11 Valpy FitzGerald completes his history of the department with an essay on the period from 1995 to 2014, during which QEH was given fresh purpose and direction by Frances Stewart as it moved towards becoming a fully fledged department of the University.

We also hear from some of the newer members of our department in this issue: opposite, Departmental Lecturer Francesca Lessa describes her work bringing together evidence about the crimes against humanity committed across Latin America as part of ‘Operation Condor’. And on pp 8–9 ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow Alessandro Corso speaks about his use of painting as a way to make sense of his field research among migrants and local people in Lampedusa.

As always, the magazine highlights interesting work done by our alumni: on p 7 we hear about Rap Therapy, a social enterprise co-founded by former MSc in Economics for Development student Joevas Asare to help bring the benefits of rapping to London schoolchildren. Moving from music to dance, on pp 12–13 Jocelyn Alexander and JoAnn McGregor trace the progress of the *toyí-toyí*, the Southern African protest dance, across time and space as part of their research into the cultures of liberation armies.

And finally on p 6 Laura Rival outlines some of the discussions that have been taking place at ODID around how best to confront the climate crisis – and invites you all to join in.

As a final note – if you haven’t yet done so, do please join our all-ODID networking group on LinkedIn, The Oxford Development Network, which brings together all our current and former students to share experiences, opportunities, and advice. You will find a flyer about it enclosed with this magazine. And don’t forget to complete the Keep in Touch form, either by returning the paper copy or following the link, to ensure we can continue to contact you about new initiatives in the future. You are a vital part of the department and we want to make sure we can be in regular contact with you and can interact as actively as possible.

Diego Sánchez-Ancóchea
Head of Department

Table of Contents

Justice across borders

Exposing the crimes of Latin America’s Operation Condor 3

Our COVID year

Three perspectives on life under lockdown at QEH..... 4

The climate crisis

Our approach to confronting ecological catastrophe 6

Rap therapy

Offering schoolchildren an outlet through music 7

Fieldwork artwork

Painting among migrants on Lampedusa..... 8

From QEH to ODID

Bringing the department’s history up to date.....10

Tracking the *toyí-toyí*

Understanding military cultures through the southern African protest dance..... 12

News

The latest from the department 14

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Thank you to the students, academics and alumni who have contributed to this magazine.

Francesca Lessa outlines how her research into transnational atrocities committed in South America in the 1970s is helping victims seeking justice.

‘A borderless zone of terror and impunity’

In May this year, siblings Anatole and Victoria Larrabeiti Yañez described to the judges of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) the incredible ordeal they had endured when they were just four years and 16 months old respectively.

On 26 September 1976, a large military operation interrupted the peaceful afternoon *siesta* in the early days of spring in the town of San Martín, on the outskirts of the Argentine capital. Argentine and Uruguayan security officers violently attacked the house where Anatole and Victoria lived with their parents, Mario Julien Cáceres and Victoria Grisonas Andrijauskaite – Uruguayan political exiles who had been living in Buenos Aires for three years. Mario was murdered on the spot, while Victoria and her two children were imprisoned in a secret torture centre in Buenos Aires (far right). After the abduction in Argentina, Uruguayan officers took Anatole and Victoria to Montevideo in Uruguay, and two months later they abandoned them in a public square in the port city of Valparaíso in Chile (right).

Forty-five years after these tragic events, Anatole and Victoria’s search for truth and justice continues. Where is the body of their father Mario? What was the ultimate fate of their mother Victoria, last seen in the secret prison after having been badly tortured? Why were they transferred to Uruguay and then to Chile? All of these questions remain unanswered while the siblings keenly await the IACtHR’s verdict, expected in late 2021.

I participated in the case – *Julien Grisonas and others vs Argentina* – before the IACtHR as an expert witness for the victims, and in my written statement I

showed how the ordeal experienced by the family was especially emblematic of Operation Condor, the transnational coordination of intelligence exchange and joint operations that Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay established in 1975; joined by Brazil in 1976 and Peru and Ecuador in 1978. Throughout the 1970s, political repression transcended geographical frontiers and resulted in a borderless zone of terror and impunity in South America that enabled the silencing of the critical voices of exiles.

The crimes committed against the Uruguayan Julien Grisonas family, which comprise illegal kidnappings, extrajudicial executions, disappearances, torture, the abduction of minors, and the appropriation of their material possessions, including the family house, is illustrative of the patterns of crimes against humanity that South America’s criminal states committed in the 1970s in the geopolitical context of the Cold War.

I have researched these transnational atrocities and the subsequent

truth- and justice-seeking efforts by victims and human rights activists as part of numerous projects that I began in 2013 and that have enabled me to conduct research in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, Italy, and the USA, as well as closely monitor several criminal trials. As part of these projects, I compiled a database on South America’s Transnational Human Rights Violations, which records the cases of 805 victims of crimes that occurred between 1969

and 1981, and was instrumental in the preparation of my statement before the IACtHR.

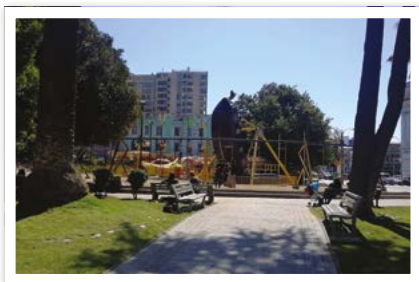
The insights provided by the database generated three important conclusions: that joint repressive operations in 1970s South America predominantly targeted Uruguayan nationals, that the vast majority were perpetrated in Argentina, and that the largest group of victims were activists who belonged to political – not armed revolutionary – groups. These findings were particularly relevant to the Julien Grisonas case, since the ordeal the family underwent in 1976 fits all three findings and can therefore be considered to illustrate the core dynamics of South America’s transnational repression and the specific plight of Uruguayan exiles in Argentina.

Anatole and Victoria’s tireless endeavours in trying to uncover the fate of their parents as well as obtain answers regarding their own ordeal exemplify larger efforts that have been unfolding in South America for four decades.

Survivors, relatives, human rights lawyers, and activists in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay have created a sort of reverse Operation Condor in attempting to unravel the secrets of transnational terror through judicial cooperation, pulling together their resources across borders in order to collate information – both archival and testimonial – that could help shed light on these atrocities, and help families discover the fate of their loved ones.

Through my research, I have collected information on over 40 criminal investigations at various stages of the judicial process that seek to provide long-awaited answers to the victims, as well as to entire societies in the Southern Cone that suffered under transnational terror. While the number of criminal investigations conducted is remarkable, much more is needed, especially in clarifying the truth regarding the fate of many victims. Forty-five years later, South American states should redouble their efforts to shatter the impunity that still surrounds these unprecedented atrocities and finally reveal many of Operation Condor’s untold secrets.

Francesca Lessa is Departmental Lecturer in Latin American Studies and Development at ODID and the Latin American Centre.



Our COVID year

Just over a year after the start of the pandemic, we hear from three members of the ODID community – a student, a member of teaching staff and one of our professional services staff – about how their home and work lives have been upended.



Aisha Ryan, second-year MPhil in Development Studies student

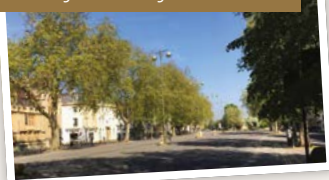
The realities of our globalised disease landscape began to shape my life in April 2020 when I left my third-storey bedroom on Church Walk and returned home to Ottawa, Canada. For the next seven months I experienced Queen Elizabeth House through Microsoft Teams lectures, catch-ups over Zoom, and meetings held over Skype instead of in wood-panelled offices. This tumultuous spring, though, quickly became a transformative summer that was only made possible because I was attending ODID from a distance.

In Hilary Term, I began to realise that conducting fieldwork would be impossible. Having planned an ethnography of a highly persecuted minority group in Pakistan, I was obliged to completely refashion my project. And given my location in my

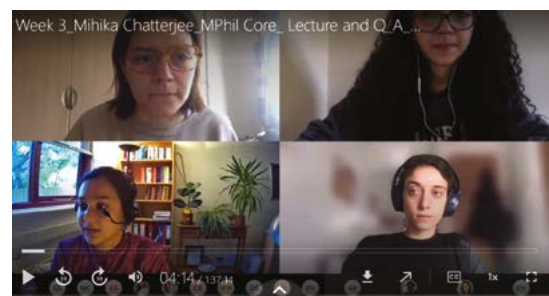
family home during a strict lockdown, I had no choice but to grapple with my conflicting academic aspirations and abilities with my family instead of with friends on the couches of QEH. As my grandfather taught me to make his favourite dish (*gobi*/cauliflower), and during long Ramadan nights hearing family stories from my grandmother, I was able to reconceptualise my interests in a methodologically practicable way. Unable to comprehensively engage with this dispossessed population, I shifted my focus to the actors sustaining such dispossession, and began a study of Islamists instead. Through this process my grandmother became my research partner-in-crime, my most conscientious critic, and my co-interviewer when my language skills were insufficient. To research from home was to come full circle, implementing in my dissertation insights from my upbringing and identity that had pushed me to ODID in the first place.

In October, many of us gleefully returned to Oxford and discovered what companionship meant in these novel circumstances. For me, it meant Monday morning walks around Christ Church Meadow with a course mate; group fitness sessions, rain or shine (typically the former), in University Parks; many walks with pastries from North Parade, and study breaks to pet horses in Port Meadow. Friendship acquired a new value and joy, as did the beauty of Oxford. The ability to weather a pandemic from the city of dreaming spires was an incomparable privilege, and one that, for many, prompted a new conscientiousness in our engagement with development theory and praxis – as we compared lockdown in Oxford with the way the pandemic was handled in many of our home countries and those of our research participants.

First day of Trinity term 2020



To study at QEH while physically separated from its halls has been a rewarding exercise in experiencing the possibilities of knowledge creation in unexpected sites of learning, and one that I will be forever grateful to have had.



Mihika Chatterjee, Departmental Lecturer in Development Studies

In the autumn of 2019, I handed in my DPhil thesis and started as a lecturer at ODID. Gary chuckled as I carried my plants from my desk in the 'Loft' to an office in the Frances Stewart Wing. His words of wisdom: 'Now, try not to forage for leftover nibbles and wine after departmental seminars. You are faculty now'.

Equipped with this sage and comprehensive advice on transition, I decided to take early-career academia head on: I took a marker to the giant whiteboard in my office and, with 'Plan for 2019–2020' as a title, divided the space into two halves. The left-hand side had working titles for an exciting set of journal articles. The right-hand side had meticulous plans for my lectures. On 23 March 2020, less than six months into the job, the UK went into its first lockdown.

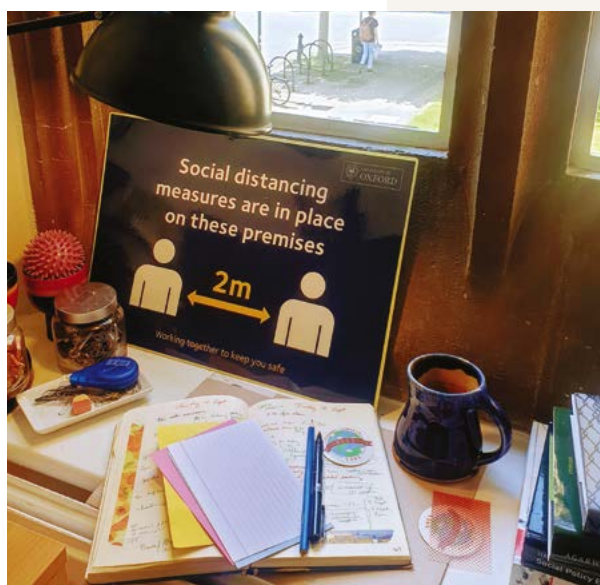
Many of the 'givens' for the international and mobile community of ODID were upended in Hilary 2020. As the first wave wracked the UK and Europe, it became clear that face-to-face research and travel were out of bounds.

It stumped the first-year MPhil students who were in the process of planning fieldwork for their dissertations. For many students, initiating a research project and collecting their own data through face-to-face interactions are the most exciting bits of the two-year MPhil. Moreover, the preparation through methods courses on the degree is largely premised on 'field' research. That this was not going to be possible in 2020 was disorienting for most. But we were quick to adapt. The MPhil faculty put together a series on desk-based research to carefully think through methods involving digital archives, secondary resources and online interviews. The series enabled honest and important discussions on the purpose of 'travel' and the place of 'place' in research between students and faculty.

As the pandemic buffeted the UK over the summer of 2020 and into the new academic year, it became painfully clear that we could no longer rely on the intimate setting of the QEH building to support the interaction-heavy nature of the MPhil. Josie Inaldo and Hannah Grieving have tenaciously kept our spirits up by organising weekly virtual 'catch-ups'. At these sessions, we found ourselves sharing glimpses of our personal lives with increasing ease. Occasionally, we used the time to react to political acts and events, such as the Rhodes Must Fall movement at Oxford. These attempts at simulating hallway lingering were relatively successful.

Staying inspired through online teaching, however, was challenging. I found lecturing for 50-60 minutes into a screen draining. From a pedagogical standpoint, for certain courses and talks, the digital format has not necessarily been disruptive. For many, tuning in from one's space of comfort makes fielding tentative thoughts and provocative questions easier. However, as much as I recognise the serious advantages of going digital in academia, I cannot accept it as my favoured method of teaching – a year on, I still feel self-conscious as I hear and see myself on screen, and remain perpetually nervous of being sabotaged by technology. I confess I am eagerly waiting to return safely to in-person teaching and discussions where I can draw on the collective energy of minds and bodies in one room.

While the largest chunk of last year was spent in managing ruptures and adapting, the protracted uncertainty over travel in 2021, combined with the ravages of the second wave in India, have been debilitating. Progress on the bifurcated to-do list on my whiteboard has been, to say the least, tardy. Moreover, a new item now heads the list of priorities: 'Call Ma back NOW', even if her message entitled 'Urgent' is about the new doorbell malfunctioning within its warranty period.



Josie Inaldo, Executive Assistant to the Head of Department and Head of Administration and Departmental Safety Officer

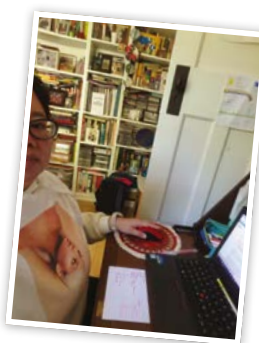
One word that keeps surfacing for me to describe the past year and a half would be: pivot. There was the pivot to home-schooling, working from home. Pivot to lockdown, new UK government restrictions. Pivot from one role to another. Pivot to opening the ODID buildings in a COVID-secure way. Like an untrained ballet dancer, I was worried about injuring myself if I wasn't careful in my pivots. The tilt on an axis could be so severe, I would spiral out.

During this time, I did not learn how to bake bread, nor write a novel, nor garden. What I did do was keep my

family's mental and physical health (including my own) intact and I worked from home. I remotely transitioned from one position (MPhil course coordinator) to another (executive assistant to the Head of Department and departmental safety officer). Not an easy task, but I was lucky and privileged to have a supportive and furloughed partner who was able to do much of the home schooling and housework, my days a stream of Teams meetings, emails and chat notifications. This supportive environment in both home and office gave me the space to pursue new ideas to help build a remote ODID community. Some of these initiatives included a virtual fitness challenge, hosting deep work sessions on Teams, creating Spotify playlists and yoga classes through Zoom.

At times, it was difficult and I struggled to get through my endless to-do lists. I had to use every tool in my self-care tool box to get through this past year. Throughout my life, I had collected a diverse set of methods to combat stress: yoga, podcasts, meditation, naps, chocolate, journaling, music. But pandemic brain fog is no joke and I had to dig deep and find new tools to help me. New coping methods such as a monthly family movie night, using an AeroPress to get near-espresso level coffee and index cards came into rotation. I downsized from my beloved notebooks to using a single 5x3 index card. I would write the date (very important as the days blurred together!), two or three work priorities and a few domestic tasks (defrost chicken, take out bins) and a reminder to drink water and incorporate some movement into my day. There was always this level of anxiousness that was humming in the background as I waited for the next set of rules to implement, the next pivot. These index cards would be my anchor and help me focus on what needed to be done.

Reflecting on this time, I'm reminded of a quote from the iconic tennis player, Arthur Ashe: 'Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can'. And alongside my colleagues, I believe we did just that. From what I've observed, the department approached the work this year in a thoughtful, kind way; kind to each other and to ourselves. The pivots are not coming at the breakneck speed that they used to and I feel there is space to catch my breath and pause. I have a fresh stack of index cards at the ready but I also have just planted some bulbs in my back garden and I am cautiously hopeful.



We know that climate change is not only happening, but accelerating. The melting of glaciers and icebergs

is occurring at an exponential rate, altering ocean currents and threatening coastal areas inhabited by millions of urban dwellers. Wildfires are repeatedly burning Australia, California, Canada, and Siberia. Extreme weather events are striking harder and with greater frequency.

And now a catastrophe to outrival all others: the COVID pandemic. Unlike localised droughts and floods, the pandemic has had a global impact; its pain is being felt in all countries. At the same time, with their freedom of movement curtailed, millions of people around the world have had time to rethink the way they live, relate to each other, work, and consume.

COVID has demonstrated what we already knew: energy shortages, water scarcity, wealth inequalities, food insecurity, and supply chain disruptions are all interconnected, and problems cannot be dealt with in isolation. The systemic nature of climate change and the ecological crisis call for a new understanding of economics and development. Countries such as India, Brazil, and South Africa, where it has been shown that decent living standards can be maintained with around 90% lower per capita energy use are playing an important role in redefining wellbeing and human need satisfaction. Societies built on a structural imperative for growth and cultures that incite consumerism have much to learn from innovations currently taking place in low and middle-income countries, where low-carbon digitalisation is driven by new patterns of economic collaboration, sharing, and behavioural and aspirational change.

Here at ODID, we are committed to using our research on these topics to help make the world a better place and determined to find ways of achieving prosperity and human flourishing within Earth's biophysical limits. During the 2020–21 academic year, we developed two main activities in relation to this commitment. We started to revise our teaching programmes to ensure that they address the severity of the planetary threat posed by the acceleration of climate change, and we launched a new lecture series on Climate Change and the Challenges of Development. Our goal was to invite guest speakers from a variety of backgrounds – academics, policy-makers, activists, and

leading practitioners – to debate three issues with our researchers and students: the ways in which climate change is approached through diverse and specific constructions of reality; the impact climate change has on the way we think about development, welfare, and wellbeing; and the policies and political steps required to keep the global temperature rise to 1.5 C and, failing that, the steps required for adaptation.



Our first speaker, Professor Arun Agrawal, Editor in Chief of *World Development*, analysed how social assistance programmes may advance climate resilience, and how their impact and design could be improved to reflect the exigencies of climate change. Having shown the intrinsic interdependence of climate change adaptation and development, Professor Agrawal advocated for a more holistic approach to social welfare.

Our second speaker, Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighted the similarities between the health and environmental crises we are facing, both resulting from an unsustainable development model. Only by responding to both challenges simultaneously will we achieve development goals. She concluded that protection from climate change and pandemics are global public goods which can only be provided through international cooperation, an active role of the state, and reliance on scientific principles.

This lecture series has grown organically from conversations and exchanges within the ODID community. Students have been actively involved in preparing the Q&A sessions that have followed the lectures and many of the discussions have in turn been incorporated within our teaching and research. For example, some of our students, early career researchers, and

research associates came together to create the Himalayan Forum, a fascinating side event in relation to Professor Agrawal's lecture. Building on the doctoral research of Laur Kiik with Kachin educationalists in northern Myanmar and on the master's research of Lamis Jamil with agroecologists in Nepal, the Himalayan Forum explored local experiences of climate resilience around three central questions: how are youth innovating for climate action in the Himalaya during the pandemic? Is migration the solution for poverty in the Himalaya? How do we evidence and fund holistic development frameworks that embed resilience into all sectors?

DPhil student Theodor Borrmann organised another very successful side event with indigenous leaders from the Ecuadorian Amazon. Finally, I was invited by Peruvian colleague Eduardo Bedoya Garland from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú to participate in a week-long event on indigenous resilience in the face of climate change and the pandemic. This included online live discussions with Peruvian biologists, park managers, and indigenous leaders, each speaking from their communities and research stations within the Peruvian Amazon.

Combining high-profile guest lectures with interactive Q&A sessions and side events organised by our students and young researchers has really enriched our understanding of development challenges in the face of climate change. By strengthening safe spaces for dialogue, debate, and exchanges of views on the health of our planet, wealth inequalities, the new technological revolution, and societal transformations towards sustainability and resilience, these events aim to offer our worldwide community an opportunity to collaborate directly in shaping the actions we must take collectively to prevent irreversible and life-threatening environmental changes. Please get in touch if you would like to propose or organise activities that explore any aspect of the challenges of development in the face of climate change and the ecological crisis.

You can watch videos from our Climate Change series at www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/content/climate-change-and-challenges-development

Laura Rival is Professor of Anthropology of Development at ODID.

Changing lives through *rap*

Jo Boyce writes about the work of Rap Therapy, co-founded by a former ODID student to help schoolchildren use rap as a tool for self-expression and improved mental health.

‘All of my fear was in my body and then it drained out of me as I put all my emotions into the rap’.

‘At first I was anxious to perform in front of a small group, but as the weeks passed all my fears went away and I managed to perform in front of the whole assembly’.

‘Proph made it easier to share and communicate how I feel’.

These words from children at a primary school in London’s Tulse Hill describe the transformative effect of Rap Therapy, a social enterprise co-founded by ODID alumnus Joevas Asare with his brother Bhishma, also known as Proph.

Rap Therapy was set up in 2018 to deliver workshops to young people to help them write and record raps as a way of encouraging self-expression, fostering creativity, strengthening their mental health, and ultimately setting them on a positive path for the future.

The team have worked with more than 4,700 young people in 45 educational establishments in London – including schools, youth clubs, libraries and summer camps – targeting schools with students that are most at risk of being excluded in particular.

Rap Therapy provides either one-off workshops or a four-week course culminating in a digital recording. The sessions focus on teamwork, communication, and confidence building as well as essential writing skills, such as creating rhyme schemes and using metaphors and similes. Out of school hours, the children have access to a network of subsidised studios where they can record for free.

The team, which consists of rappers and songwriters who have all grown up in a similar environment to the children they work with, also offer a mentoring programme, where young people can talk about situations they may not feel

comfortable sharing with teachers or parents.

The enterprise stems from Joevas’ and Bhishma’s own experience of the power of rap.

‘My brother and I both grew up making rap music when younger,’ Joevas says. ‘We were improving our mental health without even knowing it and applied the skills we learnt through rap on different paths in life’.

Bhishma continued making music, releasing an EP in 2017 – *Invisible Guidelines* – which highlighted problems such as drugs, alcohol abuse, and violent crimes that affect the Thornton Heath area where the brothers were raised.

Joevas, meanwhile, took a different path, one that ultimately led to the MSc in Economics for Development at ODID. However, his progression was by no means straightforward. His academic performance was not initially strong enough to enable him to continue to A levels until he found a college in south London that wanted to fill numbers and let him enrol for a place on their vacant courses – which happened to include economics.

‘I never knew what economics was, it was simply an A level, so I took it. In my first year ... I got Es and Us so was not expected to go to university. However, I had a teacher, John Rowlands, ... who pushed me to reevaluate the path I was going down’.

He rapidly improved his grades to the point where he was able to win a place to study economics at the University of Surrey, from which he ultimately graduated with a first-class degree.

It is this personal experience that makes Joevas particularly emphatic on the importance of interventions such as Rap Therapy that encourage and support children and widen their idea of what is possible.

‘Part of the reason I was getting poor grades originally was the socioeconomic circumstances I was in. I never considered university as an option until I had people nudge me in that direction and believe



Joevas Asare



in me,’ he says. ‘There are many bright young people that would benefit greatly from people believing in them and presenting options beyond their current circumstances.’

Joevas’ role in Rap Therapy includes supporting strategic growth and fundraising – a role he also plays for other entrepreneurs and businesses, partnering artists, musicians, sports people, and tech entrepreneurs to raise money, grow their businesses and create good impact. At the same time he is also a policy economist and thematic lead for energy at the International Growth Centre, supporting research that informs policymaking in developing countries, especially in relation to access to energy, climate change, fragility, and macroeconomic reforms.

His ability to sustain this busy professional life is partly down to the role of rap in his early life, he suggests:

‘Honestly, if I did not rap when I was younger, I would not have the mental stability, hard work and focus that I apply today in my current activities’.

Find out more about Rap Therapy at www.raptherapy.co.uk. You can also watch a BBC clip at www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-london-56647365.

Jo Boyce is ODID’s Communications and Alumni Relations Officer.



The *art* of fieldwork

Jo Boyce spoke to ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow Alessandro Corso, whose paintings recently featured in a Royal Anthropological Institute online exhibition, about how his art and his research interact.

Why do you think art is a useful tool for the anthropologist?

Art can be useful as it allows for direct and emotional expression. Fieldwork is often a very emotionally difficult time, charged with pressures, failed expectations, and surprises, good and bad. It can affect one's life in significant ways, and this process does not usually end with the fieldwork itself. Anthropologists carry the memories and impressions, frustrations and fears, doubts and uncertainties of fieldwork for a lifetime and try to come to terms with them by means of profound and in-depth thinking, studying, and writing. As writing can become an exercise in clarification so too can art. A piece of art may not only function as a disciplinary form of self-relaxation and liberation, it can retrospectively become a further fundamental piece of evidence, like field notes, photographs, or videotapes. It is a product of one's engagement with fieldwork, and it must be valued as such.

Could you tell us about the background to and context of these artworks?

The background of these paintings is the island of Lampedusa, a speck of land in the Mediterranean Sea, where I carried out fieldwork in 2016–17. Lampedusa, historically a safe port for sea travelers and pirates alike, was unified with Italy after 1860 and was soon exploited for its resources and used as a prison-like detention centre for criminals and abject others. In the present, those 'others' are so-called irregular migrants. They mostly come from African countries, risking their lives through desert crossings, abuse in criminally managed detention centres, and death at sea via the Mediterranean. Their eyes communicate alterity, pain, otherness, and injustice, but also hope, strength, and an ability to deal with the perils of life through endurance.

At the same time, local inhabitants often demonstrate arrogant and racist attitudes, impatience, frustration, and fear over the apocalyptic scenario they perceive looming on the horizon due to the presence of migrants. Many of them, however, appreciate the fact that Lampedusani have also been migrants for a very long time, and still are. And some consider politics and profit to be at the very core of this 'inhumane sacrifice of innocent people.' The majority of migration workers acknowledge this too. As they work closely with policy-makers and with the migrants, they have experienced enough to come to the conclusion that the migration crisis is ultimately a 'business' constructed on human flesh. The anthropologist attempts to find reasonable ways to come to terms with such unreasonable sets of experiences. It is in this context that my paintings were born.

Caught in the same turmoil and ethical dilemmas that have characterised many fieldworkers' writings and long-term reflections, I soon needed to find a way out of this disorder.

Writing helped greatly. However, I often forced myself not to write too much, and too freely, letting my thoughts run wild, my imagination fly, my sensations speak, my emotions scream. As a relatively inexperienced researcher, I always thought about the need for discipline, rigour, and ultimately, considered fieldwork my work, to be taken very seriously. What I had not yet understood was that expression, in whatever form, would have been the first and most important form of being respectful and rigorously engaged – both with the life worlds of the people I met and lived with, and to myself.

Painting came out as a basic need for such expression. I felt like painting from the very first weeks on the island. I forced myself not to. I eventually managed to let go, and quickly produced a few sketched oil paintings. If I were to describe them

retrospectively, I would say that the 'faceless boy' (opposite) represents the elusive and evanescent identity of all those migrants I have met. So close and similar to oneself and yet so distant in terms of life conditions, experiences of torture, ability to cope with violence and suffering, and richness of stories to tell. The 'back hole' (below, right) is a testimony of invisibility. It stands as the image of a path walked daily by migrants who exited the CPSA (Centro di Primo Soccorso ed Accoglienza, or First Aid and Welcome Centre), barefoot at times. The peace and beauty of that place gave me a sense of sadness, but also, it reminded me of how sadness can bring joy, how detention precedes freedom. The third (below, left) is a painting about the intersection and overlapping of life and death in the context of irregular migration on the island of Lampedusa. The rock is positioned against an ambivalent background, which may be read as the seabed where an unknown number of corpses rest. It could also be an amorphous space, on which the rock and the two flowers fluctuate. The red and yellow flowers witness how life flourishes despite the tangibility and presence of ongoing death; the ability of the many migrants I have met to endure in life, putting experiences of loss and death behind.

Tell us more about your practice of art – how have your technique and style developed?

I am a self-taught painter. I began drawing as a child and developed basic skills with practice, excited by the rewarding feeling it gave me. I tried acrylic paint at the age of 13 and soon experimented with oil colours, inspired by the art of Vincent van Gogh. I began by reproducing some of the paintings I most liked on canvas. Technique developed through trial and error, and the few works I have done were driven by a mixture of personal need,

inspiration, challenge, and frustration with feeling unable to express myself otherwise.

I have tried some portrait drawing with pencil and chalk, and exhibited some of them first at Durham University, as an undergraduate student, then in Italy, for restaurants and cafés. I later exhibited my oil paint works in Hong Kong for an art gallery. Four pieces were inspired by intersubjectivity, a concept I found fascinating and extremely telling as a postgraduate student in anthropology at the University of St Andrews.

I kept painting occasionally in the following years, and in Lampedusa, during my doctoral work based at Durham University and funded by the ESRC, I felt the need and inspiration to draw and paint again. I limited myself to a very small amount of artwork, as I felt the pressure of having to be a 'proper' anthropologist and kept telling myself I was not an artist, so I shall not do art. I eventually realised that if anthropology is the study of the human condition, art, however we may come to define it, cannot but be an intrinsic element of anthropological study.

What is the role of art in your current research?

Art will be used in a research project I am developing for a future project, but it will take a different form. On the one hand, I will attempt to use it as a means to allow fishermen to express some of their memories of encountering migrant remains (belongings, corpses, stories of loss and death). On the other hand, I will collaborate with local theatre performers in Lampedusa to revive traditional Sicilian storytelling and critically ask how such forms of knowledge production may significantly impact current debates in the anthropology and methodology of migration and ethics.

To view the online exhibition, visit illustratinganthropology.com



From the margin to the meridian

Exploring the ‘refoundation’ of QEH through the visionary work of Frances Stewart, *Valpy FitzGerald* brings the history of the department up to date.

Founded in 1954 as a centre for postcolonial training and networking, Queen Elizabeth House (QEH) had pivoted in the late 1960s to engage with the new discipline of development studies. However by the late 1980s, it had lost intellectual direction as well as financial viability and was close to closure by the University (see *ODM* 2019 and 2020).

Nonetheless, the Oxford authorities felt that the potential for a world-class teaching and research department on development issues was still present. In 1993 this task was entrusted to Frances Stewart, a senior research officer since 1972 with the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (integrated with QEH in 1986) with a distinguished record of policy-focussed research on economic development.

Stewart identified three major elements of change: the most important was to raise academic standards at QEH, including divesting those activities not strictly scholarly in nature. The second was to develop QEH as a multidisciplinary research and teaching institution, firmly integrated into the University. The third was to create

innovative taught courses in development studies, both to facilitate the integration of academics from different disciplines and to expand sustainable student numbers.

She insisted on budgetary support from the University and the transfer of senior Oxford academics to strengthen her team, which already included geographer Barbara Harriss-White and administrator Julia Knight. These additions included Rosemary Thorp and Sanjaya Lall, with support from her Somerville colleague Judith Heyer; while I was imported from The Netherlands. All four of us were economists in a similar broad Keynesian interdisciplinary tradition.

QEH had originally been founded as an independent body, created by Royal Charter and affiliated to the University. In 1994 as part of a restructuring its assets were transferred to the University, it surrendered the Royal Charter and its governing body was officially dissolved, replaced by an Advisory Council which now advised on outreach and fundraising. In 2000 QEH became a part of a new department called Area and Development Studies, along with some existing area studies units, as part of the reorganisation of the University into four disciplinary divisions.

A global research university for the new millennium

Meanwhile the University itself was embarking on its own delayed

‘perestroika’, finally morphing from a 19th-century British undergraduate finishing school into a leading global research university for the new millennium.



Frances Stewart

First, the strategic expansion of postgraduate student numbers at Oxford, with fees raised to international levels, allowed increased enrolment at QEH. This generated income to engage leading young academics to teach and a large scholarship fund for students from poor countries. Second, the new emphasis on generating fresh

external resources for Oxford research with international social impact aligned well with the new QEH strategy to conduct high-level research which would advance understanding of the complex economic, social, and political processes of change in countries in the poorer parts of the world. Third, and crucially, the reform of Oxford University finances devolved budgetary responsibility onto individual departments based on the ‘as earned’ principle, which meant that QEH could expand and progress without the constraints that more traditional Oxford elements had previously imposed.

Simultaneously, in Whitehall the new Labour Administration had established the Department for International Development in 1997 with a wider mandate beyond aid and a major research budget, which supported an unprecedented expansion of development research by UK universities and their overseas partners.

The Mansfield Road building

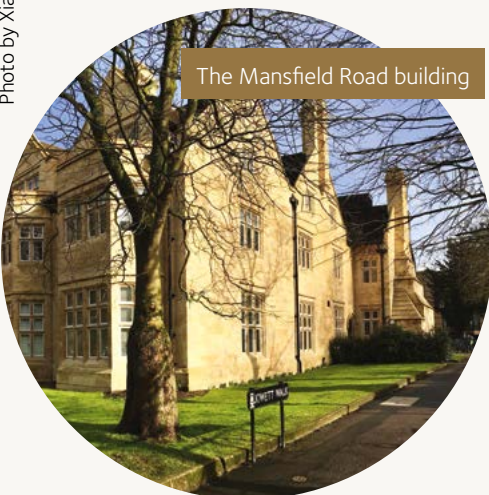


Photo by Xiaolan Fu

On the dissolution of Area and Development Studies in 2003, QEH finally became an independent department of the University within the Social Sciences Division. In 2006 the new department was retitled the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID), a name chosen to underline the fact that development issues are global and not just problems of poor countries themselves.

New departmental groups with major external funding were established to partner with research institutions in the Global South and international development agencies with explicit impact on policy. The aim was (and still is) to address the structural roots of poverty and power on the one hand, and the international as well as the national dimensions of development on the other. A particular feature has been cooperation with UN agencies – particularly the UNDP, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNICEF and UNHCR.

The titles of these new research groups give a flavour of their scope. Between 1995 and 2014 there flourished: the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity; the Finance and Trade Policy Research Centre; the International Migration Institute; the Refugee Studies Centre; Young Lives; the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative; the International Growth Centre; and the Technology and Management Centre for Development.

Strengthening research and teaching

In 2008, the national Research Assessment Exercise (covering the years 2002–8) included development studies as a separate unit of assessment for the first time and the fruits of the radical changes at QEH became clear. The department could enter 27 staff members, and 65% of its research was judged to be of ‘world leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’ quality – better than any other UK university in this field. This pole position led to an even better outcome in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, with 44 staff entered and 79% of research in these two categories – again the best in the country.

On the teaching side, the degrees in agricultural economics were wound up for lack of student demand, and a new course was launched, the MSc in Economics for Development, provided jointly with

the Economics Department. This was born out of the Diploma in Development Economics – itself the descendent of the colonial training programme – but was now at the technical frontier of the sub-discipline. Next came the MPhil in Development Studies, a rigorous and critical multi-disciplinary introduction to development as a process of managed and unmanaged change in societies in the Global South.

Eventually, three further MScs were established: in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, in Migration Studies (jointly with the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography) and in Global Governance and Diplomacy – this last, the child of the QEH Foreign Service Programme, whose vocational side had been transferred to the Department of Continuing Education. And perhaps most significantly for the new institutional strategy, an interdisciplinary DPhil in International Development was established, drawing candidates both from the department’s own master’s degrees (particularly the MPhil), and other leading universities.

In 1992 QEH had only 19 students of its own (in agricultural economics) although staff also taught for other faculties. By 2014 – only two decades later – 180 students were studying at ODID on five master’s degrees and 100 on the doctorate in international development. Application rates for these courses (which had very high standards of admission) were among the highest in Oxford social sciences and reflected the department’s new international reputation.

QEH on the move

In 2004 St John’s College regained the lease on the QEH buildings in St Giles, and the new department faced the drama of searching for new premises. However, the University belatedly recognised its responsibilities to the department and after canvassing various sites (including the former Oxford Boys’ School in George Street – now the History Faculty) the former School of Geography on the intersection of Mansfield Road and Jowett Walk was chosen.

In late 2005, the department moved to its new home and in 2011 Buckingham Palace authorised the use of the name Queen Elizabeth House for these buildings, which had been extensively



The new East Wing

Photo by Swagato Sarkar

refurbished to provide a space where students, teachers, and researchers could cross disciplinary boundaries and exchange ideas. In addition, a new East Wing was built to accommodate research groups and provide further teaching space.

During her tenure as QEH Director between 1993 and 2002, Frances in effect refounded the institution: in the words of her biographer, John Toye, ‘her decade as director witnessed a most remarkable improvement in the academic fortunes of QEH’. In 2012 the north wing of the Mansfield Road building was named for her in recognition of her 40 years’ service to the University and development studies.

By 2014, when the last of Frances Stewart’s ‘team’ had retired, a new generation of younger scholars had taken on the leadership of the department. They are committed to a strategy of adopting a long-term perspective on the problems and processes of development, of challenging assumptions, and of drawing on multiple disciplines and cross-country comparisons to generate new thinking.

It had been a long journey from 1954 to 2014. The Colonial Office had founded by Royal Charter a small and underfunded facility on the fringe of the University in the hope of influencing the leaders of newly independent countries. Six decades later, despite facing closure three times, that facility had become a core department in Oxford social sciences with an international reputation for training and research on global development.

Valpy FitzGerald is Emeritus Professor of International Development Finance and was ODID Head of Department 2007–12.

The incredible journey of the *toyi-toyi*

Jocelyn Alexander and JoAnn McGregor trace the history of the protest dance as part of their research into the military cultures of southern African liberation armies.

The toyi-toyi is a high-kneed, foot-stomping dance, rhythmically punctuated by exhaled chants and call and response.

It can be observed at almost any kind of protest in South Africa and Zimbabwe today. In South Africa, university students toyi-toyi when they protest against fees, while township residents might toyi-toyi when they object to the presence of ‘foreigners’. In Zimbabwe, the opposition party toyi-toyis to protest the ruling party’s abuses, while ruling party supporters might toyi-toyi when they want to evict white farmers.

Where did this ‘dance’ come from? Many people associate it with the South African township protests of the 1980s, when young men toyi-toyed as they confronted police or attended political funerals and protests. These images filled the world’s TV screens, becoming one of the most recognisable performances of the anti-apartheid struggle.

But its origins are in fact much further away, and they tell us about a much longer, global history of political and military struggle. This story played out

across Africa, moving from north to south, all the way from Algeria to South Africa, with stops in Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, and Zimbabwe along the way.

Military camps

We explored this history in our research. Our interest in the toyi-toyi did not come from its recent uses, but from our efforts to understand the liberation armies that fought against colonial and white minority rule in every southern African country from the 1960s.

These armies have an extraordinary history shaped by the alliances of the Cold War era. They were made up of mostly young men, who left their rural homesteads and townships for training camps that might be in the Soviet Union or Cuba, Algeria or Tanzania, Angola or Zambia.

We wanted to understand what this experience was like and what kinds of armies it made. We focused on ‘military culture’ – that is, the ideas, practices and traditions that give an army character and meaning for soldiers – and how it was instilled through training in all these different places.

The toyi-toyi proved a great way of understanding how these men learned what it meant to be a soldier, and how those ideas were transmitted over thousands of kilometres and through dozens of military camps. When the toyi-toyi eventually arrived in South Africa’s townships it was something very different from what it had been at the start of its long journey.

Algerian roots

We interviewed members of the Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army (ZPRA, also referred to as Zipra, the armed wing of the Zimbabwe African People’s Union, or Zapu). We learned that the toyi-toyi’s origins were located in the training camps set up to support African liberation movements in Algeria in the mid-1960s.

Toyi-toyi was thought to be an Arabic phrase and it formed part of the songs and chants that recruits learned. For them, the toyi-toyi was a military drill – certainly not a ‘dance’ – that they associated with achieving the high level of toughness and fitness required to survive guerrilla war. Its foreign language chants and novel movements expressed

REUTERS / Alamy Stock Photo





the international character of the armed liberation struggle itself.

From Algeria, the toyi-toyi moved southward, through training camps in Tanzania and then into Zambia, and in the process it changed.

Zimbabwean nationalism

It began to take on a nationalist character – the Arabic slogans were replaced with slogans in Zimbabwe's main languages and they were refocused around expressions of loyalty to the party and its leader. This was at a time when there were many divisions that threatened the movement. The toyi-toyi became a way of instilling loyalty and discipline as well as physical strength as many more soldiers started to fight inside Zimbabwe.

The military toyi-toyi required hours of high-kneed running in difficult terrain while carrying heavy packs and weapons. ZPRA veterans told us how they had suffered from the toyi-toyi's demands but they also stressed that it had given them tremendous pride in their toughness and helped them to face the terrible demands of the battlefield. They remembered the toyi-toyi as an essential part of their military culture.

The toyi-toyi had, however, a different standing in other liberation armies. We can see how the toyi-toyi tells us about how military cultures were remade over time in one army – it can also tell us about how such cultures were transmitted from one liberation army to another.

The toyi-toyi arrives in South Africa

The main South African liberation army, uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), learned the toyi-toyi from ZPRA, in shared military camps in Angola and Zambia and on the Zimbabwean battlefield. The spread of the toyi-toyi in MK shows how extensive these interactions were.

But MK soldiers had very different reactions to it. Some denounced the toyi-toyi as a mindless, brutal physical exercise and blamed it for instituting a repressive military culture in MK.

These critical views of the toyi-toyi did not stop it from spreading throughout MK camps in Angola and from there southwards again into South Africa. One of the main routes for the toyi-toyi's arrival in the South African townships was through MK soldiers who had been captured, held in the infamous Robben Island prison and subsequently released in South Africa.

These men were heroes to many young people in the townships. Performing the toyi-toyi was a means through which young men and women could link their protest to the glories of the armed struggle – now in the form of an at times joyous, at times menacing 'dance' rather than a military drill.

The toyi-toyi has continued to change its meanings – it has taken on many different political roles for people with no connection to the liberation struggles. By tracing its journey, we can learn how liberation movements' militaries were made – and also how they spread into a much wider political culture which remains significant today.

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Jocelyn Alexander is Professor of Commonwealth Studies at ODID. JoAnn McGregor is Professor of Human Geography and African Studies at the University of Sussex.



Masooda Bano wins EUR2.45m ERC grant to study Islamic conservatism

Professor Masooda Bano has been awarded a 2.45 million euro European Research Council Advanced Grant to study the persistent appeal of Islamic conservatism among young Muslims in Europe.

Professor Bano was one of 209 researchers across Europe to win the highly competitive awards, from a total of 2,678 applicants.

As a starting point, her work takes the highly conservative Islamic networks that have historically embedded themselves in Muslim communities in Europe and the UK. Despite facing recent competition from Islamic scholars and institutions that are actively trying to promote teachings from classical Islamic scholarly tradition – which balances textual loyalty with a focus on contemporary social reality – these movements remain highly popular among second and third-generation Muslims.

Working within theories of institutional persistence and change, complementing them with a focus on

understanding the significance of ethical and moral agency as discussed in recent studies in the anthropology of Islam, and taking cues from the growing interest in the role of neighbourhoods in religious socialisation, Professor Bano's project will develop a unique approach to understanding the 'stickiness' of Islamic conservatism in the West.

'It is an honour to be able to expand this important research further through the awarding of the Advanced Grant,' Professor Bano said.

'With the funding, the project will be expanded to have a threefold focus: firstly, studying the survival strategies of institutional elites; secondly, expanding an existing focus on "push" factors to include "pull" factors; and finally, testing the hypothesis that mosque-dense Muslim-majority neighbourhoods are central to ingrain a conservative social Islamic imaginary in each subsequent generation, which, through a dense network of ties, is spread to Muslim youth across the country'.

ODID, ACMS at Wits to launch Mobility Governance Lab

ODID and the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg have signed an innovative partnership agreement to launch a jointly directed 'lab' that will explore the governance of mobility in the Global South.

Populations, politics, and socialities are increasingly defined by spatial mobility: displacement, long-distance emigration, and widespread – but often underexplored – patterns of urbanisation and domestic and regional mobility.

The two institutions are seeking to understand and address the opportunities and challenges this mobility presents and have signed an agreement to develop the Mobility Governance Lab (MGL) to enable this.

Scheduled for formal launch in October 2021, the jointly managed initiative will explore the governance of mobility at multiple scales across the Global South.

Co-directed by Dr Jean Pierre Misago at Wits and Professor Loren B Landau at Oxford, it is intended as an autonomous, critical space working to realise principles of innovation, independence, and equitable partnership. Through collaborative research, it will offer original insight and perspectives to scholars, civil society, and practitioners while fostering the next generation of engaged researchers from Africa and beyond.

'This new collaboration provides a fantastic opportunity to build an equitable collaboration between two leading institutions in the UK and South Africa', said Diego Sánchez-Ancochea, ODID Head of Department. 'We are particularly excited about the exchange of ideas and the research collaboration in one of the key challenges of our time: the governance of mobility across borders'.

Bookmark the soon-to-be-launched website at www.miggovalab.org or follow them on Twitter @miggovalab.

OPHI introduces *executive education*

The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at ODID has introduced OPHI Executive Education, a new stream of programmes designed to provide leaders with practical knowledge to lead poverty reduction by using the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and other Alkire–Foster-based measures.

Its inaugural course, 'Leaders Programme: Using the MPI as a Policy Tool', takes place 23–27 August. The five-day online programme is aimed at

senior government officials and top-level policymakers.

Consisting of 15 hours of interactive lectures, workshops, conversations with global leaders, and practitioners' panels, the programme will leverage open discussions and high-level networking with fellow policymakers from around the world to share the successes and challenges of leading multidimensional poverty reduction.

Find out more at ophi.org.uk/ophi-executive-education

Saying *goodbye* to Penny

We were extremely sad to say goodbye to our longest-serving member of staff, our receptionist Penny Rogers, who retired in September. Penny will be fondly remembered by so many alumni – her welcoming presence has been a hallmark of the department over the years and we will particularly miss the deep interest that she showed in the welfare of staff and students alike.

‘During the last 45 years, Penny became the heart and soul of the department’, said Diego Sánchez-Ancochea. ‘From her post in reception, she charmed invited speakers, welcomed new students and always made entering into QEH special. Over the years, she has supported students in all sorts of ways from visiting them in the hospital to comforting them when they were tired with work. She made everyone laugh and the department will not be the same without her’.

We celebrated Penny’s many years of service with a book of photos, memories, and well-wishes from staff and students, past and present, and hope to get together in person in October, if COVID permits, for a party to say goodbye.

We wish Penny every happiness in her retirement.



Photo by Eliya Beachy

Raufu Mustapha’s papers in *Bodleian*

We are delighted to announce that the Bodleian library has catalogued and made available online a collection of the academic papers of our late colleague, Raufu Mustapha.

The papers include research materials relating to fieldwork conducted at Rogo Village, Kano State, Nigeria, from 1986, as part of studies for his DPhil thesis, and follow-up research from 1997, materials relating to other research projects, Raufu’s published articles and papers, and unpublished papers and lectures.

The collection, comprising 14 boxes of material, was donated to the library by Raufu’s widow, Kate Meagher, and catalogued with support from ODID, St Antony’s College and Raufu’s family.

Raufu, who was Associate Professor of African Politics at ODID and Kirk Greene Fellow of St Antony’s College, died in 2017.

The papers are available online for those with library access at bit.ly/ARMPapers.

MORE NEWS ♦ MORE NEWS ♦ MORE NEWS

- ◆ Professor Christopher Woodruff and his colleagues Joyce Sadka and Enrique Seira of ITAM were awarded the 2019 Victor Urquidí Prize in Economics by the



Collegio de Mexico for their research on the functioning of Mexico’s labour courts. The work sought to shed light on the causes of the heavy backlog of cases in the courts and the effect of different interventions. They found that providing plaintiffs with information on predicted case outcomes and asking them to meet with court conciliators increased settlement rates. Drawing on the results, the Mexican government reformed the national labour law in May 2019.

- ◆ Tom Scott-Smith explored the social history of soup – the mainstay of emergency relief for centuries – in an ‘essay’ for BBC radio. Tracing four soups and their inventors – from Count Rumford, the founder of the modern soup kitchen, in Bavaria in 1790 to Ellen Swallow Richards, MIT’s first female professor, who drew on a new metric, the calorie, to devise recipes in the late 19th century – he suggested that what is offered has tended to be determined by




current humanitarian ideas rather than beneficiary needs.

- ◆ Associate Professor Simukai Chigudu won the 2021 Theodore J Lowi First Book Award for his book, *The Political Life of an Epidemic: Cholera, Crisis and Citizenship in Zimbabwe*. The award recognises the author of a first book in any field of political science that exemplifies qualities of broad ambition, high originality, and intellectual daring, showing promise of having a substantive impact on the overall discipline. It is awarded by the American Political Science Association (APSA) and the International Political Science Association (IPSA).

- ◆ Ruben Andersson and Laura Rival were both awarded full professorships in the University’s most recent recognition of distinction exercise. Ruben is now Professor of Social Anthropology. He is an anthropologist working on migration, borders and security with a focus on the West African Sahel and southern Europe. Laura is now Professor of Anthropology of Development. She is an anthropologist whose empirically grounded, theoretically oriented and policy-relevant research aims to renew our thinking about the relationship between environment and society.

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If you would like to write a story for the next issue of the magazine, or have news you would like to contribute, please email alumni@qeh.ox.ac.uk. We are always happy to hear from you.

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Cover picture: MPhil student Aisha Ryan in the Duke Humfrey's Library.

